



45 days after accident,
one more body detected
in Meghalaya coal mine
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Electoral bonds are a
damp squib, says
former CEC Chawla
page 9



Osaka holds her nerve
to outlast Kvitova in
Australian Open final
page 17



India outplays New
Zealand in second
ODI, takes 2-0 lead
page 17

NEARBY



Priyanka may begin U.P.
innings with Kumbh dip

NEW DELHI
Notwithstanding charges of the Congress and its president Rahul Gandhi pursuing "soft Hindutva", Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is likely to begin her formal political career with a dip at the Sangam at the Kumbh Mela on February 4.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

Two militants, one intruder killed in J&K

SRINAGAR
Two Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militants and one intruder were killed in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, as a separatist-backed shutdown and heightened security disrupted life in the Valley on Republic Day.

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Saluting the Republic



Woman power: A women's contingent of Assam Rifles marching on the Rajpath in New Delhi during the 70th Republic Day parade on Saturday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA (REPORTS ON PAGES 2 & 11)

Trump ends shutdown

Backs down from demand for money to build border wall

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

Submitting to mounting pressure, U.S. President Donald Trump has signed a Bill to reopen the government for three weeks, backing down from his demand that Congress give him money for his border wall before federal agencies go back to work.

Standing alone in the Rose Garden on Friday, Mr. Trump said he would sign the legislation funding shuttered agencies until February 15 and try again to persuade lawmakers to finance his long-sought wall. The deal he reached with congressional leaders contains no new money for the wall but ends the longest shutdown in U.S. history.

First the Senate and then the House swiftly and unanimously approved the deal. Late Friday, Mr. Trump signed it into law.

Back to business

President Donald Trump has signed a short-term deal to end the shutdown

8,00,000 U.S. workers were either furloughed or asked to work without pay during the shutdown

\$6 billion was the shutdown's cost to the U.S. economy

Duration of the shutdown
34 days,
21 hours and
18 minutes

55% of Americans blame President Trump for the mess
34% is Trump's approval rating, a new low

The administration asked federal department heads to reopen offices in a "prompt and orderly manner."

Mr. Trump's retreat came on the 35th day of the partial shutdown as intensifying delays at the airports and another missed payday for hundreds of thousands of federal workers brought new urgency to efforts to resolve the

stand-off.

Not a concession

"This was in no way a concession," Mr. Trump said in a tweet, fending off critics who wanted him to keep fighting. "It was taking care of millions of people who were getting badly hurt by the Shutdown with the understanding that in 21 days, if no deal is done, it's off to the races!"

offence," he added.

According to the agency, the arrest was made on Friday after the Income-Tax Department came across details about movement of the funds allegedly involving Mr. Khaitan, which were laundered through foreign entities/bank accounts.

The Directorate suspects that undisclosed funds of some influential families

abroad were also managed and deposits made in foreign bank accounts.

Seeking his seven-day custody, the ED told the court that Mr. Khaitan had not been cooperating with the investigation. The defence counsel opposed the request terming the arrest illegal, stating that the probe was linked to the VVIP chopper deal case. The court granted two days' custody.

He said the BJP would win more seats in Uttar Pradesh in the coming Lok Sabha election than it did in 2014. "We appeal to the SC to give us justice at the earliest, to the satisfaction of millions of people," said the Chief Minister.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 10

AAP, JJP in Lok Sabha tie-up talks for Haryana

Kejriwal's party already supporting JJP leader Digvijay Chautala in Jind bypoll

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party is in talks with the recently formed Jananyak Janta Party, a breakaway of the Indian National Lok Dal, for a potential alliance in Haryana for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, AAP sources said.

The party is already supporting the JJP in the January 28 by-election to the Jind seat in the Haryana Assembly, with AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal even addressing a rally in the constituency on Saturday in support of JJP leader Digvijay Singh Chautala who is contesting as an independent candidate.

Senior AAP leaders said the party is in the process of discussing a tie-up for the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana with the JJP. The AAP lead-



AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal with JJP leaders Digvijay Singh Chautala (left) and Dushyant Chautala at a rally in Jind on Saturday. ■ PHOTO COURTESY: TWITTER

ers, as well as a JJP source, said a seat-sharing arrangement is being discussed but the division of seats has not been finalised. AAP had contested all 10 seats in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

On January 18, AAP leader Gopal Rai had announced at a press conference in the Capital that the party would contest all Lok Sabha seats in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana, in an attempt to quash ru-

mours of a potential alliance with the Congress.

Mutual praise

In Jind, Mr. Kejriwal lauded JJP leader and Hisar MP Dushyant Chautala — the brother of Mr. Digvijay Chautala and grandson of INLD leader Om Prakash Chautala — for being "selfless" and giving up the INLD "flag, election symbol and might" after a "family dispute". The Hisar MP in turn praised the work done by the AAP government in Delhi.

The JJP was formed in December last year after Mr. Dushyant Chautala and Mr. Digvijay Chautala were expelled from the INLD. Their father, Ajay Chautala, the son of O.P. Chautala, had been at loggerheads with his brother Abhay Singh Chautala and was also expelled from the party.

UP. govt. to commemorate Kasganj death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KASGANJ (U.P.)

The Uttar Pradesh government will build a square in memory of a man who was killed last year during a rally on Republic Day in the State's Kasganj town.

Minister of State for Housing and Urban Planning, Vocational Education and Skill Development Suresh Pasi issued directions to the district administration in this regard on Saturday.

Chandan Gupta (22) had died of gunshot wounds following stone-pelting by a mob during a motorcycle rally taken out to celebrate Republic Day.

His killing had led to communal violence in the western U.P. town. At least three shops, two buses and a car were torched.



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FIRs filed against Assamese singer over Bharat Ratna remark

After audio clip of Zubeen Garg, a citizenship Bill detractor, making 'derogatory' comments goes viral

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI
Two police complaints were lodged against popular Assamese singer Zubeen Garg on Saturday for allegedly making derogatory remarks about Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

In an audio clip, Mr. Garg purportedly used abusive words while referring to the award. The clip began doing the rounds on social media on Friday night, after the Bharat Ratna and Padma



Zubeen Garg

awards were announced.

"By defaming the Bharat Ratna, he [Mr. Garg] has also insulted Bhupen Hazarika, the voice and pride of Assam," Satya Ranjan Borah, State vice-president of the BJP's Kisan Morcha, wrote on Facebook. The legendary Assamese singer's name figured as a posthumous recipient of Bharat Ratna in the Friday list. Mr. Borah filed the complaint against Mr. Garg at the Lalka police station in central Assam's Hojai dis-

trict. "I have no issues against him, but his unacceptable behaviour will impact the youth negatively," he said. Srimanta Sarma, the

officer in charge of the Lalka police station, said the FIR was registered on Saturday morning under several sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology Act.

No clarification yet

Guwahati resident Biswajit Nath lodged a similar com-

plaint at the Dispur police station seeking action against the singer for "hate speech". The authenticity of the au-

dio clip has not been veri-

fied, neither has the singer issued any clarification.

Mr. Garg has been one of the strongest critics of the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. He had composed a song to protest its passage in the Upper House of Parliament.

Earlier this month, Mr. Garg wrote an open letter to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal asking him to take a stand against the Centre that is pushing the Bill.

IN BRIEF



Sisodia inaugurates works in Burari colonies

NEW DELHI Deputy CM Manish Sisodia on Saturday inaugurated development works in 11 unauthorised colonies in north Delhi's Burari. Roads and drains will be constructed in these colonies at a cost of ₹98.32 crore. The event was attended by Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control Minister Satyendar Jain and local MLA Sanjiv Jha. PTI

Mandoli jail gets 111-ft national flag

NEW DELHI Mandoli jail got a 111-foot Tricolour, the highest in east and north-east Delhi, on the Republic Day on Saturday. Director General (Prisons) Ajay Kashyap hoisted the national flag which, according to an official, is visible from over 5 km. Supplementary installation of three sets of 110-watt LED lights has also been done. PTI

Air quality of Delhi-NCR		
Delhi	233	Gurugram 177
Ghaziabad	267	Faridabad 234
Noida	198	Greater Noida 226
Good 0-50	51-100	101-200
Poor 201-300	301-400	>401
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) [SOURCE: CPCB]		

City likely to get sewer cleaning machines

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI Before the end of the month, the Delhi Jal Board is likely to induct 50 new sewer cleaning machines as a part of its effort to eliminate manual scavenging.

The practice has claimed several lives in the past few years.

Delhi Social Welfare Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam said 50 of the machines were likely to be rolled out by January-end while the remaining 150 of the total 200 in the pipeline are likely to be procured by March-end.

Mr. Gautam said those engaged in manual scavenging would be trained and assisted with financing for sewer cleaning machines.

A Delhi government official added that the machines could be demonstrated on January 30 – on the occasion of the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination.

At a Board meeting in February 2018, the DJB had approved the procurement of the 200 tailor-made sewer cleaning machines.

On Sunday, a worker died while cleaning a drain in north Delhi's Wazirabad. While manual scavenging was banned by the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, incidents like the one in Wazirabad have continued. Last September, five workers died while cleaning a septic tank at a residential colony in Moti Nagar.



Daredevils perform at Rajpath during the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

Over 20,000 officers ensure peaceful R-Day celebrations

Cops from other States roped in; facial recognition technology makes debut

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Over 2,000 security officers were deployed for peaceful Republic Day celebrations at Rajpath on Saturday, the police said.

Senior officers from other States were also roped in for security, said an officer.

"There were 25 Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police rank officers present at the event. Around 12,000 officers were deployed for security and law and order. Staff from Police Control Room, Special Security and Traffic personnel were added. In total, there were about 20,000-22,000 officers deployed," the officer said.

Police said 120 CCTV cameras were set up in Rajpath to keep a check on any suspicious movement. In addition



An illuminated Rashtrapati Bhavan on Republic Day in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHAKAR

to this, 30 cameras were installed with facial recognition software as a part of anti-terror preparedness.

"We had given the feed of known terrorists and desperate criminals. If they were present, the camera would spot them and alert us," the officer said.

The police had also identified 160 high-rise buildings, which were covered by offic-

ers in addition to anti-drone guns, machine guns and other air defence weapons.

Visible policing

All the 15 Delhi districts had security in place with checks in the market, deployment of sniffer dogs at strategic places, and increased number of pickets adding to "more visible policing", the officer said.

Commuters were advised in advance on social media to plan their journey accordingly.

There were 25 Additional DCP and DCP-rank officers present at the event. Around 12,000 officers were deployed for security...staff from PCR, special security and traffic police officers were added

SENIOR DELHI POLICE OFFICER

Elaborate traffic arrangements were also made for the Republic Day and areas including India Gate, Rafi Marg, Janpath, Man Singh Road, Tilak Marg, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg remained closed for public till the Parade was over.

Commuters were advised in advance on social media to plan their journey accordingly.

Gandhi-themed parade by States, Ministries steals the show

Army veterans, all nonagenarians, honoured at the event

SIDHARTH RAVI

NEW DELHI

The winter sun warmed the crowds gathered at Rajpath to watch the 70th Republic Day Parade on Saturday.

Helicopters whizzed through the sky, showering flower petals over the crowd to mark the start of the parade that was filled with typical pageantry.

The crowd started taking pictures as various regiments marched in seamless coordination, cavalry brigades hoisted past and marching bands played their tune.

Commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, all floats presented by various States and government Ministries, 22 in total, were themed around him.

While some highlighted individual connections

with the freedom fighter, such as Tamil Nadu's display that recalled Gandhi's visit to Madurai where he first started wearing a loincloth.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands float highlighted his influence on prisoners at the Cellular Jail there.

Coincidentally, the chief guest on Saturday was South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The Parade also witnessed veterans from the Indian National Army, all nonagenarians, honoured as they drove past, seated atop open jeeps.

Children awarded

About 26 children were given bravery awards.

The festivities were capped off with high-speed flypasts by multiple airforce squadrons and the slow rise of tri coloured helium balloons released by the Indian Meteorological Department.

Delhi tableau back after a year's break

Mahatma Gandhi spent more than 700 days of his life here

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

After a year's gap, the Delhi tableau made a comeback at the Republic Day Parade in Rajpath on Saturday.

To Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary, a white-coloured Delhi tableau highlighted his stay at the Birla House.

The middle part of the tableau highlighted Gandhi holding his daily prayer meeting – attended by people from all sections of society –, the Delhi government said in a statement.

It added that he had stayed there between 1915 and 1948 and visited the city nearly 80 times, staying more than 700 days of his life here.

In 2017, the Delhi government put up a tableau on the theme of government



The Delhi tableau rolling down Rajpath during the R-Day Parade on Saturday to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

schools, which highlighted various steps interventions made in the education sector. The Delhi tableau which

was not there in 2014-2016 had made a comeback in 2018. However, it was again not presented in 2018.

₹50,000-cr highway projects to decongest Delhi: Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Delhi is facing the problem of air and water pollution. There are frequent traffic jams. We will start work on ₹50,000-crore highway projects to decongest it

NITIN GADKARI
Union Minister

been sought from PM Narendra Modi for this. The Minister announced that the work on Delhi-Meerut Expressway will be completed by March, and April onwards, people can reach Meerut from Delhi in 40 minutes instead of the current three-and-a-half hours.

Listing various projects for Delhi, the Minister also said a new ring road – Urban Extension Road – will be constructed at a cost of ₹4,000 crore.

He said that the pollution level has reduced significantly in Delhi after several projects including the Eastern Peripheral Expressway.

Mr. Gadkari was accompanied by Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways Mansukh Mandaviya and Minister of State for External Affairs V. K. Singh.

Road Transport and Highways Minister Gadkari was addressing an event here after laying the foundation stone for a ₹2,820-crore highway corridor project that will link Akshardham to the Eastern Peripheral Expressway junction on Baghpat Road.

Signal-free corridor

The high-speed signal-free 31.3-km corridor is expected to contribute to decongestion and a considerable reduction in pollution levels in Delhi-NCR.

"Delhi is facing the problem of air and water pollution. There are frequent traffic jams. We have taken a decision to start work on ₹50,000-crore highway projects to decongest it," Mr. Gadkari said.

He said the foundation stone for Dwarka Expressway, to be built at a cost of ₹10,000 crore, will be laid next week and time has



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari at the foundation stone-laying ceremony of a ₹2,820-crore highway corridor project in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ PTI

On Republic Day, 23 police officers get medals for exemplary service

Two of them were awarded President's Police Medal for distinguished service; four officers bagged medals for gallantry

For exemplary service

POLICE MEDAL FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE



Joy Tirkey
Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime)
Ravinder Kumar Tyagi
Inspector



Satender Singh
Assistant Sub-Inspector
Jagannivasan R
Head Constable



R.A. Sanjeev
Additional Commissioner of Police

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

On Republic Day (Saturday), 23 Delhi Police officers, including six women, have been conferred Police Medal for their exemplary service.

Special Commissioner of Police Nuzhat Hassan and Additional Commissioner of Police R.A. Sanjeev have been awarded President's Police Medals for distinguished service. Four police personnel were awarded Police Medals for gallantry.

Meritorious service

Seventeen personnel bagged the Police Medals for merito-

rious service. Among those who were awarded are – Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) A.K. Singla

– who had served as DCP (Election Cell) – and Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Joy Tirkey, who has been involved in the investigation of cases like the CBSE paper leak and the mysterious Burari deaths.

Others who were awarded Police Medals for meritorious service are Additional CP Raj Kumar Singh, DCP Geeta Rani Verma, Assistant Commissioner of Police Mohammad Iqbal, Inspectors Atul Kumar Verma, Ravinder

Kumar Tyagi and Jai Shree Gosain, Sub-Inspectors Kaushal Kumari and Mahesh Singh, Assistant Sub-Inspectors Satender Singh and Rajbir Singh, Head Constables Virender Singh, Prem Chand, Jagannivasan R, Pooman Verma and Promila.

Inspector Atul Kumar Verma who was awarded the Police Medal had cracked several important cases including, Dhaula Kuan Rape Case of 2010, murder of TV Journalist Soumya Vishwanath, murder of IT executive Jigisha Ghosh and the recent murder of an RTI activist in Taimur Nagar.

Arms supplier held in Capital

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 19-year-old man was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly supplying firearms in the city, the police said on Saturday.

DCP (South-East) Chinmoy Biswal said the accused has been identified as Kasif alias Nisar who hails from Meerut. "Sagar, a member of Sunder Bhati gang, was arrested on Monday for shooting at a transgender. During interrogation he said he had purchased the weapon used in the crime from Kasif," Mr. Biswal said. Kasif was arrested from Nizamuddin bus terminus.

Kasif has told the police that he used to procure pistols for ₹25,000-₹30,000 from one Sadan alias Pistol and sell it for ₹40,000-₹50,000.

Five of family acquitted in dowry harassment case

Woman's appeal dismissed by court

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has acquitted five persons of a family, including the husband and the mother-in-law of a woman, in a case of alleged dowry harassment, stating that the victim had made no complaints about her harassment at their hands before lodging an FIR against them in 2006.

The victim's father-in-law was also an accused, but he passed away during the trial and hence the trial was abated against him.

The couple got married on April 29, 2003. The woman in her complaint at Nand Nagri police station alleged that her husband and in-laws had subjected her to cruelty demanding ₹3.5 lakh

Minor boy stabbed to death

Victim slapped accused's friend; one sustains injury

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

A 17-year-old boy was stabbed to death and his friend sustained serious injuries when the two were attacked allegedly by a 20-year-old in central Delhi's Patel Nagar on Friday, the police said. The 17-year-old had slapped the accused's friend, they said.

A senior officer privy to the probe said that the accused, identified as Deepak, a Class XII dropout and a resident of Prem Nagar, has been arrested.

The officer said that on Friday afternoon, 17-year-old Shamu (name changed) had an altercation with Deepak's friend over supremacy in the area. "Shamu was apprehended for his alleged involvement in a murder case in

Moti Nagar and was released last month. An argument ensued around 2 p.m. on Friday, after which Shamu slapped one of Deepak's friends four-five times," the officer said.

The friend then went and met Deepak. He told Deepak that Shamu had slapped him for no reason. Deepak decided to take a revenge and went to speak to Shamu. "Deepak went to meet Shamu, who was with his 16-year-old friend Shivam (name changed), around 8 p.m.. Deepak slapped Shamu after and a fight ensued between the two," the officer added.

Based on Shivam's complaint, the police have registered a case under Section 302 (punishment for murder) and 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

Court acquits man in 2016 molestation case

'Witnesses gave contradictory evidence'

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has acquitted a man in a molestation case, stating that prosecution witnesses gave contradictory evidence before the court.

The complainant alleged that the accused had held her hand and tried to outrage her modesty in November 2016 in south-east Delhi's Jaipur.

The accused, in his defense, argued that the victim had falsely implicated him to recover money which he owed to her husband for purchasing groceries from his shop.

The trial court had sentenced the accused to one-year imprisonment in the case.

He had come in an appeal

against the conviction and sentence before the court of Additional Sessions Judge Neera Bharihole.

"Perusal of the order reveals the contradictions between the testimonies of the prosecution witnesses and thus prosecution failed to prove its case. Hence, the present appeal is allowed and the appellant is acquitted," the judge stated in his order.

Court quashes acquittal of sub-postmaster

He was charged with misappropriating investors' money worth ₹2.49 lakh

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A court here has set aside a judgment acquitting a sub-postmaster working at south Delhi's Taliabad post office in a case of alleged misappropriation of ₹2.49 lakh invested in various schemes and making false entries into the investors' passbooks in 2006.

Quashing the acquittal judgment, Special Judge Rajesh Kumar Singh remanded the case to the trial court for a fresh decision, observing that the trial was not conducted in a proper manner.

The judge passed the order on an appeal by the Superintendent of Post Offices, South Division, New Delhi, against a Metropolitan Magistrate court judgment.

A packer at the post office was also an accused in the case, but the trial was abated against him as he died mid-way.

"Prosecution witness Jyoti Verma was one of the depositors whose amount had been embezzled. In her complaint, she made specific allegations against the sub-postmaster. She also denied her signa-

tures on the withdrawal slips. No question regarding her deposition appears to have been put to the accused," the judge said.

"Prosecution witness Shiv Nandan was another victim. His original passbook was on record, but it was not exhibited when he was being examined. The passbook had been returned by the FSL, Shimla, with the other original documents. If he had been examined before receipt of the opinion and the documents, he should have been recalled. The FSL re-

port was not exhibited and has not been considered while deciding the matter," the judge also said.

"In view of above discussion, the appeal is allowed. The impugned judgment dated 12.12.2017 acquitting accused/respondent Dambar Singh is set aside and the matter is remanded to trial court for fresh decision. The complainant is given liberty to move an application for recall of the required witnesses to exhibit/prove the documents already on record," the judge ordered.

Junior engineer dies in accident

STAFF REPORTER
GREATER NOIDA

A 26-year-old junior engineer at National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) plant in Dadri was killed on spot after his car rammed a parked truck near the NTPC campus in Greater Noida's Jarcha on Saturday, the police said.

They said that the accident occurred around 1.30 a.m. while he was returning home in Agra from work.

The deceased has been identified as Rahul Goyal (26). He had been working at the NTPC for the last three years.

"A passer-by informed us about the incident around 1.40 a.m. A police team was sent to the spot. The truck driver has not been found. It took us almost four hours to recover the body from the car. It was then sent for an autopsy," said Prabhat Kumar Dixit, SHO at Jarcha.

Mr. Dixit also said that a case has been registered against the unidentified truck driver based on the complaint of the deceased's family.

Momo vendor set free in murder case

Court declares his five-year incarceration as sentence

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has set free a man declaring his five-year incarceration during the trial as his quantum of sentence in a case in which the accused, a momo vendor, had stabbed a person to death over snide remarks passed by the convict against the victim's former girlfriend.

Additional Sessions Judge O.P. Saini held accused Regan Pradhan guilty under

Section 304 Part II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder).

Both Regan and victim Arun Thapa were drunk at the time of the incident.

The incident took place late on December 29, 2013.

"The convict was in the business of selling momos and belongs to lower strata of society. He was in custody since December 30, 2013. Considering these facts, I am inclined to take a lenient view and sentence him to

imprisonment for the period already undergone by him," the judge said.

The court held that the case showed the accused had no intention to kill the victim as it took place all of a sudden.

"However, when he stabbed the victim in the chest, it can safely be said that he had the knowledge that he was doing an act which was likely to cause death," the court further said.

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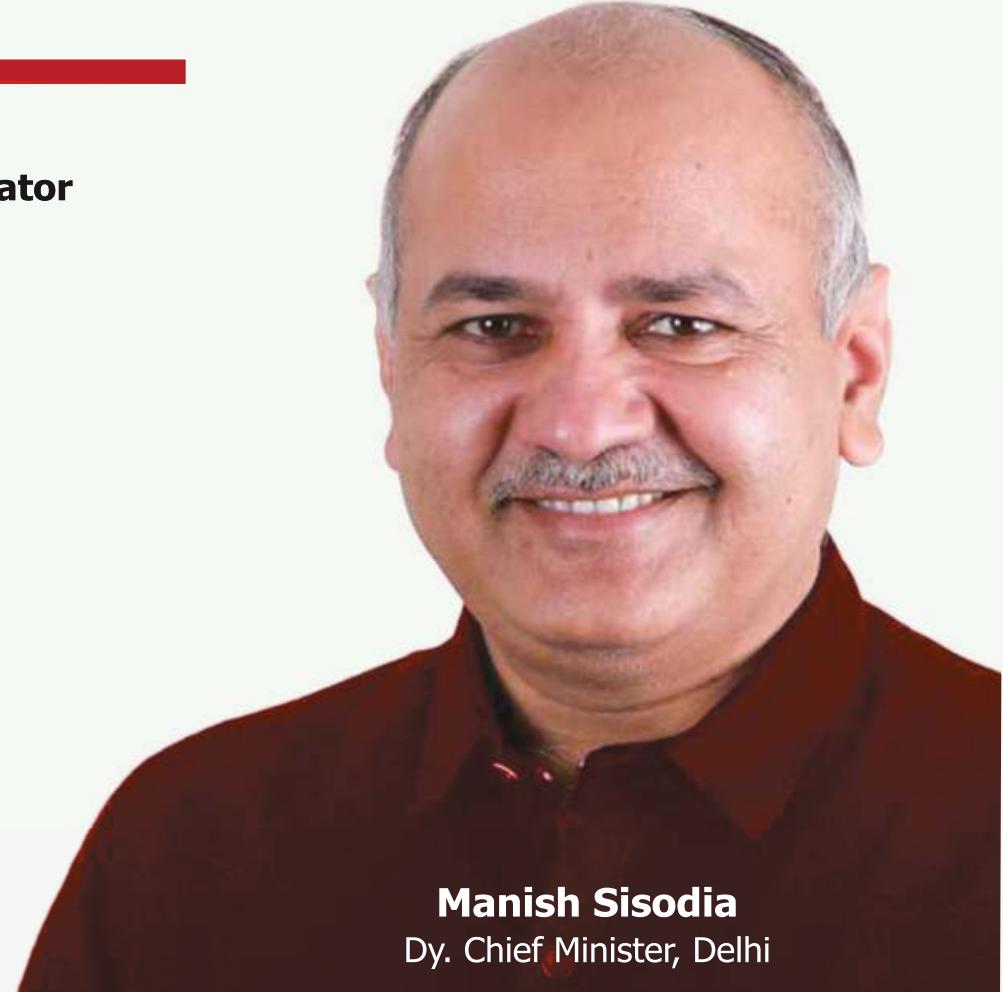
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Need cordial relations with Bangladesh: Tripura Governor

'For development of transport routes that will benefit entire north-eastern region'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AGARTALA

Tripura Governor Kaptan Singh Solanki on Saturday stressed on the need for cordial relations with the neighbouring Bangladesh for development of transport routes that would benefit the State as well as the entire north-eastern region.

Addressing the 70th Republic Day function at the Assam Rifles Ground here

after unfurling the Tri-colour, Mr. Solanki said a new waterway is being set up between Bangladesh and Tripura to make the State a trade hub.

New river port

The government is setting up a new river port at Sonamura subdivision of Sipajhala district so that ships can carry goods to Bangladesh via Gomati and Meghna rivers.

"The State government has taken various steps to make Tripura a model State and a corruption-free State. With all hopes, I believe the future of the State is very bright. We should work together and help each other so the State will develop faster," said the Governor.

He added that the biggest IT centre in the Northeast would be set up in the State.

Mr. Solanki also congratulated the people, NGOs, religious institutions and media for being committed to protecting peace and harmony.

"Our state is geographically small but it is very rich in terms of natural beauty and resources. The incumbent government has already taken a lot of initiative to develop the state as a major tourist spot," said the Governor.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**DEATH****OBITUARY****Shyamala Srinivasan**

73, Attained Lotus Feet of the Lord on 21/01/2019 at Bangalore.

She was an affectionate, caring and an ever smiling person.

Deeply mourned by:
N. Srinivasan (Ex. Dunlop),
Venkat / Shalini, Venu / Shivani /
Siddharth, Vijay / Kripa,
Relatives & FriendsContact:
96321 52287**DEATH****It is with sorrow that we announce
Mr. S V Mony's**

peaceful passing in the early hours of 25th Jan 2019. He was a leading light in the world of insurance globally. He was a mentor, supporter and leader to family and friends across generations. We will miss most his intelligence coupled with keen observations and insights. He was always warm, empathetic, helpful and had a genius for living life fully, engaging with one and all. He was renowned for his wit and was an extremely engaging raconteur. Everyone who met him knows of his tireless hard work and commitment to total honesty and personal integrity. He will live on in our hearts forever.

Shankari Mony and family

Ph: 44-42154306 / 9168689701

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**1st ANNIVERSARY**
Shri R.V. Subrahmanyam
Fondly Remembered by Family Members
Ph: 7032918254**My Beloved Daughter**
RATHI MANOHAR

For every mother her child is special
To me my daughter Rathi is not simply special; but very, very, very special.
She was firm, determined and steadfast in all her dealing throughout her life. She believed, practiced and promoted that every other individual deserves to be loved based on Jesus' second commandment Matthew 22:39

As a dedicated teacher, apart from secular education, she taught the Bible Truth willingly as a Jehovah's witness.

Unconditionally She dedicated to God Jehovah Almighty for she loved Him with her wholeself.

adhered to Jesus first commandment Matthew 22:37,38.

This is what my beloved daughter Rathi as my very special one.

Her loving mother Victoria

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HINDU PILLAI, BE SWE USA, 38/155cm wheatish divorcee seeks any degree Hindu Bride. Widower ok. 09894659497

HINDU 32 B.Tech (IT), SWE, Bangalore, seeks Suitable UG/PG bride. Caste: Ct:9632352444 / 9952539734

CHENNAI 76YRS B.A. B.Ed. Pending 14K Widower own house Middle Class Indpt. seeks Chennai & around Educated Service Minded Problemless Women 50 to 55 to look after with him (2 Wheelers preferable) Ct:9940146302

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TAMIL

MUDALIYAR 31Yrs 172Cm Thiruvonam B.E. MBA Techlead-in-reputed at Chennai Only Lac's own House at Son Good Habits. Sister Married CTS Educated Family, Seeks Matching Bride. SCNB Send BHP to ambika33e@gmail.com

ASHTASAHSARAM BHARADWAJAM Boy 30/ swathi/17M. Engg.operations Manager, Canada. Holding PR seeks suitable bride. Contact:9840589562/04-2 981375 E-mail : kbsmarian1950@gmail.com

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AGAMUDALIAR 165cm Meeham uratathai- 4am patham 28/177BE. MBA SWE 3+ yrs. Seeks Educated Bride from the decent Family. Ct: 9944570952

VANNIYAR, 32/168CM, BE, 60K, Visagan 4th, seeks Suitable Alliance same Caste, Seeks Matching Bride. Contact: 9626040083/ 9944330405

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SUITABLE ALLIANCE for Hindu, 37 years, Divorced, 5.5 Wheatish, Inter caste, Father AD mother BC, very rich, doing legal consultancy and liaisoning. SeeksBride Ct: 94443 89092

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OWN COLLEGE, Arts & Science Mudaliar 30/ B.E/ Own Bus Transports & Own Automobile Dealer well to family Seeks Bride 9176042697

IYER BHARATHWAJ, 42/170, Engg., Own Business, well settled in Chennai, seeks Any Brahmin girl, Cnt: 9840098738 / 9840008294, Email : sivalangam@icloud.com

VADAKALAI KOUSHIKAM Anusham 165cm M.B.A/ INFRA/BC, Dont Sel & Cin Habs Seek Suitable Brahmin/Veg Bride for 1st Marriage. No Brokers. 9184932501-Eve Pfd/ seehacub@ gmail.com

BRAHMAM LEGALLY Divorced age 41, S/W 12 Lacpa seeks life partner non-working Veg, preferably Brahmin without any religion. Divorcee or Widow, same age or 1-2 yrs either way accepted. Ct:9677098592

TAMIL IYER Vadimal 45 Anusham Kausikam 165cm Masters in Financial Management L&T Infotech Manager Chennai 18 Iacs pa seeks unmarried female subject no bar ph: 9840170073/ 044-2652072 Email:bmeenakshi@yahoo.com

Iyer Ashtasaharam, Moolam, 5/9, 173, unmarried, B.E, Senior Engineer in BHEL, Trichy. Seeks any Brahmin Girl, Cnt: 948712601/ 948793120

BOY FAIR, 28, 180, Barani, B.E. Infosys, F-Nair/BC/Mother Iyer (Vadam) seeks girls (B.E, Tech) from similar parentage. Ct: 9444126130. Email: pganga30554@yahoo.com

IYER, BRAHACHARANAM, Srivatsam, Uthiradham (4), 32/175cm, BE/MS Bengaluru/15LPA, Sub Castle No Bar. Ct: 9444464070, vsap14@gmail.com

IYER MOOLAM, 40 CA MNC, CFO 25L p.a. seeks Any Brahmin / Pure Vegetarian girl, Moolam 10/04

M.P. assures 100 days' work to EWS youths

Registration for Yuva Swabhiman Yojana to begin from Feb. 10

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh government on Saturday announced the launch of a scheme to ensure 100 days of employment every year to the youths from the economically weaker sections (EWS) in urban areas.

Chief Minister Kamal Nath made the announcement during his Republic Day address at Chhindwara.

Skill development

"We are going to implement a new scheme – Yuva Swabhiman Yojana, which would provide temporary employment and develop skills. Registration for this scheme would begin from February 10," he said.

Mr. Nath said that 100 days' employment would be provided every year to the EWS youths.

"During their employment, youths would be trained in skills of their choice, so that they can take benefits of the available job opportunities," he added.



M.P. Chief Minister Kamal Nath during the 70th Republic Day celebrations in Chhindwara on Saturday. PTI

The Chief Minister said that the government has also changed its industrial policy to create opportunities for the State's youth.

"We have introduced a clause under the policy for the industries that they would get the State government incentives only if they hire 70% staff from Madhya Pradesh," he said.

Mr. Nath also announced that the government would constitute a committee of

Scheduled Tribe MPs and MLAs.

The work of ST welfare would be conducted on the recommendations of this committee.

The implementation of the scheme for opening 'gaushalas' would begin by February-end, he said.

Mr. Nath added that his government would arrange funds from international agencies for infrastructure development in the State.

Will take action against guilty in loan fraud'

ANUP DUTTA
BHPAL

Reports of fake farm loans and irregularities in allocation of funds to beneficiaries under the Jai Kisan Crop Loan Waiver Scheme, announced on January 15 by newly elected Chief Minister Kamal Nath, have prompted the authorities to initiate legal action against officials allegedly involved in the fraud.

The State government has taken note of fake loan cases with utmost seriousness. Stringent legal action will be taken against culprits who have prepared fake cases to register crop loan amount in their names," Mr. Nath said.

The State Farmer Welfare and Agriculture

Development Department has issued a circular to Divisional Commissioners and District Collectors stating that any irregularities will come under the ambit of "serious crime".

The directive has come in the wake of complaints of fake loans being sanctioned in the name of farmers and depriving genuine beneficiaries of their share of loan waiver under the scheme. In one such case, Shival Kataria of Agar Malwa district claimed the list of beneficiaries showed a loan waiver of ₹13 against his name instead of ₹24,000 he was entitled to. The beneficiary list, issued by the authorities, was displayed at the gram panchayat.

Navjot Kaur Sidhu seeks Cong. ticket from Chandigarh seat

P.K. Bansal, Manish Tewari also among the contenders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu's wife and former MLA Navjot Kaur Sidhu has staked claim to the Congress ticket from Chandigarh in the upcoming Lok Sabha election.

With Ms. Sidhu throwing her hat in the ring, the number of contenders from the Congress ticket from the Union Territory has reached three. Former Railway Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal and ex-Union Minister Manish Tewari are also vying for the ticket from Chandigarh.

Presently, BJP MP Kirron Kher represents the UT.

Ms. Sidhu, former MLA from Amritsar (East) and former Chief Parliamentary Secretary, submitted her application to Chandigarh Territorial Congress Committee president Pradeep Chhabra on Friday.

"Checking brain drain and getting jobs for youths here will be my agenda

Campaigning for Ramgarh poll ends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ALWAR

Campaigning for Assembly election in the Ramgarh constituency of Alwar district ended on Saturday, an official said.

"The campaigning ended at 5 p.m. As many as 20 candidates, including two women, are in the fray for the Assembly poll which will be held on 278 booths," Returning Officer Pankaj Sharma said.

Election to the Ramgarh seat will take place on January 28. It could not be held along with the other 199 constituencies on December 7 due to the death of BSP candidate Laxman Singh. The BSP has fielded former Union Minister Natwar Singh's son Jagat Singh, a former MLA, while Congress candidate Shafiq Zubair and BJP's Sukhwant Singh are among the other candidates.

Minor girl found unconscious, injured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ETAH (U.P.)

A 16-year-old girl was found unconscious with injuries on her face at a farm here on Saturday, police said.

Additional Superintendent of Police Sanjay Kumar said, "On January 23, the girl had a fight with her mother, and went to Firozabad with a youth at the behest of an acquaintance."

According to the girl, the youngsters allegedly tried to sell her, but she managed to flee. She said the two again caught her and made her drink alcohol at gunpoint, after which she fainted. The youngsters then dumped her in the fields, from where she was eventually found.

The police said the girl's face seemed to be burnt with some chemical. Mr. Kumar said, "There has been no complaint by the girl's family, but we have started searching for the culprits."

aged to flee. She said the two again caught her and made her drink alcohol at gunpoint, after which she fainted. The youngsters then dumped her in the fields, from where she was eventually found.

The police said the girl's face seemed to be burnt with some chemical. Mr. Kumar said, "There has been no complaint by the girl's family, but we have started searching for the culprits."

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1. Mode of submission of tender :- Online through www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in
2. Publishing on website :- Date 28.01.2019 Time: 11.00 A.M.
3. Period downloading of Bidding Documents:- Start date: 28.01.2019 9Time: 11.00 A.M. End date: 18.02.2019 Time: 5:00 P.M.
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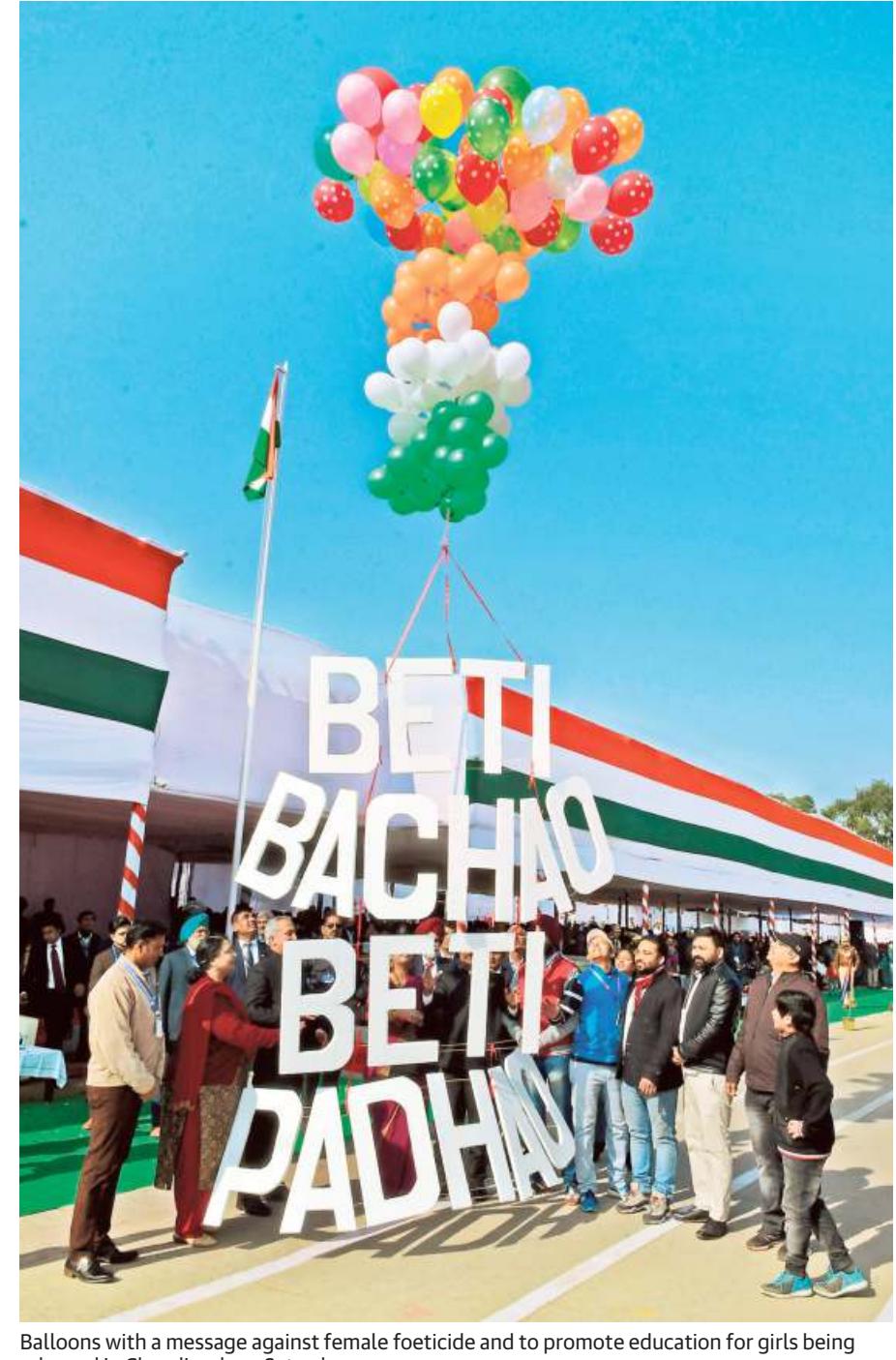
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11. For any information/complaints the department helpline no. M.b.no.9413186208 may be contacted.
12. Further details can be seen on website-www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in.

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NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND

Chief Engineer JIIDCO, Ranchi

Reminder for the Republic



Balloons with a message against female foeticide and to promote education for girls being released in Chandigarh on Saturday. AKHILESH KUMAR

TENDER NOTICE						
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2	FOREST DEPTT ,KURUKSHETRA	WORKS	23.01.2019 30.01.2019	28.48 LACS	www.haryaneforest.gov.in	01744 230743 gillvirender70@gmail.com
3	PUBLIC ENGINEERING, KAITHAL	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PUMPING MACHINERY, 13.60 MLD WATER TREATMENT PLANT WITH SCADA SYSTEM + 1 OTHER WORK	22.01.2019 29.01.2019	112.73 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	ee1kaithal@phedharyana.gov.in 0171-222250
4	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING, REWARI	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SEWERAGE SCHEME REWARI TOWN."	23.01.2019 13.02.2019	4.96 LACS	https://phd.haryanaprocurement.gov.in TENDER NO 112770	ererewari@gmail.com 0905705080
5	PWD B&R, PANCHKULA	DEVELOPMENT OF PLANTATION IN CENTRAL VERGE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 4 LANE OF KARNAL MUNAK ROAD + 1 OTHER WORK	23.01.2019 06.02.2019	23.33 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	0172-2560590
6	PWD B&R, BHADUARHAR	CONSTRUCTION OF 1 NO. 1900 SFT. HOUSING S.D.M., 2 NOS. 950 SFT HOUSING, 13 NOS. 1300 SFT. HOUSING, 6 NOS. 650 SFT. HOUSING & 2 NOS. 550 SFT. HOUSING MULTI STORED APARTMENTS FOR REVENUE OFFICES, SECTOR - 13, BHADUARHAR IN HAJIAR DISTRICT.	22.01.2019 06.02.2019	661.23 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	8901333000 pwdeepdbahadurgarh@hry.nic.in
7	PWD B&R, KARNAL	PROVIDING SPECIAL REPAIR TO EI ANTONADA SEVA KENDRA IN EXISTING BUILDING OF MINI SECTT. (ADMIN BLOCK) IN BASEMENT AT PANPAT, RECALL + 2 OTHERS WORKS	24.01.2019 01.02.2019	16.09 LACS	https://pwdbn.haryanaprocurement.gov.in	0184-2265696 pw-eed-karnal@hry.nic.in
8	PANCHAYATI RAJ , AMBALA	PDG E.I. WORK IN COMMUNITY CENTRE AT VILL. TANDOLI BLOCK PEHOWA DISTT KURUKSHETRA	23.01.2019 31.01.2019	4.37 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	94678-07024 0171-2550510 prexeeng.eamb@hry.nic.in
9	PANCHAYATI RAJ , PANIPAT	CONST. OF ANGANWADI CENTRE AT VILLAGE BHALOUR BLOCK BAPOLI DISTRICT PANIPAT + 4 OTHERS WORKS	24.01.2019 28.01.2019	54 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ee1panipat@phedharyana.gov.in
10	PANCHAYATI RAJ , NARNAUL	CONST. OF COMMUNI CENTER/ NEW P/GHAR AND CONST. OF VYAYAMSHALA	22.01.2019 30.01.2019	120.92 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	981211163 prxeeng.nrf@hry.nic.in
11	PANCHAYATI RAJ , KAITHAL	CONST. OF 2 NOS. ANGANWARI CENTRE AT VILLAGE BAROT + 2 OTHERS WORKS	23.01.2019 07.02.2019	465.74 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	98137-13988
12	PANCHAYATI RAJ , KURUKSHETRA	CONSTRUCTION OF PARK-CUM- VYAYAMSHALA	24.01.2019 12.02.2019	86.70 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	prxeeng.krk@hry.nic.in
13	PANCHAYATI RAJ , NARNAUL	CONST OF AWC	22.01.2019 05.02.2019	456.50 LACS	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in	9812711163/01282-260296/ prxeeng.nrf@hry.nic.in
14	IRRIGATION AND WATER RESOURCES, JAGADHRI	OBTAINING FITTING OF 33 NOS. DIESEL PUMP SETS IN WATER SERVICES DIVISION JAGADHRI FOR DEWATERING IN DISTT. YAMUNANAGAR. + 9 OTHERS WORKS	25.01.2019 04.02.2019	46094	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01732-237837 Xenvs1d@gmail.com
15	WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, PANCHKULA	INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR SETTING UP SEMI AUTOMATED KITCHEN IN DISTRICT GURUGRAM	CLOSING DATE 04.02.2019	3.76 CRORES FOR ONE YEAR ONLY	wcdhry.gov.in	9416654430

IN BRIEF



Modi to visit Madurai today, BJP upbeat

CHENNAI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Madurai in Tamil Nadu on Sunday has shifted the public's focus to the BJP as the election season looms. He will lay the foundation for an AIIMS in the city. BJP State president Tamilisai Soundararajan said the rally would be a "great show of our strength".

6 children hurt as stunt goes wrong on R-Day

PALANPUR
Six children and a woman constable riding a stunt motorcycle were injured when the two-wheeler skidded during the Republic Day parade organised in Gujarat's Palanpur. The bike skidded and hit the children who were part of the audience. PTI

Navy rescues sailors who went missing from sea

MUMBAI
Five officers of the Coast Guard and an Army jawan were rescued by the Navy after their sail boat went missing in gusty winds. The team was practising sailing as part of the ongoing Coast Guard Week celebrations. The Navy dispatched its Sea King 42C helicopter, which located the survivors and winched them up and returned at 11 p.m. on Friday.

45 days after mishap, second body detected in Meghalaya mine

Located at a distance of 280 feet from where the first body was detected

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

An underwater robot engaged by the Navy has detected a second body inside a rat-hole tunnel of the flooded 355-feet coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district, where 15 miners were trapped on December 13.

The second body was detected on Saturday by an underwater remotely operated vehicle (ROV), equipped with an electronic eye and mechanical arms, at a distance of 280 feet from where the first body was detected.

"The body was detected by the Navy around 3 a.m.," district's Deputy Commissioner Frederick M. Dophth said, after the local authorities handed over the body of the first victim – identified as Amir Hussain (35) – to his widow and uncle at district headquarters Khliehriat.

The mine at Khlo Rynkisan, or Ksan, is about 40 km from Khliehriat.

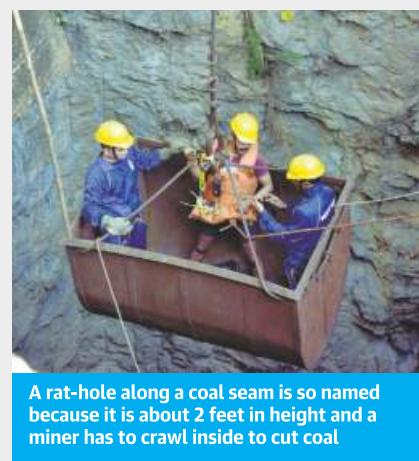
Though the Navy and private agencies with sophisticated water-draining pumps and underwater detection devices started working at Ksan from December 30, the National Disaster Response Force and the State Disaster Response Force have been at

Underground search A brief timeline of the Meghalaya mine accident

Dec. 13: Fifteen miners were trapped as water floods a rat-hole coal mine at Ksan in East Jaintia Hills district

Dec. 14: The NDRF, the SDRF, and the police begin rescue operations. Their efforts to drain out water from the mine using small pumps yield no result

Dec. 30/31: A team of Navy divers and other department personnel begins rescue operation with high-powered water pumps



A rat-hole along a coal seam is so named because it is about 2 feet in height and a miner has to crawl inside to cut coal

Jan. 16/17: Navy's underwater remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) captures the image of a body in the mine

Jan. 22: Efforts to bring out the body goes wrong as it slips out of the grip of an underwater remotely operated vehicle

Jan. 24: The body, later identified as that of Amir Hussain, extricated from the mine

Jan. 26: Second body located by the ROV

it since December 14.

In the 45 days since disaster struck when the miners hit the walls of an adjoining water-filled abandoned mine, the search and rescue personnel detected 26 lateral rat-hole tunnels branching out of the man shaft of the mine "like veins of a leaf".

Two amulets

Hussain's body was detected more than a week ago from "rat-hole 26" lying 210ft inside a rat-hole from a depth of 160ft of the vertical shaft. The body had fallen from the grip of the ROV to the bottom of the shaft, but was it

extracted on Thursday.

The body was identified from two amulets around his neck. He was given the amulets for "divine protection" before he left his village Nijdamugaon three months ago.

An officer of one of the rescue agencies said locating the maze of rat-holes and the bodies became easier after they contacted Saheb Ali, one of the five survivors of the mishap, at his village in western Assam's Chirang district.

"He provided us diagrams of the mine as well as a fair idea of the depth and length

of the rat-holes," the officer said.

Mr. Ali and four others, including the *sirdar* (mine-man manager) and the *khatamaster* (record-keeper) had clambered up the wires of a pump to escape the water that flooded the shaft. Mr. Ali had told *The Hindu* that he had checked with the *khatamaster* and found there were 17 men down the mine that day, not 15 as officially acknowledged.

They were mining illegally since the National Green Tribunal had banned rat-hole coal mining since April 17, 2014.

Though the Navy and private agencies with sophisticated water-draining pumps and underwater detection devices started working at Ksan from December 30, the National Disaster Response Force and the State Disaster Response Force have been at

ing to the pension scheme on maximum salary; and to deny the benefit of opting for the scheme to retired employees if they missed the cut-off date.

Not informed

The amendment and cut-off date were not given sufficient publicity to allow employees to opt for pension on higher salary if they wished, says the petition, adding that, "It is in these circumstances that the majority of the employees remained ignorant of the options available to them for the betterment of their life after retirement."

In an October 2016 order, the Supreme Court had struck down the cut-off date clause in the amendment.

Two months later, the Central Board of Trustees of the EPFO decided to comply with the order and allow members to get the benefit of pension on a higher salary. However, on May 31, 2017, EPFO issued a circular claiming that EPS 95 members from "exempt" companies were excluded from the benefits of the SC's 2016 order. These are companies which are exempt from maintaining a provident fund with EPFO, but not exempt from participation in the pension scheme.

With confusion prevailing, another slew of petitions landed in the courts. Currently, at least 27 cases on various aspects of EPS 95 are pending in the Supreme Court.

Electoral bonds are a damp squib: Chawla

Former CEC says scheme has served as camouflage method

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The electoral bond scheme introduced by the government in 2017-18, which saw the ruling BJP getting the highest funding, had turned out to be a "damp squib and [a] huge disappointment" because of its failure to address the issue of black money paid to political parties, former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla said here on Saturday. It had emerged as a "greater method of camouflage", he said.

Mr. Chawla, who oversaw the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, was in conversation with N. Ram, Chairman, The Hindu Publishing Group, during the release of his book, *Every Vote Counts: The Story of India's Elections*, at the Jaipur Literature Festival.

'Sea of black money'

"There is a sea of black money [for political parties] irrespective of demonetisation and irrespective of which party is in power," Mr. Chawla remarked when asked about the source of money spent during elections. Making cash contributions of less than ₹20,000 in multiples was not accounted for, while the Election Commission was making the recommendation to change the law for 22 years without any result, he said.

Mr. Chawla's book has presented an account of the daunting task of conducting the largest electoral exercise in the world, challenges before the poll panel, maintaining credibility, holding free and fair elections and enforcing the model code of conduct. Mr. Ram observed that Indian elections were considered "one of the wonders of the world", partly because of the sheer numbers of the electorate in the country.

Mr. Chawla said though the Election Commission's structure had been built brick-by-brick over 70 years, the 10th CEC, T.N. Seshan, had given teeth to the body and brought so much independence to it that it did not consult the executive while setting the dates for elections.

These machines have gone through a long judicial journey... Cases were filed in several High Courts. Until the Supreme Court takes a final view on this, we must keep our faith in them. The same machines have given different results in different polls," the former CEC said.



Straight talk: N. Ram, Chairman, The Hindu Publishing Group, in conversation with former CEC Navin Chawla at the Jaipur Literature Festival on Saturday. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

'Nari Shakti is Oxford Hindi word of 2018'

JAIPUR

Oxford dictionaries on Saturday declared *Nari Shakti* as the Hindi word for the year 2018. The announcement was made during a session at the Jaipur Literature Festival at the Diggi Palace here.

According to the Oxford dictionaries, the word has been derived from Sanskrit and is used today to symbolise women "taking charge of their lives". Oxford had named *Aadhaar* as its Hindi word for the year 2017. PTI

'India should encourage Taliban to shun violence'

JAIPUR

India should be clear about its role in Afghanistan and do whatever it can to encourage that the Taliban shun violent extremism and become mainstream, former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon said at the Jaipur Literature Festival. He said the threat of extremism emanating from Afghanistan was exaggerated in India. "I have never known a terrorist from Afghanistan in the last 40 years. This is actually Pakistani terrorism and let us not make any mistake about that." PTI

SC to hear plea against changes to pension scheme

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has posted for hearing on February 28 a petition filed by retirees and members of the Employees Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995, against the government and the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), which administers the scheme.

The petitioners claim that a 2014 amendment and a 2017 circular exclude thousands from receiving their rightful benefits under EPS 95. The petitions represent the members of the National Confederation of Retirees, that is about 42,555 former employees from the private and public sector who are members of EPS 95, and the National Confederation of



Officers Association, which represents 19,118 people working in central public sector organisations. Most of the latter group are members of EPS 95.

'Not a bounty'

"It is settled law that pension is not a bounty payment to which an employee is entitled to as a matter of right as retiral benefit for services rendered by him. It is a social security provided for him to lead a dignified life," the petitioners have argued.

EPFO's August 28, 2014 amendment had raised the wage ceiling amount for the scheme to ₹15,000 and amended the option for contribution on higher salary for existing employees, introducing a cut-off date of Sep-

ember 1, 2014. It also reduced the pensionable salary considerably by averaging 60 months salary instead of 12 months to determine the last drawn salary amount.

According to the petition, the effect of this amendment is to exclude all new employees who joined after September 2014 from joining the pension scheme altogether; to exclude serving employees from benefiting from the option of contribut-

ing to the pension scheme on maximum salary; and to deny the benefit of opting for the scheme to retired employees if they missed the cut-off date.

Not informed

The amendment and cut-off date were not given sufficient publicity to allow employees to opt for pension on higher salary if they wished, says the petition, adding that, "It is in these circumstances that the majority of the employees remained ignorant of the options available to them for the betterment of their life after retirement."

In an October 2016 order, the Supreme Court had struck down the cut-off date clause in the amendment.

Two months later, the Central Board of Trustees of the EPFO decided to comply with the order and allow members to get the benefit of pension on a higher salary. However, on May 31, 2017, EPFO issued a circular claiming that EPS 95 members from "exempt" companies were excluded from the benefits of the SC's 2016 order. These are companies which are exempt from maintaining a provident fund with EPFO, but not exempt from participation in the pension scheme.

With confusion prevailing, another slew of petitions landed in the courts. Currently, at least 27 cases on various aspects of EPS 95 are pending in the Supreme Court.

Fresh snowfall disrupts life in J&K, Uttarakhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BANJHAL/JAMMU

A fresh spell of snow hampered efforts of authorities on Saturday to reopen the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, closed now for the sixth consecutive day.

The prolonged closure of the 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, has left hundreds of passengers stranded.

The highway was closed on Monday following heavy snowfall in the Jawahar Tunnel.

Meanwhile, in Uttarakhand, Nainital received the first snowfall of the season on Friday, while Mussoorie, Chakrata and other places located at a height of 2,000 m and above received fresh spells of snow, leaving the highways to Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri blocked, officials said.

The Hindu Young World Quiz from Jan. 29

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The 19th edition of *The Hindu Young World Quiz* will be conducted across 17 cities from January 29 to March 5.

The competition is open to students in two categories: Juniors – from classes IV to VI – and Seniors – from classes VII to IX. Registration for the event involving two students per team can be done on www.thehindu.com/ywquiz with a payment of ₹200 per team. The fee can also be paid at the offices of the *The Hindu*.

Following a preliminary

written round, six best performing teams (maximum two teams from one school/ branch) will make it to the finals.

Multiple venues

The quiz will be held in Chennai, Coimbatore, Salem, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Bengaluru, Mangaluru, Hubballi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode, New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata.

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CORRIGENDUM

Employment Notification No.CMRL/HR/11/2018

for the post of General Manager (Track & Elevated Construction)

The last date for receipt of application indicated as 17-01-2019 in the above referred employment notification for the post of General Manager (Track & Elevated Construction) has been extended. **The last date for receipt of applications now is 25-02-2019.**

Accordingly, necessary corrections have been made in the advertisement and uploaded on the website <http://chennaiometrorail.org>

DIPR/75/Display/2019

Chief General Manager (HR)

REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi
MHRD, Government of India, MYSURU - 570006
Ph: 0821-2514095, 2511411, Fax: 0821-2515665
Email: riemsyore@rediffmail.com, website: www.riemsyore.ac.in

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

The Regional Institute of Education, Mysuru will conduct Walk-in-interview on the dates as shown against each post on contractual basis for the Academic Session 2018-19.

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Number of post	Consolidated Remuneration per month (Rs.)
1	Junior Project Fellow	02	25,000/-
2	Computer Typists	01	17,000/-
3	Lab Assistant for Physics Lab		

FROM PAGE ONE

Soon, you can see how the Harappans looked

The skeletal remains were CT scanned and the data fed into a programme developed by the Korean scientists to fill them "layer by layer with blood and flesh to show as to how the Harappan people looked like", said Dr. Shinde, explaining the forensic facial reconstruction technique. He added that the tentative results were already available. "We can, therefore, soon answer questions on physical similarities between the modern day population and the Harappan people," he added.

While the technique in itself is not new, with forensic scientists having helped investigators probe crimes by recreating faces using this technology, it will be the first instance when it will be used in India for the ancient population. The technique has also been used to recreate faces for the inhabitants of Egyptian and the Mesopotamian civilizations, but never for the Harappan population.

Dr. Shinde also shared that the analyses of the DNA collected from the skeletal remains was at an advanced stage and the findings would be published soon. He rubbished reports that the findings were being delayed due to political pressure, contending that DNA analysis was a lengthy process. Besides, he added, the samples were very small and the signatures were very weak. "Whatever little we have in terms of DNA data, that needs to be properly authenticated, scientifically analysed and interpreted before it is made public," contended the professor.

Rakhigarhi is one of the

largest sites of the Harappan civilisation and the major objectives behind the excavation there, according to Dr. Shinde, were to trace its beginnings and to study its gradual evolution from 6000 BCE to 2500 BCE, besides protecting it from encroachment by the locals since the village is settled exactly on top of it.

Another aim was to find out who the Harappan people were. There was a lot of debate whether they had come from West or were locals. We wanted DNA for this and started excavation at burial sites," said Dr. Shinde.

However, the findings from excavation have now largely substantiated that the Harappans were locals, said Dr. Shinde, explaining that the excavation hinted at the gradual evolution of the Harappans proving that they were locals. "The structural activity, pottery, jewellery and other crafts seem to have evolved gradually. They did not immediately start with town and villages but started with circular structures to evolve to rectangular ones and then arranged them in a pattern in the third stage before setting up cities in the fourth stage. It substantiates the hypothesis that they were locals and did not come from outside, contrary to the view held by some scholars," said Dr. Shinde.

He said that Harappans, credited with several present day traditions such as the folded hands greeting or *namaste*, chicken tandoor, use of the *bindi* and yoga, also seemed to have started the marriage system.

India show



Best foot forward: (clockwise from top left) The Navy's contingent; a C-17 Globemaster flanked by two Su-30MKI aircraft of the Air Force; the BSF's camel team; and schoolchildren from Delhi and Kolkata at the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

South Africans moved by tableau on Gandhiji

It showed Pietermaritzburg incident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A group of Indian-origin South African nationals who attended the Republic Day parade here on Saturday were moved by the Railways' tableau on the theme of the transformation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into Mahatma.

Yashika Singh from the KwaZulu-Natal Province said the Pietermaritzburg train incident depicted in the tableau "Mohan to Mahatma" touched many emotional chords. A steam-engine train was depicted with the first carriage signifying the 1893 incident at Pietermaritzburg, when Gandhi, a young barrister, was thrown off it in a racist outrage.

Connection with India

"I am a fourth-generation South African of Indian-origin, and I love my country, but we feel a sense of deep connection with India too. And, Gandhi and Mandela provide strong links. So, this tableau really moved us," she said.

Ms. Singh, who lives in Estcourt and works in the



Stark reminder: The Railways' tableau on the racist attack on Gandhiji. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

media sector, said a group of Indian-origin journalists had come from different parts of South Africa to cover President Cyril Ramaphosa's state visit.

Asked if they were travelling with the President, Johannesburg-based Fakir Hassen said, "No, this has been done separately."

Durban-based Salma Patel, who works for a radio channel, echoed Ms. Singh's sentiments.

"South Africa is our home. But we feel a connection with India. And, we are very delighted to participate in the Republic Day of India," she said.

Men, machines and glorious diversity

The parade celebrated four nonagenarian INA veterans, military prowess and cultural heritage

DINAKAR PERI

NEW DELHI

In a recognition of the role of the Indian National Army (INA), led by Subhas Chandra Bose, in India's history, four of its veterans featured in the parade during the 70th Republic Day celebrations on Saturday.

An all-woman contingent of the Assam Rifles made its debut. So did the Army's newly inducted K9 Vajra and M777 howitzers in the military display. An Indian Air Force An-32 aircraft powered by biodiesel flew in the flypast.

INA veterans Parmanand, Lalit Ram, Hira Singh and Bhagmal, all aged above 90, rode in open jeeps. Also for the first time was a marching contingent of the Gurkha Brigade, comprising all seven Gurkha regiments, led by Captain Abhaysheraz Singh Sandhu.

President Ram Nath Kovind, the Supreme Commander of the armed forces, reviewed the display of India's military prowess and cultural diversity on Rajpath. The chief guest was South African President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa.

The K9 Vajra tracked self-propelled artillery gun from



Fire power: The new K9 Vajra-T howitzer rolling down the Rajpath. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

South Korea and the M777 ultra-light howitzer from the U.S. are the Army's new artillery inductions after three decades.

The parade also featured the T-90 Bishima main battle tank, infantry combat vehicle BMP-II, surface mine clearing system, transportable satellite terminal and Akash surface-to-air missile (SAM) system.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) displayed the

medium-range SAM and an Arjun armoured recovery and repair vehicle.

The Navy contingent of 144 sailors was led by Lt. Cdr. Ambika Sudhakar and the Navy tableau was titled "Indian Navy – combat ready force for national security".

The IAF contingent comprising 144 air warriors led by Flight Lieutenant Shrikant Sharma was followed by a tableau titled "Indian Air Force – encouraging indigenisation" showcasing several

scaled-down models of indigenous weapon systems.

Amar Jawan Jyoti

The parade began with Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying homage to the fallen soldiers by laying a wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti (AJJ) at India Gate.

This may be the last Republic Day parade where wreath laying is done at the India Gate as the National War Memorial, which honours the sacrifice of sol-

Mauritius PM gets a rare honour

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI

In an unprecedented gesture, India on Saturday accorded the status of "special guests" to Mauritius Prime Minister P.K. Jugnauth and his wife, Kobita, at the Republic Day celebrations here, official sources said.

The couple witnessed the unfurling of the national flag by Maharashtra Governor C.V. Rao, inspection of the ceremonial parade and other events that were held at the State function in Shivaji Park.

An official said usually India hosted a foreign head of state or government or royalty as chief guest at the Republic Day function in New Delhi.

Special guests

However, this time, the Mauritius PM was in India for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and later on an official trip to Mumbai where he had a series of programmes to attend.

"The Government of India suggested they should be invited as 'special guests' at the function here," an official requesting anonymity said.

IN BRIEF



Gita Mehta declines to accept Padma Shri

Eminent writer Gita Mehta, who is Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's older sister, on Saturday declined to accept the Padma Shri award, saying its timing could be "misconstrued" in an election year. "I am deeply honoured that the Government of India should think me worthy of a Padma Shri but with great regret I must decline as there is a general election looming and the timing of the award might be misconstrued, causing embarrassment both to the Government and myself, which I would much regret," Ms. Mehta said in a statement from New York. PTI

Modi becomes an instant gallery favourite



Crowd hit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to spectators at the Republic Day function. ■ AFP

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

For the third year running, Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke security protocol and greeted crowds at the Rajpath at the end of the Republic Day parade, the last of his term.

After seeing off the chief guest, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, and

President Ram Nath Kovind, Mr. Modi made his way to the galleries.

Enthusiastic crowd

Spectators leaped out of their seats, rushing to the barricades for a chance to get close to Mr. Modi, as he moved towards the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The Prime Minister waved

to enthusiastic crowds, as members of the Special Protection Group and his cavalcade followed. In some sections, chants of "Modi Modi" rose as Mr. Modi, sporting an orange turban, approached the gallery. On the past three Independence Days, the Prime Minister broke security protocol and mixed with children.

Speculators leaped out of their seats, rushing to the barricades for a chance to get close to Mr. Modi, as he moved towards the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The Prime Minister waved

Sweets melt border tensions



Goodwill gesture: BSF Commandant Mukund Kumar Jha offering sweets to Pakistani Commander Usman Khalid. ■ PTI

when both nations celebrated their Independence Days.

Bitter note

However, there was no exchange of sweets at the Chakan Da Bagh crossing point along the LoC at Poonch. Pakistani troops on Saturday violated ceasefire by targeting forward posts and villages along the Line of Control in view of ceasefire violations. It was reinstated in August 2018

voking "strong and effective retaliation" by the Indian Army. A Defence spokesman said, "No exchange of sweets at Chakan Da Bagh in view of the ongoing tense situation," a source said. He said the Indian Army retaliated strongly. Meanwhile, BSF personnel exchanged sweets with their Bangladeshi counterparts in Fulbari, at the Indo-Bangladesh border near Siliguri in West Bengal.

Live up to Constitution ideals: Pranab

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

A day after his name was announced for the Bharat Ratna, former President Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday called upon countrymen to strive to protect and preserve the foundational ethics of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity as enshrined in the Constitution.

Greeting fellow citizens on Republic Day, he urged them to strengthen their resolve to live up to the ideals of the Constitution. "As the Indian Republic turns 70 years old, I wish each & every citizen in India and abroad a very Happy Republic Day. The foundation of this great democratic republic was laid down by our founding fathers," he tweeted.

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NO.MKTGM/Food Basket/2019

DATED : 24.01.2019

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Appointment of Suppliers for supply of 1204.008 MTs of Ragi Powder, 602.004 MTs of Groundnut Seeds and 602.004 KLS of Sunflower Oil in 1 kg packet form secondary packing in carton boxes for distribution under Food Basket scheme in specified districts (8) of Andhra Pradesh for the months of February, March and April 2019 to MLS points of APSCSC through NCDEX E Markets Limited e-reverse auction platform.

Applications are invited from interested suppliers of processing units or partnership firms. Registered companies or Processors/Traders recognized by Govt., or any legal organizations, for registration as suppliers for supply of above said commodities sourcing from all over India are eligible to participate in the e-reverse auction to be conducted by NCDEX E Markets Limited on behalf of APSCSC Ltd.

For registration, interested suppliers may visit www.nemli.in or www.apscsc.gov.in for downloading the application form and detailed terms & conditions. For registration contact at 9842332949/9862059569.

Last date for online registration and completion of formalities for e - reverse auction shall be up to 31.01.2019 at 5.00 pm. Interested bidders need to pay Annual Registration fee. Auction processing fee & EMD through e payment mode only using Net Banking, Debit Card, Credit Card and NEFT/RTGS.

The date of online reverse e-auction will be on 01.02.2019 at 11.00 AM onwards.

Sd/- VC & MANAGING DIRECTOR

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS: TIRUPATI

Chittoor Dist, Andhra Pradesh . SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER-II

Adv.No.48/TA/SE-II/TTD/TPT/2018-19 Dated:23-01-2019

'e' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No.	NIT No.	Name of the work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs & Time for Completion	Schedule Download Start date	Down load end date & last date for bid submission
I SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER - II CIRCLE					
1)	621/SE-II/TTD/2018-19	Modification of 'F' type Quarters 76 Nos. into suites for allotment to the pilgrims at Tirumala.	700.00 6 Months	29-01-2019 5.00 p.m.	13-02-2019 1.00 p.m. & 3.00 p.m.
2)	622/SE-II/TTD/2018-19	Construction of Additional Pilgrims Amenities Complex on rear side of B-Type Quarters at Tirumala.	7900.00 18 Months	29-01-2019 5.00 p.m.	13-02-2019 1.00 p.m. & 3.00 p.m.
3)	623/SE-II/TTD/2018-19	Facility Management Services for House Keeping, Sanitation and Maintenance of GNC, ANC, Seva Sadan, Hot Water rooms, SNC, SNR, SMRC, Jagannatha Bhavan, Santi Sadan, HVC, New Building in Plot No.4 in HVC Area, Sanndhaman and Aswin Hospital Areas at Tirumala (South Package) for the years 2019-22 (Three Years)	Open Tender 3 Years	29-01-2019 5.00 p.m.	13-02-2019 1.00 p.m. & 3.00 p.m.
4)	624/SE-II/TTD/2018-19	Facility Management Services for House Keeping, Sanitation and Maintenance of Vishnu Padam, Vilas, Covinda Nilayam, NGRH-I, II, III & IV, Srivari Kuteeram, Krishna Teja, Shakti Nilayam, JEO Camp Office, Reception Office, ATR, NGC (Sp. Type Cottages), SVRH, HRC, MBC, WVG, VRH, ATC, TBC, Adiseshi RH, Balaji Kuteeram, Vidyasara Srinivas, Lakshmi Nilayam, Babaji, Godavari Sadan, SPRH, Padmavathi Enquiry Offices at Tirumala, HVDC, Modi Bhavan, Rajendra Prasad, Bela Kutiram, Ampro, Gumbde, Annamaya Bhavan, Gayatri Sadan, Krishna Sadan areas at Tirumala (West Package) for the years 2019-22 (Three Years)	Open Tender 3 Years	29-01-2019 5.00 p.m.	13-02-2019 1.00 p.m. & 3.00 p.m.
5)	625/SE-II/TTD/2018-19	Facility Management Services for House Keeping, Sanitation and Maintenance of Astavanya (Lathur Bhavan), Panchayam, Kousthubam and Nandakam Rest Houses areas at Tirumala (EAST Package) for the years 2019-22 (Three Years)	Open Tender 3 Years	29-01-2019 5.00 p.m.	13-02-2019 1.00 p.m. & 3.00 p.m.

NOTE: For details please log on to the website <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in/> or <http://www.approcurement.gov.in>

Roc.No.PR4/13902/Adv.No.482/PRO/2019/25-01-2019

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

24 years after Mandela, Ramaphosa graces fete

South African President attends Republic Day parade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Saturday joined a select group of world leaders, including Nelson Mandela, to have graced India's Republic Day celebrations.

Mr. Ramaphosa, as the chief guest at the 70th Republic Day celebrations, watched the colourful parade at the majestic Rajpath along with President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a host of other

WHO

**Sanjiv Khanna,
surprise promotion**

After spending over 13 years as a Delhi High Court judge, Justice Sanjiv Khanna has joined a select group of distinguished people to practise at the Supreme Court. Justice Khanna, son of the late Justice D.R. Khanna, termed his elevation as "a big surprise" in his farewell speech at the High Court. He believes that judges should be "keepers of law" and should not create laws.

Why the controversy?

A controversy erupted when the Supreme Court Collegium, comprising its top five judges, decided to drop its December 12, 2018 proposal to recommend Delhi High Court Chief Justice Rajaendra Menon and Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice Pradeep Nandراج, and instead elevate Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Dinesh Maheshwari and Justice Khanna as judges of the court. The Bar Council of India termed the decision "unjust and improper," since Justice Maheshwari and Justice Khanna stood at serial number 21 and 33 respectively.

in the combined seniority of High Court judges. "The decision of 10th January, 2019, will lead to humiliation and demoralization of such judges and also of several other deserving senior judges and Chief Justices of High Courts," the BCI said, asking the Collegium to recall its decision. The retired Delhi High Court judge, Kailash Gambhir, too wrote to President Ram Nath Kovind, saying the Collegium's decision cast aspersions on the "intellect, merit and integrity" of the 32 senior judges, including many Chief Justices of the High Courts. Justice Khanna, 58, was sworn in on January 18. He is on course to becoming the Chief Justice of India after the retirement of Justice D.Y. Chandrachud in November 2024. If this happens, he will helm the post till he reaches 65, the retirement age of Supreme Court judges.

His landmark cases?

During his tenure at the Delhi High Court, Justice Khanna

authored or co-authored over 3,100 verdicts.

Though known for his acumen in taxation law, Justice Khanna passed several decisions which were of public interest. He was heading a Bench that was monitoring the installation of CCTV cameras



ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

in the National Capital Region. The Bench directed the city police to abide by the timeline set by it for installing the cameras in police stations. The Bench has also been pushing for filling vacant posts in the forensic science laboratories (FSLs) to ensure quick clearance of backlog of samples for testing, especially in criminal cases. Last March, Justice Khanna headed a Bench that quashed a notification issued by the President, disqualifying 20 Aam Aadmi Party MLAs for holding office of profit as Parliamentary Secretaries. The Bench held that the opinion tendered by the Election Commission of India to the President to disqualify the legislators was "vitiated and bad in law" as it had failed to hear out the MLAs. The verdict led to the reinstatement of all 20 MLAs. Justice Khanna is among the judges who have declared assets on their own while he was a judge of the High Court. Currently, 29 of the 33 Delhi High Court judges have declared their assets on their

own on the official website.

What are his credentials?

Justice Khanna was born on May 14, 1960, and completed his schooling in Delhi. After graduation, he studied law at Delhi University and was enrolled as an advocate with the Bar Council of Delhi in 1983. As an advocate, he handled several cases of medical negligence under the Consumer Protection Act and company law cases. On June 24, 2005, he was elevated as an Additional Judge of the Delhi High Court and became a permanent judge on February 20, 2006. In his farewell speech, Justice Khanna recalled that his appointment as an Additional Judge was delayed several times, but said he had "no regrets." He also underscored three issues plaguing the judiciary: delays in the disposal of cases; high cost of litigation; and the "impression" among the public that to win cases falsehood is needed.

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

WHAT

**The lowdown
on zearalenone
in cereals**

WHAT IS IT? Zearalenone is a fungal toxin infesting cereals such as wheat, maize and barley. It attacks crops while they are growing, but can also develop when cereals are stored without being dried fully. While numerous studies document this toxin in cereals across the world, no data existed for India until now. This month, a *Journal of Food Science* study detected zearalenone in wheat, rice, corn and oats from markets in Uttar Pradesh. The study, by researchers from Lucknow's Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (IITR), found the substance in 70 of the 117 samples tested. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India does not impose maximum limits for zearalenone, though the European Union (EU) does. Twenty-four of the U.P. samples exceeded the EU regulatory limits of 100-200 mcg/kg of cereals. Based on this, the authors say India should set limits on zearalenone in cereals. "It is definitely a worry," Mukul Das, a food tox-

icologist at the IITR and an author of the study, told *The Hindu*.

HOW DID IT COME ABOUT? Fungal toxins are commonly found in food, and can be a public health concern, says Vasanthi Siriguri, a researcher at Hyderabad's National Institute of Nutrition, who was not involved in the study. India regulates the levels of some of these, including aflatoxin, deoxynivalenol, ergot and patulin. The first three infest cereals, while patulin is found in apples. Each of these toxins has been associated with disease outbreaks. For example, in 1974, a hepatitis outbreak in Rajasthan and Gujarat, which made 398 people sick and killed 106, was linked to aflatoxin in wheat. Meanwhile, chronic aflatoxin consumption has been shown to cause liver cancer. Given this, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies aflatoxin as a Group 1 carcinogen, meaning there is enough

evidence for its carcinogenicity. In zearalenone's case, there is no strong evidence of toxicity in humans so far, though several research groups are investigating, says Dr. Siriguri. As a result, the IARC classified it as a Group 3 carcinogen, which means evidence is not sufficient for an evaluation yet.

WHY DOES IT MATTER? Zearalenone behaves like oestrogen, the female sex hormone, and could cause endocrine disturbances in humans. Its nasty effects in animals, such as pigs, are documented. When fed with mouldy corn, pigs develop inflamed vaginas, infertility and other symptoms. This is why countries like Brazil regulate zearalenone levels in animal feed. In humans, the data are fuzzier. It is probably dangerous to humans too, but to be certain, we need to know how much humans consume, how it is metabolised, and how exposure is correlated with disease. Some experiments

suggest its ill-effects: in one, when oestrogen-sensitive breast cancer cells were exposed to the chemical in a lab, they proliferated. In 2014, a Tunisian case-control study found a correlation between a zearalenone metabolite in urine and breast-cancer risk in women. But other studies did not find similar links. In the *Journal of Food Science* study, Dr. Das and colleagues also looked at National Sample Survey Office data on Indian diets to calculate how much zea-



ralenone people could be consuming. They found that average daily consumption through wheat and rice was 0.27 and 0.3 mcg/kg of body weight – higher than the EU limit of 0.25 mcg/kg. In highly contaminated samples, exposure could be as high as 16.9 times the EU limit.

WHAT NEXT? Dr. Siriguri says more data are needed from cereals in other States, and from other storage conditions, before India decides to set limits. Since zearalenone favours cool climates, such contamination could be limited to a few States. Also, strong epidemiological data linking human zearalenone levels with diseases such as breast cancer are important. The paper is an excellent starting point, since nothing was known about the chemical in India so far. It is time to build upon it.

PRIYANKA PULLA

WHY

**Britain is at
risk of crashing
out of EU****What happened?**

■ At 11 p.m., in 61 days, Britain is set to leave the European Union and could do so without a deal, effectively rendering all laws governing its interaction with the union (on trade, travel, pretty much anything) no longer applicable. Disruption to medical and food supplies and travel aside, this would – even by the government's own analysis – be economically disastrous for Britain, with a growth loss of up to 10.7% over a 15-year period. However, with no solution in

sight and parliamentarians only in agreement on what they don't want rather than what they should do, leaving with no deal is now the default scenario and a very real possibility.

Is May responsible?

■ Innumerable factors have contributed to this precarious situation. There has been Theresa May's intransigence and unwillingness to explore any idea beyond those she set out last year, involving a common rule book and free trade zone with the EU, through an end to the free movement of people that is a central tenet of the EU. While "hard" Brexiters have contributed to her resolve – she does not want to be the Conservative Prime Minister responsible for a massive split in her party – much of the stubbornness comes from within her, and in particular from her obsession with curbing immigration. She spent six years as Home Secretary – before taking over as Prime Minister in 2016 – and was the architect of the

"hostile environment" that has come under much scrutiny in the past year over the wrongful treatment of Commonwealth migrants who arrived in Britain up to the early 1970s. She has been adamant Britain must cut net migration to the tens of thousands from the 100s of thousands and has therefore made ending free movement with the EU a red line for her, rendering solutions such as custom union membership demanded by other politicians a non-starter.

What about repercussions?

■ There's also a sizeable contingent of the Conservative parliamentary party that is not convinced crashing out is such a big deal. The likes of Boris Johnson regularly point to the supposed "evidence" like the preparedness of the Mayor of Calais (the French port) to insist scare tactics are being deployed, and polling shows there's enough support for their perspective within the wider party membership. In a recent poll, 57% of the Conservative Party

members said they would choose a no-deal exit if offered a choice between that, Ms. May's original withdrawal deal and remaining in the EU. Many of them don't want Ms. May to take no-deal off the table, with one prominent commentator suggesting that to do would be like walking into a car showroom and insisting one would not walk out without buying a car.

What happened in Parliament?

■ Others bear their share of responsibility too, not least Parliament which, when it allowed her to trigger Article 50 to leave the EU, didn't put any constraint on the nature of the deal she could negotiate it. That's left Ms. May and her team free to play a game of chicken: essentially threatening it either her way or a no-deal at all. Labour and other Opposition parties are persistently seeking a commitment from her to take no-deal off the table, but the move comes rather too late to be effective.

That's partly because its looking in-

creasingly questionable whether the EU would be willing to offer Britain an extension (effectively delaying Brexit) that might be necessary to avert a no-deal. The EU's chief negotiator on Brexit, Michel Barnier, this week warned that simply opposing no-deal in the House of Commons would not stop it from happening unless a majority agreed on an alternative agreement. The next significant moment comes on Tuesday when MPs will vote on Ms. May's 'Plan B' which she outlined after her withdrawal deal failed to get through Parliament earlier this month. Amendments have been tabled but hopes that one calling for a second referendum could succeed have evaporated. Labour continues to refuse to back a second referendum, insisting a general election is the way ahead. So even though a majority of parliamentarians may agree that a no-deal Brexit is a terrible idea, it may not be enough to stop it from happening.

VIDYA RAM

WHEN

**21,
January 2019**

Tip of the iceberg: Climate change is causing Greenland's massive ice sheets to melt much faster than previously thought. According to research published on Monday in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the ice loss in 2012 – more than 400 billion tonnes – reached nearly four times the rate in 2003. Michael Bevis, the study's lead author and a professor of geodynamics at Ohio State University, said, "The only thing we can do is adapt and mitigate further global warming – it's too late for there to be no effect," adding "we are watching the ice sheet hit a tipping point". A CNN report said the findings could have dire implications for the planet's low-lying islands and coastal cities. The world is "losing the race" against climate change, United Nations chief Antonio Guterres warned in a speech at Davos, demanding bolder action from governments to arrest catastrophic warming. Picture shows an iceberg floating in a fjord near the town of Tasiilaq, Greenland. ■ REUTERS



job, the incident has left people asking – why are workers still being forced to clean drains and sewers manually?

What does the law say?

The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, notified on September 18, 2013, terms manual scavenging a "dehumanising practice" and aims to end the practice and the use of insanitary latrines. The Act states that "no person, local authority or agency" can construct an insanitary latrine and directly or indirectly employ a manual scavenger. It prohibits any person, local authority or agency from employing anyone for "hazardous cleaning of a sewer or septic tank," the maximum punishment for which has been set at a two-year jail term and ₹2 lakh in fine.

Besides the Act, the Delhi government came up with the Delhi Water Board Septage Management Regulations, 2018, to regulate the handling of sewage and make it safer for workers. The Act states that "no person, local authority or agency" can construct an insanitary latrine and directly or indirectly employ a manual scavenger. It prohibits any person, local authority or agency from employing anyone for "hazardous cleaning of a sewer or septic tank," the maximum punishment for which has been set at a two-year jail term and ₹2 lakh in fine.

Have the laws been implemented? Under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, the State governments are supposed to have a State-level monitoring committee as well as district-level vigilance committees. Though it is supposed to meet once in six months, the Delhi State Monitoring Committee, headed by the Chief Minister, held its first meeting ever on September 24, 2018.

After the meeting, Social Welfare Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam, who is also a member of the committee, admitted in a statement that manual scavenging had not stopped, as evident from the death of five workers cleaning a tank last September at Moti Nagar. He added that the implementation of the Act had not been effective. While the government issued orders to district magistrates and other officers to ramp up the implementation of the law, including the identification and rehabilitation of manual scavengers, people are still be-

ing made to enter drains and septic tanks to clean.

While issuing notice to the Delhi government in the Wazirabad case, the National Human Rights Commission on January 21 pulled up the authorities. "Despite legal provisions as well as the Supreme Court guidelines safeguarding the interest of sewerage cleaners, precious lives have been lost owing to the apparent lack of supervision and lackadaisical attitude of the authorities," the NHRC observed.

What is the government doing?

According to Delhi government officials, private contractors or residents' welfare associations continue to hire labourers to clean drains and septic tanks as they find it cheaper and more convenient than renting machines, which are not readily available. In the Wazirabad case, the police said the contractors had hired Krishan and other workers for ₹400 a day each.

Speaking to *The Hindu* this week, Mr.

Gautam said mechanical cleaning of drains would help end the use of manual scavengers to a great extent. The Delhi Jal Board was in the process of procuring 200 sewer cleaning machines by March, he said.

But, he added, he was still worried about septic tanks and drains in Delhi's slums and unauthorised colonies, where the narrow lanes would prevent the vehicles from entering.

He pointed out that the government was looking for technological solutions to the problem, besides planning to train manual scavengers to get other jobs.

A team of experts from the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, the Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology and the Delhi Technological University, as well as officers of the three municipal corporations of Delhi and the Delhi Jal Board, were expected to meet this month to discuss the solutions, he said.

DAMINI NATH

WHERE

**Sanitation
deaths continue
in Delhi**

A 37-year-old sanitation worker, hired by a private contractor, Krishan, lost his life on January 20 after he entered a drain in North Delhi's Wazirabad area, attempting to unclog it with his bare hands, and without any safety gear. While the Delhi police registered a case against the contractor and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal promised the deceased worker's family ₹10 lakh and a

The fickleness of political headgear and the persistence of memory

Today, digitally tweaked propaganda can also be un-tweaked pretty quickly



PASSING BITE

RUCHIR JOSHI
is a writer, filmmaker and columnist

In his great novel, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, Milan Kundera lays out the theme quite early: "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting". This line comes right after the brilliant first image with which the book opens. After the Soviet takeover of Czechoslovakia following the Second World War, a puppet Communist government is installed in Prague. In February 1948, the leader of this government, Klement Gottwald, addresses a crowd from the balcony of a palace. It is snowing and Gottwald is bareheaded. Among the comrade-sidekicks standing next to Gottwald is a man called Clementis who takes off his fur cap and solicitously sets it on his leader's head. The Communist Party propaganda department puts out thousands of copies of a photograph showing Gottwald in a fur cap addressing the crowd,

his comrades standing around him. Four years later, Clementis falls out of favour; he is arrested on trumped-up charges of treason and hanged. The propaganda department immediately airbrushes Clementis out of the official history and out of all the photographs as well. In the photograph from 1948, there is a gap next to Gottwald where you can see the palace wall. As Kundera pithily puts it: "All that remains of Clementis is the cap on Gottwald's head".

Erasures and retrievals

Every time I see a line-up of politicians standing on a stage at a political rally, hands linked, arms aloft, or standing solemnly in strict pecking order watching a Republic Day march-past, I wonder which ones and how many of them will be airbrushed out of history. I also wonder who will wield the airbrush – whether it will be one of the other characters standing on the stage or some Machiavellian operator standing out of sight in the wings. When, I often wonder, will one of the *chamchas* reach out, take the plumed *pagri* off the main saheb's head and install it on his own scalp? And who after that? Sometimes in my mind the *pagris* play a game of musical heads, or perhaps it's politi-



SANDEEP SAXENA

cians' heads playing a game of musical *pagris*, but the questions always remain: how long will this bag of hubris remain the chief? When and how will she or he be forced by history to depart? The next question, obviously, is how will this person be remembered, forgotten and remembered again?

The flip side of the struggle of memory against power and its selective erasures is the fact that history is written, far more often than not, by the victors; the party that wins gets to capture and destroy not only the physical set-ups of the vanquished but also their stories

and memories. Physical structures, once they are gone are gone, whether it is the statues at Bamiyan, the pillars of Palmyra or the Hall of Nations at the Pragati Maidan in Delhi. However, in terms of narratives and memory, the interesting thing is that the instruments and processes of erasure and retrieval have changed radically and unimaginably since Kundera wrote that brilliant book in 1979.

For instance, at the time Kundera was writing his novel, the actual tool of the airbrush had been around for nearly a century, invented in America in the lat-

ter part of the 19th century and refined and used over the decades for the skilful doctoring of all sorts of images from aerial reconnaissance photos to pictures of Playboy models. Photographs intercepted at source were one thing, moving pictures yet another, but if it was text and photos in news reports that you wanted to bury or alter, then you had a far more difficult, almost impossible task – there was no way you could track down every copy of a paper or a journal and destroy or alter it. All you could do was narrow down the area in which the pesky, undesirable article with its inconvenient photos could be seen or distributed. Equally, if you were on the other side, wanting to disseminate a banned image or text, then you were confined to the means of physical copying and distribution. This, for instance, led to the great body of samizdat – underground magazines and books that began to seep out of Communist-controlled central and eastern Europe in the 1960s. Through these the world came to know about the realities behind the Iron Curtain regimes and the dissent that was active against those rulers.

The suction of history's flypast

Today, of course, it is far easier to re-

move or distort something in a digital photo at the click of a mouse or e-pen. Today it doesn't take that much skill to splice together extraneous sounds on to a bit of news footage and send an innocent university student into a sedition court case. A false rumour that would have taken months to spread in 1979, thus defeating the purpose of the spreading, can now be blasted out in seconds via social media across vast swathes of demography.

At the same time, what is tweaked digitally can also be un-tweaked pretty quickly – a working man squatting on the floor in his shirt and shorts can have the visage of a politician removed from his shoulders and his own face restored to him. Space-age buses and trains can be rescued from pictures of non-existent smart cities in India and returned to Taiwan and South Korea from where they were stolen.

And in the converse of what happened to Clementis, a man like Jawaharlal Nehru can emerge through several layers of the cement and paint of lies and grin at the figures occupying the dais, his sharp eyes noting the floor shifting under their feet and their headgear being sucked off by the jets of history flying past.

The municipal model is broken

We need to urgently rethink the way our cities are run



ON THE OTHER HAND

R. SRIVIVASAN
is Editor, The Hindu BusinessLine



structure and road dust.

Cut to Mumbai. The city's bus services, arguably India's finest, are just limping back to normalcy after a crippling strike by workers of the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) over low wages and increasingly long duty hours. The estimated loss due to the strike was more than ₹20 crore.

A state of crisis

One could go on, but the short point is this: India's exploding megacities are in a state of crisis. Officially, about a third of India's population is urban but most contemporary estimates put the figure at closer to half. But the combined expenditure of all urban local bodies in India, according to NITI Aayog, is just 1% of the GDP. Worse, these city administrations generate only 44% of their finances from their own revenue sources like property taxes and user charges. The bulk of municipal expenditure (over 60%) goes towards paying wages and salaries.

Lord Ripon first specified the roles, responsibilities, and financial powers of local bodies in 1882, but it was the 74th Constitution Amendment of 1992 that specifically created a three-tier system of self-government in India, assigning 18 critical functions, including health care and education, to civic bodies.

All of them have failed to deliver. A crippling shortage of money is only part of the reason. Even where money is available, they have been unable to absorb it and execute plans. For in-

stance, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) funds infrastructure projects, but with one year left for the programme to meet its target, it has completed just 20% of the projects utilising only 3% of the allocated funds. Since AMRUT was launched in 2015, Bihar and Assam have not managed to finish even a single project!

A wretched experience

India's system of civic administration, with a permanent bureaucracy and a changing set of political representatives, is broken. Politically, civic representation is merely seen as a stepping stone to the real stuff. And the municipal administration is subordinate to the State and Central public services. The system is riddled with corruption, the functioning is opaque, and there is virtually no public scrutiny or accountability.

For the urban poor, who depend most on civic services, the experience is wretched. Municipal schools produce functional illiterates, the health services barely function, and "planned development" is hostage to the real estate lobby. As for quality of life, all you need to do is to take a deep breath in any of the cities to find out how poor it is. After all, India holds the world record for housing the maximum number of the most polluted cities in the world!

The municipal model is broken. India needs to radically rethink the model if its cities are not to become dystopian wastelands. Maybe doing away with guaranteed employment in municipal service, and having various civic service chiefs run directly for office, as is the case in the U.S., might be a start. It also needs to figure out a sustainable financial model for city governments – levying market-related charges for things like water, road usage and parking is a start. Above all, it needs a more aware citizenry, with a greater say in deciding how exactly its tax monies should be spent.

Exploding megacities

Cut to Chennai, the city where I live and work. According to Metrowater of officials, the four lakes that supply water to the city have a storage level that is just 10% of their capacity. The water will run out in a month, according to a report in this paper. With nearly 10 long, hot months to go before the next rainy season, Chennai is set to handily beat its 2017 record, when it suffered its worst drought in 140 years.

Cut to Bengaluru, India's IT capital. Almost two years ago, the city woke up to news that Bellandur lake, the largest in the city, was in flames yet again, its potent mix of domestic and industrial waste fuelling the fire. In 2015, the lake had frothed up in white foam, a few days before catching fire. The foam was photographed as it spilled onto the streets. It was reportedly so corrosive that it cracked windshields. That's not all. According to a study by urbanemissions.info and researchers from the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy, air pollution in the city is set to go up by 74% by 2030, led primarily by vehicle exhaust, con-

Separated by a common language

Across India, our public discourse waddles between two extremes, as seen in Sabarimala



SERENDIPITIES

KEERTHIK SASIDHARAN
is a writer and lives in New York City

Over the past few months, Kerala has seen more than its share of public protests: from outright violence to peaceful expressions of solidarity. People have mobilised to reawaken Hindu consciousness on the one end and to protect women's rights on the other. From afar, seeing these protests, one might conclude that there exists an implacable and nearly unresolvable set of differences between the people on both sides. Yet watching these participants up close, what is striking is how remarkably identical they are in their everyday lives. Whether in their private commitments and public cynicisms, or their aesthetics and admirations, the two sides of this prolonged Sabarimala struggle are nearly indistinguishable from one another to an outsider. In a

way, it is the "narcissism of small differences", as Freud said, that animates the furies of their discontents.

Different vocabularies

There is, however, one critical dimension along which the two sides differ: language. Despite both sides speaking Malayalam, the vocabularies they deploy to describe the situation, and thus implicitly the moral cosmologies in which they situate themselves, are starkly different. Their words bring to full view a slow social rift that, arguably, has been decades in the making. The religiously inspired protesters make appeals to *acharam* (ritual), *aithiyam* (legend), *pavitratha* (sanctity), *samrakshnam* (preservation), and *parampara* (tradition) – words which describe a world ordered by concepts whose legitimacy comes from them being transmitted from one generation to another. It is the time-tested of specific practices that imbues their vocabulary with a righteousness.

In contrast, the public expressions of non-religious inspired protests speak in terms of *niyamam* (law), *adikaram* (rights), *purushaadihpathyam* (patriarchy), *viplavam* (revolution), and *navodhamam* (reformation) – vocabularies



H. VIBHU

that have no use for an immemorial past or an inter-generational transmission chain, but rather are brim with the energies of the present and which promise to improve the future, through an application of reason. Where one side believes in the evocative prowess of stories from the past to sustain them through life, the other side relies on theories of social ordering to ostensibly improve their future. Both sides derive their ethical vocabularies from different models of how we ought to think about

the present: as a repository of the past or as a springboard for the future. They speak the same language, see the same world around them, but describe it differently.

Context matters

The schisms imposed by the usage of different sets of vocabularies within a same linguistic society is, however, not new in human or Indian history. George Bernard Shaw famously described America and Britain as two nations sep-

arated by a common language – on account of frequent misunderstandings and power politics playing between the two. Indian philosophers have known for long that even speaking the same vocabulary within the same language doesn't preclude one from coming face to face with contradictions when we think about how language, meaning and context interact. Prasastapada, a philosophical commentator from the 6th century, invented a new semantic category" called "paribhashik" to avoid contradictions between extant theories of meanings versus Nyaya philosophies.

Even the same word used in a different socio-historical context – particularly, when translated from one culture to another – reveals how wobbly any language-contingent ethical framework can be. In the great moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre's classic, *A Short History of Ethics*, he talks about a word like "agathos" which, in a Homeric world, referred to qualities one must possess to perform one's role in a hierarchical society. So, a king who rules judiciously – even if through violence – is said to be blessed by "agathos". This word is often translated as 'good' into English, even if what we mean by good

in English is a simple descriptor, while in the Greek context, the original blends "fact and appraisals". A nuanced and context-sensitive word in Greek is rendered into a context independent, adjectival gloss in English.

Between two extremes

The consequence of such inorganic cross pollination is that fullness of meanings under which the original was deployed is at best an etiolated one in the receiving language.

This, of course, is not Kerala's problem alone but a post-colonial one. Across India, our public discourse waddles between two extremes. We have neither the organised will to invest renewed introspective energies to understand the vocabularies we grant so much power over our mental lives solely on account of them being patrimonial legacies, nor do we have the willingness to recognise the borrowed nature of our progressive vocabularies that speak little to the self-descriptions of our fellow citizens. Thus, we let little understood words run our lives. We have entrusted these sounds with continent sized responsibilities to shoulder the urgencies we intuit but struggle to describe.

CAPSULE



Lifegiving collision

New research published in *Science Advances* shows that Earth must have received its supply of carbon, nitrogen and other essential volatile elements from a collision with a large planet more than 4.4 million years ago. This collision is believed to have created the Moon itself.



Reversal of memory loss

New Alzheimer's Disease research aims to reverse the memory loss that manifests as the disease progresses. The research published in *Brain* was conducted on mice with familial genetic mutations for the disease. It identified epigenetic reasons for memory loss and could temporarily reverse memory loss.



Escape from black holes
Though the black hole's gravity makes it impossible to escape from it once an object has crossed its event horizon, there are plasma jets that have been observed to leave at enormous velocity. A recent study published in *Physical Review Letters* analyses how this happens. This research can be used to image black holes.



Sharp Neanderthals
A new study in *Scientific Reports* reveals that Neanderthals possessed weapons that could kill from a distance. The study examines 300,000-year-old Schoningen spears, showing they could hit targets at even 20 metres. Previously it was believed the Neanderthals could hunt from short range only.



Warming Arctic
The Canadian Arctic might be experiencing its warmest summer in the last 115,000 years. Retreating glaciers are revealing landscapes that have been ice-covered for about 40,000 years, a study finds. Published in *Nature Communications*, the study used radiocarbon dating to estimate the age of plants in the region.

ODD & END

Moons of moons

Can small sub-moons orbit large moons that orbit planets? This seemingly innocuous question has been considered by astronomers to get nontrivial answers. Their research published in *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* reveals details about the physical parameters of moons that can support smaller sub-moons that stably orbit them. Their study shows that only those large moons having a wide orbit around a planet can host sub-moons. If the moon was smaller or had an orbit that was close to the planet, tidal forces that act on the sub-moon from both the moon and the planet would destabilise its orbit. They also found four moons within our solar system that were capable of hosting sub-moons.

Diabetic drug improves the efficacy of two TB drugs

The drugs disrupt biofilm formation by bacteria, thereby rendering them vulnerable

R. PRASAD

A protein essential for the formation of biofilm by TB-causing bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) has been finally identified by a multi-institutional team from Delhi's Jamia Hamdard, National Institute of Pathology and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. Biofilm formed by TB bacteria acts as a physical barrier to drugs thereby protecting the microorganisms. The researchers also found two FDA-approved drugs used for treating diabetes and suppressing the immune responses were able to disrupt biofilm formation by the bacteria. When the existing drugs were used along with first-line anti-TB drugs, the dosage required to kill the bacteria was drastically reduced by over 50%. To validate the promising results obtained in the lab, the team has already initiated trials on mice.

Protein folding

The protein (peptidyl-prolyl isomerase-B or PpiB) belongs to a class of cyclophilins that facilitates protein folding. In other bacteria, the cyclophilin class of proteins is known to be involved in protein folding and biofilm formation. But its role in biofilm formation by TB bacteria was not known so far. Since bio-safety level 3 lab is required to work with TB bacteria, the researchers initially used the non-pathogenic *M. smegmatis* to understand the role of TB bacteria protein PpiB in biofilm formation. The researchers inserted the PpiB gene of TB bacteria into *M. smegmatis* and tested its ability to form biofilm.

"*M. smegmatis* bacteria generally produce less of biofilm in response to stress. But when we added the PpiB gene into *M. smegmatis*, the biofilm production was 1.5-fold higher," says Ashutosh Kumar from JH-Institute of Molecular Medicine, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi and first author of a paper published in the journal *npj*



Isoniazid drug at 50% of the standard dosage was sufficient to kill TB bacteria. ■ G. KRISHNASWAMY

Biofilms and Microbiomes. Dr. Kumar is currently at the Department of Microbiology at Tripura Central University.

Since drug development typically takes 10-15 years, the researchers turned to drug repurposing using FDA-approved drugs that can potentially bind to the PpiB protein and prevent biofilm formation by TB bacteria. Based on *in silico* analysis, researchers found two drugs – acarbose and cyclosporine-A – showed high binding capacity with the PpiB protein. So the two drugs can possibly inhibit PpiB protein and thereby prevent biofilm formation and make the bacteria vulnerable to anti-TB drugs. Gallium nanoparticles were also tested to study the ability of nanoparticles to bind and inhibit the protein and prevent biofilm production.

"We validated the binding property through *in vitro* studies. Both the drugs as well as gallium nanoparticles were able to bind very well with the purified form of PpiB protein," says Anwar Alam from the Kusuma School of Biological Sciences at IIT Delhi and another first author of the paper. Recombinant *M. smegmatis* expressing TB bacteria PpiB protein were cultured in the presence of FDA-approved drugs and gallium nanoparticles to check for biofilm forma-

tion. "There was reduced biofilm formation by recombinant *M. smegmatis* in the presence of the drugs and gallium nanoparticles," Dr. Alam says.

The suppression of PpiB protein activity and inhibition of biofilm formation was more when higher dosages of the drugs and gallium nanoparticles were used. "Though the antidiabetic drug (acarbose) showed higher binding, there was increased biofilm formation when lower concentration was used. Further studies are needed to ascertain the correct acarbose concentration for inhibiting biofilm formation," says Dr. Kumar.

Testing on TB bacteria

Based on the positive results using *M. smegmatis*, the researchers then tested the ability of the drugs to inhibit biofilm formation by TB-causing bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*). "Both cyclosporine-A and gallium nanoparticles significantly reduced biofilm formation by TB bacteria. But acarbose had relatively lesser effect," says Prof. Hasnain from the Jamia Hamdard Institute of Molecular Medicine and corresponding author of the paper. He is currently on deputation at the Kusuma School of Biological Sciences, IIT Delhi

The FDA approved drugs al-

so increased the effectiveness of anti-TB drugs in killing TB bacteria. In the presence of anti-TB drugs and the FDA-approved drugs, the susceptibility of TB bacteria was higher. Isoniazid drug at 50% of the standard dosage was sufficient to kill TB bacteria. And 25% of the standard dosage of ethambutol killed TB bacteria. "Reduced dosage would mean less toxicity. And we presume that it can also shorten the duration of treatment, which can be ascertained only through trials," says Prof. Hasnain.

Another significant finding is that the drug-binding sites within PpiB are the same in many pathogenic bacteria that form biofilm.

"Since PpiB is an essential protein, it can be targeted to inhibit biofilm formation across bacterial species. And as the drug-binding sites within PpiB is conserved across pathogenic bacteria, the protein can be targeted for disrupting biofilm production across human disease-causing microbial species," Prof. Hasnain says.

"One of the repurposed drugs can be possibly used to target latent mycobacterium," says Dr Nasreen Ehtesham from the ICMR-National Institute of Pathology and another corresponding author of the paper.

Drug-loaded microparticles to manage Parkinson's

IIT Delhi team used two-compartment microparticles

ASWATHI PACHA

Parkinson's disease, which affects the central nervous system of the body currently does not have an effective cure. The dopamine (neurotransmitter chemical) deficiency caused by the disease can, however, be overcome by providing drugs which are capable of crossing the blood-brain barrier.

But most of the time only 1% of the drug (levodopa) reaches the brain after being orally taken. Using dual drugs (levodopa with carbidopa) have increased the fraction of drug reaching the brain, but low half-life has posed challenges. Also, continuous intake of levodopa has in some cases caused serious side effects such as LID (Levodopa-induced dyskinesia).



The microparticles can deliver the required dose in a sustained manner and reduce the pill burden and side-effects for elderly patients, says Sampa Saha (sitting)

via blood to the blood-brain barrier. Now, carbidopa acts as a helping hand and allows levodopa to cross the crucial barrier, reach the target zone in the brain and effectively manage the dopamine deficiency.

Also, more than 80% of the drug was released within five hours in the simulated gastric fluid, which is highly beneficial from a pharmacological point of view.

"Usually a person takes multiple pills a day to efficiently manage the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. This can be replaced by just one pill as these microparticles can deliver the required dose in a sustained manner and reduce the pill burden and side-effects for elderly patients who are more likely to forget their doses and face end of dose 'wearing-off' symptoms", explains Dr. Sampa Saha, Assistant Professor, DMSE, IIT, Delhi corresponding author of the paper. "We are currently carrying out animal trials and the results look promising."

CMB-Bharat project: listening to faintest murmurs of early universe

The proposal has been presented and is being considered by ISRO

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN



CMB-Bharat was a highlight of the workshop that also saw discussions on the X-ray telescope eROSITA, to be launched in June 2019.

Bharat, outlined the scope and plan of the project thus: "CMB-Bharat is a proposal for comprehensive next generation Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) mission in international collaboration with major Indian contribution. It proposes 'near-ultimate' survey polarisation that would exhaust the primordial information in this 'gold-mine' for cosmology."

Scientific promise
The scientific promise of the project was threefold according to Dr Souradeep. The "ultra-high-goal" according to him was that the project would reveal the first clear signature of quantum gravity and ultra-high-energy-physics in the very early universe. He clarified that this referred to quantum gravitational waves, which are different from what LIGO detectors had observed that were classical in nature. The "high" goals lay in neutrino physics where we could discover more about the neutrino species, their total mass and mass hierarchy; map all dark matter and most ba-

ryons in the observable universe, he said. The problem of knowing the hierarchy of masses of the different species of neutrino is a very deep one and being hotly pursued by many countries. The "legacy," he said, was to improve probe of cosmological model by a factor of over 10 million, and to generate rich galactic and extragalactic astrophysics datasets.

When asked about the timeline he had in mind for this project, he said that it was too early to make any definitive statements and that a more mature study had to be carried out. "Typically, ambitious space missions of this magnitude take over a decade [to] launch. We would like to be observing for 4-6 years and the time to final release of all data and release could extend to [about] 5 years," he said in an email to *The Hindu*.

Comprehensive mission
"There are no active proposals for a comprehensive next generation CMB space mission at this time. CMB Bharat mission presents an

unique opportunity for India to take the lead on prized quests in fundamental science in a field that has proved to be a spectacular success, while simultaneously gaining valuable expertise in cutting-edge technology for space capability through global cooperation," he added.

The workshop
The workshop was a unique gathering of cosmologists from across the world, and participants could attend invited talks by eminent cosmologists and experimental physicists from across the world, such as Lyman Page (2018 Breakthrough Prize, 2015 Gruber Prize), Rashid Sunyaev (2003 Gruber Prize, 2017 State Prize of Russia for Science and Technology), J. Richard Bond (2008 Gruber Prize, 2018 Gruber Prize as a team member, Officer in the Order of Canada) and others. This programme was a decadal follow-up of a previous 6-weeks long ICTS programme "Cosmology with CMB and LSS" held in 2008.



A bull elephant crossing a fence near a road in Hassan. ■ RAJKUMAR

Protect plantations and forests to minimise conflict

Elephants intensively use the acacia and eucalyptus plantations in the area

AATHIRA PERINCHERY

Acacia and eucalyptus plantations are notorious for the ecological problems they cause. Yet, in southwest Karnataka, these monocultures have become crucial elephant habitats and need to be protected along with natural forest patches to minimise human-elephant conflict, suggests a study published in *Tropical Conservation Science*.

Hassan, Madikeri

In Karnataka's Hassan and Madikeri – a landscape consisting of plantations (teak, coffee, acacia and eucalyptus), paddy fields and small, fragmented forest patches – human-elephant conflict is high. Reacting to this, authorities removed 22 elephants from the area in 2014. However, elephants from habitats nearby colonized the area again. With conflict rising, scientists at the Nature Conservation Foundation including Vinod Krishnan studied how the elephants – now approximately 30 in number – used 205 villages here between 2015 and 2017. They first

tracked daily elephant movement (using direct observation and indirect signs such as dung). With this, they mapped the intensity of use of each village by elephants. This revealed that the large mammals were present across the landscape during the first year. However, the team found a high concentration of elephant presence in the northern part of the region in the second year. According to them, the logging of trees in abandoned coffee estates in the central zone, and the installation of barriers around these estates, clustered elephant presence in the north.

This increased human-elephant conflict here, revealed an analysis of crop damage incidents and human casualties.

Habitat types

The team also mapped elephant distribution across different habitat types (such as reserved forests, agricultural fields and monocultures of acacia and eucalyptus) to study habitat use. During the day, elephants

preferred monoculture refuges (of acacia, teak and eucalyptus) and forest fragments, and avoided other habitats including coffee and human habitations. But during the night, they used coffee plantations and agricultural fields the most. Seasons too played a role: while elephants used forests and coffee plantations more during the dry season, they frequented agricultural fields in the wet season.

Across the years, while the elephants' use of monoculture refuges and coffee increased, their use of forest fragments drastically decreased (from 15% to 2%). According to Krishnan, in areas where natural forests have been wiped out, monocultures – which serve as refuges for elephants and help them move between habitats – could help minimize human-elephant conflict and promote coexistence between people and elephants.

"Such refuges play a crucial role in keeping conflict levels low," said Krishnan, the lead author of the study.

ODD & END

Moons of moons

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HEALTHLINE RITESH KUMAR



"Individuals with tattoos were more likely to be smokers and diagnosed with mental health issues." — International Journal of Dermatology

AROUND THE WORLD



Virus-based therapy to target eye cancer

A cancer-killing, virus-based therapy developed in Spain has shown some promise against retinoblastoma (which is a tumour of the retina that affects mainly children) in mouse models and a pilot clinical trial. Although further work is needed, the therapy lays the groundwork for new treatment options for the cancer, which is currently treated with disfiguring surgery. Researchers estimate that retinoblastoma causes 8,000 cases worldwide each year, a figure that represents 11% of all cancers in children under the age of one. Most cases result from inactivation of the gene RB1, which normally plays a critical role as a tumour suppressor.

Chemotherapy is the standard-of-care for retinoblastoma, but intensive rounds of such drugs can damage the retina and cause long-term vision problems. In some cases, surgery is needed to remove the eye entirely, an invasive procedure called enucleation, that results in loss of vision. The alternative treatment, called VCN-01, harnesses a virus that infects and kills cancer cells harbouring a dysfunctional RB1 pathway. The study appears in *Science Translational Medicine*.

Gum infections bacteria linked to Alzheimer's disease

An enzyme secreted from the bacterial pathogen, *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, which is known to cause gum infections in humans, may also contribute to Alzheimer's disease (AD), according to scientists in the U.S. who analysed brain tissues from AD patients. This problematic enzyme (known as gingipains) can be blocked in the brain with orally bio-available small-molecule inhibitors, the scientists went on to show in mice. The results suggest that treatment with a potent gingipain inhibitor can reduce *P. gingivalis* infection in the brain, which may potentially slow the neurodegeneration that characterises the brains of AD patients. *P. gingivalis* is a bacterial pathogen responsible for chronic periodontitis, a gum infection that can lead to tooth loss.



A camera to peer inside capillaries

A team of researchers in the U.S. has developed a new tool that images blood flow through blood capillaries. Called spectral contrast optical coherence tomography angiography (SC-OCTA), the 3D-imaging technique can detect subtle changes in capillary organisation for early diagnosis of disease. More than 40 billion capillaries, which are tiny, hair-like blood vessels, are tasked with carrying oxygen and nutrients to the far reaches of the human body. But despite their sheer number and monumental importance to basic functions and metabolism, not much is known about their inner workings. The achievement is part of increasing technological advances that allow smaller and smaller blood vessels to be imaged and provide more comprehensive, functional information. The technology allows the measurement of blood flow, oxygenation and metabolic rate. The paper was published last week in the journal *Light: Science and Applications*.



Understanding muscle memory

The old adage, "use it or lose it", tells us: if you stop using your muscles, they'll shrink. Until recently, scientists thought this meant that nuclei – the cell control centres that build and maintain muscle fibres – are also lost to sloth. Modern laboratory techniques now allow us to see that nuclei gained during training persist even when muscle cells shrink due to disuse or start to break down. These residual 'myonuclei' allow more and faster growth when muscles are retrained, suggesting that we can "bank" muscle growth potential in our teens to prevent frailty in old age. It also suggests that athletes who cheat and grow their muscles with steroids may go undetected. The findings, by researchers in the U.S., appear in *Frontiers in Physiology*.

More dairy in MedDiet? 'Yes please!'

A dairy-enhanced Mediterranean diet will significantly increase health outcomes for those at risk of cardiovascular disease, and it's even more effective than a low-fat diet, says a study in Australia. Cardiovascular disease takes the lives of 17.9 million people every year, representing 31% of all global deaths. Low-fat diets are often recommended as suitable food plans for those seeking to reduce their risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Similarly, the Mediterranean diet, or MedDiet, has been shown to deliver significant health benefits. A typical MedDiet includes extra virgin olive oil, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, wholegrain breads, pastas and cereals, moderate consumption of fish and red wine, and low consumption of red meat, sweet and processed foods. It also includes 1-2 servings of dairy foods (700-820mg calcium). The new study says more dairy is better. The findings appear in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

DEMYSTIFYING SCIENCE

What is Minimalist Machine Learning?

Mathematicians at the Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Berkeley Lab), U.S., have developed a new approach to machine learning aimed at experimental imaging data. Rather than relying on the tens or hundreds of thousands of images used by typical machine learning methods, this new approach "learns" much more quickly and requires far fewer images. The technique is formally called the "Mixed-Scale Dense Convolutional Neural Network (MS-D)". It requires far fewer parameters than traditional methods, converges quickly, and has the ability to "learn" from a remarkably small training set. Their approach is already being used to extract biological structure from cell images, and is poised to provide a major new computational tool to analyse data across a wide range of research areas.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Scaling back on sugar

Study shows children with fatty liver disease can benefit from cutting soft drinks, fruit juices and foods with added sugars

ANAHAD O'CONNOR

Overweight children with fatty liver disease sharply reduced the amount of fat and inflammation in their livers by cutting soft drinks, fruit juices and foods with added sugars from their diets, a rigorous new study has found.

The new research, published in *JAMA* on Tuesday, suggests that limiting sugary foods and drinks may be a promising lifestyle strategy to help alleviate a devastating condition linked to the obesity crisis that is spreading rapidly in adults and children. An estimated 80 million to 100 million Americans have non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, which causes the liver to swell with dangerous levels of fat. Roughly seven million of those are adolescents and teenagers.

Disease implications

Fatty liver disease typically has few symptoms, and many people who have it do not know it. But fatty liver disease raises the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, and it can progress to a more severe condition called non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, or NASH, which is a leading cause of liver cancer, cirrhosis and liver transplants.

Current guidelines call for children who have fatty liver disease to exercise and eat a healthy diet though they do not specify particular foods. But some experts already counsel their fatty liver patients to avoid added sugars, which ma-

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

nufacturers commonly add to heavily processed foods and which are different than the sugars that occur naturally in foods like fruit. Added sugars are typically high in fructose, which can ramp up the production of new fat when it is metabolised by the liver.

"The current standard of care is very similar to what we would recommend for any child that is overweight," says Dr. Miriam Vos, an author of the new study and an assistant professor of paediatrics at the Emory University School of Medicine, U.S. "Unfortunately, that general recommendation hasn't improved the disease as much as we would like, and there are no large randomised trials looking at which diet is the best one for fatty liver."

Data from the study

For the new study, Dr. Vos and her colleagues recruited 40 children, about 13 years old on average, who had fatty liver disease. Most were

Hispanic, a group that has a particularly high prevalence of fatty liver disease, with an average of between 21% and 25% liver fat, more than four times the normal limit.

The researchers then randomly assigned the children to one of two diet groups for eight weeks.

One group limited added sugars, and the second group of children, which served as the control, remained on their usual diets. They were not given any special instructions to avoid or lower sugar.

To make the diet easier and more practical for the children in the limited-sugar group to follow, the researchers asked their families to follow it as well. They tailored the diet to the needs of each household by examining the foods they consumed in a typical week and then swapping in lower sugar alternatives. If a family routinely ate yogurts, sauces, salad dressings and breads that contained added sugar, for example, then the researchers provided them with versions of those foods that did not have sugar added to them.

Fruit juices, soft drinks and other sweet drinks were forbidden. They were replaced with unsweetened iced teas, milk, water and other non-sugary beverages. Dietitians prepared and delivered meals to the families twice a week, which helped them stick to their programmes.

Ultimately, the low-sugar diet was not terribly restrictive. It was not low-carb, nor was it limited in calories. The children could eat fruit, starches and pasta, for example, and they were allowed to eat as much as they wanted. But the goal was to get their added sugar intake to less than 3% of their daily calories – less than the 5% to 10% limit for adults and children recommended by the World Health Organisation.

After eight weeks, the low-sugar group had gotten their added sugar intake down to just 1% of their daily calories, compared to 9% in the control group. They also had a remarkable change in their liver health. They had a 31% reduction in liver fat, on average, compared to no change in the control group. They also had a 40% drop in their levels of alanine aminotransferase, or ALT, a liver enzyme that rises when liver cells are damaged or inflamed.

Medical opinion

Says Dr. Vos, "As a practising hepatologist, I see children weekly with fatty liver, and I would love to see this kind of improvement in my patients." "The exciting part was not only did the fat go down, but their liver enzymes also improved. That suggests that they also got a reduction in inflammation."

The new study was funded in part by the Nutrition Science Initiative, a non-profit research group that was co-founded by the science and health journalist Gary Taubes, a proponent of low-carb diets. The National Institutes of Health, the University of California, San Diego, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University also provided funding.

Dr. Joel E. Lavine, an expert who was not involved in the study, says it was cleverly done and demonstrated "some important points about what a major constituent of diet contributes to this problem in terms of liver fat and inflammation and cell injury." He says the ubiquity of unhealthy foods makes such a diet difficult to follow, but that as a general rule, doctors should advise patients and their families to check food labels for added sugars and to avoid or eliminate juices.

The members of the low-sugar group lost about three pounds during the study, which may have contributed to their improvements in liver health. But Dr. Jeffrey B. Schwimmer, an author of the study, says it was unlikely to account for the large changes.

"The children on the low sugar diet did lose a few pounds on average, but that amount of weight loss has never been associated with this degree of improvement," says Dr. Schwimmer, a professor of paediatrics at the University of California, San Diego, and the director of the Fatty Liver Clinic at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego. He and his co-authors are doing follow-up analyses to find out more about what accounted for the liver changes.

"This is a step, it's not the final word," Dr. Schwimmer says. "But based on this, we would envision studies that look at whether this therapy can actually treat the disease well enough to prevent cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease and liver cancer." *NY TIMES*



What's inside?



Diaper alert: A French public health watchdog has warned about the risks of several chemicals found in disposable nappies, leading the French government to demand that manufacturers withdraw them from their products. The investigation, by the Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES), came after a report in January 2017, published in the French consumer magazine, *60 Millions de Consommateurs* (60 Million Consumers), sounded the alarm about chemicals in diapers. However, ANSES stressed that there was no medical study which had proved health problems caused by disposable diapers. The chemicals identified in the study (described as the first of its kind) include two artificial perfumes as well as other complex aromatic products that are refined from oil, and potentially dangerous dioxins. The magazine had reported that toxic chemicals had been found in the majority of the 12 brands – many of which are marketed globally. One chemical was glyphosate which is used in weedkiller and is feared to be cancerous. The French government called a meeting of nappy manufacturers and gave them 15 days to come up with a plan to withdraw the products identified by the watchdog. ANSES scientists tested 23 types of nappies in real-life conditions. Gerard Lasfargues, Deputy Director, ANSES, said, "We calculated the amount (of chemicals) absorbed, calculated according to the time a nappy is worn, the number of nappies worn by babies, up to 36 months, and then compared the results with toxicology standards." The tests included products marketed as being "environmentally friendly". — AFP ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Closing the gap



NANDITA SAIKIA

There have been impressive gains made in life expectancy in India in recent years, but as people are ageing, older adults are subject to a higher risk of physical impairment. An important question to be

considered is about the quality of life if people are going to live with a disability or physical impairment, especially after retirement. This underscores the importance of understanding the future course of disability in India.

Interestingly, disability research has not gained momentum in the country. A challenge for systematic research is the lack of appropriate data. Despite censuses and surveys collecting information, there is hardly any consensus on the real burden of disability.

Varied data sets

Two major sources of data, namely Census and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) collect information on "reported disability" but give different estimates around disability conditions. Census 2001 data recorded 21.91 million people (2.13% of the population), while the NSSO 2002 estimate was 18.5 million people (1.8% of the population). Census 2011 had an estimate of 26.8 million (2.21% of the total population). Both data sets also notably vary in terms of the composition of those disabled. The major weakness in both systems is that neither of them adhere to the World Health Organisation's (and internationally accepted) definition of disability which includes in the definition, limitations in performing daily activities such as walking, dressing and using a toilet.

Therefore, they not only underestimate the burden of disability, but also reveal unconventional patterns in disability by gender and region. For instance, it is an established phenomenon that women experience a higher level of disability than men, yet Census data present a different picture.

A newer study finds that 17.91% of males and 26.21% of females aged 60 and above, experience some form of disability. This adds up to 9 million elderly men and 14 million elderly women. This is far higher than the estimate in Census 2011, which showed that only 5% of the elderly population suffers from a disability. Our recent research shows that in India, there has been an increasing feminisation of disability conditions, in absolute and relative terms; elderly women spend more years of life in a disabled condition than Indian men do. The prevalence rate is much higher among widowed women, and the poor and the illiterate elderly. In addition, people with diabetes have a higher chance of being disabled.

This high and disproportionate burden of disability among the elderly, across poorer socioeconomic groups, is worrisome, especially when public spaces or facilities have not been equipped as yet to accommodate them. There is a great need to expand barrier-free facilities and institutional support to people who suffer from disabilities.

What needs to be done

Will India be able to minimise the burden of disability by promoting healthy ageing? This can be achieved by promoting healthy life styles, with an emphasis on the need for a balanced diet, and physical activity, and the imposition of high taxes on tobacco or alcohol products. Such measures can postpone the onset age of chronic diseases such as diabetes, and thereby old age disability.

While measures to ban or discourage the sale of junk foods in public places are welcome steps, their strict implementation without providing an alternative is not sustainable in the long run.

This is where the government's role is crucial. More research on the current and future burden of disability in India is needed. Census of India should consider modifying the definition of disability in the upcoming Census 2021.

Nandita Saikia is at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

Swept under the office carpet

Fair employment and work conditions are hardly seen as health determinants

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN



In the wide range of causes that can lead to poor health and disease, the workplace, as a spate of recent studies suggest, is an under-reported but significant factor.

For example, an adverse work environment can cause respiratory infections, vector and parasitic diseases, heart ailments, stroke, mental, behavioural and neurological disorders, becoming over-weight and getting skin diseases, among other medical emergencies.

Right to health

Stress alone, at work, can manifest itself in the form of extreme fatigue, heart palpitation, excessive sleeping, insomnia, gastrointestinal problems, diarrhoea, constipation and, dermatological disorders, says the World Health Organisation (WHO), which asserts that working people have the right to health and access to health care as close as possible to where they live and work.

According to WHO, "When accounting for death and disability, the fraction of the global disease burden in the general

population due to pursuing an occupation amounts to 2.7%. A large part of the population is directly affected by occupational risks, with around 62% of the population above 15 years being economically active.

Low- and middle-income countries are disproportionately affected by occupational death and disease," WHO adds in a 2018 study, "Preventing diseases through addressing major health threats at the workplace, such as stress, long working hours and shift, sedentary work, climate sensitive diseases and workplace air pollution."

Special challenges to occupational health include the large share of informal workers and the increasing impacts of an ageing workforce. Occupational risks are inordinately large in specific countries, and in certain occupations such as mining, construction and agriculture, and mainly affect lower socioeconomic groups. However, notes the WHO report, "new" occupational and work-related diseases, such as work-related

stress and health effects from different chemicals, complement the more traditional risks."

The ILO Commission's report is the culmination of a 15-month study by a 27-member group of experts on business and labour, think tanks, academia, government and non-governmental organisations. It has recommended establishing a Universal Labour Guarantee that includes a set of basic working conditions, such as an adequate living wage, limits on hours of work, and safe and healthy workplaces.

The report will be submitted at the Centenary session of the International Labour Conference in June 2019. The changing nature of jobs will also lead to new kinds of workplace health problems, but if managed well can be remedied.

The ILO says, "Artificial intelligence, automation and robotics will lead to job losses, as skills become obsolete. However, these same technological advances, along with the greening of economies, will also create millions of jobs, if new opportunities are seized."

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Point blank range

A grandson sifts through Gandhi's words and explains that by remaining a *satyagrahi* till his last breath, he transcended death

ANANYAJAYPEYI

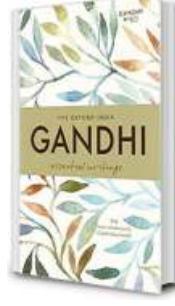
Nowadays it has become fashionable to criticise Mahatma Gandhi. We are prone to see India's failures as his failures, and vice-versa. The failure of social equality, the failure of communal amity, the failure of secular inclusiveness, the failure of ecological ethics, the failure of gender justice, the failure of non-violent democracy – it would appear that every value Gandhi espoused so fervently has failed to take root in our polity. Surely this is somehow to be construed as his fault; we suspect it to be the result of a shortfall in the strength of his beliefs.

Timeless wisdom

But Gandhi was nothing if not 'a man of deep conviction' and 'a man of intense passions', writes his youngest grandson, Gopalkrishna Gandhi. He sifts through hundreds of thousands of words uttered or written by his famous grandfather, in a life that stretched from his birth in October 1869 to his assassination in January 1948.

This in itself is a painstaking task of reading, selection and compilation that took several years of immersion and empathy – a labour of love.

Even a casual perusal of this amazing book of close to 900 pages will give the judgmental reader pause: the blame for India's problems cannot be laid at the door of the "great soul", Gandhi. At every moment of his extraordinary life, he was, evidently, engaged in the pursuit of the truth, *satya*.



■ **The Oxford India Gandhi: Essential Writings**
Compiled and edited by Gopalkrishna Gandhi
Oxford University Press
₹1,495

For a figure whose biography coincides with the history of Indian nationalism – indeed, the protagonist par excellence of our modernity – Gandhi's story is oddly reminiscent of the timeless wisdom of India's epics as well as of its medieval bhakti poetry.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi characterises his language – correctly, I think – as *bani*, the 'voice' of a saint-poet, a distillation of acute moral insight into unadorned, pared-down, direct expression. It changes one's perception of the world and once received, can never be forgotten.

To me, Gandhi's character too, is akin to a lake, a *carit-manas*, like the one Tulasidas wrote for Rama, into which one must dive again and again to experience the profundity of the human condition. It is no accident that the so-called father of the modern Indian nation and the author of *Hind Swaraj* also reminds us of older traditions



Voice of reason: Gandhi's story is oddly reminiscent of the timeless wisdom of India's epics. ■ AP

of knowledge and liberation that are as much personal as they are political, poetic as they are historical.

Work in progress

But the editor, meticulous as he is, sounds a note of caution: "How easily one can miss the essential while in search of the great!"

For Gandhi is very far from perfect. He evolves – from a callow youth to a suffering sage, the very conscience of his people; from a tactical politician to a surgeon of the soul; from a leader of mass movements to a frail, persecuted

and solitary seeker in search of a higher freedom. He wrongs many people along the way – from his black comrades in South Africa, to the many women who join his ashram; from his own wife Kasturi and son Harilal, to his critics in the Congress and the Muslim League on the eve of independence and partition. He is and remains to the very last, a work in progress.

Gandhi's most unfortunate encounter, perhaps, was with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

His letters, diary entries and articles from September and October 1932, when he seemed ready to

fight Ambedkar literally to his own death over the matter of untouchability, are difficult to read. They test our faith in the Mahatma. But they also demonstrate that at no point was he motivated by the hunger for power, or proceeding out of a crude sense of upper caste superiority. No matter how irreversibly he alienated Babasaheb, Gandhi genuinely lived by Narsinh Mehta's words: *Vaishnavjan to nekaahie je pirparajane re*, true piety lies in being able to feel another's pain as though it were one's own.

He invokes Narsinh Mehta again

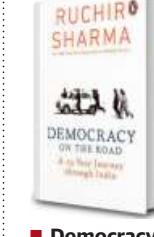
in February 1933, writing from Yeravda jail: "Many people have asked me why I have used the name 'Harijans' for people whom we commit the sin of regarding as untouchables. Years ago a Kathiawari *Antyaja* had written to me that names like *antyaja*, *achhut*, *asprishya* hurt his community. I could appreciate their feelings. ...Narsinh Mehta in one of his *bhajans* had referred to the *antyajas* as 'Harijans'. ...'Harijan' means a devotee of God, a beloved of God. It is God's promise that He is the Protector of the oppressed, an ocean of compassion, the strength of the weak, the Refuge of the helpless, the Support of the lame, and the Eye of the blind. One may therefore expect Him to bestow especial grace on the oppressed. Looked at from this point of view... 'Harijan' is appropriate in every way for the *antyaja* brethren."

From oppression to dignity

Post-colonial India has discarded Gandhi's 'Harijan' in favour of Ambedkar's 'Dalit'. But rather than invite derision, Gandhi's nomenclature has to be read historically as a necessary step in the arduous journey from oppression to dignity – when the final goal of social justice and true equality still eludes us. Gandhi's assassins proved that by remaining steadfast in the truth, a *satyagrahi* to his last breath, Gandhi transcended his own death.

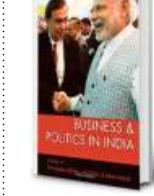
As Gopalkrishna's late older brother Ramchandra Gandhi, the philosopher, said: Bullets did not stop Mahatma Gandhi; rather, he stopped bullets in their track.

BOOKSHELF



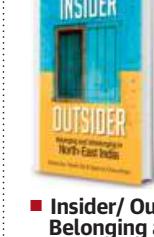
■ **Democracy on the Road: A 25-Year Journey through India**
Ruchir Sharma
Penguin/Allen Lane
₹699

A global investor and writer offers a portrait of how India and its democracy work, drawn from his two decades on the road chasing election campaigns. He and fellow writers talk to farmers, shopkeepers and CEOs from Rajasthan to Tamil Nadu, and interview leaders from Narendra Modi to Rahul Gandhi.



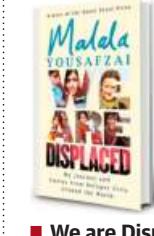
■ **Business & Politics in India**
Edited by Christophe Jaffrelot & Others
OUP
₹750

Over the last few decades, politics in India has moved steadily in a pro-business direction, which has important implications for both government and citizens. In this volume, scholars of Indian politics offer an analytical synthesis of the issue. They look at the nature of business power and its impact on labour, land and urban governance.



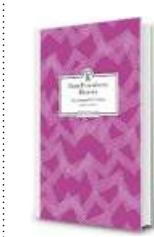
■ **Insider/Outsider: Belonging and Unbelonging in North-East India**
Edited by Preeti Gill & Samrat Amaryllis
₹399

The National Register of Citizens in Assam and an amendment to the Citizenship Act have reopened old divides between religious and linguistic communities which have a history of conflict. Academics and activists try to explain the complex mosaic of multiple ethnicities, languages, religions and tribes that is the Northeast and why some people are considered 'outsiders'.



■ **We Are Displaced**
Malala Yousafzai
Hachette India
₹399

After her Nobel Peace Prize, Yousafzai has spoken out on many things like migration, displacement, war and border conflicts. Even now when she closes her eyes, she can see the beautiful Swat Valley where she grew up but hasn't been able to go back to after the Taliban attack. She has visited many refugee camps and shares the stories.



The Tamil text, Nilakeci, dated around the 5th century CE – there is no clarity on the time – is an unusual literary creation. It retrieves a violent *pey* (female possessing spirit) of Palanayur, transforming her into a Jain philosopher. The writer places the story among other texts and traditions, giving us a peek into Tamil Jaina literary history.

Passive resistance

A historian explains how Gandhi finessed the principle of ahimsa that could be followed by anyone, young or old, man or woman

K.R.A. NARASIAH

Being a member of the subaltern studies group that formulated a new narrative of the history of India and South Asia, David Hardiman sets the tone of the book in the introduction itself. He follows Mary King's idea of using *nonviolent* as a word without hyphenation, giving it a more positive meaning. Building his theory in five chapters, Hardiman engages with Mahatma Gandhi's 'constructive method actively designed to create alternative institutions to those of imperial rulers.'

Widening the base

In 'Building A Nationalist Base in Rural India', a chapter that stands out in the book, Hardiman explains how the idea of passive resistance took root. This brought the freedom struggle to the subaltern level and it was no more the fight of the educated middle class against the rulers alone.

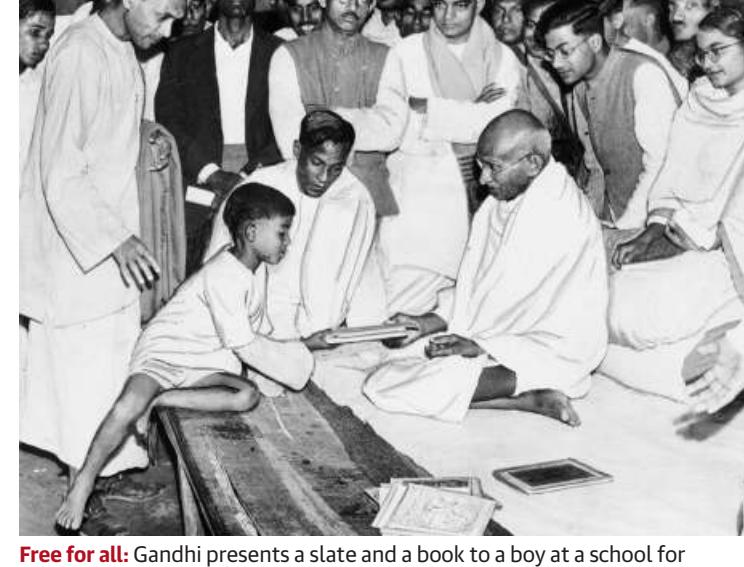
Gandhi exhorted the educated and wealthy to become champions of the peasantry and that was his biggest success as it mobilised the masses against the British. Hardiman compares the movement led by Ashwin Kumar Dutta in Bengal to the Punjab movement where urban nationalists managed to make common cause with the peasantry in an agitation in 1907 that was successful.

Hardiman points out that if 'ahimsa' was the original word thought by Gandhi, it indeed had different meanings at different times. In fact, according to Hardiman, the boundaries between 'himsa' and 'ahimsa' were always a matter of debate and they shifted according to time.

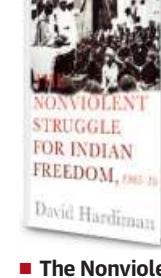
However, initially, according to him, 'ahimsa' was hardly deemed to have any applicability to a popular protest or accepted as an effective political tool. But Gandhi pushed through with the idea because he believed in it, and while on a tour to Madras, proclaimed truth and 'ahimsa' as his main guiding principles in life. In Gandhi's words: "If we are unmannerly today, we are so, not because we do not know how to strike, but because we fear to die."

Spirited protests
Hardiman dwells on the idea of passive resistance to the British when in 1905 Lord Curzon initiated the division of Bengal that was rejected by the educated middle class, which put up spirited protests.

Rabindranath Tagore declared October 16, the day of the proposed partition, as one of mourning. The Lal Bal Pal (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra



■ **Free for all:** Gandhi presents a slate and a book to a boy at a school for refugee children at Jayag, Noakhali, in West Bengal. ■ THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES



■ **The Nonviolent Struggle for Indian Freedom, 1905-19**
David Hardiman
Penguin/Viking
₹699

Hardiman demolishes the myth that Gandhian nonviolence succeeded in India because the colonial state observed the law, and that if faced with a ruthless regime the results would have been different.

Hardiman argues that even under colonial rule, the masses were not protected from atrocities committed by white planters and local elites. People lived in constant fear of these subordinate groups. But under Gandhi this fear was overcome, and particularly his leadership in Champaran and Kheda proved an inspiration for persons from all classes.

The massacre

Hardiman devotes a chapter to 'State Terror', caused by the Rowlett Act, and with a surgeon's precision discusses it in detail along with Gandhi's call for satyagraha. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13, 1919 deeply moved Gandhi. He and other leaders had raised their voices against the repressive Rowlett Act. General Dyer's action at Jallianwala saw an outpouring of protests from both the elite and ordinary people.

In conclusion, Hardiman says, Gandhi had seen that mass mobilisation was a force with great potential and this led to the subsequent launch of the non-cooperation movement against the British without losing the nonviolent approach. This is a book every university should have in its library.

Lessons from South Africa
Gandhi led a campaign in South Africa and seeing its success, both moderates and extremists in India celebrated it.

Hardiman elaborates the South African movement in the second chapter to show how in contrast to an armed struggle, Gandhi proved that passive resistance could be applied by anyone, young or old, man or woman. Gandhi's *soul force* had its strength and one of the secretaries to Transvaal colonial secretary J.C. Smuts told Gandhi, "You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness."

All sides of a story

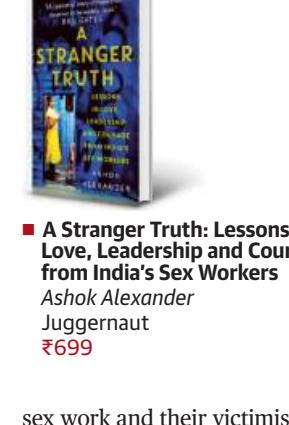
On the challenges facing AIDS prevention workers in India

ELIZABETH KURUVILLA

In 2002, when the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced its HIV prevention programme in India with a grant of \$100 million, the Health Ministry accused it of being alarmist. Yet, according to Naco's estimate at the time, 4.8 million Indians were HIV positive. The number of AIDS orphans, at more than 2 million, was the largest in the world. A health crisis of epidemic proportions was being predicted. Yet, by 2009, there were concrete signs of reversal, and today India's HIV positive population is estimated to have come down to 2.1 million.

This book by Ashok Alexander, in charge of the Gates' Avahan programme, gives a sense of the challenges facing those working to contain the spread of HIV. The first part is a collection of impressions, largely from field trips he took to map and understand the risk groups. The vulnerable included injectable drug users, transgender persons, the group of MSM and truck drivers, but mostly the sizeable population of female sex workers.

The unorganised nature of



■ **A Stranger Truth: Lessons in Love, Leadership and Courage from India's Sex Workers**
Ashok Alexander
Juggernaut
₹699

sex work and their victimisation by the police, society, family and clients turned out to be a large hindrance in the HIV programme.

In India, only about 7% of sex work takes place from brothels; mostly, it is practised from homes and in the streets, these sex workers forming an "invisible majority" of those who had to be reached out to.

Hence, the Thai government's successful intervention in the 1990s to create awareness about HIV prevention and stop unprotected sex work was difficult to replicate here; "large, well-regulated, legal brothels are a boon for HIV prevention," Alexander finds out.

In India, only about 7% of sex work takes place from brothels; mostly, it is practised from homes and in the streets, these sex workers forming an "invisible majority" of those who had to be reached out to.

HIV prevention clearly requires a multi-faceted approach, and Alexander's book recognises, above all, the contribution of sex workers in one of India's biggest public health success.

The other challenge came from sex workers themselves. Insisting on clients using condoms could deprive them of their meagre earnings and expose them to violence; in a daily struggle for survival, the risk of HIV was intangible.

Avahan funded NGOs across States with high HIV prevalence – Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Manipur and Nagaland. Where the work involved sex workers, the issue was to get these dispersed people together.

Alexander recounts the complexity through the experience of Ashodaya in Mysuru, which mobilised the sex worker community into running the programme. They had to first build trust by providing them what they needed most: security, and not just from physical violence and police harassment. Crucial was a safe place to meet, and a clinic of their own they could visit without being stigmatised. It was a successful experiment that still continues.

HIV prevention clearly requires a multi-faceted approach, and Alexander's book recognises, above all, the contribution of sex workers in one of India's biggest public health success.

Ancient footprints

Understanding the past with new stories drawn from old histories

ZAC O'YEAH

Not since A.L. Basham's *The Wonder That Was India* from 1954, which I read at university towards the end of the last millennium, have I come across such a stimulatingly lateral effort at historical analysis as Nayant Lalitha's *Time Pieces*.

Compared to Basham's doorstopper tome of 575 pages, Lalitha's 'whistle-stop tour' is devised for our times of low attention spans, yet it remains utterly engrossing, illuminating the basics of Indian ancient history in ten thematic essays based on such fundamentals of human existence as travel, food, hygiene, art, and love.

In these, Lalitha lucidly examines aspects of life and culture from the days when the subcontinent was first populated to the early medieval era, stopping at about 1000CE, which is an ambitious time span of 1.5 million years.

We learn how civilisation evolved from the arrival of those first humans with their stone tools to the golden age of Sanskrit wisdom in a manner that



■ **Time Pieces: A Whistle-Stop Tour of Ancient India**
Nayant Lalitha
Hachette
₹399

benefits both a casual reader looking for something to peruse on a train journey from Kanniyakumari to Kashmir, as well as hobby experts like me who are keen to know the latest trends in scholarship, making this paperback a perfect travel companion to anybody who'd like to explore the country's rich heritage.

Lalitha takes up concrete examples, like a 3rd century BCE love graffiti in a cave in Chhattisgarh – 'the first surviving message in Sanskrit immortalizing the bond between the lover and beloved' – and the even more ancient lines of a 5th century BCE lyric about the impermanence of female beauty by a Buddhist nun known as Amrapali (one of the earliest Indian women whose voice is on record) and interprets what these may tell us about the past.

Among the most thought-provoking essays is the one dealing with the question of identity. In it, Lalitha sheds light on how the ancients viewed themselves in terms of individual personality and their position within assorted social contexts. In our modern era when identity has been reduced to the banality of Facebook likes, and the popularity of our tweets, it's incredibly relevant to try and understand how the ancestors came to gradually define themselves as different from others, and by what means. The essay on the afterlife of historical events and how they are creatively or reductively re

Clinical India crushes New Zealand, takes a 2-0 lead

Kuldeep and Chahal have the hosts in a spin after a collective batting effort sees the visitors post a huge total



Solid opening: Rohit Sharma's nine fours and three sixes, combined with the century-plus stand with Shikhar Dhawan, laid the foundation for India's win. ■ AP

INDIA IN NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOUNT MAUNGANUI

Wrist spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal continued to torment the New Zealand batsmen after a collective batting effort, guiding India to an emphatic 90-run win in the second ODI here on Saturday.

India now leads the five-match series 2-0.

Opting to bat, India piled up a mammoth 324 for four, riding on Rohit Sharma (87) and Shikhar Dhawan (66). There were significant contributions from skipper Virat Kohli (43), Ambati Rayudu (47) and Mahendra Singh Dhoni (48 not out).

Kedar Jadhav contributed a quickfire 22 not out off just 10 balls, as he and Dhoni added 53 in the final 4.2 overs for the unconquered fifth wicket.

No resistance

The visiting bowlers then shot out New Zealand for 234 in 40.2 overs, its batsmen offering very little resistance save Doug Bracewell, who top-scored with 57.

Kuldeep (four for 45 in 10 overs) and Chahal (two for 52 in 9.2 overs) shared the bulk of the spoils.



Stat attack

- Kohli is the first Indian captain to win his first two ODIs in New Zealand

- This is India's biggest ever win by runs on New Zealand soil in ODIs, bettering the 84-run victory in Hamilton (2009)

- Rohit and Dhawan, with 15 century stands, equalled the second-best of Rohit and Kohli for India in ODIs. The Tendulkar-Ganguly combo leads the chart with 26

- Kuldeep emulated Chahal's feat of an Indian spinner claiming two consecutive four-wicket hauls in ODIs outside Asia. Chahal's performance came in South Africa in 2018

- Kuldeep equalled Kumble's record of five four-wicket hauls in ODIs, the most by an Indian outside Asia. Kumble took 94 matches to achieve it, while Kuldeep took only 18 games

- This is the first time all of India's top five batsmen scored 40+ plus in an ODI

SCOREBOARD NEW ZEALAND VS INDIA, SECOND ODI

India: Rohit Sharma c de Grandhomme b Ferguson 87 (96b, 9x4, 3x6), Shikhar Dhawan c Latham b Boul 66 (67b, 9x4), Virat Kohli c Sodhi b Boul 43 (45b, 5x4), Ambati Rayudu c b Ferguson 47 (49b, 3x4, 1x6), M.S. Dhoni (not out) 48 (33b, 5x4, 1x6), Kedar Jadhav (not out) 22 (10b, 3x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-1, w-10); 11; Total (for four wickets in 50 overs): 324.

Fall of wickets: 1-23 (Guptill), 2-51 (Williamson), 3-84 (Munro), 4-100 (Taylor), 5-136 (Latham), 6-146 (de Grandhomme), 7-166 (Nicholls), 8-166 (Sodhi), 9-224 (Bracewell).

New Zealand bowling: Trent Boult 10-1-61-2, Doug Bracewell 10-0-59-0, Lockie Ferguson 10-0-81-2, Ish Sodhi 10-0-43-0, Colin de Grandhomme 8-0-62-0, Colin Munro 2-0-17-0.

New Zealand: Martin Guptill c Chahal b Bhuvneshwar 15 (16b, 2x4), Colin Munro lbw b Chahal 31 (41b, 3x4, 1x6), Kane Williamson b Shami 20 (11b, 1x4, 2x6), Ross Taylor st Dhoni b Jadhav 22 (25b, 2x4), Tom Latham lbw b Kuldeep 34 (32b, 3x4, 1x6),

Henry Nicholls c Shami b Kuldeep 28 (38b, 2x4), Colin de Grandhomme c Rayudu b Kuldeep 3 (8b), Doug Bracewell c Chahal b Bhuvneshwar 57 (46b, 5x4, 3x6), Ish Sodhi b Kuldeep 0 (1b), Lockie Ferguson c Shankar b Chahal 12 (20b, 1x4), Trent Boult (not out) 10 (4b, 1x4, 1x6); Extras (w-2): 2; Total (in 40.2 overs): 234.

Toss: India.

Man-of-the-Match: Rohit Sharma.

India won by 90 runs, leads series 2-0.

Zealand bowlers were hit all over the park.

Rohit fell short by 13 runs when he failed to keep a pull shot down off a slower one from paceman Lockie Ferguson. Kohli and Rayudu did not give any respect to the Kiwis as they added 64 for the third wicket from 9.4 overs before Dhoni and Jadhav added 86 in the final 10 overs.

Kedar Jadhav happy there is 'healthy competition'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOUNT MAUNGANUI

Kedar Jadhav is happy that there is a "healthy competition" in the Indian team for the all-rounder's slot which is up for grabs going into the 2019 World Cup in England.

With Hardik Pandya back in the mix after the CoA lifted his suspension, the Baroda all-rounder will be competing with Tamil Nadu's Vijay

Kuldeep claimed the wickets of Henry Nicholls and Ish Sodhi in the 31st over, polishing off the Kiwi innings in a burst of three overs.

Chasing a stiff target of 325, New Zealand lost its top four batsmen, including

skipper Kane Williamson (20) and senior pro Ross Taylor (22), by the 18th over when it touched the 100-run mark.

Earlier, Rohit missed out on a chance to hit his first one-day hundred in New

Shankar. Jadhav, is also very much in contention for a permanent place in the playing XI during the World Cup.

"It is a good thing for any team that more guys are competing for one spot. So every time any guy gets an opportunity, he will know that he needs to perform," said Jadhav, who scored 22 off 10 balls and also took a wicket in India's 90-run win

in the second ODI against New Zealand.

Jadhav said that everyone is trying to put their best foot forward and grab that spot in the squad.

Jadhav said M.S. Dhoni shoulders bulk of the responsibility when it comes to scoring runs during the middle and final overs.

"It helps when Mahi bhai is there till the last ball. All

his experience and the power in his game and it helps players like us to just work around him and he takes most of the strike and scores most of the runs."

Jadhav said that 324 was a par-score on this track after the openers provided a good start.

"We wanted to bat first and it started well. With the kind of top-order batting we

have, 90% of the time we will get a good start," Jadhav said.

He was all praise for Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma, who had another hundred-plus opening partnership.

Wrist spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal have now accounted for 12 out of the 20 New Zealand wickets after the first two games.

Osaka overcomes nerves and a gritty Kvitova

Clinches maiden Australian Open crown and second consecutive Slam, takes over as the World No. 1



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MELBOURNE

Japan's Naomi Osaka said she was "in a state of shock" after holding her nerve to battle past Petra Kvitova to win the Australian Open in a three-set thriller that also delivered her the World No. 1 ranking on Saturday.

The fourth seed triumphed 7-6(2), 5-7, 6-4 in a two hour 27 minute epic over the Czech eighth seed to claim back-to-back Grand Slams and become the first Asian, man or woman, to hold the top spot. The 21-

year-old Japanese youngster fell to one knee in celebration, head bowed, as Melbourne Park erupted in thunderous cheers.

A rattled Osaka almost blew her title hopes with one hand on the trophy when she failed to convert three championship points leading 5-3 in the second set.

Never-say-die
The never-say-die Kvitova forced a deciding set before Osaka finally edged ahead with a decisive break early in the third.

For Kvitova, it was her first

Grand Slam decider since a burglar slashed her racquet hand in a 2016 knife attack. She is "crazy. I can hardly believe that I just played in a Grand Slam final again."

Predictions of a slugfest

between two of the game's biggest hitters proved accurate as the pair went toe-to-toe in the first set.

The Czech mixed up her game with drop shots and changes of pace but blew three break chances in a crunch sixth game in the first set.

Kvitova saved two set points to force a tie-break but Osaka ran away with it 7-2, taking the first set the Czech had conceded in the entire tournament.

Kvitova regrouped and

kept her hopes alive with the first break of the match, going up 2-0 in the second.

Osaka was frustrated but did not panic, going back on level terms in the next game after benefiting from a Kvitova double fault and poorly hit drop shot.

The Japanese star broke again to take control as Kvitova's error rate climbed, bringing up three championship points. But the Czech saved all of them, forcing

court with a towel draped over her head. Osaka regained her cool and clipped a clean backhand winner to take a break point in the third game of the decider, going on to see off a Kvitova break opportunity, her mental demons put to bed.

Kvitova would not surrender, saving three break points before again forcing Osaka to serve it out, but the Japanese champion managed it on the second attempt for a famous victory.

Osaka to serve for the title. Nerves took hold as Osaka conceded a break to make it 5-5, smashing a ball into the ground and putting her hands over her ears.

The Czech broke again to

seize momentum with her

fourth straight game, claiming the set as Osaka left the

court with a towel draped over her head. Osaka regained her cool and clipped a clean backhand winner to take a break point in the third game of the decider, going on to see off a Kvitova break opportunity, her mental demons put to bed.

Kvitova would not surrender, saving three break points before again forcing Osaka to serve it out, but the Japanese champion managed it on the second attempt for a famous victory.

Osaka to serve for the title. Nerves took hold as Osaka conceded a break to make it 5-5, smashing a ball into the ground and putting her hands over her ears.

The Czech broke again to

seize momentum with her

fourth straight game, claiming the set as Osaka left the

Osaka	MATCH STATS	Kvitova
9	Aces	5
4	Double faults	4
62	First serve (%)	64
3/14	Break points	3/10
0/3	Net points won	10/12
33	Winners	33
33	Unforced errors	39
116	Total points	112

The Japanese is the first woman since Serena Williams to win successive Majors. The American had won four on the trot (2014 US Open to 2015 Wimbledon).

It is Kvitova's first defeat in a Slam final in her third appearance. It also ends the Czech's run of eight straight successful tournament finals.

The Wizard of Oz vs Spanish Matador

■ It will be the 53rd meeting between Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal, and the 15th in Grand Slams

■ The Serb leads their overall head-to-head 27-25, but trails the Spaniard 5-9 in Slams

■ A triumph on Sunday will make Djokovic the undisputed king of Melbourne Park as his seventh title will take him past Roger Federer's tally of six

■ In Slam finals, there is not much to separate the two with Nadal having the edge (4-3)

■ In recent times, Djokovic has had the better of the exchanges, winning 12 of their last 15 meetings. The three losses have come on clay

■ Djokovic's last defeat to Nadal on hard courts came in the 2013 US Open final

■ Nadal, the 2009 champion, can become the first player in the Open Era to win each Major at least twice if he wins on Sunday

1-Djokovic	Quick facts	2-Nadal
31	Age	32
1	World ranking	2
\$125,847,879	Prize money	\$103,251,975
72	Career titles	80
14	Grand Slam titles	17
2008, '11, '12, '13, '15, '16	Australian Open Champion	2009

I just have to think my way. I have to keep doing the things that I am doing. Just keep playing the way that I am playing and expect to have one of those special days

gap on Roger Federer's 20 at the top of the all-time list and Djokovic's 15th would give him sole ownership of third place ahead of Pete Sampras.

"These are the kind of matches that you live for: finals of Slams, playing the greatest rivals at their best," said Djokovic after dismantling Lucas Pouille 6-0, 6-2, 6-2 in a lopsided 83 minutes in Friday's semifinal.

The top two players in the world have 31 Grand Slam titles between them and each can claim another slice of history with victory.

Djokovic, 31, will lift a record seventh Norman Brookes Trophy with a win while Nadal, 32, will become the first man in the Open Era to win all four Grand Slams twice if he adds to his 2009 Melbourne Park crown.

"What more can you ask for? This is where you want to be."

It will be the 53rd meeting between the two giants of the games and their eighth in the final of a Grand Slam.

Nadal's 18th Grand Slam title would see him close the gap on Federer's 20 at the top of the all-time list and Djokovic's 15th would give him sole ownership of third place ahead of Pete Sampras.

No two men have met more often in the Open Era,

and no pair have pushed one another harder or further.

Their only previous final in Australia, in 2012, developed into a record-breaking five hours and 53 minutes slugfest.

"Nadal has historically throughout my life and career been the greatest rival that I ever played against, on all the surfaces," Djokovic said.

"I had some disappointing moments where I lost to him. I

Shreyas comes up with another defiant knock

Adds 61 with Mithun for the unbroken ninth wicket stand; Karnataka takes a healthy lead of 276

RANJI SEMIFINAL

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
BENGALURU

Shreyas Gopal stood defiantly tall as Karnataka stalled Saurashtra's charge on the third day of their engrossing Ranji Trophy clash.

Jaydev Unadkat and Dharmendrasinh Jadeja had spearheaded Saurashtra's bowling effort at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday, with the home side reduced to 129 for six in the second innings.

But Shreyas, Karnataka's

top-scorer in the first dig, resisted yet again, making an unbeaten 61. He and Abhimanyu Mithun were involved in an unbroken partnership of 61 as their side recovered to 237 for eight at stumps.

Karnataka's lead is now a healthy 276; with batting expected to get tougher, Manish Pandey's men will believe they are ahead in the contest.

More takes six

It was a productive day out for Mithun, who in the morning was key to wiping Saurashtra's tail out. He struck twice in two balls, while Ro-



Standing tall: Shreyas Gopal, who was Karnataka's top-scorer in the first dig, came up with yet another valuable innings. ■ SUHAKARA JAIN

nit More claimed the other wicket, as the visiting side lost three for nine in 4.3 overs.

Karnataka's advantage of 39 runs had barely swelled before R. Samarth was sent back, bowled through the gate by an in-ducker from

Unadkat. K.V. Siddharth and Karun Nair fell to Prerak Mankad's seemingly innocuous medium-pace. Mankad bowled off a few paces and generated no great pace, but his stump-to-stump line and extravagant in-swing accounted for both batsmen.

Agarwal went on to make

an excellent appeal for leg-before early in his innings and then on II was put down at first slip by Arpit Vasavada; young Chetan Sakariya was the bowler to suffer on both occasions.

They got through to stumps unscathed; with two days left in the game, a grip-

ping finish looks on the cards.

The scores:

Karnataka – 1st innings: 275.

Saurashtra – 1st innings: Harvik Desai c Pandey b More 16, Snell Patel c Sharath b Shreyas 85, Vishwaraj Jadeja c Sharath b More 5, Cheteshwar Pujara c and b Mithun 45, Sheldon Jackson c Sharath b More 46, Arpit Vasavada c Nair b More 30, Prekash Mankad c Sharath b More 0, Kamlesh Makwana c Sharath b More 1, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja c Sharath b Mithun 3, Jaydev Unadkat lbw b Mithun 0, Chetan Sakariya (not out) 1; Extras (b-1, lb-3); 4; Total (in 71 overs): 236.

Fall of wickets: 1-43, 2-63, 3-137, 4-178, 5-223, 6-223, 7-227, 8-230, 9-230.

Karnataka bowling: Vinay 15-43-32-0, Mithun 19-6-46-3, More 18-1-60-6, Siddharth 3-0-9-0, Gowtham 11-0-50-0, Shreyas 5-0-35-1.

Karnataka – 2nd innings: R. Samarth b Unadkat 5, Mayank Agarwal b Jadeja 46, K.V. Siddharth b Mankad 8, Karun Nair lbw b Mankad 15, Manish Pandey lbw b Jadeja 26, Shreyas Gopal (batting) 61, Sharath Sri-nivas lbw b Unadkat 7, R. Vinay Kumar b Unadkat 12, K. Gowtham b Jadeja 11, A. Mithun (batting) 35; Extras (b-5, lb-4, nb-1, w-1); 11; Total (for eight wkts, in 78 overs): 237.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-26, 3-52, 4-89, 5-108, 6-129, 7-155, 8-176.

Saurashtra bowling: Unadkat 15-3-35-3, Sakariya 11-0-38-0, Mankad 10-0-27-2, Jadeja 27-3-77-3, Makwana 15-1-51-0.

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The scores:

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Saurashtra – 1st innings: Harvik Desai c Pandey b More 16, Snell Patel c Sharath b Shreyas 85, Vishwaraj Jadeja c Sharath b More 5, Cheteshwar Pujara c and b Mithun 45, Sheldon Jackson c Sharath b More 46, Arpit Vasavada c Nair b More 30, Prekash Mankad c Sharath b More 0, Kamlesh Makwana c Sharath b More 1, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja c Sharath b Mithun 3, Jaydev Unadkat lbw b Mithun 0, Chetan Sakariya (not out) 1; Extras (b-1, lb-3); 4; Total (in 71 overs): 236.

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Karnataka bowling: Vinay 15-43-32-0, Mithun 19-6-46-3, More 18-1-60-6, Siddharth 3-0-9-0, Gowtham 11-0-50-0, Shreyas 5-0-35-1.

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Saurashtra bowling: Unadkat 15-3-35-3, Sakariya 11-0-38-0, Mankad 10-0-27-2, Jadeja 27-3-77-3, Makwana 15-1-51-0.

Shreyas has taken a step forward: Karun

Feels Karnataka is well-placed to push for victory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

There is at times doubt over what Shreyas Gopal's primary skill is – his batting or his leg-spin – but Karnataka will not care. To his team, he is simply, and emphatically, an all-rounder.

Shreyas now has 524 runs and 32 wickets to his name this season; on Saturday he scored a potentially game-changing half-century, digging Karnataka out of trouble and leading it to a position of strength in its Ranji Trophy semi-final clash against Saurashtra. And this after having top-scored with 87 in the first innings.

The best

"I have been playing with him from my schooldays; this is the best I have seen him bat," said Karun Nair, after the third day's play here.

"He has taken responsibility and has also played according to the situation. To get fifty

in both innings is amazing. Getting fifty over here in the second innings is like getting a hundred."

Temperament

Karun hailed Shreyas's temperament. "He has always been level-headed. He is someone who knows his strengths and he knows where he can get runs and he will not go away from that."

"He has got some crucial runs when we have been in difficult situations when the team has needed it the most. He has taken a step forward," he said.

Karnataka was well-placed to push for victory, Karun felt. "We are in a good position," he said.

Credit to bowlers

"The wicket is going to get tougher and tougher. Our bowlers were brilliant in the first innings. We did not bat well in the first innings, so credit goes to the bowlers, but we have to come back tomorrow and do it again."

The Invader claims feature event

BENGALURU: Nityanand's ward The Invader piloted by P. Trevor won the The Catalyst Properties Bangalore Derby, the stellar attraction of the races here on Saturday (Jan 26). The winner is the property of Mr. A. Mauniraja and Mr. Nanda Kumar N.

The Invader, who was racing second last till the final bend, made his move on the wide outside, came flying and breezed past Isn't She Lovely near 150m and won comfortably, giving its owners, trainer and the jockey a classic double.

THE RESULTS

1 TOTALIZATOR CUP (Div. II, 1,200m), rated 15 to 35: SAN-TAMARIJA FESTA (Neeraj) 1, Duxton (Darshan) 2, Songkran (Trevor) 3 and Regal Force (Sai Kiran) 4. Not run: Legend Is Back 1/2, Nk and Nk. Im 14.97s. ₹31 (w), 15, 28 and 22 (p), SHP: 89, THP: 54, FP: 324, Q: 213, Trinella: 1,873 and 589, Exacta: 8,671 and 3,716. Favourite: Santamarija Festa. Owners: Mr. S.M. Ruia & Mr. Kersha Vachha. Trainer: S. Attaolahai.

2 SADDLE UP CUP (1,200m), rated 00 to 20: PERFECT-GOLDENERA (K. Nazil) 1, Southern Ruler (A. Imran) 3 and Shareef (Ajay) 2, Kruger Park (S. Shareef) 3 and Country's Pearl (Irwan) 4. 5-1/2, Link and 3/4. Im 14.79s. ₹55 (w), 20, 19 and 22 (p), SHP: 69, THP: 52, FP: 927, Q: 570, Trinella: 3,607 and 1,766. Exacta: 85,640 and 36,703. Favourite: Dallas. Owner: Mr. P.S. Somakanthan. Trainer: Sharat Kumar.

3 KEMPE GOWDA CUP (1,600m), rated 60 above: COURAGE (Robbie Downey) 1, Star Cracker (Arshad) 1, Pinayda (T.S. Jodha) 3 and Super Smart (Neeraj) 4. 1-3/4, 1/2 and 1-3/4. Im 13.70s. ₹76 (w), 22, 16 and 27 (p), SHP: 39, THP: 69, FP: 742, Q: 265, Trinella: 4,855 and 1,561, Exacta: 1,73,236 (carried over). Favourite: Speaking Of Stars. Owner: Mr. Lakshminarayana G. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

4 MYSORE RACE CLUB TROPHY (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o and above: PRODIGAL (Akshay) 1, Armin (Robbie Downey) 2, Candle-lightqueen (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Kimera (Srinivas) 4. Not run: Nawabzaadi 1-1/4, 1-1/2 and 1. Im 13.47s. ₹31 (w), 15, 14 and 21 (p), SHP: 30, THP: 42, FP: 286, Q: 87, Trinella: 1,139 and 588, Exacta: 1,752 and 42, Favourite: Kimera. Owners: Mr. K. Kamesh & Mr. S. Ramasubramanian. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

5 T.B. HANUMANTHARAJ ME-MORIAL TROPHY (Div. II, 1,400m), rated 30 to 50, 5-y-o and over: OPTIMISTICAPPROACH (Sai Kiran) 1, Reczai (K. Nazil) 2, Emilio (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Touch Of Class (Akshay) 4. 2-3/4, 1/2 and 1. Im 13.16s. ₹30 (w), 15, 28 and 49 (p), SHP: 82, THP: 69, FP: 394, Q: 270, Trinella: 7,961 and 7,677, Exacta: 3,41,948 and 1,46,549. Favourite: Optimisticapproach. Owners: Mr. Nitin Himmamat Jain & Mr. Jatin Laxmi. Trainer: Praveen Jesu.

6 TOTALIZATOR CUP (Div. I, 1,200m), rated 15 to 35: PRODIGO (Akshay) 1, Call Me Maybe (I. Chisty) 2, Southern Ruler (A. Imran) 3 and Chandelle (Zervan) 4. Hd, Link and 3/4. Im 13.70s. ₹76 (w), 22, 16 and 27 (p), SHP: 42, FP: 286, Q: 87, Trinella: 1,139 and 588, Exacta: 57,195 and 24,512. Favourite: Castaway. Owners: Mr. Rajan Aggarwal & Mrs. Geeta Aggarwal. Trainer: Deepak Anna.

7 CATALYST PROPERTIES BAN-GALORE DERBY (2,400m), 4-y-o only, (Terms): INDIAN EMPRESS (Akshay) 1, Invicta (I. Chisty) 2, Southern Ruler (A. Imran) 3 and Chandelle (Zervan) 4. Hd, Link and 3/4. Im 13.70s. ₹76 (w), 22, 16 and 27 (p), SHP: 74, THP: 78, FP: 2,611, Q: 1,178, Trinella: 10,046 and 17,221. Exacta: 57,195 and 24,512. Favourite: Castaway. Owners: Mr. Rajan Aggarwal & Mrs. Geeta Aggarwal. Trainer: Deepak Anna.

8 INDIAN REPUBLIC TROPHY (1,200m), rated 45 to 65: PRODIGO (Akshay) 1, Call Me Maybe (I. Chisty) 2, Bluejack (T.S. Jodha) 3 and Nonon (Arshad) 4. 1/2, 1/2 and 1. Im 13.27s. ₹22 (w), 13, 20 and 25 (p), SHP: 42, THP: 62, FP: 81, Q: 49, Trinella: 398 and 280. Exacta: 2,116 and 804. Favourite: Spirit Of London. Owner: Mr. Dilip R. Ranka. Trainer: B. Prithviraj.

9 T.B. HANUMANTHARAJ ME-MORIAL TROPHY (Div. II), 1,400m, rated 30 to 50, 5-y-o & over: SPIRIT OF LONDON (P.S. Chouhan) 1, Call Me Maybe (I. Chisty) 2, Bluejack (T.S. Jodha) 3 and Nonon (Arshad) 4. 1/2, 1/2 and 1. Im 13.27s. ₹22 (w), 13, 20 and 25 (p), SHP: 42, THP: 62, FP: 81, Q: 49, Trinella: 398 and 280. Exacta: 2,40,418. Favourite: Isn't She Lovely. Owners: Mr. A. Muniraja & Mr. Nanda Kumar N. Trainer: G. Nityanand.

10 JACKPOT: ₹13,338 (79 tkts); Runner up: ₹3,395 (133 tkts); Treble (i): ₹475 (47 tkts); (ii): ₹2,607 (12 tkts); (iii): ₹937 (53 tkts).



Chairman and Managing Director of Catalyst Properties Anjan Rangaraj (second left) presenting The Catalyst Properties Bangalore Derby trophy to the winning owners A Muniraja and Nanada Kumar N. Also seen Chairmen of BTC Harimohan Naidu (right). ■ SREENIVASA MURTHY

Australia routs Sri Lanka in first Test

Cummins leads the way with a brilliant bowling display

LANKA IN AUS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRISBANE

Australia thrashed a disappointing Sri Lanka by an innings and 40 runs in the first day-night Test in Brisbane on Saturday.

Led by a brilliant display of fast bowling from Pat Cummins, the Australians dominated a Sri Lankan outfit that never came to terms with the pace and bounce of the Gabba wicket.

It made 144 in the first innings and just 139 in the second in reply to Australia's first innings total of 323.

Cummins took a career-best six for 23 in the second innings, and 10 for the match. ■ AFP

Sri Lanka never looked like making Australia bat a second time.



Rich haul: Pat Cummins took a career-best six for 23 in the second innings, and 10 for the match. ■ AFP

SCOREBOARD AUSTRALIA VS SRI LANKA, FIRST TEST

Greg cared for Indian cricket, says Gloster

'Kirsten, team benefited from the fruits of the coach's vision'

PLAINSPeak

S. DINAKAR

CHENNAI
John Gloster's four years with the Indian cricket team – from 2005 to 2008 – were busy, eventful, and fulfilling.

The experienced physio was under coaches John Wright, Greg Chappell, Ravi Shastri and Gary Kirsten. "I've been through various phases in the Indian cricket team," he told *The Hindu* on Saturday.

And Gloster has seen several Indian captains – Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Anil Kumble and M.S. Dhoni – from close quarters.

The South Australian, now married to an Indian pilot and settled in Mumbai, shed light on Chappell's tumultuous stint.

Eye for talent

Gloster said, "Greg had a fantastic eye for talent, had a long-term vision for Indian cricket. He saw a transition phase coming and had guys like Dhoni, Suresh Raina and others ready. He cared for Indian cricket."

Gloster added, "In fact, I would say that Kirsten and the Indian team benefited from the fruits of Greg's vision, in the 2011 World Cup."

Then where did it go wrong for Greg, first with Sourav Ganguly and then with a bunch of senior cricketers following the disastrous 2007 ODI World Cup?

Gloster answered, "Perhaps, Sourav expected more help from Greg when things were not working for him as a batsman. Then, probably, Greg was not happy with the team he got in the 2007 World Cup and things started going downhill."



Balanced view: John Gloster has high praise for Greg Chappell but, at the same time, says he could have handled the media better. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He said, "Greg could have handled the media better. But he left his imprint in Indian cricket."

Talking about Indian captains, Gloster felt Ganguly brought aggression to the Indian team. Dravid, he said, was "both sensitive and tough as skipper, which is a rare combination."

Gloster was the India physio when the 'Monkeygate' Sydney Test of 2008 happened. How was the dressing room like after the incident? "There was a lot of confusion about who said what. Kumble was the captain and he handled the situation calmly; he bought time."

Shrewd captain
Gloster, now with Rajasthan Royals, was with Dhoni when India triumphed in World T20 in South Africa, 2007. Gloster felt Dhoni was a "shrewd, smart captain who thought on his feet."

The erudite Gloster is convinced about one thing though – fitness has lent a cutting edge and consistency to Indian cricket.

World Cup

Talking about Virat Kohli, Gloster said, "He is not just a great batsman but deserves credit for making fitness a non-negotiable issue."

"I personally think the Yo-Yo Test is suited more to T20 and possibly ODI cricket and a 2km time trial may be a better option for Tests, but the more important thing is the messaging about fitness."

"Kohli has put fitness in the forefront and everyone knows about the consequence of failing the test," he said.

Gloster, however, said the communication to the media around the fitness issues in the Indian team, if improved, would complete the circle of progress. "That's one area. Within the group there could be communication but outside it? I don't know who is in charge of it."

The erudite Gloster is convinced about one thing though – fitness has lent a cutting edge and consistency to Indian cricket.

Vinita claims title

Surmounts Straub's challenge

SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU
MUNICH

World University champion Vinita Bhardwaj was in irresistible form as she topped a strong field in winning the gold in women's air rifle in the H&N Cup international shooting championship here in Germany.

Vinita shot 251.0 in the final and beat the qualification topper Isabella Straub of Germany by 0.8 point for the gold. Vinita had qualified in the second place with an impressive 630.1, while Isabella had shot 1.5 point more.

World Championship silver medalist Anjum Moudgil shot 627.8 for the 14th spot, while Shriyanka Sadangi had 627.4 for the 23rd place.

World Cup

In the second match, Vinita Bhardwaj (627.4) and Shriyanka

Sadangi (627.7) missed the final in air rifle, but former world-record holder Heena Sidhu had consistent fare in women's air pistol, as she won the bronze and placed fourth in two matches.

In men's air pistol, world-record holder Shahzar Rizvi, who had won a gold and a silver in World Cups last year, shot 576 and placed 28th.

The results: Women's air rifle:

1. Vinita Bhardwaj 251.0 (630.1); 2. Isabella Straub (Ger) 250.2 (632.6); 3. Alison Weisz (US) 228.9 (629.8); 14. Anjum Moudgil 627.8; 23. Shriyanka Sadangi 627.4.

Women's air pistol:

1. Olena Kostevych (Ukr) 242.0 (586); 2. Vitalina Batsarashkina (Rus) 240.4 (579); 3. Heena Sidhu 220.0 (579); 8. P. Shri Nivetha 115.4 (579).

Women's air pistol-2:

1. Olena Kostevych (Ukr) 242.5 (584); 2. Vitalina Batsarashkina (Rus) 240.4 (578); 3. Heidi Dietelheim (Sui) 220.9 (578); 4. Heena Sidhu 200.1 (579).

Consistent fare

In the second match, Vinita Bhardwaj (627.4) and Shriyanka



Making a mark: Vinita who won the gold in women's air rifle. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

'Historic 2018 raised my hopes'

I was not sure if I would get it this time: Sharath Kamal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The path-breaking twin medals at the Jakarta Asian Games made his case stronger for the prestigious Padma Shri award, feels paddler Sharath Kamal, who finally got lucky after finding his nomination being rejected on two previous occasions.

The 36-year-old, who had criticised the application process, said that the Padma honour is supremely special.

'Right up there'

"It is my first civilian award, so it has to be right up there. I was out with friends when the news broke last night. My phone ran out of battery and it has been madness ever since I got back home," Sharath said.

It was tough to ignore Sha-



Sharath. ■ JIGNESH MISTRY

rath this time, considering how phenomenal 2018 was. He guided the men's team to a historic bronze at the Asiad with a shock win over Japan, ending a 60-year wait for a medal in table tennis.

Sharath and rising star Manika Batra then clinched a surprise bronze in mixed doubles to cap off a dream

run at the games.

He now stands at a career-high 30 in the latest world rankings and broke Kamlesh Mehta's record of most national titles by winning his ninth crown earlier this month.

"It feels great to get this recognition, especially when you look at others who have been named for Padma Shri. After two failed attempts, I was not sure if I would get it this time but considering the year we have had, anything was possible."

"The fact that an athlete has to apply for it still remains but I don't know if you can do it any other way," said Sharath.

It's just pure happiness: Chhetri

Says the award will motivate him to work harder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Indian skipper Sunil Chhetri on Saturday said being in the elite list of former footballers to be honoured with the Padma award makes him a bit "nervous" and brings "extra pressure" to strive for excellence.

Chhetri, the second highest goal-getter (among current players) in internationals after Cristiano Ronaldo, was among the nine sportspersons to be honoured with the Padma Shri award.

"At the moment, it's just pure happiness. It hasn't sunk in as yet. I need some time to feel it. I need some time to understand what the recognition actually means," said Chhetri.

"Every person has flaws, so do I. I understand it and strive to be a better version of myself – a better human



Sunil Chhetri. ■ AP

being. I feel I need to set a better example to others. On that perspective, I am loving that extra pressure which has come with this Padma Shri announcement."

Chhetri said it will motivate him to work harder.

"As a player, I need to keep working hard. There's no alternative to that."

"No award can make you a better player unless you strive to be one," he said.

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TV PICKS

New Zealand Women vs India Women: Second ODI: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
Ranji Trophy: Karnataka vs Saurashtra, Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Australian Open: Sony Ten 2 & Six (SD & HD), 2 p.m.
PWL: Sony Six (SD & HD), 7 p.m.

Ankita a step closer to WTA event; Kamran loses

SPORTS BUREAU
HUA HIN (THAILAND)

Ankita Raina blanked Kwan Yau Ng of Hong Kong 6-0, 6-0 to reach the second and final qualifying round of the \$250,000 WTA tennis tournament here on Saturday.

In the final round, Ankita will play fifth seed Conny Perrin of Switzerland.

Karman Kaur Thandi, however, went down fighting 3-6, 5-7 to Chloe Paquet of France.

Other result: \$25,000 WTA, Hua Hin, Thailand: First qualifying round: Chloe Paquet (Fra) bt Karman Kaur Thandi 6-3, 7-5; Ankita Raina bt Kwan Yau Ng (Hkg) 6-0, 6-0.

Dhanker edges Rana

Y.B. SARANGI
GREATER NOIDA

Amit Dhanker pipped Parveen Rana 4-2 in the deciding nail-biting men's 74kg bout as Punjab Royals defeated Haryana Hammers 4-3 in the Pro Wrestling League at the Gautam Buddha University indoor hall here on Saturday.

Dhanker snatched two points in the closing moments to spread joy in the Royals camp.

World under-23 championships silver medallist Ravi Kumar continued his unbeaten impressive run,

Saina sets up final with Marin

The Indian fights back to down sixth seed Bingjiao

INDONESIA MASTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAKARTA

Saina Nehwal made her first final of the season with a combative victory over China's He Bingjiao at the \$350,000 Indonesia Masters badminton tournament here on Saturday.

The 28-year-old Indian, who was the runner-up here last year, notched up a 18-21, 21-12, 21-18 win over sixth seed Bingjiao, a World championship bronze medallist.

Eighth seed Saina will now face Spain's three-time World and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin, who put it across China's third seed Chen Yuifei 17-21, 21-11, 23-21, in the summit clash of the World Tour Supper 500 event.

Better court coverage

In their first ever meeting in international circuit, Saina showed better court coverage and unleashed some telling smashes to trouble the 21-year-old left-hander. Saina lagged 2-0 initially but clawed back to 5-5 with a couple of smashes.

Another powerful straight



Going strong: Saina Nehwal made her first final of the season. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

smash left the Chinese stranded as the Indian led 8-6. She then went into the break with a 11-7 advantage.

Saina continued her good run after the break to lead 16-11 but twice hit the net to allow Bingjiao narrow down the equation to 15-16. A brilliant cross-court smash and a superb drop helped the Chinese keep the deficit to a point till 17-18.

Bingjiao won a video referral on a line call to make it

18-18. She then unleashed a smash to grab a crucial 19-18 advantage, before holding two game points. The Chinese sealed it when Saina went wide.

In the second game, Saina pulled away to 6-3 after an initial duel. Easy mistakes started creeping in Bingjiao's game as she found the net often and sent the shuttle long and wide to allow Saina enter the break with a huge 11-3 lead.

Saina eventually took the match to the decider with a cross court slice.

Stijn Pel bags a double

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Top-seeded Stijn Pel of the Netherlands completed a grand double as he made a spectacular comeback against China's Hanwen Li to win the boys' singles title, here in the DKS ITF Junior tennis on Saturday.

Pel, who had in partnership with compatriot Guy Ouden, won the doubles title on Friday, annexed the singles crown downing the Chinese opponent in style.

The results (finals):
Boys: Stijn Pel (Ned) bt Hanwen Li (Chn) 3-6, 6-0, 6-0.
Girls: Mai Napatt Nirundorn (Tha) bt Alexandra Eala (Phi) 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

advantage. The Dutch player took over from the second set and won 12 straight games to wrap up both the sets 6-0, 6-0.

Fourth-seeded Mai Napatt Nirundorn of Thailand had to work hard against unseeded Alexandra Eala of the Philippines before overcoming the latter in the decider and win the girls' singles crown.

The results (finals):
Boys: Stijn Pel (Ned) bt Hanwen Li (Chn) 3-6, 6-0, 6-0.
Girls: Mai Napatt Nirundorn (Tha) bt Alexandra Eala (Phi) 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Jason Holder slams a record unbeaten double century

Dowrich helps himself to a ton

AGENCE-FRANCE PRESSE
BRIDGETOWN

England, chasing a mammoth target of 628, had made 134 for two in the second innings against West Indies at lunch on the fourth day of their first Test at Kensington Oval on Saturday.

Earlier on Friday, West Indies had declared its second innings on 415 for six after a magnificent unbeaten dou-

ble-century by captain Jason Holder and a calm, supporting century from Shane Dowrich.

Building on an already considerable first innings lead of 212 after Holder chose not to enforce the follow-on on the second evening, the skipper himself led the way with a commanding 202 not out, dominating an unbroken seventh-wicket

SCOREBOARD WEST INDIES VS ENGLAND, FIRST TEST

West Indies – 1st innings: 289.
England – 1st innings: 77.

West Indies – 2nd innings: K. Brathwaite lbw b Moeen 24, J. Campbell c Jennings b Stokes 33, S. Hope c Jennings b Stokes 3, D. Bravo c Stokes b Moeen 1, R. Chase c Stokes b Moeen 0, S. Hetmyer c Buttler b Curran 31, S. Dowrich (not out) 116, J. Holder (not out) 202; Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-3): 5; Total (in 103.1 overs in six wkts. decl.) 415.

Fall of wickets: 1-85, 2-134.
West Indies bowling: Roach 12-3-48-0, Gabriel 9-2-23-0, Holder 8-4-17-0, Chase 3.5-0-15-1, Joseph 10-3-26-1, Campbell 1-0-1-0.

England bowling: Anderson 18-

4-58-0, Curran 17-1-69-1, Moeen 20-3-78-3, Stokes 25-3-81-2, A. Rashid 9-0-61-0, Root 10-0-37-0, Jennings 4-10-29-0.

England – 2nd innings: R. Burns b Chase 84, K. Jennings c Holder b Joseph 14, J. Bairstow (batting) 29; Extras (b-4, nb-1, w-2): 7; Total (for two wkts. in 43.5 overs, at lunch): 134.

Fall of wickets: 1-85, 2-134.
West Indies bowling: Roach 12-3-48-0, Gabriel 9-2-23-0, Holder 8-4-17-0, Chase 3.5-0-15-1, Joseph 10-3-26-1, Campbell 1-0-1-0.

Jason's day out

■ Jason Holder's 202 not out is his highest First Class score

■ It is the third highest score by a No. 8 batsman in Test history after Pakistan's Wasim Akram (257 not out vs Zimbabwe) and Imtiaz Ahmed (209 vs New Zealand)

■ He is the second West Indies skipper after Brian Lara to score a double hundred against England. Lara had made 375 and 400 not out

■ Holder smashed eight sixes, the most by a West Indies batsman in a Test innings against England

■ Holder and Dowrich's 295-run association is the highest seventh-wicket stand against England in Tests



Terrific innings: West Indies captain Jason Holder plundered the England attack at will by hitting eight sixes on way to his unbeaten 202. ■ AP



Arvind Kejriwal

Chief Minister, Delhi

Inauguration ceremony for Construction of 110 Lac Litre capacity UGR & BPS and laying of feeder/peripheral main at Patparganj near Aster Public School

On Sunday, 27th January, 2019 at 11.00 AM

Venue: Near Anand Lok Society, Patparganj, Delhi

Chief Guest:

MANISH SISODIA

Dy. Chief Minister, Delhi

In the presence of

Dinesh Mohaniya

Vice-Chairman, DJB

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT

- On completion of the project more than 1,00,000 residents will be benefited
- The pump house shall be operated by latest technology SCADA

DIP/SHABDARTH/D/0226/18-19



Spain, France, Germany to recognise Guaidó if Maduro doesn't call poll
page 3



The date U.K. leaves EU could be pushed back by a couple of weeks
page 3



Part of shares held by Siddhartha, Coffee Day in Mindtree attached
page 7



Facebook move to unify chat apps may make them porous: report
page 10

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IN BRIEF



China to step up stimulus in slowdown fight

BEIJING China will take steps to spur growth amid a trade war with the U.S., but there is limited room for aggressive stimulus in an economy laden with massive debts and a property market prone to credit-driven spikes, policy insiders said. The deepening economic slowdown has fanned market expectations of a big spending binge, especially if the tariff war escalates.

BUSINESS ABROAD ▶ PAGE 8

Shipping rates go down in a sign of slowdown

SINGAPORE Freight rates for dry-bulk and container ships, carriers of most of the world's raw materials and finished goods, have plunged over the last six months in the latest sign the global economy is slowing significantly. The Baltic Dry Index, measure of ship transport costs for materials like iron ore and coal, has fallen 47% since mid-2018.

BUSINESS ABROAD ▶ PAGE 8

Taliban leader likely to join talks with U.S.

KABUL/PESHAWAR Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban's new political leader, is expected to join meetings with U.S. officials in Qatar imminently. Taliban sources said, as the latest round of talks to find ways to end the 17-year Afghan war entered a sixth day.

WORLD ▶ PAGE 3

IRCTC starts e-payment for food in trains

NEW DELHI The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has introduced electronic payment for food items sold on trains, through the use of Point of Sale machines. Also, the paper bill is generated immediately after the payment is made.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 2

Alwar's government schools make a turnaround with model project

With 2 civil society groups joining hands to upgrade facilities and teaching, children from Meo and Dalit communities are back in classrooms

MOHAMMED IQBAL
ALWAR

The project has helped improve infrastructure and attract students from marginalised sections to these schools.

As a result, the school, which started in a small building two decades ago, has a robust infrastructure today.

Vice-principal Hemlata Manaktala points out that the better amenities, including furniture, toilets and large classrooms and the multimedia KYaan facility have boosted the confidence of the girls.

'Smart classes'

The Alwar Mewat Institute of Education and Development (AMIED) and Plan India, a child rights organisation,



Bright makeover: Cycles of students at the Government Girls' Senior Secondary School in Ramgarh. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

joined hands to establish 'smart classes' in the government schools in Ramgarh and Umren blocks and provide basic facilities in their buildings, apart from programmes to enhance capacity among the teachers. The

Metsu group from Finland has pitched in with financial assistance.

AMIED executive director Noor Mohammed told *The Hindu* that the project was aimed at encouraging families in the Meo-dominated

blocks to send their children to the government schools. "The Meo Muslim, Dalit and OBC children were either attending private schools or not going to school at all," he said.

The lack of basic facilities in the school buildings and high drop-out rates, coupled with the indifference of local communities, had created

SUNDAY SPECIAL

an environment in which the private schools had emerged as an alternative, despite their low quality of teaching.

As part of the project, AMIED activists fanned out to the 25 schools during the last two years and guided the teachers, the staff, the

students and village elders in the betterment of the education system, and in strengthening the school development and management committees.

They also focused on sanitation and hygiene in schools, and improving infrastructure. Laboratory equipment and books in the local language, Mewati were presented to the schools.

With existing resources

Rajwati Yadav, a teacher in Dadar's Government Secondary School, said the Building as Learning Aid (BaLA) concept in the project had utilised the existing infrastructure elements as learning resources and helped the primary section's students

become proficient in basic counting and arithmetic and spelling words.

Payal Verma, a Class X student from the Ramgarh school, who was elected head of *Baal Sansad* for the current academic session, cited instances of students' role in the school management. She said she had asked for separate laboratories for physics and chemistry.

AMIED associate Ikram Khan pointed out that the average results of schools in the project area had increased to 87.33% for the Secondary Board examination and 89.86% for the senior secondary exam. Besides, 32 girls have qualified for the State's Gargi Award.

Power point



Growing with the sun: Farmers working in front of newly installed solar panels to power water pumps in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal on Saturday. Solar pumps are at work in remote areas where electricity is out of reach for farmers. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

AI Boeing with ED/CBI officials may head for West Indies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Top government sources have confirmed that India is moving ahead to bring back high-value economic offenders from the West Indies.

A long-range Air India Boeing aircraft has been commissioned to handle this mission. Officials of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) will fly to

the West Indies to bring these persons back.

Availing themselves of the controversial paid citizenship programme offered by many of the islands in the Caribbean, diamond trader Mehmud Choksi and Winsome Diamonds promoter Jatin Mehta have taken citizenship in these parts. Mehta became a citizen of St Kitts and Nevis some years ago, while Choksi has taken Antigua

and Barbuda citizenship recently. These islands provide visa-free travel to 132 countries.

A popular option

Citizenship through investment has become popular among Indian economic offenders.

Sources in the investigating agencies also revealed that Choksi and absconding businessman Nirav Modi are

the principal targets of this exercise, but it is not clear whether Modi lives on one of these islands. Choksi may be picked up in the Caribbean, while Modi may be sequestered on the return route from Europe where he is reportedly hiding. Lack of extradition treaties has made these islands a safe haven for India's uber rich.

Other countries like Grenada, St Lucia and Dominica

have similar citizenship by investment programmes. Dominica and St Lucia give citizenship and a valid passport for just \$100,000, a chunk change for ultra rich Indians on the run. If your spouse needs a similar passport, it is \$165,000 in St Lucia and \$175,000 in Dominica.

Meanwhile, Grenada gives you similar passports for \$200,000.

which is an agreement for exchange of terrorist screening information between the Terrorist Screening Centre (TSC) of the U.S. and a selected Indian security agency. The TSC has the database of 11,000 terror suspects and U.S. authorities, while pitching for the agreement, had told India in 2016 that in the past one year two dozen people with terrorist links were arrested in Canada and Australia with the help of HSPD-6 as both countries

"The extradition treaty signed with Australia earlier was general in nature. This one will be more crime specific. It will focus on narcotics, human trafficking, spies and terrorism," the official said.

The official said that Australia has been keen on seeking information on terror suspects arrested here and the revamped pact will pave the way for sharing similar information.

Specific requests
It may be recalled that India had refused to sign the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-6),

In a decade, India has extradited only two persons from Australia. In 2014, Jaskaran Kalsi, an Indian, was sent to India for murdering a Burundi national in Jalandhar.

In 2015, Wulf Ingó Werner, an Australian, was extradited to India for alleged child sex abuse cases in Goa.

two persons from Australia. In 2015, Wulf Ingó Werner, an Australian, was extradited to India for child sex abuse cases in Goa. In 2014, Jaskaran Kalsi, an Indian, was extradited to India for murdering a Burundi national in Jalandhar.

According to the website of the Ministry of External Affairs, India can make an extradition request to any country. "While India's treaty partners have treaty obligations to consider India's requests, in the absence of a treaty, it is a matter for the foreign country to consider, in accordance with its domestic laws and procedures, whether the country can agree to India's extradition request on the basis of an assurance of reciprocity," the MEA says. India has extradition treaties with 43 countries and extradition arrangements with 10 countries.

India questions rush to declare climate change a security issue

Envoy to UN points to the pitfalls in the approach

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
UNITED NATIONS

India has questioned the rush at the UN to declare climate change an international security issue, potentially giving the Security Council the right to take action on it, and pointed to the pitfalls in the approach.

A "mere decision of the Council" to take over enforcement of climate change action will disrupt the Paris Agreement and multilateral efforts to find solutions, India's Permanent Representative Syed Akbaruddin told the Security Council on Friday.

India has been wary of the Council's mission creep as it tries to extend its reach beyond what is allocated in

the UN Charter by redefining other issues, even as it struggles to fulfil its primary functions.

An inclusive framework

Taking aim at the composition of the Council that does not reflect the contemporary world, Mr. Akbaruddin asked: "Can the needs of climate justice be served by shifting climate law-making from the inclusive UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to decision-making by a structurally unrepresentative institution with an exclusionary approach decided in secretive deliberations?"

He said the main point of contention "is about what manner, which aspects and

which global governance mechanisms are best suited to tackle these phenomena" and India favoured a cautious approach.

The Council was discussing the impact of climate-related disasters on international peace and security after the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, said the trends of heat waves, heavier rains, higher sea levels and severe damage to agriculture "represent a security risk for the entire world."

Performing for the first time in Sri Lanka, the veteran classical musician, flanked by his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, presented 'Strings of peace' – a concert organised by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka on the eve of the Republic Day. The show featured three segments – beginning with a duet piece

by his sons, followed by a solo segment featuring the senior artiste, and culminating in a majestic finale by the trio – accompanied by Satyajit Talwalkar and Shubh Maharaj on the tabla.

A link

"Music does not belong to any religion – it is like air, water, fire...but we all need music in our lives. In our country we say music connects you to God. Music has connected the world," Mr. Khan said during the concert, just before performing a Tarana – a composition whose lyrics comprised just rhythmic syllables, no words. In a delightful prelude, he sang a few lines to demonstrate its

structure. The complexity of the Sarod is hardly apparent when the master strummed its strings with his right hand, at once sliding his fingers on the left hand along its fretless board. "I have to file my nails on stage – it's not a thing of beauty, I need to do that to ensure the sound I produce is fine," he explained, demonstrating the difference between the rather rough and blaring tone when he played with his finger-tips, and the smooth, well-rounded contrast, as he used his finger nails.

Limiting the conventional Hindustani classical fare to a couple of pieces – raags Lalitha Gauri and Desh – the artistes offered a treat of popular numbers, including Rabindranath Tagore's *Ekla Chalo Re* and Mahatma Gandhi's favourite bhajans Vaishnava Janato and Raghupati Raghava Rajaram.

Making a rare appearance together, former Presidents and rivals Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Mahinda Rajapaksa, along with Speaker Karu Jayasuriya, were special guests. The artistes ended the show, playing the national anthems of the two countries, with Sri Lankan artiste Lahiru Gimhana Komangoda accompanying them on the keyboard.

Strumming the strings of peace in Colombo

Amjad Ali Khan performs with his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

"With all due respect to language, language creates barriers, while music connects the world," said Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, who enthralled a huge crowd at Colombo's iconic Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall on Friday.

Performing for the first time in Sri Lanka, the veteran classical musician, flanked by his sons Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash, presented 'Strings of peace' – a concert organised by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka on the eve of the Republic Day. The show featured three segments – beginning with a duet piece

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ND-ND

IN BRIEF



Train 18 to have higher fares than Shatabdi

NEW DELHI With all the safety clearances, trials and tests in place, the railways is all set to launch the indigenously-built Train 18 with fares that are likely to be around 40 to 50% higher than the Shatabdi Express, officials said. The first train is slated to run between New Delhi and Varanasi. IANS

7 arrested for assaulting woman, cutting her hair

DAHOD Seven persons were arrested here in Gujarat on Saturday for allegedly assaulting, abusing and chopping off the hair of a woman a few days ago, the police said. "The woman, married with two children, reportedly ran away to Ahmedabad with her lover. She was brought back to the village and beaten up," a police official said. PTI

50 youths to 'auction themselves' for water

HATHRAS Fifty youths in Nagla Maya village in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras district have, in a desperate measure, proposed to "auction themselves" to raise money to get drinking water for their village. Residents of Nagla Maya claim they have met various officials and raised the issue of acute water scarcity in the village, but to no avail. ANI

Three members of family killed in wall collapse

BASTI Three members of a family, including an infant, died and as many were injured on Friday after a wall of their house collapsed on them due to rain here in Uttar Pradesh, the police said. The incident occurred at Banpur village in Lalganj area. The deceased were identified as Chandranhan, 40, Pramila, 38 and six-month-old Satish. PTI



Safe ground: Sarus cranes searching for food in the wetland of Hargaon in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh. They feed on harmful insects, thereby controlling pests. • SANJAY KUMAR

The Sarus crane takes flight with people's help

Its population in Uttar Pradesh has steadily grown since 2013, as wetlands thrive and farmers, fisherfolk nurture their nests

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Its numbers pushed to the edge by habitat degradation and human callousness, the world's tallest flying bird now seems to be getting a new lease of life in Uttar Pradesh, where it enjoys the status of official State bird.

The population of the Sarus crane, a bird distinguishable by its red upper neck and white collar, has climbed to 15,938 as per the 2018 census (summer). This is a jump of 5.2% from 2017, when there were 15,138 Sarus cranes across U.P., as per the State Forest and Wildlife department.

Crucial role
The Sarus habitat is outside protected areas, in natural wetlands with low water depth, marshy and fallow areas and agricultural fields. They play a vital role in ecological balance by controlling the population of harmful insects and have significant cultural importance, while also being sociable. Sarus is omnivorous, feeding on fish and insects, as well as roots and plants.

Sanjay Srivastava, conservator of forests (wildlife) U.P., said the figures of Sarus population show that the conservation efforts made by his department were paying

off. But he also gives credit to general public awareness and efforts of locals, including schoolchildren, who share the fields with these magnificent birds, for their "positive role" in conservation.

Anand Srivastava, deputy chief wildlife warden, also stresses the role of local population in conservation. The department "motivates" locals to take care of Sarus, he said.

In U.P., Sarus crane is mainly found in south-west and central regions, in Mainpuri, Etawah, Aligarh, Etah, Lakhimpur Kheri Sitapur Shahjahanpur Barabanki and Hardoi

vation project, says the population of the bird has also gone up in parts of east U.P., where they have identified 30 water bodies as important Sarus wetland sites.

Since 2013, when the Samajwadi Party government was in power, the Sarus Crane Conservation Project has been running across 10 districts of Purvanchal by WTI in collaboration with Tata Trusts and the U.P. Forest Department.

Working through local volunteers (called Sarus Mitra or Friends of the Sarus), Tata Trust partner NGOs working in the area, and Sarus Protection Committees, the

taining it. "It is a result of involvement of farmers and fisherfolk in the protection of Sarus nests in wetlands as well as rice paddies. In this area, a significant number of Sarus cranes use rice paddies for nesting and breeding. So, it could be one of the direct reasons," said Mr. Sinha.

WTI has been working in Bahraich, Shravasti, Balrampur, Siddharthnagar, Kushinagar, Maharaiganj, Shahjahanpur, Faizabad, Barabanki and Sant Kabir Nagar.

Threat from dogs

The focus has been on involving farmers in the protection of Sarus nests, as depredation by stray dogs and egg stealing are common threats in the fields. The results have been "good", as per Mr. Sinha; in the last five years, over 650 nests have been protected by involving locals, with a hatching success of around 90%. "Most of these districts were not considered important for Sarus (conservation) due to less numbers. But, the

IRCTC starts e-payment for food in trains

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL
NEW DELHI

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has introduced electronic payment mode for food items sold on trains, through the use of Point of Sale (POS) machines.

Also, the paper bill is generated immediately after the payment is made by the customers as a record of the purchase. It would check overcharging and the complaints regarding the same, said an IRCTC official.

He informed that about 2,000 POS machines have been deployed in Mail and Express trains and soon the rest of the trains would also be covered.

Instructions have been given that in one rake there should be at least eight machines, he said.

'Curbs overcharging'

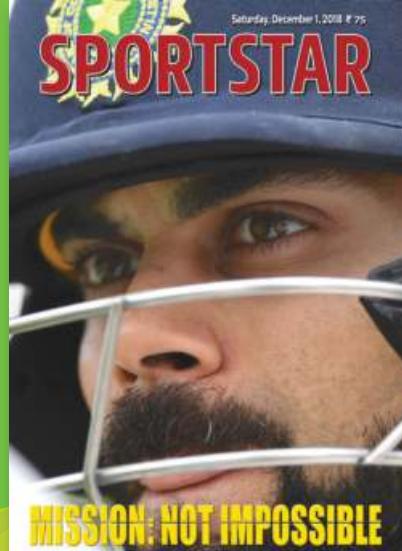
An inspection drive will also be launched on all the Mail and Express trains from January 26 to February 15 to ensure the availability and working of POS machines.

"This system is indeed a very good system as nobody will overcharge the passengers and we have to pay the amount that is generated electronically," said Neha Singh, who was travelling in Kashi Vishwanath Express from Delhi to Varanasi on Friday.

"Sometimes, they used to charge extra for water bottle saying it is for cooling. Now that will stop," she said.

"These days people usually avoid carrying change. This is a very good system as now we can pay for food by using credit card or debit card," said Raj Pratap Singh, another traveller.

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ELSEWHERE

Asia Bibi's lawyer to return to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD
Saif Malook, the lawyer of Asia Bibi, has decided to return to the country as the Supreme Court decides on January 29 whether to allow an appeal against her acquittal. Mr. Malook went to the Netherlands last year due to "security concerns" when violence broke out soon after Ms. Bibi's acquittal. PTI

300 missing after dam collapse in Brazil

BRUARINHO
Hopes were fading on Saturday that rescuers would find more survivors from at least 300 missing after a dam collapse at a mine in southeast Brazil, with nine bodies so far recovered. By early Saturday, the official death toll had risen to nine, local firefighters said, who also doubled the number of people presumed missing to nearly 300 people. AFP

Spain, France, Germany ask Maduro to hold fresh elections

EU nations warn that they will recognise Guaidó as President if polls are not held

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Spain, France and Germany put Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro on notice ahead of an UN Security Council meeting on Saturday, saying they would recognise Opposition leader Juan Guaidó as President unless he calls elections within eight days.

The ultimatum comes as international pressure mounts on the Maduro regime to agree to a new vote, after the United States, Canada and major South American players recognised Mr. Guaidó, who proclaimed himself acting President of Venezuela during massive street rallies this week.

Maduro given 8 days

"If within eight days there are no fair, free and transparent elections called in Venezuela, Spain will recognise



New leader: Opposition leader Juan Guaidó is cheered by supporters in Caracas, Venezuela, on Friday. ■ NYT

Juan Guaidó as Venezuelan President" so that he himself can call such polls, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said. French President Emmanuel Macron followed suit in a tweet, saying that "the Venezuelan people must be able to freely decide on their future," as did German government spokeswo-

man Martina Fietz. Mr. Guaidó quickly welcomed the support from the European powerhouses. "There continues to be progress in the European Union for the recognition and full support of our legitimate and constitutional struggle," he tweeted. The coordinated announ-

cements are the most explicit yet from EU countries as the 28-member bloc struggles to draft a joint statement with regards to its position on the crisis in Venezuela. For his part, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will on urge UN Security Council members to recognise Mr. Guaidó as interim president, the State Department said.

Spain had wanted the EU to take a tough line on Mr. Maduro by calling for immediate elections, failing which it wanted the bloc as a whole to recognise Mr. Guaidó. But countries like Austria, Greece and Portugal are much more reluctant.

Greece's ruling party Syriza has publicly backed Mr. Maduro, with party secretary Panos Skourletis voicing "full support and solidarity" to what he called "the legal President".

Taliban leader Abdul Baradar to join talks with U.S. in Qatar

Negotiations with special envoy Khalilzad enter sixth day

REUTERS
KABUL/PESHAWAR

The Taliban's new political leader is expected to join meetings with U.S. officials in Qatar imminently, Taliban sources said on Saturday as the latest round of talks entered a sixth day.

The peace talks are continuing despite Taliban representatives staging a brief walkout on Friday over differences with U.S. special



U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad. ■ AP

Afghanistan, was arrested in 2010 by a team from Pakistani and U.S. intelligence agencies. A co-founder of the movement, he was a close friend of the reclusive former Taliban leader, Mullah Omar. His appointment marks a new push to bring Taliban out of the political and diplomatic shadows, with several other officials being appointed to oversee education, mining and health issues.

When he joins talks, Mr.

Baradar will be faced with easing U.S. fears over the Taliban's refusal to cut ties with al-Qaeda – the issue at the core of Friday's walkout.

One of the key U.S. demands is a guarantees from the Taliban that Afghanistan would not be used as future base for terrorist attacks. "The Taliban has assured the U.S. that they will oppose any attempt by militant groups to use Afghanistan to stage terrorist attacks on America or its allies," a senior Taliban leader said, adding that U.S. wants the Taliban to snap ties with Islamic State and al Qaeda.

"We are willing to denounce links with Islamic State but we refuse to disconnect ties with al-Qaeda because they accept Taliban supreme Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada as their leader too," the leader said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Zimbabwe govt. pledges to probe abuse claims against security forces

12 people had died nationwide in violent protests last week

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HARARE

Zimbabwe's government has pledged to "thoroughly" investigate allegations of abuse and rape levelled against its security forces during a brutal crackdown to quell last week's anti-government protests.

Nationwide demonstrations erupted last week after President Emmerson Mnangagwa announced on January 12 that fuel prices were being more than doubled. Furious demonstrators took to the streets in several cities

and towns with widespread rioting and looting before soldiers and police brutally put down the protests at the cost of at least 12 lives, according to NGOs.

Hundreds of people were injured. "The government wishes to assure the public that all allegations of misconduct against any of our security services will be thoroughly investigated and that the law will be allowed to take its course," Justice Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi said on Friday. He said complaints should be lodged

with the police and also assured that they would be treated with "sensitivity", but many Zimbabweans fear retribution and find reporting such cases daunting.

In a separate statement, Home Affairs Minister Cain Mathema acknowledged reports of "alleged rape, sexual abuse and assaults".

"We take these rape allegations very seriously and investigations will be instituted immediately once complainants file reports with the police," Mr. Mathema said.

Dutch envoy to return to Pakistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
THE HAGUE

The Dutch Ambassador to Pakistan is to return to Islamabad next month after receiving a death threat last year, reportedly from Islamists angry over anti-Islam tweets by far-right politician Geert Wilders, Dutch media said on Saturday.

Ardi Stoios-Braken "will fly back to Islamabad in early February," the daily tabloid *Algemeen Dagblad* reported. She received word last October "that a letter [which spoke of a specific threat] had arrived at the Embassy."

British paper apologises to Melania for 'false' reportage

Telegraph also agrees to pay damages

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Britain's *Telegraph* newspaper has apologised and paid damages to U.S. First Lady Melania Trump after publishing an article it says contains many false statements.

The newspaper said on Saturday that it apologises "unreservedly" to Ms. Trump and her family for any embarrassment caused by the content of a cover story published on January 19 in the newspaper's weekly magazine supplement.

The Telegraph said it falsely characterised Ms. Trump's father, mother and sister had relocated to New York in 2005 to live in buildings owned by Mr. Trump.



U.S. First Lady Melania Trump. ■ AP

ported that her career as a model was unsuccessful before she met Donald Trump.

It also retracted the statement that Ms. Trump's father, mother and sister had relocated to New York in 2005 to live in buildings owned by Mr. Trump.

'Brexit could be pushed back by a few weeks'

Leadsom hopeful of getting deal passed

REUTERS
LONDON

The date Britain leaves the European Union (EU) could be pushed back by a couple of weeks to give time for legislation to be approved by lawmakers, the leader of Britain's lower house of Parliament said, the most senior figure to make such a suggestion. Britain is due to leave the EU on March 29.

Parliament will now vote on a series of amendments on Tuesday.

"We can get the legislation through and I think we do, in spite of everything, have a very strong relationship with our EU friends and neighbours and I am absolutely certain that if we needed a couple of extra

weeks or something then that would be feasible," Andrea Leadsom told the BBC.

Extending Article 50? Responding to the idea that this would mean extending the two-year Article 50 negotiation period, Ms. Leadsom, who is the organiser of government business in the lower house of Parliament, told the BBC: "It doesn't necessarily mean that. I think we would want to think carefully about it. But as things stand I do feel that we can get, with the support of both Houses – the House of Commons and the House of Lords – with goodwill and a determination we can still get the legislation through in good time."

'Saudi Arabia could be testing ballistic missiles'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI

A military base deep inside Saudi Arabia appears to be testing and possibly manufacturing ballistic missiles, experts and satellite images suggest, evidence of the type of weapons it has long criticised its arch-rival Iran of possessing.

Further raising the stakes for any such programme are comments by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who said last year the kingdom wouldn't hesitate to develop nuclear weapons if Iran does.

The images, first reported by *The Washington Post*, focus on a military base near the town of al-Dawadmi, some 230 km west of Riyadh. *Jane's Defense Weekly* first identified the base in 2013, suggesting that its two launch pads appear oriented to target Israel and Iran with ballistic missiles the kingdom bought from China.

Satellite images The November satellite images show what appear to be structures big enough to build and fuel ballistic missiles. An apparent rocket-engine test stand can be seen in a corner of the base – the type on which a rocket is positioned on its side and test-fired in place. Such testing is key for countries attempting to manufacture working missiles, experts say.

Chinese military support to the kingdom would not come as a surprise. China has sold armed drones to Saudi Arabia and other nations in the region, even as the U.S. blocks sales of its own to allies over proliferation concerns.

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Deep down: An abandoned hand pump at Atal Ayub Nagar, one of the areas most affected by the Bhopal tragedy. The leaked gas has contaminated groundwater, but residents here used to consume it till water supply started from the Narmada. According to reports, groundwater within a radius of 3.5 km of the factory has been contaminated.



On a short fuse: Rajni Pant, 21, a resident of one of the areas affected by the toxic gas leak in Bhopal, is always angry, earning the wrath of her neighbours who sometimes fight with her. Multiple disabilities have made this child of Bhopal gas leak survivors shy and irritable.



Living victims: Vikas Yadav, 19, and Aman Yadav, 17, brothers, have muscular dystrophy and are being cared for by their mother at their home. Affected by toxic waste which seeped into the groundwater, they lead painful lives.



Father-daughter dynamics: Aaliya, 14, who is mentally challenged and has muscular dystrophy, is being carried by her father from the Chingari Rehabilitation Centre for Children. Aaliya's mother, who was affected by the gas, died eight years ago. "Why don't you keep her in a special institution," her father is often asked. "No one else takes care of her as I can. She can't live without me," he replies.

Eyes wide shut

Governments don't see the miserable lives led by children of survivors of the Bhopal gas tragedy, which seems to have a life of its own

TEXT AND IMAGES BY ROHIT JAIN

It's five past midnight on a cold December night. You wake up coughing, with eyes and throat scorching. Dimly you hear the panicked shouting of people, "run, run". Gas is seeping through the makeshift doors and windows. You rush with your family from your home into the dark street. People and animals are dying on the streets; already bodies lie scattered on the road where half-blind people are stumbling over them to escape the lethal fumes. On the intervening night of December 2 and 3, 1984, approximately 40 tonnes of methyl isocyanate, one of the most toxic gasses, leaked from the factory in Bhopal owned by the U.S. chemical giant Union Carbide Corporation (Union Carbide India was taken over by Dow Chemical, which recently merged with DuPont to create DowDuPont).

Now, 34 years after the tragedy, the second and third generation of the survivors are battling a spectrum of disabilities on a scale not seen anywhere else in India. Cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, Down's syndrome, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, blindness, learning difficulties and gross motor delay are rampant. Many of the young adults have multiple conditions. Many are immobile, needing help to wash, eat and even defecate.

Research studies indicate higher rates of congenital malformations among children born to parents exposed to the gas and contaminated water. Sixteen studies by government and non-governmental agencies show that the soil and groundwater in and around the abandoned factory is contaminated with toxic chemicals, even persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals.

In these years, the number of affected communities increased to 42 from the 12 initially. The groundwater contains toxic levels of chlorinated solvents. Six years ago, responding to relentless efforts from activists, the Supreme Court ordered the city to install pipes to supply clean water from the Narmada. But the pipes coming into some houses run right through sewers, and on rainy days, filth and faeces mingle with the clean water. Each monsoon may be carrying this toxic plume farther.

Rohit Jain is an independent New Delhi-based documentary photographer. Reporting for this piece was facilitated by a grant from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.



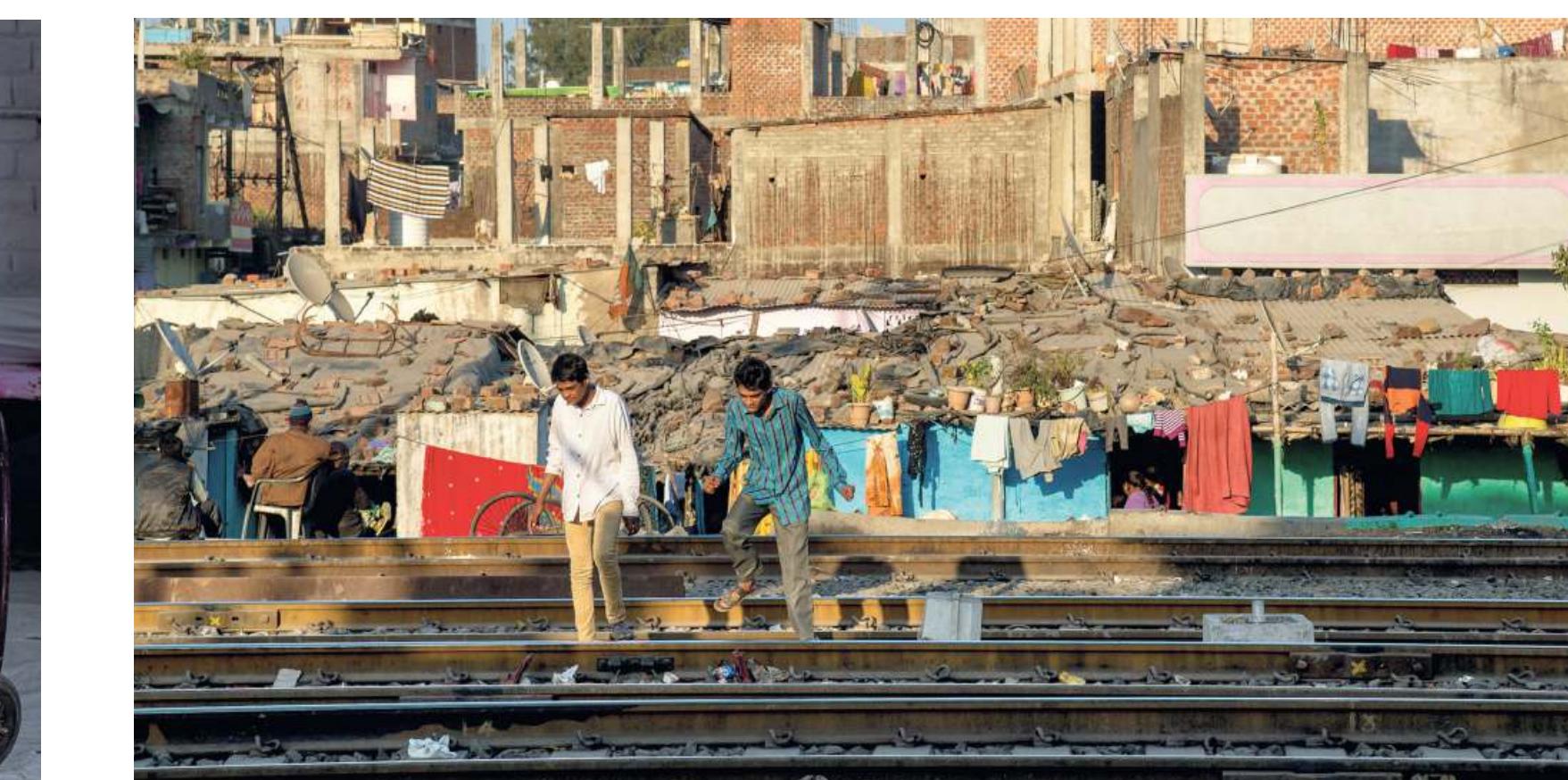
Shaky lives: Suraj Malam, 21, who has cerebral palsy, struggles to stand on his feet after losing his sister's grip as she runs from him.



Poison everywhere: Kausar, 16, along with her mother Haseena, stands next to one of the solar evaporation ponds Union Carbide left behind in Bhopal. Kausar has low IQ and used to attend a special school until last year. The toxic waste from the factory site piped into three such huge ponds were leaking into the soil and groundwater.



Brothers in distress: Umar Khan, 24, with his parents shows photos of his older brother Azhar who died last year. Azhar had muscular dystrophy as does Umar. Umar fears he will meet Azhar's fate soon.



Shared fate: Hassan Khan, 23, and Nawab Khan, 20, brothers with cerebral palsy, struggle to cross a railway line on their way home. They were affected by the toxic waste which seeped into the groundwater.

6 DESPATCHES

DELHI THE HINDU
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

WASHINGTON

Trump's pursuit of a Space Force

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Defense released its 2019 Missile Defense Review. In it are references to China and Russia developing anti-satellite capabilities.

This U.S. concern – that Russia and China are getting ahead in the mastery of space – has shown up elsewhere too, most noticeably with U.S. President Donald Trump's pursuit of a "Space Force". "When it comes to defending America, it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space, we must have American dominance in space... I am hereby directing the Department of Defense and Pentagon to immediately begin the process necessary to establish a Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces," Mr. Trump said in June.

Over the last few years, the talk of a Space Force has generated some excitement, some scepticism and a dose of drama, with Netflix commissioning a series, *Space Force*.

This isn't the first time America has sought martial capabilities in space. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan, a former Hollywood actor, outlined the U.S.' Strategic Defense Initiative, which reversed three decades of a strategy based on a nuclear deterrence and Mutually Assured Destruction. Reagan ordered the development of space-based defensive weaponry that could take down ballistic missiles from the Soviet Union and other ad-

President Trump has ordered to establish a Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces but the idea lacks support among the Democrats who have a majority in the House of Representatives

versaries. His programme was called 'Star Wars' by critics, while those who supported it say the initiative helped end the Cold War.

Dominance over space

Reagan's idea did not take off, partly due to technological constraints, but America has been itching to assert its dominance over space. In 2002, the U.S., under President George W. Bush, withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, saying deterrence cannot be based "solely on the threat of retaliation".

Again, in 2008 and 2014, attempts by Russia and China to introduce a treaty-based ban on weapons were not supported by the U.S. In 2007, China had shot down its own weather satellite Fengyun-1C, 865 km above the earth. Fears had grown in the U.S. that Russia and China were quietly developing anti-satellite machinery and that American satellite systems – used to guide aircraft, ships, make Battle Damage Assessments, provide GPS in war zones and collect intelligence – were at stake.

Fast forward to 2017 when some from both sides of the aisle in Congress supported the idea of a greater U.S. presence in space, while others showed ambivalence or resistance. In 2017, Mike Rogers (Republican) and Tim Cooper (Democrat) proposed a Space Corps that would be part of the Air Force.

This idea didn't pass muster with Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who argued against designating Space Corps because of the extra administrative burden it would carry. Pentagon officials were of the view that the Air Force was enough to protect military satellites.

Last summer, Mr. Trump approved a congressional Bill that asked the Department of Defense to prepare a space-war fighting policy, an idea that may not go very far with a new Congress, according to Marina Koren, writing in *The Atlantic*.

Representative Adam Smith, the Democrat who chairs the Armed Forces Committee of the House, does not support Mr. Trump's idea of a Space Force. Mr. Smith had said in a statement in November the idea was too expensive and not the right way to advance U.S. national security, especially with competing funding requirements for defence and domestic priorities.

For now, it looks like the only Space Force Mr. Trump will see is the one on Netflix.



DHAKA

Bangladesh election under new scrutiny

The dust was about to settle with the election fever dissipating in Bangladesh. The political scene was slowly returning to an atmosphere of relative calm. Then came a damning report from the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) that uncovered "serious wrongdoings" during the December 30 election.

The list of irregularities in 47 out of 50 constituencies surveyed by the TIB includes ballot stuffing in the hours to the election day, fake votes and obstruction of voters.

The TIB also said security forces on the scene silently stood by when these irregularities took place. "Law-enforcement agencies, a section of administrative officials and election authorities were seen playing biased roles in the election," Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, who uses one name, said in a statement on January 15.

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud swiftly dismissed the report as fictitious, imaginary and deliberate. Mr. Mahmud said the report reeks of propaganda by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its ally, Jamaat-e-Islami. The Election Commission also brushed aside the TIB's findings. "It's a predetermined and imaginary report," Election Commissioner Rafiqul Islam said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has a record of solid achievements for her two consecutive terms. Per capita income has grown by 150%, and the proportion of people living in extreme poverty has fallen from 19% to 9%. "All the greater the pity that her achievements have been offset by a precipitous slide toward authoritarianism," *The New York Times* wrote in an editorial on January 14. "Ms. Hasina's every achievement will now be tainted by her authoritarian methods and repressive measures; her critics, driven into exile or underground, will become only more strident, and her foreign supporters more wary," it wrote.

Then on January 22, a report published by Reuters puts the election under new scrutiny. The report cited a top official of an observer group that monitored the election and one of its foreign volunteers as saying that they regretted participating in the process. Both cast doubt on the credibility of the vote. Mohammad Abdus Salam, the president of the SAARC Human Rights Foundation, was quoted as saying

A new report says activists from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League stuffed ballot boxes the night before the general election and intimidated voters while security officials stood by

that he now believed there should be a fresh vote after hearing accounts from voters and officials presiding over polling booths that activists from Ms. Hasina's Awami League stuffed ballot boxes the night before the poll and intimidated voters.

False story

A Canadian observer, Tanya Foster, who was brought in by the foundation, has also said she now wishes she had not been involved. The foundation later issued a statement denouncing the Reuters story. It said the news agency distorted what Mr. Salam said in the interview. "I have been defamed by the publication of the false story and I'm embarrassed," he said on the foundation's website. Reuters later said: "We stand by our reporting on the views expressed by the election monitors."

Ms. Hasina's political foes ratcheted up their rhetoric over the election based on these reports. BNP leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said in a media briefing on January 17 the government and the Election Commission were hit hard by the TIB report. "They have received a big blow from the TIB report. The Ministers and the EC are now struggling to hide their faces as the TIB has exposed vote frauds," Mr. Rizvi said.

The criticism of the election will probably go away with time, but it came as a huge contrast to the celebrations in the victors' camp. It similarly dismayed the friends of the ruling party, who also face unsavoury questions.



LONDON

Prince Philip's never-ending list of transgressions

With the turmoil around Brexit, the country is deeply divided. However, over the past couple of weeks, there is one person on whom some agreement has emerged: Prince Philip, 97, the Duke of Edinburgh and husband to Queen Elizabeth.

A photograph of the controversial Prince, driving without a seat belt on the Queen's Sandringham Estate in Norfolk, England, last weekend – just two days after he had been in a car crash involving two women and a small baby – triggered outrage online and offline as well as a wider debate. Even the usually pro-Royal family *Daily Mail* was scathing. "It's time the Queen gave her rude, stubborn, insensitive, arrogant and dangerous Duke of Hazard his driving marching orders," declared its high-profile, right-wing columnist Piers Morgan in a piece that described the Prince as the "rudest human being" he had ever met.

The police's response further deepened public indignation as Norfolk police said they had provided the Prince simply with "suitable words of advice" after the image of him without a seat belt emerged. Less than 24 hours after the crash, it emerged that a replacement Land Rover had been delivered to the Prince, who – according to U.K. press reports – had told the police that he had been momentarily dazzled by the sun. Adding to the furor was the apparent nonchalant way in which the situation had been dealt with by Palace authori-

The Duke of Edinburgh, who was recently involved in a car crash, has a notorious reputation for making offensive remarks.

However, many in U.K. media have dismissed them as mere quips

ties who insisted that messages "of support" had been sent to the two women in the minivan that had been hit. A family liaison officer had told them that the "Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh would like to be remembered to you. That's not an apology. Or even a well-wish," one of the women, whose wrist was broken in the crash, told *The Daily Mirror*.

Back in the spotlight

The controversy has brought the Prince, who officially retired from public life in 2017, firmly back into the public spotlight. Born in Corfu in 1921 as Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, he moved to Britain and served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, marrying the then-Princess Elizabeth in 1947.

While acknowledged for some of the programmes he set up, he has a notorious reputation for making offensive remarks. In 1999, he was forced to apologise after pointing to an old, messy fuse box at an Edinburgh factory and remarking that it looked like it had been "put in by an Indian." More than a decade earlier, during a visit to China in 1986, he had told British students that they could become "slit-eyed" if they stayed in the country any longer. In 2009, looking at the name badge of Atul Patel, a prominent businessman, who was attending an event for British Indians at Buckingham Palace, he remarked that "there's a lot of your family in tonight". While many have condemned such remarks, others within the British media have often dismissed them as quips.

"Philip has long been given a free pass on bad behaviour. In part this is because he targets minorities, in part this is because there is a notion that amends need to be made to his masculine ego for the fact that he has come second to his wife in rank," says Priyamvada Gopal, an academic at Cambridge University, who points to the role that dramas such as the popular television series *The Crown* have played in perpetuating this sympathetic perspective.

"I think that this time, precisely because it doesn't involve insults to ethnic or sexual minorities or women, there's a much clearer sense of double standards at work. However, I don't think it will last. Media culture in Britain, for one thing, is extremely subservient to the monarchy and there is rarely any meaningful criticism of the Royals."



BEIJING

Gathering storms around China's economy

Chinese President Xi Jinping has delivered a tough back-to-the-trenches call to his comrades in the Communist Party of China (CPC) to weed out the "grey rhinos" and "black swans" that dare to undermine the economy of China and confidence of its people in its political system.

By referring to "grey rhinos", the President was asking the CPC to eliminate highly probable events that can rock the markets, resulting in massive financial outflows, haemorrhaging business confidence in the economy. The 2008 financial crisis was a blaring "grey rhino" global event.

Conversely, Mr. Xi's spotlight on "black swans" was a call on cadres to nail hard-to-predict events that can range from terror strikes to Brexit, which can also attack markets, resulting in extreme financial consequences.

On January 21, when Mr. Xi spoke at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee, his remarks pointed to gathering storms around China, with the trade war and the seeming consensus across party lines in the U.S. to curb China's rise as the subtext. Mr. Xi's blunt speech echoed his similar remarks last month, warning that China may encounter "unimaginable terrifying tidal waves and horrifying storms" in the years ahead.

The audience, who heard his rallying call with rapt attention, included senior provincial and ministerial officials, as well as army generals – all decision makers who had been summoned to a special "study session" of the CPC.

Mr. Xi's major focus has been on improving material conditions, especially by creating opportunities for young people to find employment as the foundation of social stability.

Political education

The President was emphatic in exhorting the 86 million strong CPC machine to adopt concrete measures that would generate a movement for mass-financing micro, small and medium-sized firms, helping guarantee jobs for the youth. Besides, he urged the cadres to go the extra mile to provision to the people social security, medical and health care, food security as well as workplace safety.

But the President was also clear that for ensuring legitimacy, a fresh focus was required

President Xi Jinping urges the party to be vigilant about potential threats to the Chinese economy and asks cadre to work towards ensuring food security, health care and workplace security

on political and ideological education. In remarks that echoed Mao Zedong, Mr. Xi was unambiguous in calling for a robust reinforcement of "ideological and political education among the young." That, he said, would enable the next generation to have "full confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics".

Some analysts are of the view that Mr. Xi and others of his generation are hyper-sensitive that China's generation-next maybe lured into a traumatic cycle similar to the one that led to the Tiananmen Square incident, whose 30th anniversary falls later this year.

However, during his address, Mr. Xi also conveyed to the CPC that exceptional and proactive steps were required for ensuring a balance between domestic stability and reform at a time of "unpredictable international developments". "We must keep our high alert about any 'black swan' incident, and also take steps to prevent any 'grey rhino' (threats)," he said.

Mr. Xi strongly messaged that in the current circumstances, it was indispensable to achieve self-reliance in fostering innovation and development of advanced technology – a veiled response to the threat radiating from Washington targeting China's hi-tech Made in China 2025 project. Besides, he called upon the Party to establish an iron-fisted "security system" that would safeguard his signature Belt and Road Initiative.



INNSBRUCK

The far-right's attack on human rights

The far-right Freedom Party, which is part of the Austrian government, triggered a new controversy when party leader and Interior Minister Herbert Kickl recently attacked the European Convention on Human Rights. Freedom Party is known for its controversial views on migration, Islam and policing, among other issues.

Mr. Kickl, who used to write the speeches of right-wing politician Jörg Haider, also created the "At home instead of Islam" slogan ('Daham statt Islam') of the Freedom Party and used to be one of the main organisers of the right-wing 'Defenders of Europe' conference that took place in 2016 and in 2018 in Austria.

Recently, Mr. Kickl called for harsher measures against refugees in an interview with ORF, Austria's public television broadcaster. "The law has to follow politics, politics doesn't have to follow the law," he said.

In this context, the Interior Minister, who wants to deport refugees rather quickly, described the European Convention on Human Rights as consisting of "strange, legal constructs" that are "partly many many years old". He added that these laws prevent the Austrian government from doing "what is necessary".

Unsurprisingly, Mr. Kickl's comments provoked outrage. "The European Convention on Human Rights has been ranked in the Constitution of Austria for 59 years. Challenging this

Austrian Interior Minister and far-right Freedom Party leader Herbert Kickl's attack on European Convention on Human Rights has triggered widespread criticism in the country

would be a termination of the basic consensus of the Second Republic," said Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen on Twitter without mentioning the name of his Interior Minister.

According to Karl Weber, a veteran jurist who is focussing on constitutional law at the University of Innsbruck, Mr. Kickl spread "dangerous nonsense". "What the Interior Minister is saying is not compatible with a state of law. If a student writes in an exam that the law has to follow politics, he or she would not pass," Mr. Weber said in an interview with Austrian daily *Der Standard*.

Several jurists have also criticised Mr. Kickl's "unbearable" and "unworthy" comments. Others called for his dismissal. Austria's two main Opposition parties, the Social Democrats and the liberal NEOS, said they would introduce a motion of no-confidence against the Minister. Reportedly, Mr. Kickl already talked to Chancellor Sebastian Kurz regarding the issue. "It is clear that the Constitution, the basic principles of the European Union and basic and human rights are valid and that they are grounded in the government programme," Mr. Kurz said in a statement. The talk between him and the Interior Minister has been described as "clarifying".

At the same time, leading politicians of the Freedom Party, including Vice-Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache, supported Mr. Kickl's views and criticised the "bashing in media" against him.

Authoritarian state

"I never expected to face such a debate in a place like Austria. These are the first steps towards a fascist and authoritarian state, and history taught us that this has already happened in this country," said Taseer Mohammad, a 24-year-old refugee who lives in Innsbruck. He believes that it is dangerous that a person like Mr. Kickl controls the whole police force in the country. His Ministry is also responsible for many decisions that affect people like Mr. Mohammad.

"Since this government came to power, our situation is worsening day by day. They hate us, and they don't even try to hide it. When Mr. Kickl talks about refugees, I notice that he doesn't consider us as humans," said Sahel Khan, 27, a refugee from Afghanistan.



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BND-ND

IN BRIEF

**Bharti Infratel to get ₹2,900 cr. in settlement**

NEW DELHI
Telecom infrastructure firm Bharti Infratel said it will get around ₹2,900 crore from four telecom operators, including Vodafone Idea, in settlement charges for their exit from cell sites before the expiry of contract period. The total settlement is estimated to be around ₹3,600 crore after including share from Indus Towers in the cash component. PTI

NBCC bags ₹228-crore WHO-SEARO order

NEW DELHI
State-owned NBCC has bagged a ₹228-crore order to redevelop World Health Organisation (WHO)-SEARO building in the national capital. In a regulatory filing, NBCC said the "WHO-SEARO office in New Delhi acts as the regional office for the organisation in South-East Asia and provides leadership on health matters, articulates evidence based policy options, provides technical support to countries in the region and monitors health trends." PTI

Suzlon commissions wind project for HAL

NEW DELHI
Renewable energy solution provider Suzlon Energy announced commissioning of its second 8.4 MW wind power project for Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL). The 8.4 MW project in Bagalkot in Karnataka was inaugurated by R. Madhavan, CMD, HAL. With this project, HAL's total wind energy capacity delivered by Suzlon stands at 14 MW and caters to 46.6% of HAL's energy consumption of its Bengaluru-based divisions. PTI

I-T attaches CCD founder's stake in Mindtree

Action over potential tax demand bars 'transfer or charge' of 74.9 lakh shares controlled by Siddhartha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
The Income Tax (I-T) Department has attached a portion of shares held by V.G. Siddhartha and Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd. in information technology (IT) firm Mindtree over a potential tax demand, a development that could impact the potential stake sale by the Cafe Coffee Day (CCD) founder to his



Stakes at stake: The order would be applicable for six months from January 25, 2019, Mindtree said. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

ment on...shareholders of the company – Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd. and V.G. Siddhartha."

It added that the attachment also "prohibited for transfer or charge" of 22.2 lakh equity shares of Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd., and 52.7 lakh shares held by Mr.

Siddhartha. The order would be applicable for six months from the date of the order i.e. January 25, 2019, it said.

At the end of December 2018 quarter, Mr. Siddhartha held 54.69 lakh shares (3.3% stake) in Mindtree, while Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd. had more than 1.74 crore shares

(10.63% stake). Another entity, Coffee Day Trading Ltd. holds over 1.05 crore shares (6.45% holding). Mindtree's promoters, which include Subroto Bagchi, Krishnamurthy Natarajan, N.S. Parthasarathy, and Rostow Ravan, together hold roughly 13% stake in the company.

Talks are on'

As per reports, Mr. Siddhartha is in advanced talks with L&T Infotech (LTI) and private equity firm KKR to sell his stake in the mid-sized IT services company. Also, there has been speculation that such a sale by Mr. Siddhartha could trigger a hostile takeover at the company, even as the founders are said to be making all-out efforts to counter any such developments.

Both Mr. Siddhartha and Mindtree's founders have not

made any specific comments on the issue so far.

During the Q3 earnings call recently, the management skirted questions on the speculation, saying it remained committed to delivering growth for the company. "This is something that is not in our control. Shareholders make their own decisions on when they want to buy, how much they want to buy, when they want to sell, etc. It is outside our purview in that sense," Mr. Ravan, who is also the CEO and managing director, had said.

Mr. Ravan had further said: "We can make sure that things go right at Mindtree, we take care of people, customers and continue to deliver industry-leading growth, so the stake sale is not something that we have a view on or would like to make a comment."

Lupin's unit in M.P. gets 6 USFDA observations

Relates to conditions at the facility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
Drug firm Lupin on Saturday said the U.S. health regulator has issued six observations after the inspection of a unit of its Pithampur facility in Madhya Pradesh.

The inspection of Pithampur Unit-2 was carried out by the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) between January 14 and January 25, 2019, Lupin said in a statement.

"The inspection at Pithampur Unit-2 (Indore) closed with six observations," it added.

The company, however, did not provide any details about the nature of the observations.

The company is confident of addressing the observations satisfactorily, Lupin said.



The company says it is confident of addressing the observations. ■ REUTERS

The U.S. health regulator issues observations by means of an FDA Form 483 notifying the company's management of objectionable conditions at the facility inspected.

Pallavaa Group to expand capacity

Mulls entering textile processing

M. SOUNDARIYA PREETHA

COIMBATORE
Textile producer Pallavaa Group plans to invest ₹500 crore in the next five years to expand capacity and enter into textile processing.

According to Durai Palanisamy, the group's executive director, the group signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu Government at the recently held Global Investors' Meet.

Synthetics, blends
The company, with focus on synthetics and blends, has spinning, weaving, and knitting facilities in Erode. Apart from increasing the existing

capacities and investing in textile processing, the investments (equity and debt) will also go into scaling up its wind and solar energy generation. The group's annual turnover of ₹2,200 crore is expected to rise to ₹4,000 crore when the capacity is expanded.

"We see growth in synthetics, especially blends, in the Indian and global markets," he said.

India is a growing economy and when the per capita consumption of textile increases, the demand for synthetic textiles will increase. "We see potential in the domestic market. So, we plan to expand," he said.

Aircel wants more time for fresh bids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**MUMBAI**

The resolution professional of Aircel sought excluding the 127 days it lost in fighting and winning a case against the government and Bharti Airtel so that it could seek fresh bids for the remaining assets of the crippled company.

The IBC-mandated 270 days for a resolution is already over for the bankrupt company.

It may be noted that on January 12, 2019, the Supreme Court had directed Bharti Airtel to pay ₹453 crore immediately to Aircel. The court had also asked DoT to pay ₹298 crore to the operator.

The beverage is priced at ₹25 for 250 ml and comes in PET bottles.

Coca-Cola expands juice portfolio

Launches Minute Maid Colour to cater to people of Tamil Nadu

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**CHENNAI**

Minute Maid Colour is a juice-based sparkling beverage. It is made with black grape juice. The product, Coco-Cola claims, is the outcome of an extensive research on specific palate of Tamils who have a propensity for grape-flavoured beverages.

The beverage is priced at ₹25 for 250 ml and comes in PET bottles.

Hyper local product

According to T. Krishnamurthy, president of Coco-Cola India and South West Asia, Minute Maid Colour is the first big product offering as part of the already laid out



Colourful choice: Srideep Kesavan, director-juices, Coca-Cola India and South West Asia and T. Krishnakumar. ■ BIJOY GHOSH

vision to develop the Indian business of the company around four pillars – core product, hyper local product, economy impacting product and brands that could be taken global. Mi-

nute Maid Colour, he said, was the consequence of Coco-Cola's conscious decision to follow a hyper-local strategy and introduce localised beverages that suit the consumer preferences specific to a region."

The launch of Minute Maid Colour, he asserted, was step in the "transformational journey towards becoming a beverage company with local roots."

He also hinted at Coca-Cola launching more products in the coming months to appeal to the taste buds of people in other regions of the country. Reiterating that 'consumer is the king', he said that 'Coco-Cola would strive to offer a variety of choice to suit his/her palate.'

Under the Minute Maid brand, Coca-Cola has pulpy orange, nimbu fresh, guava, mango, mixed fruit, pulpy mosambi, litchi and anar juices, among others.

Emami acquires German personal care brand Creme 21

FMCG company now eyes economies of scale

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**KOLKATA**

FMCG company Emami Limited announced the acquisition of German personal care brand, Creme 21. The brand is now available in west Asia and other markets.

In a regulatory filing, Emami said the brand had been acquired at less than 1.5 times of its sales. This acquisition is in line with its strategy for growth through inorganic route.

The brand was acquired by Ms. Antje J Willems Stickel in 2003. More than 80% of the brand's business is contributed by MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region and the balance by Ger-



Harsha V. Agarwal

many and other countries.

The products are manufac-

tured by a third party in Ger-

many under asset-lean model,

according to a state-

ment, a press release said.

With current sales of

more than €8 million and

gross margin of over 50%,

Emami expects to take this brand on an aggressive growth trajectory. The acquisition is being funded from internal accruals.

Harsha V. Agarwal, director, Emami Limited, said, "...Creme 21 has a strong business fit as it operates in Emami's focus markets and chosen categories.. With this acquisition, the company will be able to enjoy economies of scale due to additional business base."

Antje Willems Stickel, promoter of Creme 21, added "...with Emami's strength in Middle East and other global markets, we are confident that Emami would add lot of value to Creme 21."

‘Exporting 300 mn kg tea critical for small, large growers’

Strict quality, chemical and pesticide residue standards important for boosting shipments: Tea Board



High standards: There is a need for greater awareness on quality, says Arun Kumar Ray. ■ ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

plus stock of about 75 million kg was being generated annually. This may not be absorbed by domestic consumption. In 2017, India produced 1,322 million kg of tea, imported 20 million kg with exports of 252 million

kg. Domestic consumption was 1,000 million kg, leaving a surplus of 90 million kg.

Commerce Ministry officials present at the meeting – Praveen Bonigala, Joint Secretary (Plantations) and Arun Kumar Ray, chairman

and deputy chairman, Tea Board, concurred that strict compliance of quality, chemical and pesticide residue level standards were important for boosting exports. Mr. Ray also stressed on the importance of increased co-operation between the large estate players and the small tea growers who now comprise a formidable chunk (about 48%) of the India tea industry.

He wanted the small tea segment to develop greater awareness on quality compliance and large industry, to emphasise on exports of orthodox and organic teas.

Export incentive scheme
Industry, on its part, wanted enhanced MEIS rate (merchandise exports incentive scheme) which, they said,

would enable India to increase orthodox tea exports to destinations like China, Russia, Iran and Iraq which were big markets for these type of teas. Orthodox teas are created by a different manufacturing and processing method (against the conventional CTC teas), which pave way for a more flavourful brew. However, the cost of production, too, is higher. Tea Board officials said that provisional figures show India produced 90.6 million kg of this variety of tea and exported 62.1 million kg between April and October 2018.

Industry sought a hike in the subsidy rate provided by the Tea Board to bridge the con-cost gap between CTC and orthodox teas. It also wanted easier freight rates.

Firm to use ₹720 cr. from proceeds to repay part of debt



Bids can be made for a minimum lot of 53 equity shares and in multiples of 53 equity shares thereafter.

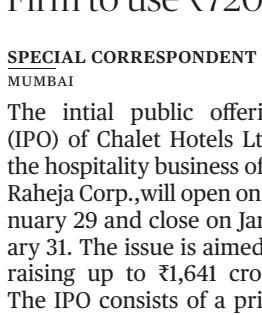
Chalet Hotels is the owner, developer and asset manager of five star deluxe hotels, including the Renaissance Convention Centre, Powai, JW Marriott at Sahar, Mumbai, Marriott Bengaluru Whitefield, The Westin Hyderabad, and Four Points by Sheraton, Vashi.

Price band

The price band has been fixed at ₹275 to ₹280 per equity share. At the lower band, the issue would raise ₹1,629 crore and at the upper band ₹1,641 crore.

Challet Hotels’ ₹1,641-crore IPO to open on January 29

Firm to use ₹720 cr. from proceeds to repay part of debt



The company has a debt of ₹2,500 crore. Proceeds of the primary issue worth ₹720 crore would be used to retire a part of the debt, company officials said.

For FY18, the company reported net profit of ₹31 crore on a sales turnover of ₹929 crore. Neel C. Raheja, group president, K. Raheja Corp and non-executive director, Chalet Hotels said, "We have emerged as a leading hospitality player in India due to efficient management of properties and buying of land at much cheaper rates than others. And the journey will continue."

Sanjay Sethi, managing director and CEO, Chalet Hotels said, "We are currently developing three hotels, including a W hotel in Mumbai and are looking for acquisitions to ramp up capacity rapidly."

Consolidate main firms, 14 arms into single financial entity, say Videocon lenders, RPs

‘Stakeholders will benefit as consolidation will maximise value of assets’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**MUMBAI**

In a first since the bankruptcy law was enacted, the lenders and resolution professionals (RPs) for Videocon Industries and Videocon Telecommunications approached the NCLT seeking a direction to consolidate all the 14 group subsidiaries under one financial entity.

The RPs urged a single bench of the Mumbai National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), M.K. Shrawat, to direct a consolidation which would recognise all the companies as a single entity saying all these entities had common lenders and were engaged in common businesses.

The RPs also cited global precedents in this regard saying there were four kinds of consolidations globally – procedural, consequential,

partial and sub-standard – and that various courts have allowed such measures.

Seeking a procedural consolidation for the Videocon Group and its over a dozen subsidiaries, the RPs and the lenders said if accepted, it would maximise the value of assets and all stakeholders would benefit from it.

However, the lawyer of Trend Electronics, a group

company, objected to this saying it was a publicly traded entity and would do better if the resolution plan is carried out independently. Trend Electronics manufactures set-top boxes for Videocon D2H.</

IN BRIEF



Malaysia to junk \$20 bn rail project with China

KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia's economics minister Mohamed Azmin Ali said the country will cancel its \$20 billion East Coast Rail Link project with contractor China Communications Construction Co. Ltd. He said that at the project's cost was too great, and Malaysia would welcome investment from China on a case by case basis. ■REUTERS



Toyota Motor aims to boost China sales by 8%

BEIJING

Toyota Motor Corp. aims to raise vehicle sales in China by 8% to 1.6 million this year, it said. Toyota Motor Corp. sold 1.47 million vehicles in China last year, up 14.3% from 2017. The forecast comes at a time when automakers in China in general are bracing for a tough year after weakness in sales emerged last year. ■REUTERS



'3,400 Subaru staff not paid for overtime work'

TOKYO

Subaru Corp. said it did not pay overtime wages over a two-year period to some 3,400 employees who under-reported their hours, a revelation that surfaced in an internal probe following the suicide of an overworked employee. The automaker said outstanding wages, totalling \$7.08 million, were paid retroactively to 3,421 workers last March. ■REUTERS



Hyundai Motor to cut China jobs as sales fall

SEOUL/BEIJING

Hyundai Motor said its Chinese JV is accepting voluntary retirements and reviewing "optimisation plans" at its factories following a slump in car sales. China saw auto sales contract in 2018 as pressure from a crippling trade war with the U.S. and the phasing out of tax cuts on smaller cars pummeled business. ■REUTERS

The automation agenda hidden by the Davos elite

Many honchos want machines to replace humans as soon as possible

KEVIN ROOSE

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND

They'll never admit it in public, but many of your bosses want machines to replace you as soon as possible.

I know this because, for the past week, I've been mingling with corporate executives at the World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual meeting in Davos. And I've noticed that their answers to questions about automation depend very much on who is listening.

In public, many executives wring their hands over the negative consequences that artificial intelligence and automation could have for workers. They take part in panel discussions about building "human-centred AI" for the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" — Davos speak for the corporate adoption of machine learning and other advanced technology — and talk about the need to provide a safety net for people who lose their jobs as a result of automation.

But in private settings, including meetings with the leaders of the many consulting and technology firms whose pop-up storefronts line the Davos Promenade, these executives tell a different story: They are racing to automate their own work forces to stay ahead of the competition, with little regard for the impact on workers.

"People are looking to achieve very big numbers,"



Whither humans: The headquarters of Foxconn that plans to automate much of its workforce, in Milwaukee. ■NYT

said Mohit Joshi, the president of Infosys, a technology and consulting firm that helps other businesses automate their operations. "Earlier, they had incremental, 5 to 10% goals in reducing their work force. Now they're saying, 'Why can't we do it with 1% of the people we have?'"

Few American executives will admit wanting to get rid of human workers, a taboo in today's age of inequality. So they've come up with a long list of buzzwords and euphemisms to disguise their intent. Workers aren't being replaced by machines, they're being "released" from onerous, repetitive tasks. Companies aren't laying off workers, they're "undergoing digital transformation."

A 2017 survey by Deloitte found that 53% of companies had already started to use machines to perform tasks previously done by humans.

The figure is expected to climb to 72% by next year.

The corporate elite's AI obsession has been lucrative for firms that specialise in "robotic process automation," or RPA. Infosys reported a 33% increase in year-over-year revenue in its digital division. IBM's "cognitive solutions" unit, which uses AI to help businesses increase efficiency, has become the company's second-largest division, posting \$5.5 billion in revenue last quarter. The investment bank, UBS, projects that the AI industry could be worth as much as \$180 billion by next year.

Reskilling workers

One common argument made by executives is that workers whose jobs are eliminated by automation can be "reskilled" to perform other jobs in an organisation. They offer examples like Accenture, which claimed in 2017 to have replaced 17,000

back-office processing jobs without layoffs, by training employees to work elsewhere in the company. In a letter to shareholders last year, Jeff Bezos, Amazon's chief executive, said that more than 16,000 Amazon warehouse workers had received training in high-demand fields like nursing and aircraft mechanics, with the company covering 95% of their expenses.

But these programmes may be the exception that proves the rule. There are plenty of stories of successful reskilling but there is little evidence that it works at scale. A report by the World Economic Forum this month estimated that of the 1.37 million workers who are projected to be fully displaced by automation in the next decade, only one in four can be profitably reskilled by private-sector programs. The rest, presumably, will need to fend for themselves or rely on government assistance.

Automating work is a choice, of course, one made harder by the demands of shareholders, but it is still a choice.

And even if some degree of unemployment caused by automation is inevitable, these executives can choose how the gains from automation and AI are distributed, and whether to give the excess profits they reap as a result to workers, or hoard it for themselves and their shareholders. ■NYT

China to step up economic stimulus in slowdown fight

Growth weakened to a 28-year low of 6.6% in 2018

REUTERS

BEIJING

China will take steps to spur growth amid a trade war with the United States, but there is limited room for aggressive stimulus in an economy already laden with massive debts and a property market prone to credit-driven spikes, policy insiders said.

China's deepening economic slowdown has fanned market expectations of a big spending binge, especially if the bruising tariff war with Washington escalates, intensifying pressure on Chinese jobs and threatening social stability.

But these programmes may be the exception that proves the rule. There are plenty of stories of successful reskilling but there is little evidence that it works at scale. A report by the World Economic Forum this month estimated that of the 1.37 million workers who are projected to be fully displaced by automation in the next decade, only one in four can be profitably reskilled by private-sector programs. The rest, presumably, will need to fend for themselves or rely on government assistance.

"The room for a strong stimulus is not big, and there are very big risks, because that will rely on a flood of cash and increased leverage in the economy," said a policy insider.

During the 2008-09 global financial crisis, Beijing rolled out a 4 trillion yuan (\$591 billion) spending package to fight a downturn that cost 20 million jobs in a matter of months, quickly reviving growth but also prompting a credit explosion.

The obsession of China's leaders with stability led to policy easing in 2012 and 2015 — a year marked by a



Setting sights lower: Beijing plans to lower its growth target to 6-6.5% this year from about 6.6% in 2018. ■REUTERS

stock market crash, a slide in the yuan and sharp capital outflows — that further pushed up debt levels and inflated home prices.

Authorities have taken a raft of pro-growth measures in the past year, in the form of cuts to the levels of cash banks must hold as reserves to spur lending, tax cuts, and efforts to accelerate infrastructure spending.

Still, growth in the world's second-largest economy weakened to a 28-year low of 6.6% in 2018, and is expected to slow further to 6.3% this year.

Sources have told Reuters that Beijing was planning to lower its growth target to 6-6.5% this year from around 6.6% in 2018.

Some Chinese factories have felt the pinch from higher U.S. tariffs, but there are few signs of a sharp rise in unemployment due to a more resilient services sector and a shrinking pool of workers as a result of the country's demographic changes. "We should be vigilant about employment

Shipping rates slump in latest sign of economic slowdown

Baltic Dry Index has fallen by 47% since mid-2018

REUTERS

SINGAPORE

Freight rates for dry-bulk and container ships, carriers of most of the world's raw materials and finished goods, have plunged over the last six months in the latest sign the global economy is slowing significantly.

The Baltic Dry Index, measure of ship transport costs for materials like iron ore and coal, has fallen by 47% since mid-2018, when a trade dispute between the United States and China resulted in the world's two biggest economies slapping import tariffs on each other's goods.

Dry-bulk commodities are taken as a leading economic indicator, because they are used in core industrial sectors like steelmaking and power generation, and analysts say the recent declines in activity point to a serious economic slowdown.

"The global economy and dry-bulk shipping market are showing us very real signs of distress," said Jeffrey Landsberg, managing director of commodity consultancy Commodore Research.

"While dry-bulk rates often face at least some pressure during the early stages of a year, the magnitude of



weigh on sentiment in commodity markets," ANZ bank said in a note on Friday.

This was after U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said on Thursday the United States and China were "miles and miles" from resolving their issues.

"The global economy and dry-bulk shipping market are showing us very real signs of distress," said Jeffrey Landsberg, managing director of commodity consultancy Commodore Research.

"While dry-bulk rates often face at least some pressure during the early stages of a year, the magnitude of

the declines being seen lately have been very rare," he said.

The Baltic index has lost a quarter of its value since the start of the year, and dry-bulk is not the only shipping market under pressure.

Container rates slump The Harpex Shipping Index, which tracks container rates, has dropped by 30% since June 2018.

As a measure of the demand for shipping manufactured goods from producers to consumers, container rates are also seen as a leading economic indicator.

Their slump underscores weakening manufacturing data from Asia, Europe and North America.

"Slowing global economic growth, the unresolved U.S.-China trade conflict, the U.S. government shutdown, and Brexit drama are all sources of uncertainty dragging at sentiment," said Hussein Sayed, chief market strategist at futures brokerage FXTM.

Waiting to fire up



Fuelling shortage: Motorists wait for hours to buy fuel in Monterrey. Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said the shortages were triggered by the decision to temporarily close some of Pemex's pipelines to curb fuel theft that cost \$3 billion in 2017. An explosion in central Mexico killed 94 people after hundreds converged at an illegal fuel-line tap to gather fuel. ■AFP

Guns and corsets: firearms industry strikes gold marketing to women

Gun sales have declined since peaking in 2016 with firms like Remington going through bankruptcy reorganisation last year, but women's share of the market has been growing



Hitting the target: Anna Taylor, founder-CEO, Dene Adams, displays a concealed carry holster for women at the SHOT (Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade) Show in Las Vegas, U.S. ■REUTERS

market has been growing.

Women have led the change, both as consumers and as entrepreneurs in the world of accessories, forcing gun-makers to follow their lead.

Retailers estimate women accounted for 23% of the \$44 billion retail market for firearms and accessories in 2016, up 7 percentage points from 2010, according to data from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which runs the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show.

After overlooking the women's market for years, the firearms industry now sees women as the drivers of growth. Gun sales have declined since peaking in 2016, with companies like Remington Outdoor Company Inc. going through bankruptcy reorganisation last year, but the women's share of the

market has been growing.

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U.S. firearms sales peaked at 15.7 million in 2016, according to NSSF data. Sales fell to 14 million in 2017 and are on pace to dip again in 2018. The trend reflects politics, with sales driven by fears that a Democratic president

will limit gun rights.

Corsets and yoga pants

Ms. Taylor created her own company, Dene Adams, in 2013 upon growing frustrated over the lack of holsters for women. She sewed a neoprene mouse pad into one of her corsets for her first prototype, and now has a line-up of 13 holsters for Dene Adams. Sales reached \$2,500,000 in 2014 and grew to \$1 million in 2018, she said.

Among the hot items this year are yoga pants with enough support in the waistband to carry the weight of a gun. Ms. Taylor also pulled up the hem of her skirt, showing off her compression shorts with a built-in thigh holster that allows a woman to pack a piece whether she

is dressed for a night on the town or Monday morning at the office.

Men's holsters have traditionally been designed around the belt, but because women wear a variety of outfits they need options in the bra, waist, belly, underarm, thigh, ankle and purse. That also means women need to practice their draw from multiple angles.

Firearms companies once engaged in what is derisively called "pink it and shrink it," offering traditional guns in feminine colours and promoting smaller guns to fit a woman's hand, which is not necessarily a solution as lighter guns have more recoil.

Carrie Lightfoot created the Well-Armed Woman in 2012 to give women easier access to information and products and now has 400 chapters across the United States.

Ms. Lightfoot said gunmakers such as Glock Inc., Sturm Ruger & Company Inc. and Walther have since developed more sophisticated products and design changes.

While the U.S. gun rights debate rages, women see their weapons as empowering. At a time when the #MeToo movement has raised awareness of sexual assault, firearms are "the great equalizer," said Dianna Muller, a retired police officer from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who is now a full-time professional shooter.

"Growing up, my generation of women have been told we can do anything that we want," she said.

ILLUSTRATION:
J.A. PREMKUMAR

The connecting thread

Unexpected yet valuable lessons from a journey across boundaries and religious beliefs, capturing the essence of India

AKIL BAKHSHI

In the summer of 2018, while posted in the clamorous city of Gorakhpur, I decided to take a day off and visit Nepal. Accessible through the road crossing at Sonauli, it was barely an hour's drive from the city.

My destination was Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha. I had heard many tales about how wonderfully the sacred place had been

preserved by the government. A number of Buddhist countries, whether rich or poor, had built monasteries around the shrine in a bid to claim the religious space. Enticed by the promise of serenity, I booked a cab without a second thought.

The driver arrived 15 minutes before the designated time. He was a tall and plump fellow, who appeared to be a little too talkative for his own good. As we began

our journey, he started telling me stories about how he'd driven to Nepal on multiple occasions and how thoroughly he knew the length and breadth of that country.

His narrative kept me hooked for a little while, but I soon lost interest and began to enjoy the beauty around me instead. He continued to talk incessantly, but with an open window on one hand and a view of the Himalayan foothills on the other, his

voice was relegated to being just background noise. Before long, we had crossed over to the Nepal side.

Lumbini was more incredible than I'd thought it would be. The massive compound of the shrine was divided into an eastern wing and a western wing, separated by an artificial pond.

From my limited understanding of the religion, I'd gathered that the beliefs and consequently the symbols of

all three of its branches – Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana – varied. However, there was a set of multi-coloured flags that graced almost all the monasteries, irrespective of the sect they belonged to. This left me confused. The driver, sensing my ignorance, spoke up.

"These flags are like a connecting string, sir," he said. "They unite all forms of Buddhism into one. It is said that the colours of these flags reflect the colours of the Buddha's aura. They stand for peace, compassion, strength and wisdom."

"Are you a Buddhist?" I asked impulsively. "Aren't we all, sir?" he replied with a smile. "The Buddha stands for enlightenment. And that enlightenment can come only through happiness. In one way or the other, aren't we all striving for happiness? Some find it in their jobs, others in their families. Ulti-

mately, we are all treading the path which leads to the Buddha."

curiosity or admiration, suddenly he didn't seem to be so talkative anymore.

As he dropped me off at my place, I asked him where I could reach him. Quickly, he pulled out paper and scribbled something on it. Abbas Hashmi, it read, followed by his address and phone number. The next day I purchased a copy of the Bible and sent it to him. He gave me a ring that very evening and thanked me profusely for the gift. But the truth was that it was he who had given me the gift of understanding.

Most of the remaining part of my trip was loaded with conversations. As it turns out, the driver had developed a keen interest in religion since childhood. Over the years he had picked up a couple of sacred books belonging to different faiths. He'd read the Bhagavad Gita, the Koran, translations of the Tripitaka and bits and parts of the Avesta, too.

He had picked up all these books from stalls at railway stations, which had but rather crude copies of the actual texts. He hadn't yet been able to lay his hands on the Bible but he wanted to read it soon. Whether it was out of

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The banality of India

SURYA PRATAP SINGH

When Hannah Arendt witnessed the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi General, in Jerusalem, she was taken aback. Reporting for *The New Yorker*, she went to Jerusalem for the trials, and also to see things in a post-War scenario. However, she was taken aback to hear what Eichmann had to say. He had no remorse for whatever crimes he had committed. He did not feel anything because he was doing it in the sheer fashion of bureaucracy. It compelled Hannah's thoughts to cross the limits of pre-existing "normal" and come up with the thought of a new normal, or the "banality of evil".

Banality means unoriginal of the truest sense; a sense that is normal enough to lack even slightest interest and becomes boring. She wrote about how the crimes committed against

lantes", we are facing a similar situation. We see people taking the law into their hands with the justification ready. It becomes painful when the culprits are honoured by a few for their political benefits.

The murder of a police inspector in Bulandshahr while trying to perform his duty, or the lynching of a Google engineer in Karnataka, put forward examples of the sheer banality with which crimes are being committed without any remorse.

A Minister from Uttar Pradesh said people were crying over the death of one inspector when more than 20 cows had been killed. I want to ask him how can he justify the death of one man who was in his uniform and performing his duty? Would he react the same if it was his family member who faced the wreath of the mob?

Our social values have taught us that violence in all its forms must be condemned. However, it seems we are now trying to justify violence in all its forms for the sake of political gains. Whether it is the case of mob lynchings, or the murder of a scribe. None of the major political parties seem to remain an exception to this.

End of the day, it is not very difficult to conclude that Hannah Arendt was not wrong after all in saying that modernity has given rise to the banality of evil. It remains true even in a society like India that has had deep cultural roots since time immemorial.

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A wife to a man, truly

How to embrace the fact of retirement and help with some home-making

HABEEB AHAMED

Life is a succession of events and retirement is one such. Here's a little secret: foremost, there is no such thing as retirement anymore! Concluding your full-time career doesn't mean being "put out to pasture". On the contrary, it's an opportunity to begin a new and exciting phase of life. It means paying attention to all aspects of life, including leisure activities, creative pursuits, physical and mental well-being.

Who among us does not yearn for the day when we will finally quit our job and begin a new life in retirement? Unleashed from a monotonous life. Obviously there are many, after years of working and scrimping, will finally pay off when we begin our second act, free to live each day as we choose to.

In fact, on my retirement, I felt liberated from all pressures. No more morning commute, no more idiotic bosses, no more stressful deadlines! Officially off the clock and the world was the oyster! I didn't care what time I went to bed or woke up because to me every day was a holiday and every night Saturday night. Incidentally, a few days were great. Completely stress-free, but it did not last long.

Slowly, the joy eroded. At times I used to be happy

about the freedom and lack of stress, and sometimes I felt the loss of personal identity and prestige, a sense of just drifting along aimlessly, feeling useless and unproductive.

I had no epiphanies, whatsoever. I did not have any world-shaking ideas, except to spend a good deal of time in the house.

Time at home

It does not connote a cloistered existence in a gated retirement or resort community. As a part of moving forward, it is a good idea to embrace the idea and spend time at home. If I am put out to pasture – let me explore the pasture.

Having heard my wife tell my children several times that she ought to have been born an octopus – even eight arms would not have been enough to deal with day to day toil and strife, I thought I can assist my wife in kitchen to start with. Prior to this I had never taken my usefulness

into the kitchen domain. As in many families, the kitchen is seen as the wife's domain, which she runs with an iron mitt. It was held sacred to my wife's own management.

Since this is a great place to be of service to my wife and keep me engaged, I started learning the field of play. I started familiarising myself with the various kitchen items and where they are. In the process, I rearranged the kitchen utensils and the spice rack to make it better. Though it irritated my wife, she never bothered to change.

Perhaps she knew how to pick her battles to fight. Nagging me about cleaning up the mess was not one of them. Besides, a little piece of her smiled every time she saw the things laid out all over the place.

One morning, scooping up the coffee cup that was turned over on the table, she made her way to the sink. There was a plate and a small skillet that had egg

Hamletian propensities

ADITYA MUKHERJEE

Certain kinds of human behaviour can be as weird as they are inexplicable. While such behaviour assumes a whiff of romantic acceptability in the realm of literature, when it manifests itself in real life, observers tend to form a different opinion.

When we talk of Hamlet's soliloquies we conjure up the image of a lonely, desolate, wronged character inveighing against the injustices of a world out of joint. Talking to himself and blowing off steam becomes his cathartic moment as we pity his existential angst.

But this writer who displays similar attributes of Hamlet is happily married with a college-going daughter. My tendency to talk to myself in a room or in the balcony, also involving facial expressions and contortions and involuntary flailing movement of arms, leave both my wife and daughter gasp in amazement and incredulity. But make no mistake; I am neither going through any existential despair nor harbouring any thoughts of revenge on anybody. I am also not a genius or an intellectual, ones who are generally believed to indulge in such behaviour. Blame it all on my erratic mood swings that oscillate between ecstasy and irascibility. Such behaviour at times is also triggered by moments of epiphany or teenage memories when I start recalling goof-ups or incidents of school and college life by talking to myself, breaking into

laughter in between. I have this habit since college days.

Obviously, when my wife suddenly catches me in the act, she gets furious and nonplussed; embarrassed to even remind me that what I am doing doesn't behove a mature man entrusted with the job of running a family and earning a living. Everytime I am reminded of my infantile digressions

from the normal rhythm of life, I decide, like an obedient child, not to repeat this act again – only to promptly forget it after a couple of days.

One day while returning home after a gruelling day in office, I broke into another soliloquy about the growing load of office work and my repeated inability to leave home in time. I thought I would have it out with my boss. All this was happening while I was deboarding the Metro, unmindful of some curious gazes that had already fastened on me. By the time I got conscious of my silliness, the cat was out of the bag. My Hamletian streak had again made me a laughing stock.

My wife suggested I consult a psychiatrist, which suggestion I politely declined. I told her talking to myself makes me feel lighter and happy.

My daughter, who has been enjoying my funny and logic-defying activities for the past few years, still can't fathom why she doesn't see other people do what her father often is found doing. But I continue to remain a comic relief for her.

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The place for a woman: is the jury still out?

There is some way to go before the issue is thrashed out

MINI KRISHNAN

You can't because... I can because...

How often do Indian girls hear these words between the ages of five and 15? "I can't make the tea because I'm a boy." "You can't stay late for theatre rehearsals because you are a girl."

Growing up in a patriarchal society in which tradition is rarely questioned, only equal opportunities education helped women to break out of the medieval notions about their frailty and inherent inferiority.

About half century ago, realisation dawned – slowly, but nevertheless it dawned – that a woman's brain is as good as a man's. Thereafter, a minuscule percentage of Indian women who were fortu-

nate enough to secure a university education in the 1940s and 50s laid the field that their confident descendants walk in today. Even the daughters of a gardener or security guard can be certain of higher education if they can clear the entrance tests.

From hesitating to say yes, 40 years ago, to a daughter who wanted to go from Salem to Delhi to study, today's families do not question whether or not they should support the grand-daughter's plans to study in Europe. Even so, stereotypes persist, and with it now, a hardening of male bonding against women at the workplace because an honest and competent woman is now a force to be reckoned with in any line of work.

A point many people

might have noticed is that other things being equal, it is nearly always a man who is promoted by another man into a position of higher responsibility.

Indeed, it is quite likely he would be supported by a woman colleague who is actually more competent than he is but who thinks it wiser to play a subservient role in order to keep her job. Women do a lot of shadow work.

Consider the pillars of society: education, law and religion. What role do women play at the very top of any of these institutions? They were all designed by men to keep order in society – a subconscious item on the list being the control of women.

In all the years of India's Independence, the country has had only one woman

Prime Minister, and one woman as chairperson of the University Grants Commission. Has a woman ever been the Chief Justice of India? And despite the much-trumpeted equality before God that all religions preach, can any woman hope to head a church, mosque or math?

The question from the other side is whether society recognises what it does to lit-

tle boys and men who are trained to suppress their softer sides and encouraged to be unemotional. ("Don't be a sissy. Only girls like dancing and dressing up.")

Most fatally for the species, most of them are taught to despise women and view them with either suspicion or derision. It begins very early with statements like, "You can't join this game..." it

isn't for girls," and goes on to "That is your responsibility, not mine, because..."

One of the theories for misogyny is that a human male's first experience of both pleasure (food and comfort) and discipline come from his mother, and this pattern of reward and punishment given or withheld sets up a certain deep resentment of womankind as a whole and is, when carried into adulthood, expressed as dislike, mistrust and a strong desire to subdue and control women.

How often have we seen women struggling with heavy bags while a husband or son walks ahead of her unburdened by any of the groceries? We need to remember that women are home-makers, not home-slaves.

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More on the Web

thehindu.com/opinion/open-page

Hail the supermarket trolley

These shining, steely carts take the load off our shoulders during shopping

ANANTHAKRISHNA BHAT

A tale of three cities

The lessons of life from parents, from some of the lived experiences across India

VASUDA RAVICHANDRAN

On the road to a PhD

In the bucket list of a doctoral scholar, some of the items are pretty daunting

SHAVETA MENON



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IN BRIEF



French composer Michel Legrand dies aged 86

PARIS Michel Legrand, French composer and three-time Oscar winner, has died aged 86. Mr. Legrand first won an Academy Award in 1969 for the song *The Windmills of Your Mind*. He followed that with Oscars for his music for *Summer of '42* in 1972 and for *Yentl* in 1984. AFP



Veterinarians fix puppy paws pointing upwards

SILLIWATER A puppy born with his front paws facing up instead of down and unable to walk is recovering after surgery. The 10-week-old dog, named Milo, suffered from congenital elbow dislocation. Doctors inserted pins in Milo's elbows to realign the joints and help the dog eventually learn to walk. AP



ISLAMABAD Pakistan government has declared sugarcane juice as the "national drink" of the country after a poll on Twitter. In the poll, 7,616 people participated. Of them, 81% voted for sugarcane juice, ousting orange and carrot juices. PTI



LISBON Portuguese archaeologists digging near one of Lisbon's most iconic restaurants, the Solar dos Presuntos, have discovered a Roman cemetery holding 2,000-year-old skeletons and various ancient artefacts. REUTERS

Facebook move to unify chat apps may make them porous: report

CEO promises end-to-end encryption but researchers say privacy is a concern

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
SAN FRANCISCO



WhatsApp's end-to-end encryption – the hallmark of users' privacy – may be challenged if Facebook integrates the popular mobile messaging platform with the less-secure Instagram and Messenger, a report in technology website *The Wired* said on Saturday.

According to the report, to universally preserve end-to-end encryption poses a whole additional set of critical challenges for Facebook. *The New York Times* reported on Friday that Facebook planned to integrate chats within WhatsApp, Messenger and Instagram.

WhatsApp chats are currently end-to-end encrypted by default. Facebook Mes-

senger offers the feature if you turn on "Secret Conversations".

"Instagram does not currently offer any form of end-to-end encryption for its chats," the report said, noting that Facebook will need to find a way to help users easily understand and control end-to-end encryption as the ecosystem becomes more porous.

"The big problem I see is that only WhatsApp has de-

fault end-to-end encryption. So if the goal is to allow cross-app traffic, and it's not required to be encrypted, then what happens? There are a whole range of outcomes here," Matthew Green, a cryptographer at the Johns Hopkins University, was quoted as saying.

Internal conflict
WhatsApp co-founder and CEO Jan Koum quit Facebook last year over difference of opinion with CEO Mark Zuckerberg when it came to data privacy and encryption.

In a statement, Facebook has said it wanted to "build the best messaging experiences we can; and people want messaging to be fast, simple, reliable and private."

It added: "We're working on making more of our messaging products end-to-end encrypted."

"There is a lot of discussion and debate as we begin the long process of figuring out all the details of how this will work," a spokesperson said.

"I'm cautiously optimistic it's a good thing," said former Facebook Chief Security Officer Alex Stamos, who now teaches at Stanford University. "My fear was that they were going to drop end-to-end encryption."

However, the technology does not always conceal metadata, sparking concern among some researchers that the data might be shared between the services. (With inputs from Reuters)

Goa forum to focus on education

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PANAJI

Leading experts in the field of education and policymakers will gather in Goa for the return of the Difficult Dialogues forum, an annual conference tackling vital issues facing South Asia.

The fourth edition in the

series that previously highlighted issues around India's position in a globalised world, health and gender equality, will focus on education this year, from January 31 to February 2 at the International Centre Goa and Goa University in Dona Paula near here.

Difficult Dialogues 2019 will focus on issues such as the need to increase public spending on education, and what can be done to improve

India's education sector and set it on the path of excellence.

The forum also features an event called Daring Debates, which brings together students from across the country, and will be moderated by actor and columnist Pooja Bedi this year.

In Hungary's cafe, robots serve fun

They offer food and drink, tell jokes, dance with kids or just hang out

REUTERS
BUDAPEST



The robot waiters follow fixed paths to deliver food and drink to customers. ■ REUTERS

The robots at the Enjoy Budapest Cafe can do it all – they can serve up food and drink, tell jokes, dance with the kids or just hang out for a chat with customers.

The cafe, opened by IT company E-Szofterfejleszt in the Hungarian capital, is staffed by a whole team of robots that aim to help familiarise the public with the technological revolution in automation and artificial intelligence.

The robot waiters follow fixed paths to deliver food and drink orders to customers, who are asked to keep out of the robots' way.

Others serve up entertain-

ment of a cafe, said Tibor Csizmadia, owner of the cafe.

From online reviews, customers appear to be charmed by Pepper's antics and were forgiving of the laborious service style of her 'waiter' colleagues.

Hiring doubled

Despite fears that increasing automation and artificial intelligence will take away employment from humans, Enjoy Budapest Cafe's robots aren't putting anyone out of a job yet.

"We actually employ twice as many people as before, because to operate 16 to 20 robots from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. we need to have IT specialists in the background," said Mr. Csizmadia.

Michelin boosts female chefs in 2019 guide

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

An unprecedented number of restaurants run by female chefs won plaudits in the new French edition of the Michelin food guide, as the guardians of haute cuisine sought to address a glaring gender imbalance.

Eleven female-led restaurants have been added to the 2019 guide to the best food in France.

The 2018 French guide had only two female chefs featured, both in partnership with male colleagues. A year earlier, only one woman was among the 70 additions.

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A heart of gold



Madhumitha Gomitanayagam from Chennai is a passionate individual who has created an identity for herself as a social activist and much more. An avid nature lover who has partnered with various NGOs for cleanup activities on beaches, ponds, forests and communities, covering as much ground as possible. Madhumitha who is working on spreading positive attention to her transgender

A second chance for all



Jasper is the founder of The Second Chance - an NGO that offers shelter for the destitute in Secunderabad. He runs this full-time with a 12 member team.

THE HINDU
#UNDERMYWATCH
I WILL HELP ACCIDENT VICTIMS

Housing about 150 people, they provide for them - from the time they enter till their last breath. This is not all - he also helps accident victims. Let's hope people take inspiration from stories like that of Jasper's!

community believes in taking action and volunteering towards causes that could bring a change in the society.

Back to the basics



Sumasree from Bengaluru has been sharing insights through social media and various workshops on how to lead a sustainable life and in turn create a low impact on the environment. From clean-ups to conducting workshops on minimalism and vegan baking, she reaches out to her community to look into the simplest things of life that

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#UNDERMYWATCH
I WILL LIVE SUSTAINABLY

can cause change. She believes minimalism brings about a meaning to life that can cause a reservoir of happiness.

Rebuilding from a traumatic past



Dr. Prasanna Gettu from Chennai, the co-founder of International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care, aims to transform the

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WE WILL PROTECT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

lives of women who have undergone sexual, physical and emotional abuse and empower them to become productive citizens. This initiative was started in 2001 when there were insufficient facilities available for women who were victims of violence and abuse.

The modern 'Ayyamittu Unn'



Meet Dr. Issa Fathima Jasmine, orthodontist and the brain behind 'Ayyamittu Unn' - a community fridge in Besant Nagar Tennis Club, Chennai. Started in August 2017, this community fridge has been feeding the hungry

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I WILL DONATE EXCESS FOOD

for nearly one and a half years and quite popular in her area. The community fridge initially collected only food for the needy but later, with interest from the public, other items like clothes and shoes were donated too.

Tell us how you have made a difference in your own little way and get a chance to be featured in *The Hindu*.

Submit your stories at www.thehindu.com/undermywatch

Krill head south towards Antarctica as waters warm

The climate is becoming unhealthy for them to reproduce

REUTERS
OSLO

Krill are shifting south towards Antarctica as the oceans warm, disrupting stocks that are eaten by penguins and whales and caught by industrial trawlers, said a study.



Waters in the southwest Atlantic have warmed 1 degree Celsius

arctic peaked in the early 1980s at more than 500,000 tonnes caught a year, dominated by the Soviet Union, and had dropped to 237,000 tonnes caught in 2017, according to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

'Warning bell'

"It's a well-managed fishery but this is a warning bell about the future management," Mr. Atkinson said.

"The industry is doing everything possible" to ensure a long-term sustainable fishery, Javier Arata, executive officer of the Association of Responsible Krill Harvesting Companies (ARK), said.

ARK members include Akker Bimarine in Norway, South Korea's Insung, China National Fisheries Corporation and Pesca Chile.

From 2019, for instance, krill companies have agreed to ban all fishing near penguin colonies, Mr. Arata said.

Krill is caught to make fishmeal or oil that is sold as a human health supplement.

The Soviet Union used to can krill as food but Mr. Arata said "it doesn't have much flavour".

MAGAZINE



Chennai Photo Biennale,
starting next month, promises
a bigger, better, bolder show

page 4

Madam/Sir, Movie DVD is
gone. Remote is gone. But
at least wife is there

page 8

In the end, whether it's culture
or genetics, we're like pizza:
Tony Joseph

page 2



Across generations

Krishna Rao lives with his wife Sushmita, 13 years older, in her ancestral home in Kolkata. With them are Sushmita's daughter from her first marriage, Sreemoyee Piu Kundu, and Sreemoyee's foster daughter, aged 9



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Four times over

Nithya Karthik had a two-year-old daughter when she lost her husband at 30. She married an Army officer with twin sons who had also been widowed. The family now has four sets of grandparents and four extended families

COVER STORY

JUST LIKE FAMILY

Multiple generations, same-sex couples, many sets of in-laws: the Indian family is evolving with the times



The family that prays together

Ekant Singh and Tushar Mistry are from Mumbai, live across two cities, and are business and life partners. Gradually, the parents have begun to accept the couple. Today, they do pujas as a couple in Mistry's parental home in a village in Gujarat



The house they built

Jyotsna Gokhale is one of 12 people who live together across three generations in four flats in an apartment building in New Delhi

DINESH KRISHNAN

BY SUNALINI MATHEW

Someone asked me who wears the pants in your house. I said we all do," laughs Delhi-based knitwear designer Jyotsna Gokhale.

Gokhale is one of 12 people from across three generations who live in four houses of an apartment building reconstructed to accommodate the entire family. She is divorced, and lives with her son and partner in one house; in the other three houses live her parents, two sisters and their families. Gokhale has a cordial relationship with her ex-husband while her former mother-in-law visits each time she does pop-ups of the knitwear she sells.

When Mumbai-based architect Tushar Mistry decided to come out as gay, he somehow did not feel the need to tell his parents outright, or give his relationship a name. "They understood," he says. Today, his parents, from a small town in Gujarat, invite his partner Ekant Singh to perform a *puja* usually done only by a heterosexual, married couple. The family *pujari* initially refused to conduct the ritual with the two of them, but later he came around. "When he realised how I care for the family much like a *bahu* would, he blessed us together," says Singh, an interior designer, who works with his partner. It's not about education or big-city living, but about being open, he says. "Tushar's parents are very accepting of the fact that society has changed. His father once told his mother, 'We have lived our lives the way we wanted to, now it's their time to live theirs the way they want to.'

Embracing choices

The Indian family is changing. There's no 'ideal family' defined by children or lineage. It comes in different shapes and sizes. And it has grown to embrace

individual choices, and social realities: single children, divorce, double incomes, sexual freedom.

This change is inevitable, says Neeru Kanwar Chaudhuri, Delhi-based clinical psychologist. The concept of 'family' has always been fluid, even in traditional set-ups, but today "the new generation is seeing much more of the world; they're exposed to Western norms of individualism and autonomy," says Chaudhuri. Everyone needs both individual identity and affiliation. "Earlier, we submerged ourselves completely in the group; now the sense of the 'I' is developing," she says.

A family could now be the quasi-family of the TV serial *Friends*, where a group of people cohabit and share their lives and belong to each other in a fundamental way, but have no single figure of authority.

Gokhale would relate to this arrangement. The absence of an authority figure helps her make choices and be candid about her relationships with her partner, her ex-husband, her son, her parents and siblings. It is a level of honesty impossible in a highly patriarchal household where a single person's views often prevail. Neither her brothers-in-law nor her own partner had a problem moving into homes built by the women of the family. It was a practical move.

"We meet as a family twice or three times every week. We have a WhatsApp group, and invariably someone says it's time for all of us to meet. And if someone can't make it, we're not fussed. We're flexible," says Gokhale. A large family has its advantages, of course. Shopping is shared, as is caring for elders, and the children grow up together. "It is a safety net," says Gokhale.

Nithya Karthik, a doctor, lives in a 'blended family'. She and her husband were both married before, have chil-

dren from their previous marriages and between the couple, have four sets of in-laws and former in-laws – all of whom are welcome at their home in Guwahati. Karthik lost her first husband when she was 30 and her daughter was two. Her present husband had lost his wife and had one-year-old twins. Wherever they have lived – and they have lived in several parts of the country as her husband is in the Army – Karthik says she often had people make disparaging remarks about her family, whether at parent-teacher meetings or at social gatherings.

Navigating society

"I wish people were more open-minded. It's okay to have had a broken relationship or a failed marriage," says Karthik. But her unconventional family has taught her how to navigate societal scepticism. "So for instance, you may break news selectively, first to your friends, then to your siblings, then to your parents. You choose how the information is filtered, you tell your mother, so she can relay it to your father."

And increasingly, age is no bar to starting over. "Pyar karna sabka hag hai (everyone has the right to love)," says Natubhai Patel, 69, a retired government officer. He lives in a so-called traditional joint family with his wife, sons, their wives and children. In 2001, after the devastating Bhuj earthquake, when over 20,000 people died, he began to think of those who had lost their spouses. The next year he started the Anubandh Foundation, a remarriage bureau that divides its candidates into 'below 50' and 'over 50'. He has some 5,000 of the former, and 10,000 of the latter. Through his large *sammelans* or meetings in cities across India, people get together and explore possibilities of remarriage.

Everyone needs a *hamsafar* (compa-

nion), says Patel who has facilitated 145 weddings in the over-50 category. His oldest client was 82 years old, and 12 couples he introduced opted to live together.

"Yes, there is still stigma around women remarrying, and I have seen some cases where relationships have failed, others where the daughter-in-law hasn't accepted the new mother-in-law," says Patel. But there have also been instances when daughters-in-law have come with their mothers-in-law to find partners for them, he says. "As you grow older, the caste, creed, and region divides begin to blur."

Retired seniors, with both the time and money to travel, read and relax, no longer see the care of grandchildren as their duty. "They value their own freedom, and so in some ways are slightly detached," says Chaudhuri. There's also respect. The mother of an adult who has come out of the closet may privately be anguished, but may not express it aloud, says Chaudhuri. Earlier, older adults felt entitled; today, that's changing.

Sujatha Sriram, dean, School of Human Ecology at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, who works on marriage and family concepts, feels the change is no revolution and that it is still marginal. The problems around reimagining families conjoin around three main areas: assumptions, expecta-

tions and adjustments, she says. Assumptions for instance that a man of 28 necessarily wants to get married and wants to marry a woman; expectations that a woman will leave her job once a child is born; and adjustments like the ones women must make to meet the spouse's family demands.

Communication, says Prof. Sriram, is key. "Within families we should be able to sit and talk about everything, including sexuality."

'Karmic' ties

Families aren't likely to be immediately won over or created anew, but they may come around eventually. Kolkata-based N. Krishna Rao lives with his wife, Sushmita Kundu, who is 13 years older, in her ancestral home. Living in the same space is their daughter, the writer Sreemoyee Piu Kundu, and their nine-year-old granddaughter. Rao, who came to Kolkata in the 1980s, was a paying guest with Sushmita's parents, but was gradually embraced by them as one of their own. The couple soon married, then a big step, because Sushmita was divorced and older than Krishna. Sreemoyee, who was 12, initially resented the relationship, but later grew to love him, and today shares a warm relationship with the man she calls her "karmic father".

Before the wedding, "My dad sought my permission, then gave me space to take a decision," she says.

Some of the changing perceptions are thanks to popular culture, movies, movie stars. When you see Sonam Kapoor and her siblings interact with their step-siblings, it helps push the boundary of what is possible.

Says Karthik, laughing: "I was the youngest of three sisters and always said I wouldn't marry as I didn't want in-laws or children. But today, here I am with two marriages, four sets of in-laws, and three children!"

I wish people were more open-minded. It's okay to have had a broken relationship or a failed marriage

Not just India

A record number of Americans today live in multigenerational households, part of a broader trend toward more shared living. In 2016, a record 64 million people, or 20% of the U.S. population, lived with multiple generations under one roof.

Meanwhile, 78.6 million adults, or about 32% of the U.S. adult population, were part of a shared household in 2017, reflecting another increasingly common living arrangement.

A shared household is a household with at least one adult who is not the household head, the spouse or unmarried partner of the head, or an 18- to 24-year-old student. (Most multigenerational households are also shared households.)

Source: Pew Research, 2018

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BY MANU S. PILLAI

Things are often not what they seem." So proposes the first line in Tony Joseph's *Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From*. He would know, for a glance at the Amazon.in page that advertises his book is a lesson in how impressions can be manufactured even when they fly in the face of reality.

Of the 48 reviews posted on the e-commerce site, none of the dozen-odd negative ones is from a verified buyer. And the assorted complaints range from Joseph's alleged evangelical zeal to accusing him of plotting civil war. "Not worth a single penny," declares Amit, while Ankur claims the author is inspired by Lord "macaulay".

A user called Dharma, meanwhile, makes a valorous attempt at nuance: "Traces of central Asia dna (sic) found in few (sic) genetic samples in India in no way proves Vedas originated outside of India or brought to India by outsiders (sic)." It is merely, insists another apoplectic user, "propaganda of leftist (sic) to disintegrate... and demean ancient Indian society."

Where were the Vedas written

When I meet Joseph in New Delhi, I decide to inflict these comments on him, in a slightly less hysterical tone. "Are you even hinting that the Vedas originated outside India," I ask, trying to mine the political before we get to the historical. "No," he answers, between sips of filter coffee. Parts of the *Rig Veda* may have been composed in the far reaches of the subcontinent, but the bulk of the Vedic corpus was created in this land. "Is your argument that Hinduism is a foreign religion?" I demand, trying to play devil's advocate while chewing on a chicken sandwich. "No," again, is Joseph's sage response. Hinduism was born from the interaction of migrants from beyond this land with the faith(s) already here, which in turn were nourished by multiple outside influences from the ages before. "The Vedas and Hinduism," he reiterates, "are Indian."

What he does, however, argue firmly – which is just as likely to provoke the unthinking minds that make up Internet mobs – is that India is not a single source culture. The Vedas, in simpler language for the Amits and Ankurs of Amazon, are Indian, but they are not the only or the earliest fount of Indian culture. India is, on the contrary, a confluence of ideas and practices, synthesised over thousands of years into that fascinating civilisational and religious universe which we now call Hinduism.

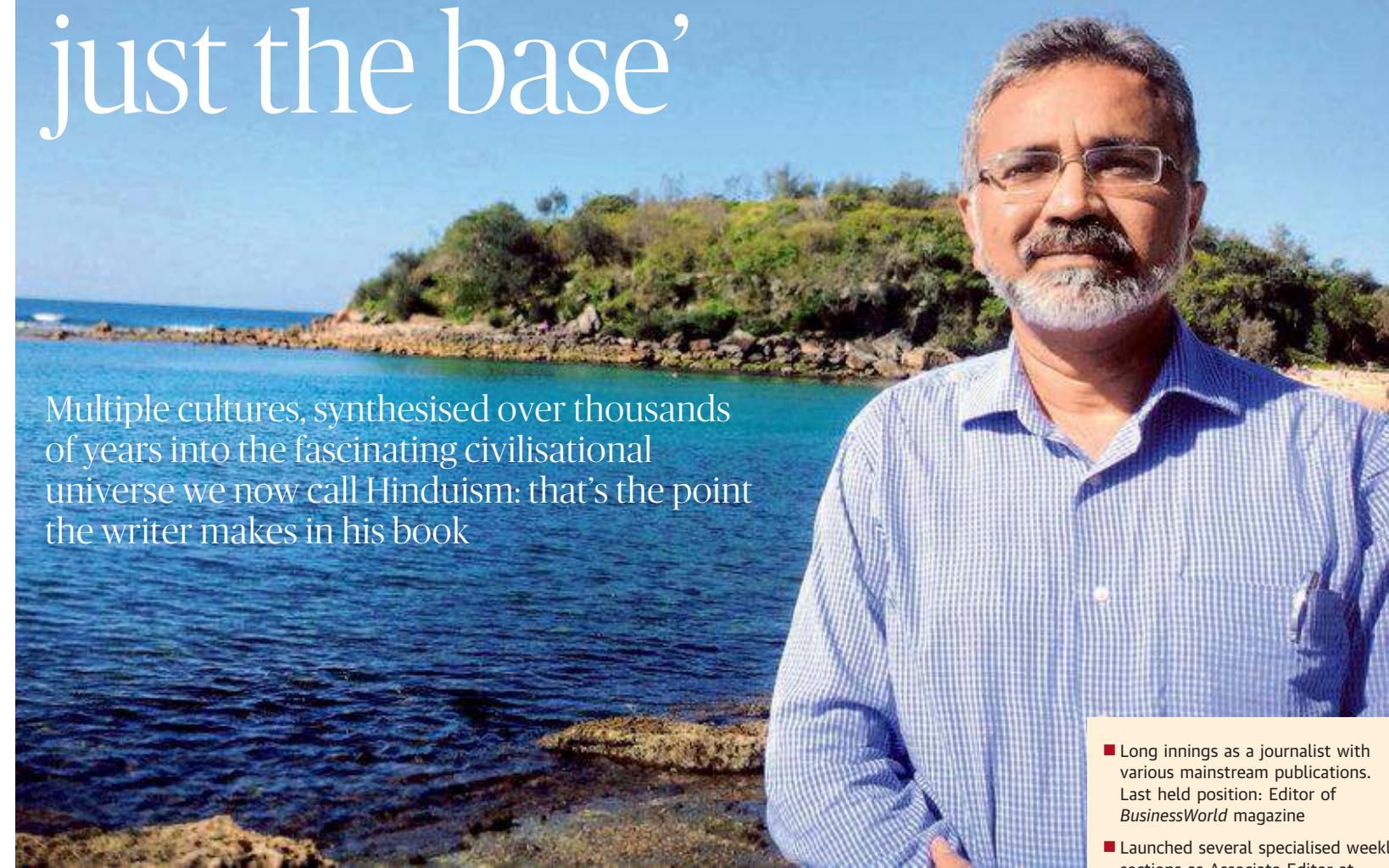
We are the world

And, in what is the principal point of the book, we Indians ourselves are not children of a single source. As has long been suspected, and as science is confirming, Indians today – like Indians thousands of years ago – are descendants of people whose roots do not always lie in our sub-continent. We are all Indians, but we are also all made up of genetic influences that emerged in lands deemed foreign.

The only theme Joseph avoids is detailing the full political implications of the latest findings. It is just as well, be-

60 MINUTES: WITH TONY JOSEPH

We are like pizza. Early Indians were just the base'



Multiple cultures, synthesised over thousands of years into the fascinating civilisational universe we now call Hinduism: that's the point the writer makes in his book

Potpourri The Harappans were themselves a mix of the early Indians and Iranian immigrants: Tony Joseph. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

cause it would open up a space for conspiracy theories and angry speculation instead of an engagement with facts. Still, I persuade him to give me his views. "Nobody," he finally explains, "has any argument with the coming of the first Out of Africa humans to the subcontinent 65,000 years ago. Nobody has any issues with the East Asian origin of the Mundas. It is only when we speak of the migration from the Central Asian Steppes – of the so called 'Aryans' – that there is this sensitivity. And this comes from believing that everything Hindu, everything Indian, must be Vedic and Aryan." In other words, acknowledging an Aryan migration into India would puncture political ideologies built around notions of who belongs here and who does not. And this is precisely the kind of puncturing that would hurt.

What Joseph explains in *Early Indians*, then, is that Indian history is marked by several major influxes of people. Leaving out archaic humans (who went extinct long ago but have left material traces), and besides our African ancestors who first populated this land (all

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Since I have decided to play devil's

advocate, I press him on the Out of India Theory (OIT) – the idea that the Aryans were Indians who fanned out into other parts of Asia and Europe. Joseph laughs: he calls proponents of OIT not theorists but "denialists" of evidence. "For decades," he argues, "we have been hearing about OIT. But why is it all noise? Why is there not a single peer-reviewed research paper on OIT? Yes, there are blogs and websites, but there is no academic case made out cogently to support the denialists."

The antiquity anxiety

OIT, to Joseph, comes from an anxiety to place the Aryans in India before anyone else. What genetics shows, however, is the opposite. "About 17.5% of Indian males today carry the R1a haplogroup, which is also found in Europe and Central Asia," he points out. "In ancient DNA evidence from 3200 BCE, this signature and this affinity to Central Asians is absent, but by 1200 BCE, you find it." While the final report is not out, DNA extracted from a 4,500-year-old skeleton in Rakhigarhi, Haryana, con-

■ Long innings as a journalist with various mainstream publications. Last held position: Editor of *BusinessWorld* magazine

■ Launched several specialised weekly sections as Associate Editor at *Business Standard*

■ Features Editor with *The Economic Times* between 1988 and 1991, responsible for a major overhaul in the style and content of the newspaper

firms the trend: the R1a "Aryan gene" is absent and so is any evidence of a genetic link to Central Asians. In other words, if R1a did not exist in a 4,500-year-old Harappan but exists here today, somewhere in the middle someone new entered India. "It is simpler to speak of haplogroups, which concern a small part of the ancestry we carry," says Joseph, "but even if you look at the complete genome data, the argument holds true."

This is not necessarily surprising. There is archaeological evidence that the Harappans were phallus worshippers; those who prayed to the lingam. The *Rig Veda*, the oldest in the Vedic corpus, lambasts such people. In one verse, Indra defeats a city of phallus worshippers, elsewhere invoking Agni (fire) to: "Destroy with your heat the workers of magic (the Dasyu enemies of

the Aryans are described as those who are *anyavarta*, of strange rites). Destroy with your power the evil spirits (for after all they are *anindra*, without Indra, and *shishnadevas* or phallus worshippers). Destroy with your flames the idolaters (for the *Rig Veda* venerated no idols). Burn to nothingness the murderous scoundrels." What is interesting, however, is that by the time we arrive at the later Vedas, such as the *Yajur* and *Atharva Vedas*, not only is idol worship normal, but even the phallus has become sacred.

In other words, the Aryans came and at first did not like what they saw. But over the succeeding centuries, they merged with the Harappans, not only introducing their culture into India, but absorbing Harappan ideas into their own customs and imagination. (A little bit like later Islamic dynasties, one might mischievously add.)

Harappans weren't Aryans

Our conversation meanders into several other subjects: the Saraswati river, the links between Old Elamite and Dravidian languages, and the disintegration of Harappan culture. Indeed, the Harappans were already in decline when the Central Asian immigrants began to knock at their doors. But on the difference between the Aryans and the Harappans, Joseph is firm, armed not only with genetics but history. It is telling, he points out, that the "Vedas are of little use in deciphering the Harappan script, just as the imagery of the Harappan seals has little connection with the world of the Vedas."

Where the Vedic texts elevate the horse to divine levels, the horse is conspicuous in its absence from Harappan seals. But for all that, Harappan culture merged with the Aryans, even as it travelled south and married itself to the world of the early Indians who lived there (thus creating 'Dravidian' culture). The house with the central courtyard, the sacredness of the peepal tree, the lingam, the toilet lota, and even the tale of the thirsty crow that put pebbles in a jug – these are all bequests from our Harappan ancestors.

"In the end, whether it is culture or genetics," Joseph concludes, "we are like the pizza. The early Indians were the base. The Harappans, born from a marriage with Iranian immigrants, became the sauce on the pizza. Then came the cheese and all the toppings: the Aryans, the Tibeto-Burmese, and the Austro-Asiatic language speakers. And it is together that they have created what we today define as Indian culture, and Indian identity."

It is a fascinating picture, even if an unorthodox analogy. But while the story of the pizza that is Indian history and our place on it may fascinate many, there will be others who do not accept this, no matter what the evidence; some to whom India is not a pizza with multiple ingredients, but a pristine, imagined ideal, where everything is one, and nothing was ever born of difference.

The writer won the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar for *The Ivory Throne* (2015). His latest book is *Rebel Sultans: The Deccan from Khilji to Shivaji*.

PROFILE

He's been a rebel without pause

Malamud's crime? Making public information accessible to the public

BY VISVAK

On his Twitter bio, Carl Malamud describes himself as a civil servant. In real life, he seems to spend a lot of time coming up with new ways to get in trouble with civil servants worldwide. Over the last three years, he has been involved in six different court cases across three continents. His crime? Making public information accessible to the public.

At the 19th International World Wide Web Conference in 2010, Malamud articulated his '10 Rules for Radicals'. Among them was the commandment "run really fast" because, "as a small player, the elephant can step on you,

but you can outrun the elephant." Malamud, dressed in business formals ahead of what promises to be a typically hot and humid Mumbai day, has the aura of someone who never stops running.

When I meet him at a hotel in Mumbai's Cuff Parade, Malamud was in the middle of a whirlwind tour of India. Apart from a scheduled appearance at Delhi High Court, he has public and private engagements lined up with activists, academics, bureaucrats, tech workers and students across the country. He is here to spread the word about his mission and to recruit potential collaborators.

"Information must be free," says Malamud. "I really believe that information has become colonised. That the pu-

blishers have overreached. They are taking property that is not theirs and guarding it."

One-man army

The digital archives maintained by his one-man NGO, Public.Resource.Org, currently contains close to 10 million files. From complete collections of the laws of several American States to the National Building Code of India, Malamud has liberated a dizzying array of government documents from their walled prisons across the world. He has painstakingly digitised and improved many of them with better formatting and accessibility features, and made them available online for anyone to access for free.

Malamud and his lawyers use a simple argument: "That the edicts of government should be available

to citizens is a democratic principle, a rule of law."

It is hard not to get caught up in his enthusiasm as he describes the enormous multiplier effect that access to government information tends to have. "If it's not available, nobody knows it's there and nobody cares about it. But once it becomes available, citizens start to use it and entire industries start to get built on top of it."

Malamud is no pirate though. While his work probably does violate the letter of the law, he stresses that he "spends a

■ My job is to confront authority and that's exactly what Gandhi did. It's what Martin Luther King did as well



tremendous amount of time coming up with a convincing story for myself and others as to why it's the right thing to do."

Breakers of rules

India's most famous rule-breaker, M.K. Gandhi, defied Britain's salt tax to assert Indians' right to govern themselves. In his quest to establish access to knowledge as a fundamental human right, Malamud sees standards as his salt. "My job is to confront authority and that's exactly what Gandhi did. It's what Martin Luther King did as well. He broke the law by sitting at lunch counters, but with the specific aim of changing the law, and not simply because he wanted to make sure kids had lunch."

Unfortunately, the odds seem to be stacked against him. The Internet that Malamud cut his teeth on was a truly egalitarian network whose very architecture prioritised freedom and open access. Today's digital world, controlled and monitored by governments and giant tech firms, is a stark contrast. Malamud appears to be somewhat of an anachronism against this backdrop. While he soldiers on on his lonely quest to liberate public knowledge, today's brightest young minds are engaged in building technologies designed to hoover up ever-increasing amounts of private data.

Outnumbered and outgunned he may be, but Malamud is optimistic. "I want to let young hackers know that you can do more with technology than simply come up with an app that'll make you money."

You could actually make your world a better place."

The freelance journalist is based in Goa.

Twitter: @visvak



POWER OF KNOWING Carl Malamud (bottom) is determined to make access to knowledge a fundamental right.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK & JOI ITO/FLICKR.COM

Malamud has been associated with the Internet since its infancy. He spent most of the 80s writing reference books about computer networks. While many of his peers went on to establish tech businesses and become billionaires, Malamud has spent the last 30 years putting government databases online, one at a time. "Dotcom CEOs are a dime a dozen," he says. "Running an NGO that takes on governments is something not a lot of people know how to do."

BIS rules online

Although the Public.Resource.Org archive currently hosts a varied selection of documents, nothing gets Malamud quite as excited as the collection of public standards from across the world. These standards, which in India are produced by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), specify norms that affect the daily lives of citizens in many ways. From the design of crash-safe motorcycle helmets to earthquake-proofing measures for buildings to tests for the purity of atta and ghee, standards define acceptable minimums everywhere.

Though all of these documents have been created using public funds, the government agencies and private contractors that publish them routinely charge citizens exorbitant fees for the privilege of accessing them. BIS, for instance, charges ₹14,000 for a copy of the National Building Code of India.

"One of the things I always look for is a government or a private party overreaching. If a standards body puts the standards online for reading, even if they prohibit commercial access, I wouldn't have done this," he reasons. "But when they say nobody can put these files on the Internet by any means and the price is a thousand dollars, then we have a problem."

Malamud and his lawyers use a simple argument: "That the edicts of government should be available

FIELD NOTES

Interpreter of a malady

In one of Jharkhand's poorest districts, a village health worker is the only one watching over TB patients

BY ANUMEHA YADAV

On the outskirts of Tarwadih village in Jharkhand's Latehar district, a path winds through paddy fields and leads to Bhuiantola, a hamlet where Bhuiyan Dalit families live. That month, four residents of Bhuiantola hamlet were being treated for tuberculosis (TB), a bacterial infection that mostly affects the lungs.

Radha Devi, the village sahiya or frontline health worker, an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA), was walking down the village path and hollered out to Ramavtar Ram, a farmer in his 50s, who was working in the fields. "Nine number medicine course is over for you," she said. "You will now be on CP." Ram had contracted TB six months ago and looked emaciated from the infection.

Stepping in

Devi, who has been supervising Ram's treatment for the past six months, is not a trained doctor or nurse. She has studied only till Class IV and is one of the over 1,325 health activists appointed under the National Health Mission's community health programme in Latehar. "I am not fully literate, but I recognise medicines through a number or an alphabet in the drug's name," Devi said, explaining how she had memorised 13 long and complicated names of TB drugs.

TB can be fully cured with a six-month antibiotics course. But India accounts for a fifth of TB-related deaths worldwide. In Jharkhand alone, nearly 40 people die of the disease every day. The government has recognised that people in remote tribal districts, with poor access to nutrition and medicine, are a priority group.

Jharkhand's Adivasi villages lack critical healthcare infrastructure. Rajabau Yole, a World Health Organization TB consultant working in Jharkhand, said that although every community health centre is supposed to have an X-ray machine and a courier service to transport sputum samples for testing, these are missing in most districts.

Then there is also the major shortfall of doctors. Raksh Dayal, Jharkhand's State TB officer, said the State has only 2,200 doctors (of 3,400 posts) and only half the required contractual health staff for the treatment programme. In Latehar, one of the poorest Adivasi regions in Jharkhand, 13 of 23 posts in the district TB hospital have been vacant for



C *Mohan called me and said he feared he was going to go mad,' said Devi. 'I felt he was like my son; I was worried'*

five years, including the post of TB medical officer.

It is here that health workers like Radha Devi step in to fill a critical gap.

Deadly smoke

Latehar families are especially vulnerable to TB because of their work. When the season's paddy harvesting is done, they migrate for work to the brick kilns in Benaras in Uttar Pradesh and Aurangabad in Maharashtra. Here they are exposed to smoke that damages lungs and reduces immunity to many infections, particularly TB.

In fact, before Devi was chosen as the

sahiya in 2007, she too worked in brick kilns. The contractors offer ₹10,000 to ₹12,000 as an 'advance', but there are no regular wages. "At the kiln sites, away from towns, there are no health facilities," said Devi. "Besides, many people do not complete the treatment course. Some don't like the taste of the medicines, others worry about the side-effects."

In Tarwadih, Devi met Bartu Oraon, who has had a relapse. Then she counselled Neetu Devi, a young farm worker and patient, who had recently delivered a baby boy. Devi advised her to cover her mouth while breastfeeding to prevent the infection from spreading to her baby.

Teaching precautions

Devi has been trained by the TB hospital in Latehar. "I ask patients to take precautions, to use ash to cover their spit, or cough only into a gamcha and boil it in water to prevent the infection from spreading." And to cover the after-taste



C *To cover the after-taste of drugs, she even buys patients packets of namkeen, Devi said, showing me a small packet of snacks*

ter nine months of treatment, Bhuiyan now had enough strength to walk and had taken the cattle out to graze. But his family was anxious: one of the medicines had impaired his hearing.

The medicine can also make patients depressed, paralysed, or completely deaf. "Sadly, I have seen Mohan go through all these stages this year," said Devi.

When he started to display these side-effects, Devi went to Itki a second time to act as his counsellor. "Mohan called me and said he feared he was going to go mad," she said. "I felt he was like my son; I was worried." The government staff did not pay her anything but Bhuiyan later reimbursed her the ₹400 she had spent on travel.

As a sahiya, Devi is supposed to get ₹100 as 'incentive' for each TB case she reports. She has heard that the government has promised to double the incentive and the honorarium this year. But nothing has happened yet. "I have not been paid anything for more than a year," said Devi. But she was soon up again, ready to see a new patient.

The writer received the REACH fellowship on TB.

Critical gaps (Clockwise from above) Villagers in Latehar line up to cast votes; students cross a makeshift bamboo bridge on their way to school; Radha Devi (centre) with a patient's family. MANOB CHOWDHURY

of drugs, she even buys them packets of namkeen, she said, showing me a small packet of snacks she was carrying for a patient.

Among the more serious patients, Mohan Bhuiyan, also a brick kiln worker, developed multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, a more deadly form of the disease that develops when a patient gets incomplete or inadequate treatment. This makes the most powerful TB drugs ineffective, and it needs a protracted two-

year treatment with highly toxic drugs. This deadly strain can be passed to others through close contact via air droplets in much the same way as regular TB.

Always there

"The sahiya has been coming home to give him medicines every day," said Sita, Bhuiyan's wife. Devi travelled twice with her husband to Itki, 110 km away, where the government runs a sanatorium. Af-



FOCUS

The last swordsmith

At 90, Heeralal may just be the only surviving artisan of a centuries-old craft

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

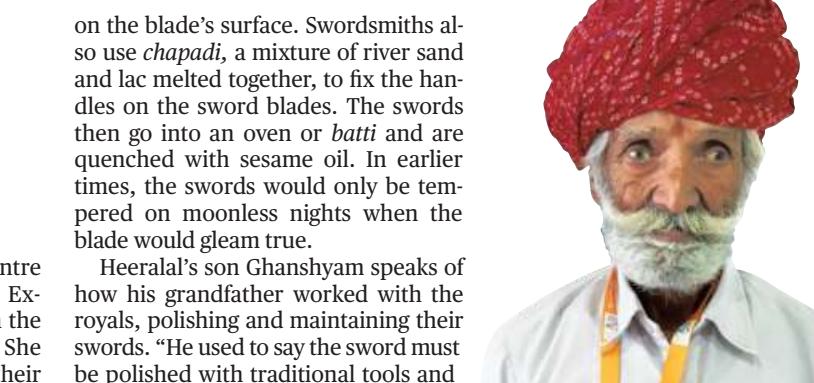
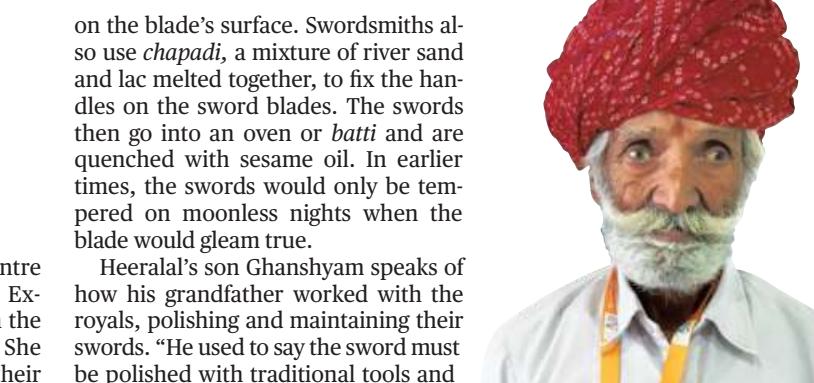
There's a din in the air and before me is a riot of colours. I am in Udaipur's City Palace that is hosting its 4th World Living Heritage festival, where, despite all the brouhaha, I am drawn to an old man polishing a sword with what appears to be a wooden wheel held in place by a rotating stand. This is Heeralal, 90, perhaps the last surviving sikligar, or traditional swordsmith.

Sikligars from Rajasthan polish, furnish and make swords as well as restore and sharpen old ones. Some 400-500 years ago they were a nomadic community and part of the king's entourage

on the blade's surface. Swordsmiths also use *chapadi*, a mixture of river sand and lac melted together, to fix the handles on the sword blades. The swords then go into an oven or *batti* and are quenched with sesame oil. In earlier times, the swords would only be tempered on moonless nights when the blade would gleam true.

Heeralal's son Ghanshyam speaks of how his grandfather worked with the royals, polishing and maintaining their swords. "He used to say the sword must be polished with traditional tools and not machines so that the temper is maintained. It also helped that in the

C *The Arm and Armour project merges traditional smithing with advanced nano materials to restore old swords*



Rare craft (Clockwise from extreme left) Ghanshyam and his wife sharpen a sword; intricately carved sheathed daggers; the swordsmith Heeralal; and a carved sword handle. BINDU GOPAL RAO

past the quality of the iron used was superlative, which is not the case today. We shape the swords by hand just like sculptors," he says.

For Heeralal, the sword means everything. "It's like my soul," he says. "I don't worry whether I make money or not. I value it far too much to let it go."

Magical powers

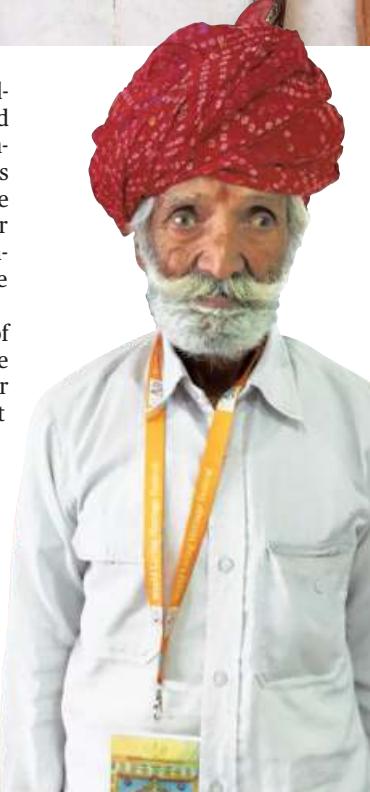
During Navratri, in Heeralal's village Ameth, swords are placed before an idol of the goddess Durga and worshipped. They are believed to gain magical powers. "The swords are then viewed entirely differently, as spiritually charged ritual objects," says Singh. After the nine days of festivities, the sword is taken out on a procession, as villagers dance with swords while some of them strike themselves with it by way of asking for forgiveness for past sins.

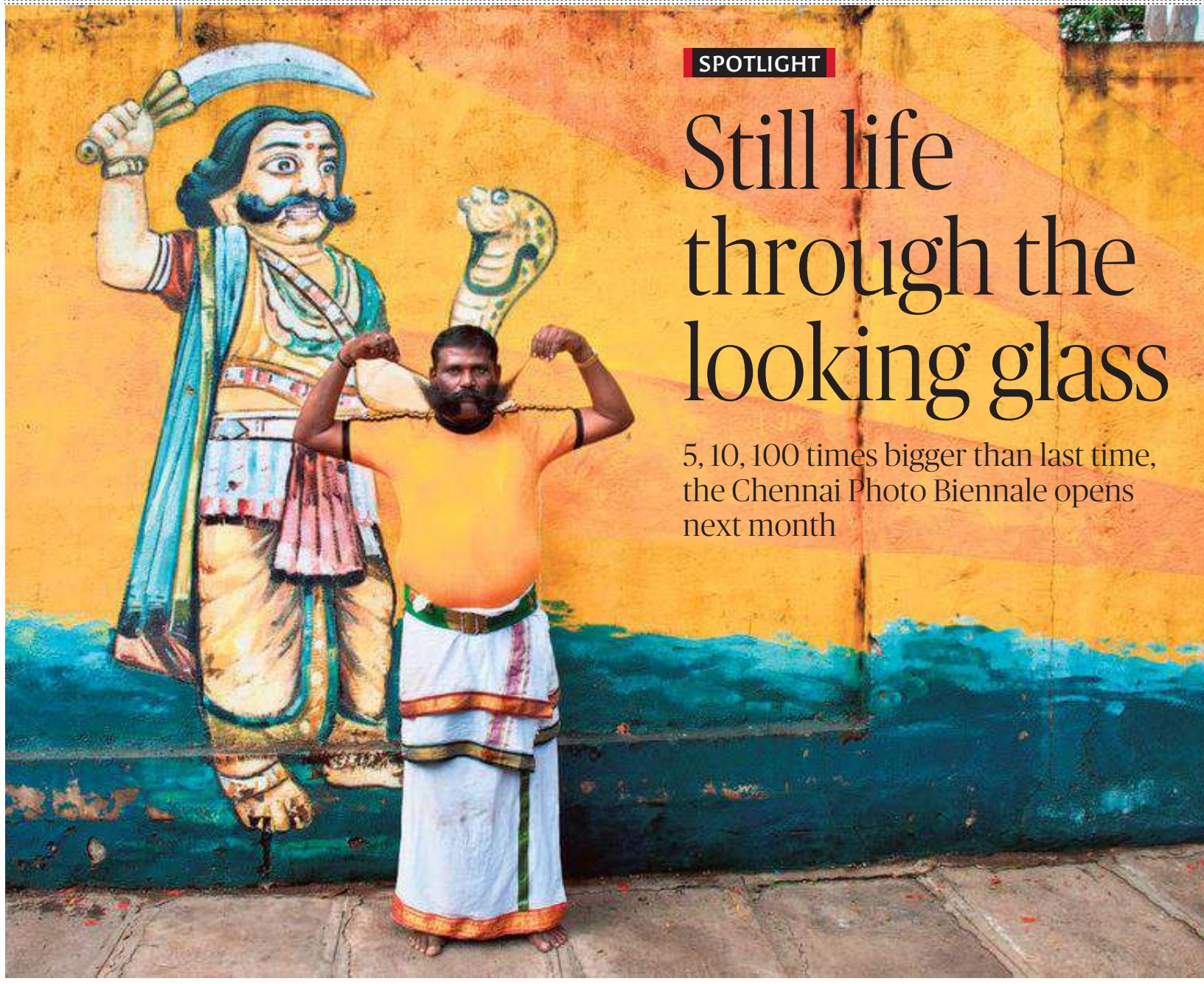
Traditional conservation techniques are part of the 'Arm and Armour' project at the City Palace, and Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar of Udaipur is overseeing the effort. Singh and her team are working on cleaning, conserving and restoring as well as documenting the weapons in the armoury here. They are also merging traditional smithing with advanced nano materials to restore and repair old swords. "Carbon fibres and carbon nanotubes have been used as the reinforced materials and pure lac is used as a matrix material. These are non-toxic and biodegradable," says Singh.

However, as with most things traditional, the challenge is the lack of demand. Sikligars now use their skills to make scissors.

But Singh and her team have begun to document the dying art by interviewing the remaining swordsmiths and organising live demonstrations to rekindle interest in the art form. The sikligars might yet get another innings.

The freelance writer and photographer from Bengaluru seeks offbeat experiences through travel.





BY ROHAN MANOJ

What do we see through a glass darkly? Mere reflections, or a façade hiding an eldritch realm that lies just beyond our ken, populated by demons plotting to invade the material world and devour all mankind? The ancient Chinese believed the latter, dubbing these creatures the 'fauna of mirrors' – and this concept has been adopted as the title for the second edition of the Chennai Photo Biennale (CPB). "It's not theme such as," says artistic director Pushpamala N., who views it in broader terms, "as a metaphor for photography itself, a mirror portal that creates another world." A parallel world that is "familiar yet strange, perhaps friendly and intimate, sometimes mysterious and hostile – but always magical."

Quantum leap

The Biennale, an international festival of photography co-founded and co-organised by the CPB Foundation and the Goethe Institut/ Max Mueller Bhavan, Chennai, will be open to the public from February 22 to March 24, and will feature works by more than 100 artists

from 13 countries, with exhibitions in various venues across the city, including heritage sites. There will be seminars, workshops, talks and performances. Much of the work is already in print, but many are being created specifically for the event – something that's enabled by the biennale format, with residencies and artist grants. But what really marks out Year 2 as a huge step up from the more modest first edition – a product of "enthusiasm" – is a quantum leap in quality, according to co-founders Varun Gupta and Helmut Schippert and founding trustees Shuchi Kapoor and Gayatri Nair. For this they credit Pushpamala's curation as well as their brainstorming after the first event. Overall, the difference in scale is "10x," asserts one. "Let's keep it at 5x," cautions another. "100x," exclaims a third.

Chennai calling

Pushpamala, former sculptor and now performance photographer, brings a unique perspective to the curation. Her background being in the art world, the Biennale has more than a tinge of the art show about it, with several installations, videos, projections and so on – but all to do with photography, the still image. And there is a focus on her own



CPB will feature works by more than 100 artists from 13 countries, and will also have workshops, talks and performances

area, conceptual photography, although a number of documentary photographers and political activists are also represented. And she has selected specific works to be arranged thematically, rather than by artists *per se*.

Why Chennai, a city steeped in cinema and the classical arts, but with no great tradition of still photography? The answers come in a cascade.

"Why not Chennai?" Because we're here. "Because it's our city." "Because there's a void in contemporary art to be filled here." Chennai is "very fast-growing, like so many metropolises," says Schippert, but "tell me one single contemporary art event that Chennai is

Visual treat (Clockwise from left)
Works by Cop Shiva, Chan Hyo-Bae and 3rd Space Lab Collective.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



good in. There's none."

With its rapid success since its launch in 2012, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in particular – now counted among the world's big art events – has been an inspiration. The difference, of course, is the focus on photography, but there are several South and Southeast Asian precedents to cite in that regard: Nepal's Photo Kathmandu, Singapore's International Photography Festival, the Kuala Lumpur Photography Festival in Malaysia, Bangladesh's Chobi Mela. The last is "a name in the art world," Schippert points out. India has nothing similar, but smaller festivals have been starting up, like Egaro in Agartala. There's collaboration going on as well; curated photos from the Delhi Photo Festival were shown at CPB's first edition.

Future photo capital?

Hosting the Biennale in the city's heritage venues could be a boon for conservation, by bringing attention back to these beautiful but forgotten spaces and thus extending their useful lives, says Kapoor. The Senate House is one example, largely inaccessible, sealed off with red tape and bureaucratic lethargy. It's hoped that making use of such sites will encourage owners of other heritage buildings to come forward and open up their properties.

When asked where they see CPB in 10 years' time, the team displays ample ambition; Gupta wants to put Chennai on the map as the "photo capital of India" and the home for photography the country lacks at present. More prosaically, they'd like to see Chennai as a place on people's calendars, somewhere to go, like Venice, like Kochi, a place where all the best, the most critical and the most socially relevant gather every two years. And, as a consequence, bring other benefits to the city, such as increased footfalls and business.

With the foundation also working with the photography community to host regular events such as workshops and talks through the year, in addition to the Biennale, another 10-year goal is to build a museum in Chennai, with a focus on archiving the photography of South India.

WHO'S COMING

Aishwarya Arumbakkam, India
Angela Grauerholz, Canada
Anna Fox, U.K.
Amshu Chukki, India
Archana Hande, India
Armin Linke, Germany
Arpan Mukherjee, India
Arun Vijai Mathavan, India
Atul Bhalla, India
Balaji Maheshwar, India
Camp, India
Catherine Leutenegger, Switzerland
Chan Hyo Bae, South Korea
Cop Shiva, India
D. Ravinder Reddy, India
Dayanita Singh, India
Desire Machine Collective, India
Gauri Gill, India
Indu Antony, India
Jason Shulman, U.K.
J.H. Thakker, India
Kader Attia, France
Karthik Subramanian, India
Kowshik Vasudevan, India
Liz Fernando, Germany
Manit Sriwanichpoom, Thailand
Manjunath Kamath, India
Munem Wasif, Bangladesh
Naeem Mohaiemen, Bangladesh
Nalini Malani, India
Nandini Vali Muthiah, India
National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar, India
National Institute of Fashion Technology, Chennai, India
Navjot Altaf, India
Offset Pittara-Anshika Varma, India
P. Sainath, India
Putu Sayoga, Indonesia
Rabih Mroue, Lebanon
Ram Rahaman, India
Raqs Media Collective, India
Rashid Rana, Pakistan
Shadi Ghadirian, Iran
Sheba Chachhi And Sonia Jabbar, India
Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, India
Susanta Mandal, India
Tejal Shah, India
Tracey Moffatt, Australia
Vijay Jodha, India
Vivan Sundaram, India

WHERE TO GO

Offbeat venues will be a big plus for CPB. "I wanted to keep the feeling of these venues," says Pushpamala. So instead of using only flat surfaces, she has taken the sculptural installation route, and some large works will jut out from the floor. There will also be videos playing on monitors. Venues include fabulous heritage buildings like Madras University's Senate House, Egmore Museum, and Madras Literary Society; quirky local spots such as railway stations and Elliot's Beach; plus regular galleries.

SCANNER**Auction for Kerala**

'Art Rises for Kerala', the first live art auction in Kerala, had all its lots sold out on January 21 at the Grand Hyatt in Kochi. Proceeds from the auction amounting to ₹3.2 crore will be donated to the Government of Kerala Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund. The auction was conducted by Saffronart and the Kochi Biennale Foundation. Anish Kapoor's 'Untitled' (picture) sold for ₹1.3 crore.

India Heritage Walk Festival

Sahapedia, an online encyclopaedia of Indian arts and culture, is collaborating with UNESCO to host the second edition of 'India Heritage Walk Festival', a month-long, multi-city event introducing people to the tangible and intangible heritage of their cities. The second edition will cover 37 cities across India. It will be held from February 1-28.

Banksy on display

The Banksy painting, 'Love is in the Bin', that recently auctioned to a European collector at Sotheby's, will go on public display for the first time in February at Museum Frieder Burda in Baden-Baden, Germany. A panel discussion will try to make the context and intentions of Banksy's work comprehensible. The display will focus closely on the picture itself, the new global icon.

FRAMED

Standing in solitary splendour

What happens to passionate private collections once their patrons are gone?



GAYATRI SINHA
is an art critic and curator who, while preoccupied with her art website www.criticalcollective.in, is also contemplating a book

The banks of the Sabarmati encased in impenetrable cement seem to hold a lesson for the cultural life of Ahmedabad. Once accessible from the steps of Sabarmati ashram, the rambling riverfront, home to small communities and even the popular circus, was messy, vibrant and dynamic, much like the city. That is now consigned to memory and photo to archives. The concrete bank seems to serve as a metaphor for another kind of ossification, in the city's art resources.

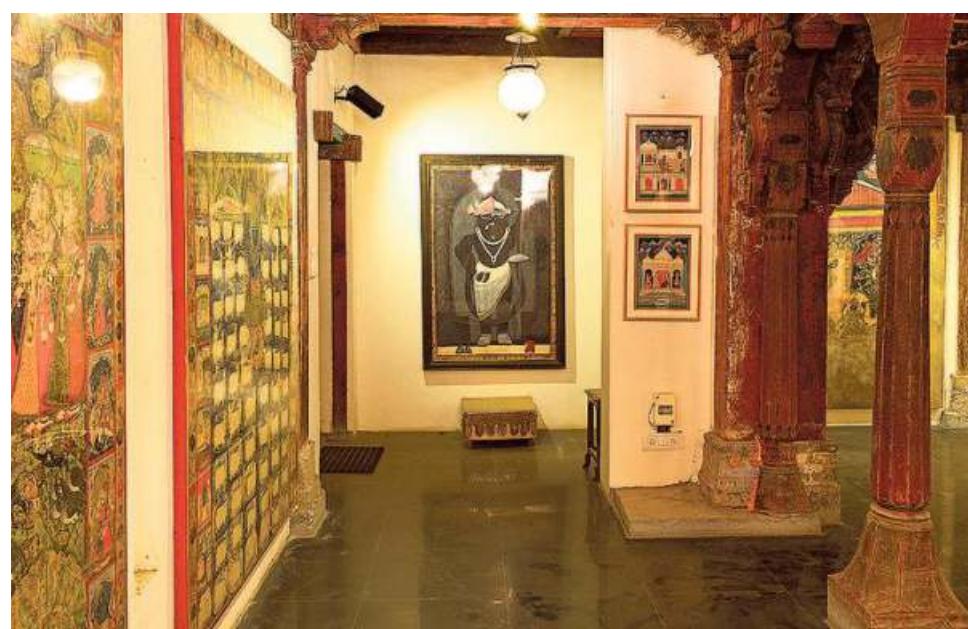
Textile tour de force

Ahmedabad, unlike Mumbai or Kolkata, other cities with a mercantile past, continues to be a city of privately held museums. While the Tatas, the Readymoneys and the Gurusaday Dutt collections passed into government hands, Ahmedabad has largely held on to the phenomenon of the patron-collector. Inaugurated by Nehru in 1949, the The Calico Museum of Textiles, housed in the former Sarabhai residence, remains a gem of collecting endeavour.

The profound attention to the textile wealth of India make this museum a one-of-its-kind repository. Gautam and Gira Sarabhai's initiative, however, needs more contemporary and informative ways of sharing – a more informed guided tour, for instance. The museum as repository of knowledge rather than a dazzling rushed tour, which is what it is at present, would perhaps be closer to the spirit of its founders.

Two other private museums are more recent and modest in scale but nevertheless speak eloquently of the city's private collections. Amit Ambalal, author of *Krishna as Shrinathji* and originally the inheritor of a textile fortune, is both collector and artist, who has given a decisive turn to the readings of art production in the Gujarat-Rajasthan region.

Recognising the Krishna haveli painting of



Revived The pichhwais on grand display in Amit Ambalal's private collection. ANUJ AMBALAL

C**A team of three photographers has transformed the Navajivan archive into an active hub**

Nathdwara as a distinct sub-school, he initiated from the 70s an extraordinary collection of Nathdwara Pichhwais. While the large-scale, early Pichhwais of the Sarabhai collection point to one phase of the aesthetic of haveli painting, the Ambalal collection is dynamic, tracing from the mid-18th century painted fragment to the diffuse 'iconic' images of Narottam Narayan and Ghasiram that combined photography and painting.

Remarkably, Ambalal has recently transported a late medieval temple from Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh to his home. According to his son Anuj Ambalal, during the 16th century, the Sultan of Burhanpur had invited jewellers from

Together with the impressive Relia collection of portraits and rare pieces like Ravi Varma's 'Sita Bhooparvash', the collection straddles some masterpieces from the colonial period to the present day. These three private collections – and there would be others in the city – are poised in a limbo of sorts. Supported entirely by their patrons, they have closed or very limited access. They exist outside state support, and there's no readymade template for such passionate collections to weather the passage of time.

No longer sleepy

In contrast, another institution has seen an extraordinary revival. Visitors to Navajivan over the last few years might remember the Gandhi archive and the repository of his writings and his early printing presses as a sleepy institution. In the last two years, a team of photographers – Vivek Desai, Himanshu Panchal and Mitul Kajaria – have helped transform it into an active hub, lending the archive a contemporary buzz.

Navajivan now has a printing lab, one of the finest in Ahmedabad, that works mainly with young photographers. It has Café Karma, a popular eatery, a shop with khadi and handicrafts, and what is perhaps its most significant achievement, the Satya Gallery, which offers free space primarily for photographers to share their work. In the shrinking institutional space for photography, Navajivan is helping build audiences and interest in the medium, even as Gandhian thought hovers gently in the background.

Ahmedabad, the locus of 'the Gujarat model of development', is perhaps an accurate example of the state of the country's cultural institutions. As long as there's a dedicated patron, the collection flourishes, but once it is overly settled or deprived of fresh finds, it starts to ossify.

The L.D. Museum of Indology, with its extraordinary treasures including the N.C. Mehta Jain medieval paintings, and even the Sarabhai Calico Museum, are instances of once vibrant centres that need more energy and better viewer interface. The state can be a distant patron but not a disinterested one, or else important repositories might petrify for want of funds and museological expertise.



BIG SCREEN

BY NAMRATA JOSHI

In *Delhi Crime Story*, Shefali Shah plays the lead role of a cop investigating the 2012 Nirbhaya rape case. Shah tells me about the sensitivity, honesty and responsibility with which she had to approach the real-life character in this seven-episode, independent TV series by Indo-Canadian filmmaker Richie Mehta. "I couldn't mess with the facts or goof up with the material and had to approach the situation, incident and people with respect."

Mehta, she says, invested much time to research the facts, and kept it gritty and real. Shah felt more like a collaborator than just an actor. "He told me that it had been written by a man and he needed a woman's voice in it."

The brutality and unbearable horror of the Nirbhaya case shook people, not just in India but the world over. *Delhi Crime Story* is based on actual events and case files of the Delhi Police investigation and has been narrated from the perspective of the cops.

"It hit all of us in our gut," says Shah. But "I couldn't react as Shefali but as the cop in charge of the investigation who had hunted down the rapists in 72 hours," she says.

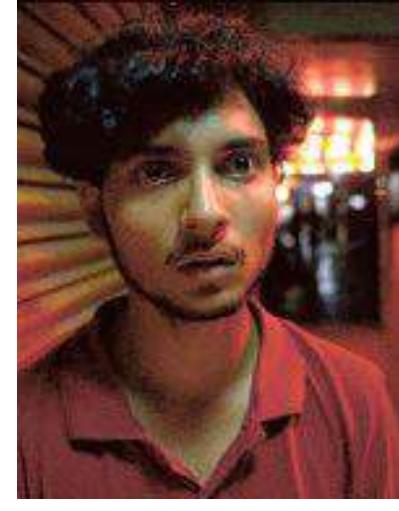
Mehta met the cops, researched and went through reams of material. "Nothing has been fabricated out of nothing," Mehta tells us on a call from London. The material available was so vast that he calls *Delhi Crime Story* an eight-hour independent film that has been serialized into seven episodes.

The series looks at law and order and justice and at how, not just punishment, but something greater is needed while dealing with such heinous crimes. "Why do they [criminals] think the way



Cops and shepherds

A bunch of gritty Indian movies are all set for the winter film festival circuit



I couldn't react as Shefali but as the cop in charge of the investigation who had hunted down the rapists in 72 hours

they do" is a question he wants to leave the viewers with.

The show's ensemble cast includes Adil Hussain, Denzil Smith, Rasika Dugal, Rajesh Tailang and Yashaswini Dayama, and it will be the first Indian series to have its world premiere at Sundance Film Festival in the Indie Episodic section on January 29. Mehta hopes that the series "affects someone", who can, in turn, "effect change in this age of apathy".

Debuts and sophomores

As the winter film festivals roll on, a bunch of Indian films are set to travel internationally. Besides the biggies – Zoya Akhtar's *Gully Boy* at Berlinale and Ritesh Batra's *Photograph* that features both at Sundance and Berlinale – there are debuts and sophomore outings, young and veterans alike.

In Rima Das's *Bulbul Can Sing*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival last year, themes of feminism, gender and sexual identity go hand in hand. It won the Golden Gateway award in the India Gold section at the Mumbai Film Festival, and now features at Berlinale. Prantik Basu's 27-minute *Rang Mahal* will premiere in the Shorts section at Berlinale.

Meanwhile, at Sundance, the New Frontier section showcases acclaimed theatre director Anamika Haksar's direc-

torial debut *Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Jaa Riya Hoon* (*Taking the Horse to Eat Jalebis*), an experimental take on Old Delhi's syncretic migrant culture.

Devashish Makhija's *Bhonsle*, which plays in the Voices segment of the International Film Festival of Rotterdam (IFFR) also deals with migrant politics. But the story of depression and decay in the life of a retired 60-year-old cop (played by Manoj Bajpayee) is a very "personal film," says Makhija. It emerged from his relationship with his father, "a failed businessman," who worked in a sari shop in Kolkata and was ousted one day after 57 years of service.

It's about the "decay of his soul" after his wife's death, being unemployed, and about the ravages of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's; it's also about Makhija coming to terms with "not being there for his father".

Praveen Morschale's *Widow of Silence*, about a Muslim 'half-widow' in

Themes of feminism, gender and sexual identity go hand in hand in Bulbul Can Sing



PAST FORWARD

Murder most mauled

Bollywood adaptations of *Hamlet's* play-in-play are faithfully unfaithful



VIKRAM PHUKAN
sought out cinema that came at least two generations before him, even as a child. That nostalgia tripping has persisted for a lifetime

The Mousetrap, not to be confused with the long-running Agatha Christie whodunit that was recently staged in Mumbai, is the name given by Hamlet to the 'play within the play' performed in the eponymous Shakespearean drama.

"The play's the thing, wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king," he says, in allusion to the murder of his father by his brother Claudius, now king of Denmark and married to Hamlet's mother, Gertrude. The play within, actually called *The Murder of Gonzago*, depicts a murder executed in much the same fashion as Hamlet's father's. As it unfolds, guilt and perhaps contrition are writ large on Claudius' face, and he rushes from the room.

In Vishal Bhardwaj's *Haider* (2014), Shahid Kapoor and a bevy of backup dancers perform the implicating ballad, 'Bismil Bismil', using elements of the Kashmiri folk form, the *bhang pather*, even as the entire saga shifts to Kashmir from Denmark. But in some of the earliest adaptations – the silent film *Khoon-e-Nahak* (1928), Sohrab Modi's *Khoon ka Khoon* (1935) and Kishore Sahu's *Hamlet* (1954) – the 'mousetrap' is a play, and not a song.

Sahu's film owed a huge debt to the definitive Laurence Olivier version from 1948, with only the gravediggers afforded a rousing comic number.

Modi's version was essentially a recording of the play being staged in a studio against huge painted backdrops of realistic Victorian settings. Regrettably, no trace remains of the original print. Of course, there are Hindi films in which a similar trope is used that might not have been directly received from Shakespeare.



In disguise Farah Khan's *Om Shanti Om* features variations on the 'mousetrap' theme.

and Helen, is a saga of betrayal and murder, with even a Helen lookalike, Madhumati, roped in for the cabaret re-enactment. *Pagla Kahin Ka* is one of those 60s confections that were idiosyncratically original and wholly unoriginal, all at the same time.

Then there are *Karz* and its clones, which feature pivotal song sequences in which a murdered man, reborn as another, re-enacts the killing (usually at the hands of his paramour) in a song-and-dance gala. The 1980 original directed by Subhash Ghai was loosely based on *The Reincarnation of Peter Proud*, which featured several *déjà vu* moments, but none that could qualify as a bona fide 'mouse-

trap'; so Karz's evergreen ballad by Laxmikant Pyarelal, 'Ek hasina thi', performed to expose Simi Garewal's complicity, was a dramatic invention that would have done *Hamlet* proud. Farah Khan's homage *Om Shanti Om* (2007) and Satish Kaushik's remake *Karzzzz* (2008) both feature impressively mounted 'items', all using riffs from the *Karz* signature tune lifted from George Bern's 'We as love'.

Variations to a theme can be found in *Karz*'s Southern remakes. In the Telugu film, *Aatmabalam* (1985), the 'mouse-trap' takes place at a college function, and the victim's surviving family members participate in the mêlée. In *Enakkul Oruvan* (1984), the Tamil remake, there is no incriminating song, and the central murder is not committed by a vengeful fiancée, but she is framed for it.

Of course, in countless Indian films, the 'song within the film' is a dramatic device ripe with metaphors and allusions, rather than a natural part of the narrative as in Hollywood musicals. A case in point being *Don* (1978), where almost every song is a 'mousetrap' in disguise.

Karz and its clones
feature pivotal song sequences in which a murdered man, reborn as another, re-enacts his killing

IN THE NEWS

Amazing grace

Aamir Khan's latest is a documentary about loss. And about forgiving

BY PETER GRIFFIN

With an Aamir Khan Productions film, one expects carefully orchestrated publicity, the actor giving out strategic media interviews, a series of appearances with the look he is assuming for the film, and so on. Not unnaturally: a superstar carries the weight of a film and potential box office returns. For *Rubaru Roshni*, though, Khan only put out a video asking fans to watch it, and said nothing of substance about the film.

But by the time you read this, if the non-publicity has worked, a substantial chunk of India's television audience will already be talking about the film. It will have skipped theatres altogether and launched across Star TV's network, with dubs in six languages (with English subtitles), beamed simultaneously across the country, and on Hotstar.

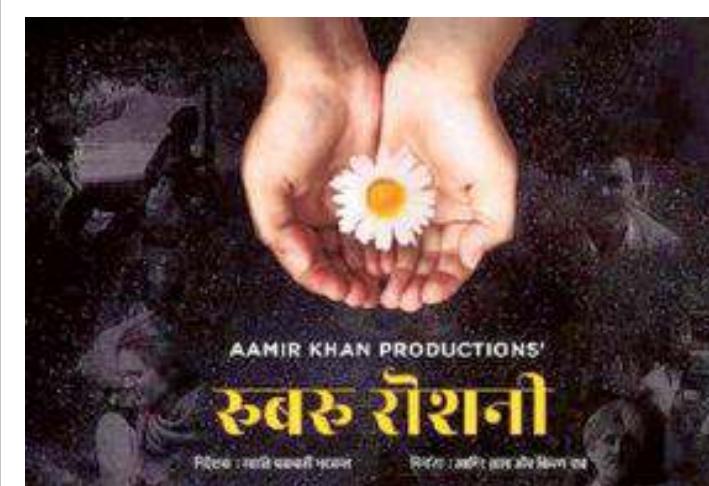
For those of you who missed it, what's the hullabaloo about?

The documentary, at one level, is about grief and devastating loss: a young child loses both parents to a political assassination; a nun with

cancer loses her sister, also a nun, to a senseless attack; a middle-aged woman loses her daughter and husband in a brutal terror attack, one the world witnessed in real time. It is also about the perpetrators of these gruesome deeds: a man radicalised by the pogrom in Delhi after Indira Gandhi's assassination; a semi-literate sharecropping farmer brainwashed by landlords into thinking the nun's social activism is a threat; faceless terrorists.

Close-up view
The camera gets in close, telling their stories in their own words. Close enough to Avantika Maken Tanwar, whose father was a target of Sikh revenge, to see what seems like brash self-assurance dissolve as a self-confessed daddy's girl re-

Ajmal Kasab, half in tears, tells the police about his parents having sold him into militancy



Difficult stories Poster of *Rubaru Roshni*.

members that day and its aftermath. Close enough to the impulsive face of Ranjit Singh "Kuki" Gill to look deep into his eyes as he makes no attempt to sugarcoat the story of how he and his compatriots shot and killed Lalit and Gianjali Maken, about his life in prison, his extradition and attempts to win release.

We get as close to Samundar Singh, the farmer, as we do to Sister Selmi Paul, sister of Sister Rani Maria. We spend time with Kia Scherr and her memories of Alan and Naomi, but there is also footage of a half-in-tears Ajmal Kasab telling the police about his parents having sold him into militancy, to wrench you away, if only for a moment, from the verdict in your head about the horrors of 26/11.

At times, one feels almost like an intruder, as composites crumble, taut smiles waver, twist and reveal naked grief, but we are held, forced to witness the humanity, to not turn our gaze. At others, the intensity dials back to character-revealing interludes – the meticulous tying of a colour-coordinated turban, a bare altar, calloused hands pulling up shoots.

Khan is the voice-over bridging the conversations, while debutant director Svatik Chakravarty Bhattacharya is also invisible but core to the film's veracity: its subjects speak to her, not to the eye of the camera. More than her filmmaking skills – which are evident – what shines through is her feel for story, her empathy, her ability to probe beyond the surface, to step back from the easy slope of bathos.

The narrative, then, is not about the atrocities that started the stories. It is about finding – despite the shattering of lives, despite the pain that nurtures bloodlust and dreams of revenge – that it is possible to forgive, and through forgiveness, find salvation and peace.

Highlights (From far left) Stills from *Bhonsle*, *Delhi Crime Story*, *Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Jaa Riya Hoon* and *Binnu Ka Sapna*.

Kashmir, who struggles to get the death certificate of her missing husband from the government, also plays in the same section at IFFR.

The Indian highlight at IFFR, however, is the international premiere of Ridham Janve's *The Gold-Laden Sheep And The Sacred Mountain*. It competes with 20 films from over the world in the Bright Future Competition section, and is a rare film set in the mountains of Himachal Pradesh in the midst of the Gaddi community of shepherds.

What lies beyond
A graduate of the National Institute of Design and a resident of Goa, Janve has been a regular visitor to the mountains, and the idea of the film came from one of his treks there. Set around an elderly shepherd who goes looking for the pilot of a crashed plane, *The Gold-Laden Sheep..* is a fascinating mix of mythology, mysticism, folklore and ethnography. "What lies beyond the misty mountain," is the underlying question.

Shot with local resources and facilities, the film has a cast of non-professional actors, the local Gaddi community itself filling in for various roles; five of them came for the premiere at the Mumbai Film Festival. The lead role is played by Arjun Pant. "He can't read or write but is an encyclopedia on mountain culture," says Janve.

If *Delhi Crime Story* raises questions about the mind of a criminal, Kanu Behl's *Binnu Ka Sapna* tries to understand the roots of anger. It will premiere at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival 2019, the world's largest dedicated to shorts. Of 78 films, *Binnu Ka Sapna* is the only Indian one competing this year.

Behl says an individual has a public and a private life, as well as a secret one that they don't reveal to anyone. He tries "to dive into the head," "understand the vortex" so to speak. He admits that "it was a thin line to walk. We were not trying to justify his [violent] act."

The voice-over, the use of still frames, the slideshow of images – all bring alive the theme, the condition, the suffocation and anxiety in Binnu's mind. "His vision is myopic. He has blinkers on, constantly seeing through the same lens," says Behl. The still frames were used to universalise his story. Binnu's warped mind harks back to the past. It is like a cup of tea, a strong metaphor in the film. Much as his anger is against the world around him, like the recurring cup of tea, the anger is also an inheritance he can't break away from.



BY UDDIPANA KALITA

The straight road out of Jodhpur cuts through Rajasthan's arid land dotted with kikar and baobab trees. Three hours later, Google Maps tells me I have reached my destination, and the cacophony confirms it. I am in Khichan village where small brick homes and havelis dot jowar and bajra fields. The loud trumpeting comes from winter visitors to the village – thousands of demoiselle cranes that have migrated from eastern and central Asia.

And in Khichan, these birds are treated like royalty. On every day of their stay between September and March, residents feed them at the bird granary or *pakshi chugga ghar* that they have created. Here, every morning, residents – many from the Jain community – spread out sackfuls of grain for the des-

cending flocks. Ram Chand, tells me: "They are like our guests. We must feed them every time they visit."

I head to the Khichan water reservoir where the noise gets deafening. A sea of ash grey plumes transforms the desert landscape. When they fly, their huge wings whooshing, the birds look pale blue and the black pattern on their underbelly looks like they're wearing black ties. There must be some 500 cranes at the reservoir, preening their feathers, drinking water from a small pond, looking towards the afternoon sun.

Proud ambassadors

The local community members are proud ambassadors of the cranes, always eager to take birdwatchers around the village. Many have built viewing platforms on their terraces, a great vantage for visitors to watch the birds from.

RED EARTH

Dining with the demoiselle

How a migratory crane has turned a remote Rajasthani village into a tourist hub



Like royalty
Demoiselle cranes at Tal Chappar (left extreme), and a huge flock at Khichan village. [wiki COMMONS](#)

Tour operators from Jodhpur and Jaipur routinely bring in tourists who are willing to travel the distance just to see the cranes. On a typical winter Sunday, you would have at least 10 cars coming into Khichan with tourists.

At a grocery shop I meet little Champta. She is all of five, but tells me the cranes have migrated from Turkey. She watches the birds with me, deftly peering through my binoculars.

There haven't always been so many demoiselles at Khichan. It all started 70 years ago when one Khichan resident

started feeding a few dozen cranes. Rantan Maloo was conferred the Salim Ali Nature Conservation Award in 2009 by the Bombay Natural History Society for his work in conserving the cranes. Maloo passed away in 2011. Over the next years the numbers increased and some winters have had 20,000 birds visiting.

Habitat loss

Demoiselle cranes are found in 47 countries around the world, and although they are not endangered, they face threats from habitat loss. They feed on plants, insects, grains and small mammals. This village is ideal habitat, with its matrix of wetlands, cultivated lands, ponds and food provisioning grounds.

Although the crane's population increase is seen as a conservation success, the idea of artificially feeding these wild birds has drawn criticism too. "Providing food artificially can cause unnatural

The population increase is a conservation success, but artificially feeding has drawn criticism

not damaged. Happily, some of the major threats to the cranes have been resolved. High tension electricity wires once killed several cranes but Sundar says that "with local lobbying and a court verdict, the lines have moved underground." Then there were feral dogs who hunted the cranes, but the feeding area has now been fenced off so that dogs can't enter.

With the growing numbers of tourists, a delicate balance will have to be struck in Khichan: as big a draw as they are, the birds also need to be left undisturbed while they feed at the ponds and wetlands and food provisioning grounds. The cranes, meanwhile, have learnt remarkably well to co-exist with villagers, tourists and domestic animals in this arid landscape.

When not working in the forest, the writer loves to cook from YouTube recipes.

C Many locals have built viewing platforms on their terrace, a great vantage for birdwatchers

flocking in some areas," says K.S. Gopi Sundar, scientist, Cranes and Wetlands Programme, Nature Conservation Foundation. Research says that while artificial feeding may be good to rapidly bolster crane populations, it is not a good long-term conservation measure.

Feeding on crops

The birds also take a toll on the crops. "Cranes feeding on crops is not always welcome," Sundar points out. This will have to be monitored so that the positive attitude of the area's inhabitants is

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE

Plastic, the spiny-tailed lizard

Orange speckled head, blue tinted tail – these lizards of Rajasthan are a colourful lot



JANAKI LENIN
is not a conservationist but many creatures share her home for reasons she is yet to discover



Baked brown An Indian spiny-tailed lizard. [MADHURI RAMESH](#)

Madhuri Ramesh observed the lizard through binoculars. Its dark round head had emerged from the burrow and surveyed the sunlit world for danger. Nothing in the open arid land raised an alarm, not even the little hide made of shrubbery that concealed the researcher and her assistant, Musa Khan. She named the reptile 'Plastic', after the bits of debris embedded in the ground around his lair.

Minutes later, he crawled out of his cubbyhole, revealing his foot-long flat, hefty body and stubby legs. Other lizards surfaced until the entire colony lay sprawled out in the open on that searing hot April morning. If the reptiles have pride, it must rest on the dense rows of spines covering the full length of their tails, which gives them their name – the Indian spiny-tailed lizards.

Heat had transformed Plastic's colour from slate grey to beige. Orange speckles adorned his head, and blue colour tinged the spikes of his tail. "Even lizards are colourful in Rajasthan," Ramesh said.

Baked to his preferred operating temperature, Plastic waddled to a patch of the last remaining greenery and tore off leaves from herbs.

Dietary preference

Unlike any other lizard in the subcontinent, spiny-tailed lizards are vegetarians, an unusual dietary specialisation in a desert with scant rainfall and sparse plant life. Vulnerable to starvation in drought years, they make do with locusts. Otherwise, they don't give the insects a second glance. Unlike other herbivores, the spiny tailed lizards lack the teeth to chew their greens. And unlike other lizards that lead independent solitary lives, these social creatures live in colonies. This combination of exception-

C Plastic pounced on the female lizards too, not letting them eat in peace. "He's such a badmaash. We should give him a good beating," Khan said

al habits fascinated Ramesh. For a hundred years, no one had investigated the species. Studying it isn't for anyone who wilts like a flower in the infernal desert summer.

Heat junkie

"I like hot weather," Ramesh had confessed to Ravi Sankaran, a bird ecologist who was then researching floricans and bustards in the area. Who better to study the lizards than a self-professed heat junkie!

That dawn, she and Khan had trekked three kilometres, when the temperature was 40°C, carrying their gear and a heavy jerrycan of water. Before slipping into the hide, they scoured the interior for any saw-scaled vipers seeking refuge in its cool shade. Once ensconced, they wouldn't be able to move lest they scared the lizards into their burrows. All they'd have to eat through the day would be dry rotis with a spicy pickle.

Ramesh watched Plastic swallow mouthfuls of leaves before he and the others made a run for it. They didn't make for the nearest burrow but to their

own as if tied to it by an imaginary string. Several hatchlings tried to jam themselves at the same time into a couple of narrow entrances, leaving their mothers out in the open. Startled, Ramesh looked around for the danger. Distorted by rising heat waves, the vision of a shepherd and his flock of goats shimmered like a mirage in the distance.

Missing nothing

"Gossip and shepherds travel far in the desert," says Ramesh.

Every herder within a 40-kilometre radius felt compelled to call on her, convinced she was bored and dying for human company. She failed to persuade them that she found the reptiles' social life as enthralling as a soap opera.

The curious residents didn't know what to make of a woman who spent all her time with lizards. She had introduced herself as a doctoral student. Word spread and villagers lined up to consult this newly arrived "physician". Khan extricated her from the situation by explaining that she had to prove she could herd the *sanda*, as they called the

species, to get a government job. Mysterious were the ways of the administration, but being in its employ was one of the few careers available in that part of the country.

By the time the shepherd reached the hide, the place that had a moment earlier been crawling with lizards was deserted. After milking a nanny goat, the herder made cardamom tea while chatting with Khan in Marwari. The goats grazed on the low plants covering the ground, and the lizards resumed nibbling, at ease among the mammals. Although these visits disrupted her observations, she welcomed such opportunities to quiz the men about the grasslands and where they had seen *sandas*.

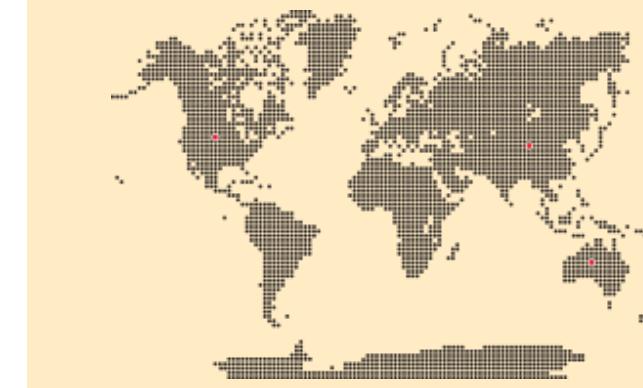
Ready to fight

After the man left, Ramesh returned to work. With his tail curled up like the "handle of a teacup", Plastic swaggered around looking to pick a fight. If a rival or youngster wasn't quick on its feet, he puffed himself up and charged. The display was enough to send the other lizard scurrying out of his way. The females didn't escape his attention. He pounced on them not letting them eat in peace. Watching these antics, Khan commented, "He's such a badmaash. We should give him a good beating."

Besides Plastic, the hatchlings captivated Ramesh. Inflating themselves until they resembled animated balloons, they leapt on each other and rolled. The ferocity of their wrestling kicked up dust in the colony and amusement inside the hide. Until the arrival of the monsoon, the young would live under their mother's protection in her burrow.

At sunset, Plastic and the other *sandas* retreated underground, plugging the entrance of their burrows with mud to deter night prowlers. Ramesh and Khan gathered up their stuff and trudged back to the village in the fading light. They'd return the next day for another episode of the *sanda* soap opera.

FLASHPOINT



Back from oblivion



Despite what its name may imply, *Lethe niceletta* was never forgotten, merely lost. The Small Woodbrown butterfly – very small, with a wingspan of no more than 55 mm – has been rediscovered in Sikkim a good 120 years after it was first found and classified in 1887. The entomologist who made the original discovery, Lionel de Nicéville, did not present photographic evidence or report the exact location, and it was never spotted and conclusively identified in the interim years. This time, however, a team from Sikkim University's zoology department has nailed down the elusive creature with photos and captured specimens.

Outback Conquistadors



Down under, where the flora are rugged and the fauna downright terrifying – but these are fast losing ground in the face of an external threat. Research recently published in *Pacific Conservation Biology* has revealed that the greatest threat to Australia's native plants and animals is neither climate change, nor land clearing, nor energy production, but invasive species. The article



identified 1,257 native species as being threatened by some 207 invasive plants, 57 animals and three pathogens. Largely thanks to imports like foxes and feral cats, the country has the highest rate of mammal extinction in the world.

A heroic cause deserves a heroic name, and thus was born the Alliance to End Plastic Waste. More than 25 companies – some produce consumer goods and plastic, while others are waste management and recycling firms – including the likes of Procter & Gamble, Shell, BASF and ExxonMobil, have joined hands in an effort to reduce plastic waste and improve recycling. They've agreed to contribute a collective \$1 billion over the next five years in areas such research and development of recycling technology, and cleaning up rivers. The response has been mixed, with Greenpeace global plastics leader Graham Forbes quoted as saying this was a "desperate attempt to maintain the status quo."

The Barbary cardsharps

Lyrical accounts and black-and-white memories aside, Marrakech preys on tourists, brutally

BY ZAC O'YEAH

Marrakech. Hearing the destination announced on the airport PA at Amsterdam gets my cerebral cinema going: Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, set around the ancient Jamaa el-Fna square, the Kate Winslet starrer *Hideous Kinky*; the romcom *Sex and the City* 2, which though supposedly set in Abu Dhabi was filmed in Marrakech.

I am also seeing in my mind's eye celebrity photographer Sir Cecil Beaton's images of the Rolling Stones lounging around Es Saadi's hotel pool while composing their psychedelic album *Their Satanic Majesties Request*. My spiritual soundtrack also includes the 1969 number 'Marrakesh Express' by Crosby, Stills and Nash, composed by Graham Nash after a train ride from Tangier to Marrakech. But my favourite is a rare Beatles demo with John Lennon singing 'On the Road to Marrakech' to a tune which he later repurposed as 'Jealous Guy'.

I step off the aeroplane at Marrakech's stylish small airport, where passengers are made to walk across the tarmac as the sun sets in the vast surrounding semi-desert, shining on the snow-capped Atlas peaks on the horizon.

After an hour of painfully slow immigration, I'm finally on the rickety airport bus to Jamaa el-Fna. The vibe of Marrakech is focused around this touristy hotspot, booby-trapped with pesky shopkeepers who won't let customers leave until they buy something. When I don't buy, they call me 'bad tourist'. I escape into a quieter bazaar, squeezing past overloaded donkey carts straight out of the Middle Ages and peddlers of decapitated goat heads and live fowl, but the way ahead is blocked. 'Hollywood film shoot,' I'm told by a bouncer type.

Getting fooled
Fake guides inform me that a museum I am looking for is indefinitely shut, which invariably turns out to be not true, but they can show me a better museum, that is, another souvenir shop. I'm lost in tourism purgatory, where all roads lead to Jamaa el-Fna, whose name aptly means 'assembly of the dead'. Unesco-approved street entertainers here invite me to enjoy their performance, only to demand 200 dirhams (about ₹1,500) the moment I pull out my camera. An aggressive snake-charmer threatens to tie his reptile around my neck if I don't pay up.

The square's innumerable food stalls are remarkably popular despite making me pay much more than I would for a better meal at the nearest restaurant. But taxis ask for five times the meter, so I simply cave in and sit down at the run-down Le Grand Balcon du Café Glacier, furnished with plastic chairs and overpriced mint tea.

Trapped in time
I usually find something to love wherever I go, but Marrakech's predatory tourism induces



Wanderlust Street food and night life at Jamaa el-Fna square, Marrakech. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

try feels – how should I put it – unsound, as if Disneyland has given a makeover to an Arab town. Sure, its money-making traditions date back a thousand years to a time when its medina was erected as an entrepôt for Saharan trade routes. Within the walls of the Jamaa el-Fna, any number of fondouks – caravanserais – dot the souks. Here traders once lodged and stored goods, but most now function as souvenir stalls.

Gone too soon
Brooding at the café keeps me at a safe distance from the tooth-pulling quacks and the wily cardsharps and toddler pickpockets who demand cigarettes in order not to loot me. It puts me in mind of what George Orwell wrote about Marrakech in the late 1930s: "Somebody noticed that I was lighting a cigarette. Instantly, from the dark holes all round, there was a frenzied rush ... all clamouring for a cigarette. Even a blind man somewhere at the back of one of the booths heard a rumour of cigarettes and came crawling out, groping in the air with his hand. In about a minute I had used up the whole packet."

Except for Orwell, I'd generally come across lyrical descriptions of the city – especially from the '60s, when Marrakech was the southern hub of swinging London, "discovered" by hippies who made it into a Saharan version of Goa. This led to artists, designers, authors and other creatives relocating here. Yves Saint Laurent, for example, whose ash-

When I don't buy, they call me 'bad tourist'. I escape into a quieter bazaar, squeezing past overloaded donkey carts straight out of the Middle Ages

es are scattered in his Marrakech garden, decided to stop designing black clothes after buying a house here, and from then on used vivid Moroccan colours in his couture.

Double edge

It sets me thinking of the double edge to tourism: while developing Marrakech into a resort for dollar tourists keeps the city alive, it also turns it into the opposite of a resort – the unnecessarily rough bullying to squeeze extra dirhams out of visitors results in tourists opting to mill around in guided herds from sight to sight and then hide in opulent hotels.

All riads, traditional 'inward-looking' courtyard homes, seem to have been bought up by rich Europeans after the king relaxed the foreign-investment rules, which, while resulting in the restoration of many a decaying building, hurts native hoteliers (used to ripping off tourists, which is what happened at both the hotels I stayed at) and also alters the demographics of the old town.

Tourists might end up entirely isolating

themselves from the locals, staying in riad-hotels run by expats, which would put the tourist economy in an even trickier position.

Already in the time of the Stones, their home-away-from-home hotel became a Marrakech-away-from-Marrakech, as they walked about bedecked in Berber jewellery and chic Moroccan robes without ever entering the hustle of a souk. Lennon mostly partied in a riad owned by J. Paul Getty Jr., where Marlon Brando also lived for a time and which was subsequently owned by French actor Alain Delon, who eventually sold it to pop philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, who lives there now.

Free? Not really

To my surprise, though, on my fifth and last day at Jamaa el-Fna, its vibe grew on me. The ecstatic drumming and hypnotic base grooves combined with greasy smoke from a hundred food stalls grilling away as if there's no tomorrow somehow brainwashed me into enjoying myself.

I also discovered that once the 200-dirham photo penalties are taken care of, the musicians invite you to sit with them as they play. 'No charge. You already paid. Enjoy for free.' So there's something that's free in Marrakech after all: the rubbing in of the fact that one has been cheated.

The author is fascinated with places where tourists don't go, especially if there's something to eat that he hasn't tried before.

With warmth Harissa, a meat and rice dish, is cooked only during winters. And (below) a basket of water chestnuts.

NISSAR AHMAD & REUTERS

sun till all their water evaporates. They are then packed up for the winter months.

"Our mothers and grandmothers had mastered the art of making delicious foods from these sundried ingredients," says Zahid G. Muhammad, author of the book *Srinagar: My City, My Dreamland*. "The dishes were time-tested. There were ducks and mallards prepared with *handh* (dried dandelion), shredded or minced meat with dried quince, eggs with tomatoes." *Handh* or dried dandelion is cooked with chicken and meat.

Garlands of greens

Until recently, come autumn and you would see practically every home in the Valley with garlands of vegetables hanging from the sun-facing windows. The custom is still prevalent, but perhaps not as much as before. Red chilli and dried turnip garlands are vivid from a distance.

Some of these were also essential to Sufi Urs, the days of remembrance of the saints. During the Urs of the Mughal-era saint, Hazrat Sheikh Dawood from Batamaloo, for instance, many people abstain from meat and only eat sundried turnips. According to legend, during Dawood's times, it was sundried turnips that helped the land come through a famine.

And then there's that famous breakfast meat dish that keeps the Valley's citizens tough enough to fend off the cold. Made only during the three months of winter, the high-calorie harissa is served in shops with special seating arrangements. A huge copper vessel is kept underground with a fire beneath it. The diners squat on raised wooden platforms and gather around for a cosy binge with friends and family.

Harissa came from Central Asia many centuries ago, and is served piping hot with local bread. Most of the old city shops that sell the dish have to take advance orders because it is in much demand.

"It is prepared overnight. The copper vessel is filled with rice and meat, which is first pulverised, and then stirred the whole night through," says Haji Ali Muhammad, a shop owner in the old city.

Notes from Lansdowne

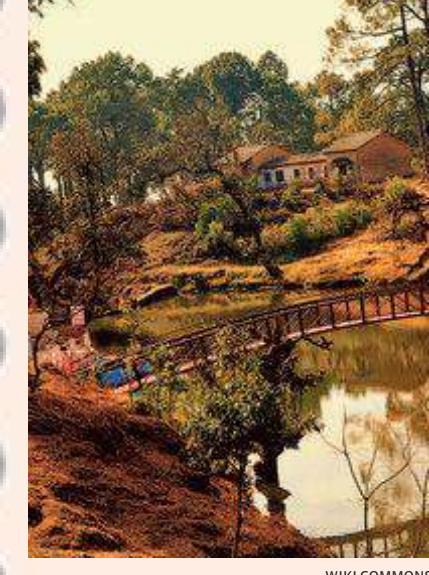
BY NITIN CHAUDHARY

This winter was not the same as the previous one; I realised this as drops of sweat settled on my forehead while I drove through the bright sun. Numerous traffic congestions on NH 119 added to the frustration of this traveller seeking solace.

Lansdowne, a distant hill town nestled in the Lower Himalayas, is a well heard of, but little travelled to township. Home to an army cantonment, Lansdowne has mixed links with history: dating from as late as the Raj era when it nested a unit of the British army. The links to the past were never severed: Garhwal Rifles' cantonment carried forward the baton from the immediate history.

Metalled roads

Lansdowne is located in Uttarakhand, in the north-east of Delhi, and at a distance of approximately 275 km from it. Uttarakhand offers numerous choices to travellers. But the spirit is often damped by a badly congested road network. Himachal, on the other hand, offers equally picturesque getaways but with metalled roads and controlled fast moving traffic. Our choice to discover Lansdowne was partially inspired by the lack of information on the subject.



WIKI COMMONS

Home to an army cantonment, the place has mixed links with history: dating from the Raj era when it nested a unit of the British army



Comfort food for cold weather

When it's freezing in Kashmir it's time for sundried veggies and harissa

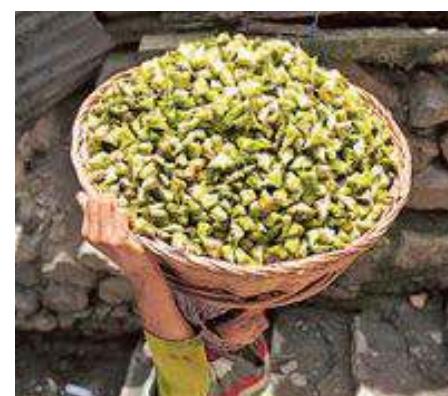
BY PEERZADA ASHIQ

Kashmir was heavily snowed in again this month. Layers of snow covered rooftops, lawns, orchards and roads. People were left housebound, and the Valley itself was cut off from the rest of the country for a few days.

Winters alter people's everyday routines, and this is especially true of food habits. Winter is the time when the narrow but well-lit Gaad Kocha or Fish Lane in Srinagar's historic Zaina Kadal area sees an unusual buzz as it gears up for its cold-weather friends. This is the time a unique cold-weather cuisine comes into its own.

Dishes made of sundried tomatoes and bottle gourd, dried aubergines, lentils, turnips, radish leaves and dandelion greens, quince and spinach come into their own in the sub-zero temperatures.

The process is simple: the vegetables are peeled and chopped, salt is applied as preservative, then they are put out in the bright



Come autumn and you would see practically every home with garlands of vegetables hanging from the sun-facing windows

The road to Lansdowne passes through Meerut, Bijnor and Kotdwara, from where the climb starts. At 600 metres altitude, Lansdowne has a reasonably pleasant climate. Seven hours after embarking on this journey, we entered the quiet town with an entrance designed to accommodate various army halls and messes. The quaint town lay further ahead with its entrance defined by a small market.

Peanuts and tea

There are few options for staying and we chose the Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam's (GMVN) reasonably priced guesthouse. Soon after checking in, we started discovering the old world market and searched for local wine; to our disappointment, none was made there.

We searched for food. The market was small and as subtle as any other small town market, with shops selling things of daily need, peanuts and tea, and trinkets. The interest soon faded away and we headed back to our hotel room for a quiet dinner.

Early next morning, I dreamt of my relatives, dozens gathered near my bed, shouting at me to get my ways right. The pandemonium grew till I could take it no longer and woke up with a start. I rushed out of my room to actually find a group of people waiting to occupy the room we were in.

Quick escape

Soon, we gathered our stuff, checked out of our room, and headed to the town market for morning tea. The locals had spread their wares and smoked in the crisp mountain air.

After tea, we decided to take a walk to Bullar lake, a man-made one situated some 200 metres away. On our way, we discovered an open air tennis court in a state of neglect atop a small hill. A step higher was a football court, in a slightly better condition.

Bullar lake, a water-filled small crater, was speckled with beautiful ducks, black and white, that sunny morning. Clean and well maintained, the lake offered boating and a pleasant spot to enjoy the winter sun, or to play a game of football in the small playground nearby.

After a tranquil time, we had our fill. This was the quiet, solitary getaway that we were looking for.

The adrenaline rush-seeking travel writer lives in Malmö, Sweden.

Easy like Sunday morning

Money often costs too much: Ralph Waldo Emerson

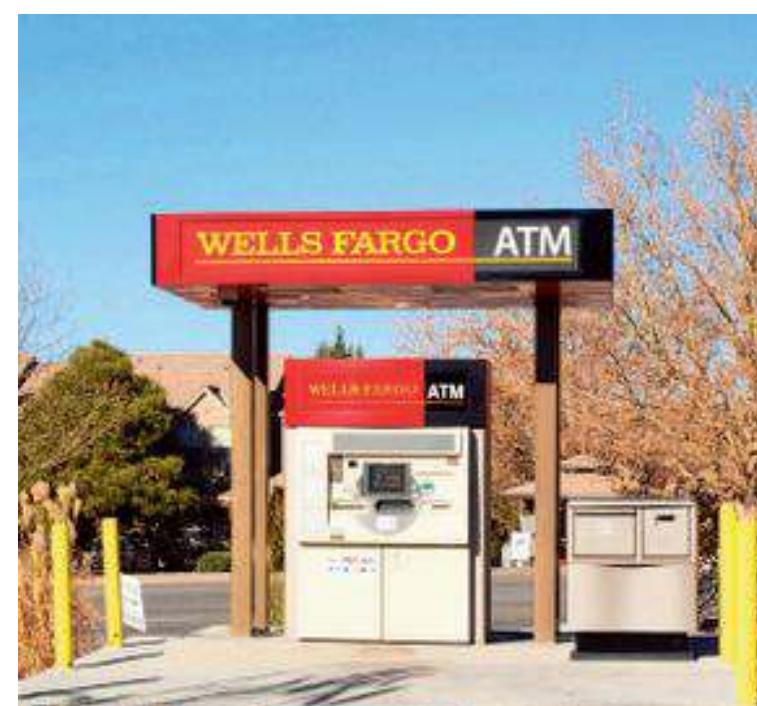
BY BERTY ASHLEY

1 On January 27, 1921, The Imperial Bank of India came into existence. It was the amalgamation of the Bank of Calcutta (1806) and the Banks of Bombay and Madras (1840). The three Presidency Banks were at the helm of Indian banking till the amalgamation. With the establishment of the RBI, the Imperial bank could become a purely commercial bank. In 1955 it became what it is known as now. What did the Imperial Bank become?

2 The word 'bank' comes from the Latin word 'banco' which means 'bench'. In the 15th century in the Venetian Republic, money-changers and usurers would put coins and business papers on the bench to start the transaction. When a money-lender became insolvent, they would break the bench they worked from to signify that they were no longer in business. The Italian word for 'broken' is 'rotto'. What modern day word owes its origin to this practice?

3 In medieval Europe, the Roman Popes were strictly forbidden to lend money at interest. To cash in on the financial difficulties of Italy was considered a terrible sin. So in 1179, Pope Alexander III declared money-lenders hardened sinners and forbade them from communion. Unlike Christianity, this community does not forbid the believers to engage in usury, so the vast majority of the medieval 'bankers' were from this community. Which community is this that has been stigmatised in popular culture due to this?

4 Started over 70 years ago, this was initially called 'The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development'. Originally the organisation worked to improve conditions in countries devastated by World War II, but this quickly evolved into efforts to end global poverty once and



Lonely money Wells Fargo Bank ATM in sunny Albuquerque. The bank's ATM is also in one of the world's coldest places. Where is it? GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

for all. It has a new goal to lower the number of people who make less than \$1.90 a day to three per cent by 2030. What bank is this which is precisely what its name implies?

5 Wells Fargo Bank operates the only ATM in this place and has been dispensing American dollars since 1998. It takes Wells Fargo 10 months to prepare a person to service its ATM, and the employee sent must undergo a psychological evaluation in case they are stranded when flights are cancelled for the season. Where is this lonely but vital ATM?

6 Willie Sutton, the famous American bank robber once when asked 'Why do you rob banks?' replied, 'Because that's where the money is'. This gives rise to Sutton's law in another field where it states that when making a ___, it is worthwhile

to first focus on the obvious and conduct tests that may confirm the most likely ___, rather than trying to find a relatively uncommon condition. Which profession does this law speak to?

7 This bank could be compared with Kubera – the lord of wealth. So it was decided that statues of Yaksha and Yakshini could be put up at its entrance and assume the duty of guarding the bank's treasure. In the modern context, the figures could also be given the allegorical interpretations of symbolising industry and agriculture, subject matters with which the bank was concerned. In front of which vital institution would you see these two sculptures by Shri Ram Kinkar Baij?

8 RRBs are Indian Government banks operating at a regional level

level, which were set up to provide banking facilities in certain geographical areas. They were established under the provisions of an Ordinance passed in September 1975 and the RRB Act 1976 to provide sufficient banking and credit facility mainly for agriculture. What is the full form of RRB and what is the common name for these banks?

9 This is a public sector bank based in Bengaluru. It was established by a group of farmers led by A.B. Shetty on October 23, 1931. That day marked the end of Durga Puja and was celebrated to remember goddess Durga's victory over demon Mahishasura. Consequently, what is the name of the bank?

10 Emmanuel Nwude is the former Director of 'Union Bank of X', X being his native country. In 1995, he led a scam where he sold a new airport in the nation's capital to one of Brazil's biggest banks Banco Noroeste. He scammed \$191 million in cash and \$51 million in the form of outstanding interest. The scam was discovered only three years later and Emmanuel was taken into custody in 2004. Which country is he from which unfortunately has an association with scams?

A molecular biologist from Madurai, our quizmaster enjoys trivia and music, and is working on a rock ballad called 'Coffee is a Drink, Kaapi is an Emotion'. @bertyashley

1. State Bank of India
2. Bankrupt
3. Jews – Hence the Jewish Moneylender
4. World Bank
5. Maracica
6. Doctor. The missing word is, disastrous;
7. The Reserve Bank of India
8. Regional Rural Banks or Central Banks
9. Vijaya Bank (It was formed on the day of
Vijayadashami)
10. Nigella

A-N-A-T-O-M-I-Z-E

Toric Capitole watch



PARMIGIANI FLEURIER

● The first Toric Capitole was made in 2011, with another model following in 2015

● It is water resistant to a depth of 30 metres

● The new timepiece is one-of-a-kind, with a reported price of \$362,000

● The 45 mm case is 18-carat rose gold

BY ROHAN MANOJ

The Capitoline Hill, one of the seven hills of Rome, once home to the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus – Jupiter, best and greatest – and inspiration for the Toric Capitole series of timepieces by Michele Parmigiani of Parmigiani Fleurier.

Geometric spiral floor tiles found at the ancient site were the basis for the watch dial's hand-engraved spiral pattern. "The design is so captivating because it is based on the Golden Ratio. Within it, you see Fibonacci's spirals, reproducing a harmony that is everywhere in nature," Parmigiani was quoted as saying. But classical antiquity wasn't the only era the watchmaker

and antique restorer looked to. A new Toric Capitole, unveiled at this year's SIHH last week in Geneva, is a reinterpretation of a 19th-century mechanical pocket watch by Perrin Frères that Parmigiani once restored, and which itself has a classical scene on its cover.

Aesthetics aside, the watch is powered by the PF321, a manual winding movement. It has 386 components, 33 jewels and 40 hours of power reserve.

The sector-time display shows the hours and minutes as they pass by means of a slowly rotating system of satellites, just like the Perrin Frères original. But, just in case you miss the passing of a minute, the Toric Capitole has a built-in speaker with cathedral chimes!

GOREN BRIDGE

+ Ruff or take your tricks?

North-South vulnerable, South deals

BY BOB JONES



led a low club to dummy's queen. What would you do as East after winning your king of clubs? Would you lead a diamond into the king-jack or try to give partner a club ruff?

A diamond shift would be the winner, but the East player at Gue's table led a club. He successfully gave West a club ruff, as Gue unblocked dummy's ace, but it was with a natural trump trick. West shifted to a low diamond, but Gue realized that he had little chance if East held the ace of diamonds, as he would probably be defeated by a second club ruff. He rose with his king of diamonds, drew the outstanding trumps, and discarded his diamond losers on the long clubs. Making five!

We don't have a record of the play at the other table, just the knowledge that declarer lost a trump, a club, and two diamonds to finish down one. Did East find the diamond shift at trick four? We'll probably never know, but we do know this: Many beatable contracts have sailed home when the defense went looking for a ruff rather than just going after their tricks.

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♣ Pass 2♦ Dbl* 3♦
3♦ All pass
*Negative, values with no clear bid

Opening lead: Five of ♦

Today's deal is from a recent team competition in Australia. Both teams reached four spades after a competitive auction, and both Wests led a low heart.

At one table, where Australian expert Phil Gue was South, declarer won the opening heart lead perforce, cashed the ace of spades, and

ECOTISM

BY ASHVINI MENON



CM YK



LETTER FROM A CONCERNED READER

Life is remote control

Respected Madam/ Sir,

Pookal DVD after so many years." I said, "Kamalam, of course, we will watch this moment itself; I will never forget this film from 1991, the same year we purchased mattress that has never been changed."

One for TV, one for DVD

We sat down. I put DVD inside DVD player. And then I pressed remote control button. Nothing. What nonsense. I pressed again. Nothing. I pressed and pressed. Nothing whatsoever. Stupid remote control.

Madam/ Sir, till two weeks back whether any problem was there? Never. One remote for TV. One remote for DVD player. One remote for home theatre.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



Home theatre. One more remote is there but nobody knows what it is for. Full and full happy situation. And then what happened? Son happened. I have mentioned before my son who is working from home every

day like Pablo Escobar. At least, Escobar went on plane to foreign countries sometimes.

This fellow is saying, "My god, appa, this is the year 2019 and you are still using one dozen remotes like Jambavan period? I will get universal remote." Next day, all remotes gone. Instead one new universal remote came. Then we had one week intensive tuition for using.

"Kamalam," I said, "remote is not working. Your son has destroyed my life yet again."

She said, "I am going to make lunch, you please solve this problem fast. I have to return DVD in the evening." I called my son.

"Hello Mandasiromani Mathrubootham, stupid remote is not working. Where is the old remote?"

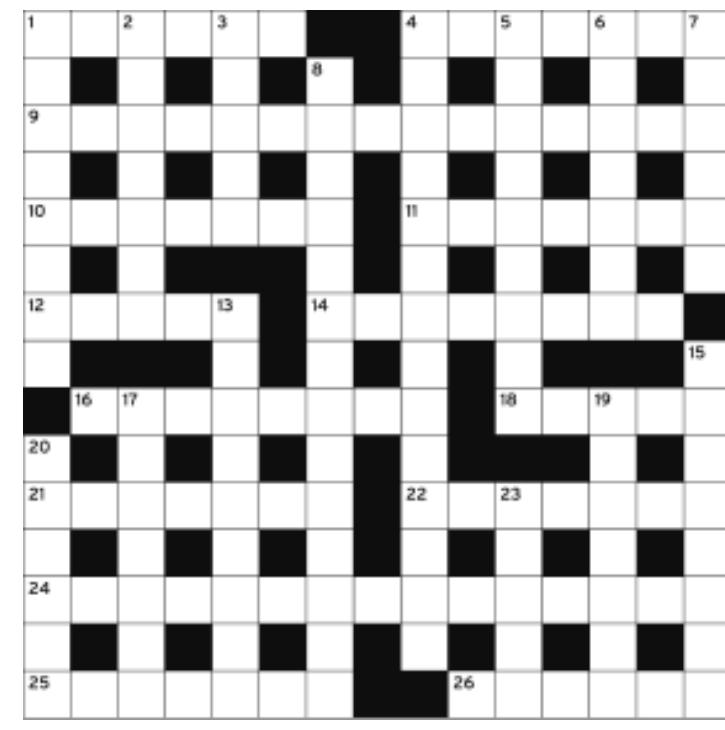
He said, "Appa, it is inside one cardboard box under the bed." "Which bed?" "Appa, it is under your bed. Just underneath the hole from mosquito coil fire." "What fire what nonsense you are talking, who is this, sorry wrong number, I will report to cyber police."

Madam/ Sir, unfortunately gap between bed and floor is too small for my hand due to large bone structure. Mrs. Mathrubootham can easily do but why to put atom bomb inside volcano.

So movie DVD is gone. Remote is gone. But at least wife is there.

Yours in cinematic frustration,
J. Mathrubootham

THE SUNDAY CROSSWORD NO. 3032



Across

- 1 Decide length, cutting piece of cake (6)
- 4 Dash about, beset by mass hatred (7)
- 9 Sweet temper a prince abandoned, interrupting head of government (10,5)
- 10 Clerical garment found with odd items of classy clobber (7)
- 11 Article as broadcast about tanks (7)
- 12 Step inside theatre, admitted (5)
- 14 Living without purpose? Find grit to reform (8)
- 16 Fight, protecting rear, without a dagger (8)
- 18 See me in love repeatedly faced by resistance (5)
- 21 Soldier in middle of foreign field, cold and mournful (7)
- 22 Lawyer after anger discounting thousand extra items (7)
- 24 Impressed, raved about fake, endlessly accepted without question (5,3,7)
- 25 Communists keeping resolution? Correct (7)
- 26 Vitality needed by keener gymnasts (6)

- Down
- 1 Limit a large town's power (8)
- 2 Demon with strength having no time for deadlock (7)
- 3 Belief about party led by Conservative (5)
- 4 Citrus fruit supplied by chap, bold European, around North



Solution No. 3031

PILED DRIVER SPOT
MANOR ENDEAVOUR
PG C SEC DGD
SUPERSTRUCTURE
TOY OCT
TRIBUNAL MATTE
CUCUMBER
LOOPS EPILOGUE
EBS CDM
ASTRACASE MAYBE
RILEY TREV
COMPLAINTS TIANNE
JULIA FOGS
TOME ASTRINGENT