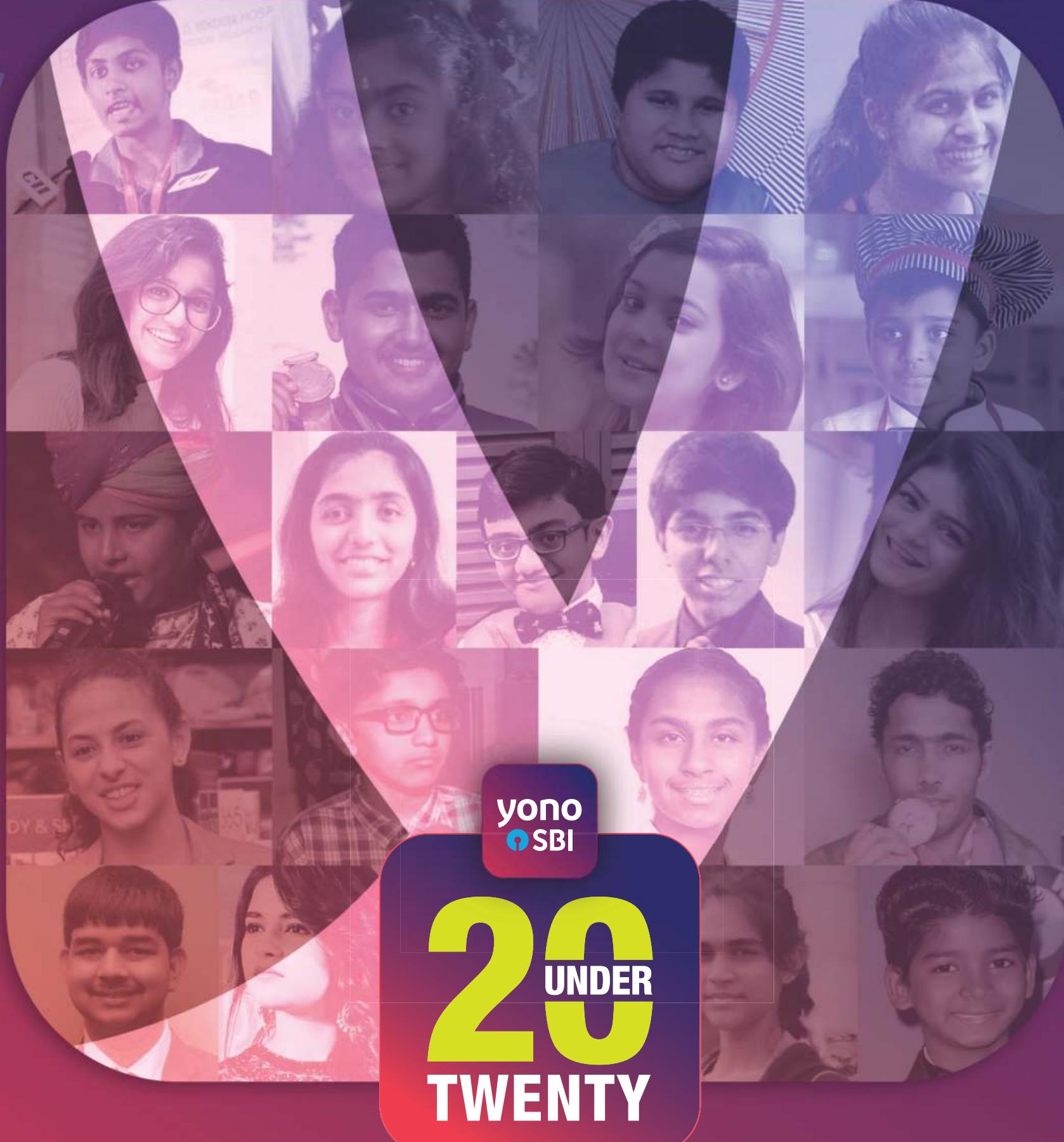




# 60 COOLEST GO-GETTERS. 20 INCREDIBLE WINNERS. 1 MARVELLOUS PLATFORM.

**India has voted and chosen 20 winners  
from yono 20 under twenty.**



Happiness bhi, celebration bhi, yono 20 under twenty mein hai dono. As these young achievers get ready to take India to newer heights, we want to thank you for encouraging these champions with your votes. Let the future begin!

## PROUD WINNERS OF YONO 20 UNDER TWENTY.

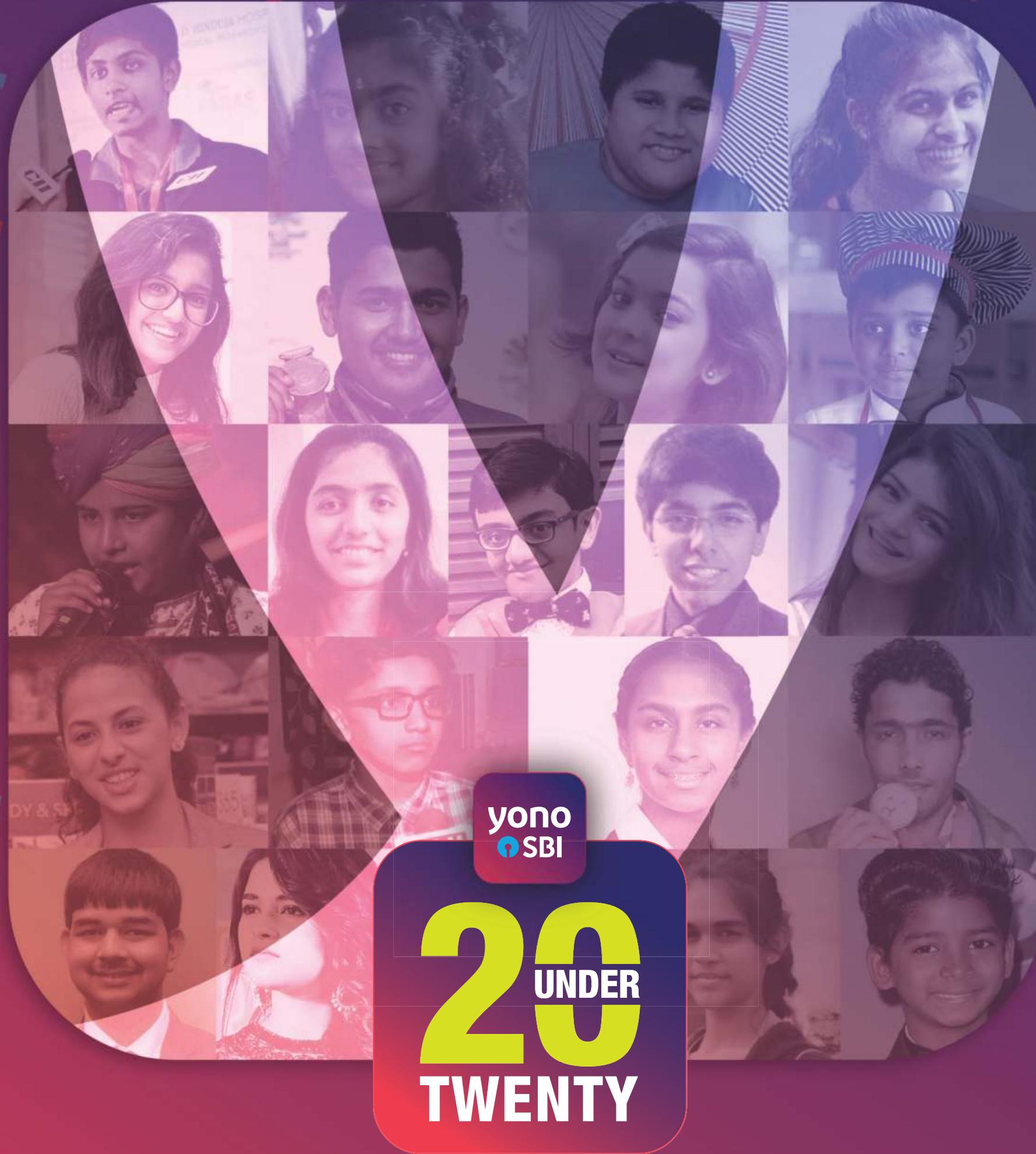
Sanya Runwal | Sovesh Mohapatra | Hima Shrushti | Rinku Hooda | Shreya Ramachandran | Sparsh Shah  
Zaira Wasim | Sunny Pawar | Nishtha Sharma | Jasu Khan | Pothunuri Laya | Akash Manoj | Rajvee Gandhi | Nihal Raj (Kicha)  
Manu Bhaker | Anish Bhanwala | Nikhiya Shamsher | Mohammed Ali Hassan | Zuleika Juliet Antao | Anubhav Wadhwa

Special Jury Award: Hridayeshwar Singh Bhati

 Download & Register now

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## Bengal budget has sops for all

Financial help to jobless youth, benefits to contractual staff, and tax schemes

DELHI Timings	
TUESDAY, FEB. 05	
RISE 07:07 SET 18:03	
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 06	
RISE 07:07 SET 18:04	
RISE 08:03 SET 19:23	
THURSDAY, FEB. 07	
RISE 07:06 SET 18:05	
RISE 08:37 SET 20:15	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	23	08
Safdarjung	23	08
Palam	22	07

**Delhi Palam Today**  
24°C Significant rise in day/night temperature are likely with light rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds by evening.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
24°C Rain with strong gusty winds and hailstorms likely. Significant improvement in pollution level is likely.

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West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra presenting the budget in Kolkata on Monday • PTI

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

On a day when West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee continued to lock horns with the Centre, her Finance Minister Amit Mitra rolled out a budget announcing financial support to the State's unemployed youth while boosting the earnings and terminal benefits of lakhs of contractual workers.

Mr. Mitra skipped reading much of his 81-page budget amid a din in the Assembly as the Opposition disrupted the session.

The new initiatives include an annual financial assistance of ₹1 lakh each to help 50,000 unemployed youth find self-employment opportunities. The government also proposed ₹2,000 monthly wage hike, across all existing slabs, from this month, for one lakh contrac-

tual workers in Group C and D, now on the State government rolls. A similar increase in monthly remuneration would be extended to all data entry operators for contractual IT personnel.

To benefit another one lakh contractual workers on the verge of retirement, the budget announced a hike in terminal benefits given to them as ex gratia benefits. They would get ₹3 lakh as against ₹2 lakh now.

Further, Group D contract-

ual workers, who have secondary-level education and been working for three years, will now get an opportunity to be engaged as Group C staff. This will benefit over 50,000 workers, Mr. Mitra said.

Sops were also announced in the form of tax settlement schemes. A scheme for waiver of motor vehicle dues is already under implementation.

The budget announced huge allocations – ₹27,540

crore for the School Education department and ₹20,442 crore for the Panchayat and Rural Development department.

### Focus areas

Creating rural jobs, houses, building roads and providing livelihoods to rural women (through credit-linked self-help groups) were the other focus areas. With an allocation of ₹10,930 crore, urban development and municipal areas was also a highlight of this budget. Mr. Mitra said that West Bengal farmers were better off than in many other States. The average annual income of farmers has trebled from ₹9,020 in 2010-11 to ₹2.9 lakh in 2017-18, he said, adding that ₹1,600 crore has been directly credited to their accounts towards subsidy for farm equipment.

## Governor praises Naveen govt., Cong. responds with walkout

'State on steady growth path due to political stability'

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal said on Monday that the State was on a steady growth path as political stability has provided it with "an unrestricted space" for development. The State has been consistently growing at a rate higher than the national average, he said.

"Odisha's economy is on the path of steady growth. From subsistence to sustenance and from sustenance to surplus, Odisha's pace of transformation has been exceptional and the State's growth has been inclusive," said Mr. Lal while addressing the House on the opening day of the budget session.

"Stability has provided us an unrestricted space for growth and development. Our transparent ways of governance have made us responsive and responsible to the changing needs of our time," said the Governor.

The legislators of the Opposition Congress, led by Leader of the Opposition Narasingha Mishra, however, staged a walkout as Mr. Lal



Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal • FILE PHOTO

continued with his address. Mr. Mishra told journalists outside the House that they boycotted the Governor's address as he praised the State government's activities.

**Pro-people'**

"My government is untiringly striving to eradicate poverty, accelerate the pace of economic growth, reduce regional disparity and gender differences through various socio-economic measures and pro-people initiatives," said Mr. Lal.

He said that the State is

now among the largest contributors to the PDS and is playing a major role in the food security of the nation. The Governor added that Odisha has made a quantum jump by achieving the sharpest decline in infant mortality rate and has scored better than national average in decline of maternal mortality rate.

### 'Schemes, smartphones'

Mr. Lal also spoke about the State government's newly launched scheme for the development of agriculture and poverty reduction in the State. The government has launched schemes like KALIA for the welfare of farmers and Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana to facilitate treatment of patients, said the Governor, adding that his government has also provided 65,000 smartphones to farmers.

The Governor also spoke in detail about several other initiatives of the State government in housing sector as well as for development of infrastructure in different parts of the State.

## Assam Minister goofs up on data of illegal foreigners

Speaker assures the House of looking into the matter

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GUWAHATI

In a major embarrassment, a Minister made a goof-up in the written replies in the Assam Assembly by giving two different figures for the number of illegal foreigners detected in the State.

The issue was pointed out by BJP MLA Numal Momin as Point of Order immediately after the Question Hour and he urged the Speaker to take strict action against the "callosous officials".



Chandra Mohan Patowary • FILE PHOTO

were detected during the same time period.

In both the cases, Mr. Patowary was replying on behalf of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal who holds charge of the Home and Implementation of the Assam Accord departments.

Responding to the bloop, Speaker Hitendra Nath Goswami assured the House that the matter would be probed.

In response to Mr. Momin's query, Mr. Patowary informed that so far only 29,829 illegal foreigners

have been either pushed back or deported to their original country. These illegal foreigners are detected and declared by the Foreigners' Tribunals, the number of which was increased to 100 from 36 after the BJP government came to power in the State, he added.

### Doubtful voters

Talking about 'D' (doubtful) voters, Mr. Patowary said the number was 2,02,092 in the voters' list of 1997.

"The total number of names marked as 'D' in the rolls published after intensive revision in 2005 was 1,60,051. Total number of names marked as 'D' in the draft electoral rolls published as on September 15, 2018, is 1,19,559," he added.

The Minister said various measures have been taken to detect illegal foreigners across the State including forming of 500 task forces of the Assam Border Police, second line of defence by the BSF, creation of patrol posts and riverine checking.

## One more arrested in BJD leader's murder case

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BERHAMPUR (ODISHA)

The police on Monday arrested another person for his alleged involvement in the murder of a BJD leader at Chhatrapur in Odisha's Ganjam district, an officer said. The accused, Subrat Patnaik (18) alias Lucky of Pandiripada, was arrested for his alleged involvement in the murder of Chhatrapur NAC councillor Laxmidutta Pradhan on September 17, 2017. With this arrest, the total number of

persons arrested in the case increased to 19. "Patnaik was absconding and was arrested on a tip-off," said Chhatrapur SDPO Ramchandra Sethi.

Those arrested include BJD's Ganjam district unit secretary Krushna Chandra Nayak and Laxmipur panchayat samiti member N. Duryodhan Reddy.

The police again issued notices to BJP spokesperson Golak Mohapatra and general secretary Bhrugu Buxipatra.

## Man sets house afire over brother getting govt. job

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MALDA

Angry over his younger brother securing a government job on compassionate grounds, a 30-year-old man allegedly set two rooms of their house on fire, killing four members of the family and injuring four others in West Bengal's Malda district, police said on Monday.

Accused Makhan Mondal allegedly poured petrol in the hut on Sunday night.

His younger brother Gobinda, elder brother Bikash, and Gobinda's two minor daughters were charred to death, the police said.

Bikash's wife, son and daughter, and Gobinda's wife were admitted to a hospital in a serious condition, the police said. Their mother escaped unharmed, they said. Their father Gedu Mondal had died before retirement and Gobinda got the job, leaving Makhan angry, said the police.

## 2 EAST

## Bengal budget has sops for all

Financial help to jobless youth, benefits to contractual staff, and tax schemes

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RISE 07:07 SET 18:03	
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Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	23	08
Safdarjung	23	08
Palam	22	07

**Delhi Palam Today**  
24°C Significant rise in day/night temperature are likely with light rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds by evening.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
24°C Rain with strong gusty winds and hailstorms likely. Significant improvement in pollution level is likely.

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### Brand connect initiative

## Building model villages

Meet Shruti Nimbargi, engineer and founder of Artha Foundation, located in Karnataka



taka, which aims at rural development and building model villages.

"Benakanahalli in Vijayapur district is in north Karnataka and is also the village where my father is from. Even today, many villagers



es in north Karnataka including this one do not have proper water facilities, educational institutions and employment opportunities. So, people move to other cities because they offer them more opportunities for education and employment, hence the villages remain underdeveloped," says Shruti.

Shruti's father who is a retired government employee and her brother who is a civil servant, are both involved in social ser-

**THE HINDU IN SCHOOL**  
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

### SCHOOL BUZZ

#### SCIENCE EXHIBITION AT ITL PUBLIC SCHOOL



ITL Public School hosted a CBSE Regional Science Exhibition 2018-19 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January. This two-day insightful mega event focused on promoting interest in science and technology amongst younger generations, encouraging creative and design thinking, promoting psychomotor skills among students through self-designed models. The Chief Guest, eminent educationist, Secretary CBSE, Mr. Anurag Tripathi IRPS inaugurated the magnum opus science exhibition and ITL Public School's innovation hub. Dr. Sweta Singh, Joint Secretary, CBSE (Academics) graced the event as the Guest of Honour. Ms. Pragya Verma, CBSE Observer marked the event with her presence. Principal ITL Public School, Ms. Sudha Acharya invited the students and teachers of Government schools and Principals of Sankalp Sahodaya South-West Delhi schools to visit the newly established Atal Tinkering Lab and the CBSE Regional Science Exhibition. The Valedictory Session marked the presence of the distinguished CBSE Director (Skill Education & Innovation) Dr. Biswajit Saha who addressed the gathering.

**GET READY FOR THE YOUNG WORLD QUIZ**  
There is good news for children who enjoy putting their knowledge to test as we are all set to launch the 19th Edition of The Hindu Young World Quiz at 17 cities PAN India. The event is powered by Eveready and is open to students in two categories – Juniors (from classes 4 to 6) and Seniors (from classes 7 to 9). Each team must consist of two members. From a school, any number of teams can take part by registering online and paying a non-refundable registration fee of Rs. 200 per team. The team members must be from the same school/branch and no cross teams are allowed. To register, log on to [www.thehindu.com/yquiz](http://www.thehindu.com/yquiz)

For Subscription related queries, please contact Kapil Nagar:  
Handphone: +91 98100 89457/Email: kapil.nagar@thehindu.co.in

### Arvind Kejriwal

Chief Minister of Delhi



## &lt;h2

## IN BRIEF



## Heavy snowfall likely in Himachal Pradesh

**HIMACHAL**  
Himachal Pradesh is likely to witness a fresh spell of heavy snowfall in the high and mid hills, and rain in the low hills and plains from Monday night to Friday, the Meteorological Department said here on Monday. PTI

## 4 die as car collides with truck in Rajasthan

**JAIPUR**  
Four persons were killed when a car they were travelling in collided with a truck in Rajsamand district of Rajasthan, police said on Monday. The deceased were on their way to Rajsamand from Jaipur after participating in an exhibition, police said. PTI

## Four drug peddlers arrested in J&amp;K

**JAMMU**  
An elderly man was among four drug peddlers arrested after contraband and over ₹2 lakh were recovered from their possession in separate operations in the State, police said on Monday. Mohammad Yousuf, 69, was arrested with 110 drug injections and ₹2.16 lakh in cash from Ramban district, police said. PTI

## 17-year-old killed in U.P., body found in field

**GONDA**  
A 17-year-old teenager was allegedly kidnapped and killed over an old enmity at a village in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district, police said on Monday. The boy, Mohit, was differently-abled and was allegedly kidnapped by one Rajesh Singh, they said. PTI

## Bike, auto collision takes four lives in U.P.

**SANT KABIRNAGAR (U.P.)**  
Three persons and a one-year-old boy were killed in a collision between a motorcycle and an auto-rickshaw in the district on Monday, police said. Three on the bike died on the spot. The one-year-old boy travelling in the auto-rickshaw also died in the accident. PTI

# Cong.-SAD spat continues over Centre's scheme for farmers

Sukhbir Badal not concerned about farmers' plight, says Amarinder

**VIKAS VASUDEVA**  
CHANDIGARH

The ruling Congress party and the Opposition Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab continued their war of words over the recently proposed Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi in the interim Union Budget.

While Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday accused the Akali Dal chief Sukbir Badal of pretending to be concerned about problems of the people, especially the farmers, the party in turn accused the Congress leaders of harbouring a negative mindset.

"Why had he (Sukbir) not spoken up for the farmers all these years despite his party (SAD) being a part of the ruling alliance at the Centre? The Central govern-



CM Amarinder Singh. ■

ment has already made a mockery of the farmers by announcing a meagre ₹6,000 a year to support them," said Capt. Amarinder here, adding that Mr. Sukbir's demand from the Centre to double the amount was an insult to farmers.

"Did he really believe a thousand rupees a month would help the beleaguered farmers, many of whom were being driven to suicide

as a result of massive debts?" asked Capt. Amarinder.

He said if the Centre was really interested in helping farmers, it should announce a one-time waiver of loans.

**Negative mindset'**

Meanwhile, former Akali Dal Minister Maheshinder Singh Grewal said Punjab Congress leaders have a negative mindset and outright criticism of the proposed scheme was unwarranted.

"Instead of appreciating the out-of-the-box thinking of the Union government to take measures to ameliorate the condition of the poor farmers, the Congress leaders, including Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar, are critical about the amount being offered," said Mr. Grewal.

"In case of appreciating the out-of-the-box thinking of the Union government to take measures to ameliorate the condition of the poor farmers, the Congress leaders, including Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar, are critical about the amount being offered," said Mr. Grewal.

## Punjab govt. to release compensation'

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government will soon release compensation to farmers whose crop got damaged because of hailstorm, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Sukhinder Singh Sarkaria said on Monday.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had issued orders to all the Deputy Commissioners to conduct fresh 'Girdwari' (loss assessment) of the affected area of the State, Mr. Sarkaria said in a statement issued here.

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## IN BRIEF



## Seemanchal Express passengers reach Delhi

NEW DELHI

Several passengers aboard the Seemanchal Express were bound for the Kumbh Mela at Allahabad but had to abandon their journey after its coaches derailed in Bihar killing six people, co-passengers said Monday. The passengers of the 12487 express train reached Delhi in a special train on Monday evening. PTI

## Leopard injures seven in Pune suburb

PUNE

Seven persons, including a child and an elderly lady, were injured after a stray leopard entered a residential building in Pune's Mundhwa on Monday. The big cat was caught and tranquilized and was sent to the city's Katraj Wild Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, forest officials said. Earlier last month, the National Defence Academy in Khadakwasla had issued a cautionary note to its staff and cadets following several leopard sightings.

## 100 tortoises seized from Jharkhand train

RANCHI

More than 100 tortoises were seized from a train at the Dhanbad junction in Jharkhand on Monday. According to Forest Department officials, the tortoises were found in a general coach of the Dehradun-Howrah Express. The Government Railway Police said the tortoises were in a bag and no one came to claim them. IANS

## Mauni Amavasya: 5 crore devotees take holy dip

ALLAHABAD

An estimated five crore devotees took the holy dip here in the Sangam on Monday on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya, the busiest among all sacred bathing days in the 50-day long Kumbh Mela. The district administration has claimed that the huge number of devotees on Monday "was a new record of human congregation anywhere in the world". About 12 crore people are expected to visit Kumbh till March 4, when the festival will come to an end. PTI

## JeM operative held for 2017 CRPF camp attack

Accused provided logistical support

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday arrested an operative of the terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in connection with the 2017 attack on a CRPF camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Lethpora.

According to an NIA statement, the accused, Fayaz Ahmad Magray, is a key conspirator who gave logistical support such as providing shelter to the terrorists and conducting reconnaissance of the CRPF group centre in Lethpora before the attack.

He was detained under the Public Safety Act (PSA)

## Emission levels rising faster in Indian cities than in China

Study analysed link between population density and emissions from vehicles across the districts in the country

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Urbanisation is accelerating greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles in India at a faster rate than in China.

On average, an Indian emitted about 20 kg per capita while commuting for work, with the highest (140 kg CO<sub>2</sub>) in Gurugram district (Haryana) and the lowest (1.8 kg CO<sub>2</sub>) in Shrawasti district (Uttar Pradesh), says a study, to be published in the peer-reviewed journal Environmental Research Letters.

India's CO<sub>2</sub> emission grew by an estimated 4.6% in 2017 and its per-capita emission was about 1.8 tonnes. In spite of being the 4th largest emitter, India's per capita emissions are much lower than the world average of 4.2 tonnes. But those emissions have been growing steadily, with an average growth rate over the past decade of 6%,

a preference for public transport. However this didn't effectively apply to developing countries, the authors argue.

In China a 1% increase in urbanisation was linked with a 0.12% increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions whereas, in India, it translated into 0.24% increase in emissions, said the study, to be published in the peer-reviewed journal Environmental Research Letters.

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## Cause for concern

Highlights of the study to be published in the journal Environmental Research Letters

- Delhi NCR has the highest commuting-emissions per capita
- On average, a 10% increase in population densification reduces commuting-emissions by 1%. Some districts defy this trend

■ India's mean annual commuting emissions (to home/from work) is 20 kg CO<sub>2</sub> per capita, with the highest (140 kg CO<sub>2</sub>) in Gurgaon district (Haryana) and the lowest (1.8 kg CO<sub>2</sub>) in Shrawasti district, Uttar Pradesh



tively. "In total, India's transport patterns are very climate friendly, and much better than those of Europe and the United States. We find that some districts are mostly relying on three-wheelers for short commuting distances, while others are highly urban, rich, and rely on cars," Creutzig said in an email.

Because there were several instances of districts with similar population density but varying per capita emissions, a "simple-minded densification" was an inappropriate policy for reducing commuters' GHG emissions and India would do well to focus on electric vehicles and efficient public transit system. This to however ought to be tailored to a region's geographical context, the authors contended.

higher commuting emissions than Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad. "Delhi's higher socio-economic status and heavy reliance on private travel modes led to higher commuting emissions than in other megacities," the report noted.

The mean commuting distance (among commuters) is 5.9 km, with the lowest 1.3 km in Longleng district (Nagaland) and the highest 14 km in Dharmapuri district (Tamil Nadu).

Delhi had the highest commuting emissions per capita – a factor that also contributed to its high level of pollution – and the national capital region had 2.5 times

Contempt plea against Prashant Bhushan

Lens on CBI chief's appointment tweet

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Attorney General K.K. Venugopal has filed a contempt of court petition against advocate Prashant Bhushan for his tweets alleging that the government, through the top law officer, had misled the court about the appointment of M. Nageshwar Rao as interim CBI Director.

"The attack on the Attorney General in such a brazen, willful and malicious way would tend to shake the very foundation of the justice delivery system," the petition said.

By alleging fabrication of minutes of the high-powered committee (HPC) meeting, Mr. Venugopal had handed over the minutes of the HPC meeting to the court for perusal.

However, advocate Prashant Bhushan, who represents the petitioner NGO Common Cause, took to Twitter later in the day alleging that the government had "misled" the court. Mr. Bhushan tweeted that he had spoken to HPC member and Opposition Leader Mallikarjun Kharge.

chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 9-10 for the posting of a "suitable officer" as interim CBI Director till a new Director was appointed.

Mr. Venugopal had handed over the minutes of the HPC meeting to the court for perusal.

Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, said:

"Cancer is far from an equal opportunity killer. Inadequate access to cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment is the primary cause of deaths."

According to figures for India released by the Nation-

2017, just 30% of low-income countries reported having cancer treatment services available.

Just 26% of low-income countries meanwhile reported having pathology services generally available in the public sector, leading to late diagnosis and a lower chance of successful treatment.

In a judgment, a Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and S. Abdul Nazeer is

Sonia Gandhi's lawyer grills Swamy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

BJP leader Subramanian Swamy on Monday told a Delhi court that the possession of the vast land of the Associated Journals Ltd. (AJL), publisher of *The National Herald*, by Young Indian was not relevant for the National Herald case of cheating and misappropriation because it is a case of corruption, not possession.

Dr. Swamy has alleged that the accused – former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Mo-

til Vora, Oscar Fernandes, Suman Dubey and Sam Pitroda – "fraudulently" acquired AJL and transferred its assets to Young Indian.

The Young Indian acquired 99.1% shares of the AJL, and Rahul Gandhi held 35% of shares at the time of the acquisition.

Dr. Swamy made these statements in the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Samar Vishal while being cross-examined by R.S. Cheema, counsel for the Gandhis.

DMK support key for next govt., says Stalin

STAFF REPORTER

MADRASAI

DMK president M.K. Stalin on Monday claimed no government could be formed at the Centre without the support of his party after the next Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a gram sabha-like meeting organised by the DMK at Thanakkankulam panchayat in Madurai, he accused the Narendra Modi government of cheating the people by making false promises. "He [Modi] has now announced ₹ 6,000 cash assistance per year to farmers holding less than

two hectares of land). While promising this on one hand, the Union government has increased taxes on fertilizers and pesticides. This is nothing but a fraud to take the money from farmers and give it back to them," Mr. Stalin alleged.

Though Mr. Stalin did not explicitly seek vote for the party as the meeting was organised as a gram sabha meeting to discuss the grievances in the panchayat, he appealed to the people on the need for sending home both the Central and State governments.

Explosives found on train in Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The Government Railway Police (GRP) on Monday recovered four bags of explosives containing gelatine sticks, detonators and fuse wire from two places 60 km apart.

The explosives are suspected to have been transported for illegal mining or for fishing in hill rivers, but the police have not ruled out the possibility of their use for subversive activities by extremist groups.

A GRP officer said that three of the bags were recovered from the Guwahati railway station's platform number 3 around 5.45 am, when the Awadh Assam Express was waiting there.

"We found 440 gelatine sticks in 22 packets, 700 detonators in seven packets," he said.

Another bag containing 160 gelatine sticks in eight packets and 500 detonators in five packets was later found near the toilet of an AC II-tier coach of the same train at Jagiroad, 60 km east of Guwahati.

67% cancer patients in SE Asia die before 70: WHO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In 2018, 18.1 million new cases of cancer developed worldwide; 9.6 million people died from the disease; 70% of the deaths occurred in low and middle-income countries, including those of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Southeast Asia region; and 67% of the region's cancer patients died before the age of 70. The fi-

gures were released by the WHO Southeast Asia here on Monday on World Cancer Day.

Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, said:

"Cancer is far from an equal opportunity killer. Inadequate access to cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment is the primary cause of deaths."

According to figures for India released by the Nation-

2017, just 30% of low-income countries reported having cancer treatment services available.

Just 26% of low-income countries meanwhile reported having pathology services generally available in the public sector, leading to late diagnosis and a lower chance of successful treatment.

According to figures for India released by the Nation-

al Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research (NICPR), one woman dies of cervical cancer every eight minutes in India; for every two women newly diagnosed with breast cancer, one woman dies of it in India; as many as 2,500 persons die every day due to tobacco-related diseases; and tobacco (smoked and smokeless) use accounted for 3,17,928 deaths in men and women in 2018.

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NRI moves SC for free transportation of bodies

Bench asks Centre to reply in 6 weeks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

A UAE-based NRI, who claimed to have helped in repatriation of 4,700 bodies to 38 countries across the world, moved the Supreme Court on Monday, seeking a direction to the Centre for arranging free transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals who die abroad.

The plea claimed that Air India transports bodies under the "Sentimental Shipments" category but the procedure adopted by the national carrier is inhuman and degrading in nature as it weighs the dead body and

then levies charges on it.

A Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and S. Abdul Nazeer issued notice to the Centre and sought its reply in six weeks.

The plea was filed by Ashraf Thamarassery, working in Ajman in the United Arab Emirates, who deals with the problems and challenges faced by the socially excluded Indian emigrants particularly in the Gulf region.

Mr. Ashraf also sought a direction to all the States for the preparation of statistical records and data of the total number of Indians who currently stay abroad.

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SC upholds government's Haj policy

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Haj Policy 2019-23, which categorises the Haj Group Organisers (HGOs) on the parameters of their experience and financial strength. The court found "nothing arbitrary or unreasonable" in such a classification by the government.

In a judgment, a Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and S. Abdul Nazeer also drew a line on their power of judicial scrutiny of government policy decisions.

"It is settled law that policy decisions of the Executive are best left to it and a court cannot be propelled into the unchartered ocean of government policy," Justice Sikri, who authored the verdict, said.

Justice Sikri wrote that "public authorities must have liberty and freedom in framing the policies."

Based on feedback

The 22-page judgment said the policy was finally drawn on the basis of feedback received from more than 180 individual private tour operators (PTO) and associations, including the Indian Federation Haj PTOs of India and jointly by other PTO associations.

The court said the government had paid equal attention to both experience and financial prowess of the HGOs while classifying them into various categories.

GOVT FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

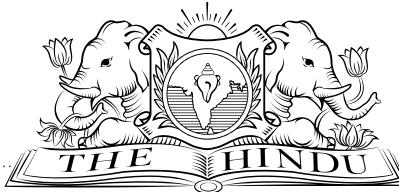
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, Govt.Flying Training School, Jakur Aerodrome, Bangalore-560064  
No: FTS/07/ADM/2016-17 Date: 30-01-2019

APPLICATION FOR TWO POSTS OF ASSISTANT FLYING INSTRUCTOR (CONTRACT BASIS).

Applicant must fulfill DGCA qualification as per CAR Section 7, Series D, Part 1. Applicants must submit their resume by e-mail or by post to the following address, Office of The Director, Govt. Flying Training School, Jakur Aerodrome, Yelahanka Post, Bangalore-64. Period of Contract-Two years on temporary basis. Email: gfts.kar@gmail.com Phone: 080-23332251

Sd/- Director, Govt. Flying Training School, Jakur, Bangalore.

INVITATION OF BID THROUGH e -TENDERING			
Bid Identification No-19/EE/RWSS/ 2018-19/Bpt Dated.31.01.2019			
01. Name of the work :- As per ANNEXURE - A			
Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding on office hour only	Date of Opening (Technical Bid)



## Visa crackdown

Students should be made aware of the risks of falling afoul of U.S. immigration laws

The arrest of 129 Indians on the charge of wilfully violating immigration laws to stay and work in the United States sends a stark message to youth looking for better prospects abroad: their efforts should begin with due diligence and strictly follow the letter of the law. In the sting operation carried out by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which threatens to encompass many more Indians in the 'University of Farmington' case, the contentious issue is whether they fell victim to unscrupulous recruiters who offered to secure an I-20 student document that allowed them to undertake paid work using the provision for Curricular Practical Training, or knowingly engaged in fraud. Going by the indictment of eight recruiters of Indian origin, they knew they were violating U.S. immigration law when they enrolled students using fraudulent and unlawful means, and their profits included negotiated referral fees paid into their accounts by undercover agents. The prosecution has alleged that each student who enrolled in the 'university' was aware that there would be no classes, credit scores or academic requirements, and the intention was merely to "pay to stay" and gain access to employment. These statements are, of course, subject to scrutiny during the trial of the alleged recruiters. The Ministry of External Affairs has made the correct distinction between students who may have been duped and the recruiters. Students who are eligible to pursue studies at an authorised university in the U.S. should, therefore, get a further opportunity and not be subjected to summary deportation or humiliation. It must also not prejudice the prospects of such students who may apply in future for legal entry.

The University of Farmington case in Michigan is not the first instance of Indian students falling foul of U.S. immigration laws, although it stands apart as a racket exposed by a sting operation. Others such as Tri-Valley University and Herguan University were degree mills run by individuals that used false claims and documents to enable youth to unlawfully stay in the U.S. and, in many cases, pursue employment. These trends reinforce the need for good communication that would help students identify credentialed institutions that meet the requirements of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, and highlight the serious nature of visa fraud. If the averments in the Michigan case are correct, the prospect of working in America attracted many of the 600 students who were recruited. This should serve as a reminder to India's policymakers that access to higher education, job-creation and raising of living standards to meet the aspirations of youth must receive priority. Talk of an impending demographic dividend is meaningless without creating opportunities at home.

## The peace holds

A harsher penalty in the 2008 Assam serial blasts case could have led to wider trouble

Rocked by protests against the Centre's proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, Assam's Bodoland populated areas were on edge for another reason last week. Over a decade after nine serial bombs ripped through four towns, the clamour for the death penalty to be awarded to the perpetrators had put the State on alert, after a district and sessions court set up for the CBI case had convicted 14 of them. The October 30, 2008 bombings exacted a severe toll. Eighty-eight deaths, 53 of them in Guwahati, with 540 injured, it was argued, passed the Supreme Court's 'rarest of the rare' test. And yet, mindful of the "entire facts and circumstances of the case", the judge on January 30 sentenced 10 of the convicted, including Ranjan Daimary, to life and handed out limited terms to the others. Most of the convicts belong to a faction of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, of which Daimary is the chairman. The NDFB(R) has had a ceasefire agreement with the Assam and Union governments since May 2005. The NDFB (Progressive), led by Gobinda Basumatary, is also in peace talks. Recent incidents in Bodoland areas – including the May and December 2014 attacks against Muslim migrants and Adivasis, in which over 100 civilians were killed – have been attributed to the rebel NDFB faction, led earlier by I.K. Songbijit and now by B. Saoraigwra.

These groups and their predecessors, many of which have given up arms and joined the formal political process, espouse causes ranging from secession to a Bodoland State carved out of Assam. The violent phase peaked in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but ebbed with the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Council in 2003. It absorbed the likes of Hagrama Mohilary, formerly a Bodoland Liberation Tigers militant, whose Bodoland People's Front has been an alliance partner of both the erstwhile Congress-led State government and the current BJP regime of Sarbananda Sonowal. While NDFB(R) supporters chanted slogans demanding Bodoland to protest against the judicial order, a death sentence for Daimary could have sparked wider convulsions, and pushed some of the fringe groups back into militancy, creating a 1990s redux. The BJP has backed the creation of smaller States, but Bodoland is unlikely to be realised any time soon. The Bodoland case for statehood is also hamstrung by the fact that non-Bodos account for nearly 70% of the population in the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts that will comprise the core of such a State. New Delhi is focussing instead on devolving more powers with its constitution amendment Bill – likely to be introduced in Parliament this week – to bring 10 autonomous district councils under the purview of the Central Finance Commission. Along with ideologically agnostic partnerships with the State government in Dispur, this is the way forward for now.

## A national register of exclusion

There are few parallels anywhere else of the state itself producing statelessness in the manner that it is doing in Assam



HARSH MANDER

**B**y requiring long-term residents of Assam to prove their citizenship by negotiating a thicket made up of bewildering and opaque rules and an uncaring bureaucracy, the Indian state has for the past two decades unleashed an unrelenting nightmare of wanton injustice on a massive swathe of its most vulnerable people.

### Distressing cycle

The official presumption that they are foreigners has reduced several million of these highly impoverished, mostly rural, powerless and poorly lettered residents to a situation of helplessness and penury. It has also caused them abiding anxiety and uncertainty about their futures. They are required to persuade a variety of usually hostile officials that they are citizens, based on vintage documents which even urban, educated, middle-class citizens would find hard to muster. And even when one set of officials is finally satisfied, another set can question them. And sometimes the same official is free again to send them a notice, starting the frightening cycle afresh.

On February 2 and 3, I was in Guwahati listening to heart-breaking accounts from 53 people from 13 districts of Assam. This was as part of a people's tribunal on the National Register of Citizens (NRC), along with Justice Venkate Gowda, Colin Gonsalves,

Monirul Hussain and Sanjoy Hazarika. What emerged were numbing stories of unyielding official bias and arbitrariness, of the denial of elementary "due process" and, above all, the complete absence of public compassion. Even old men frequently broke down as they spoke of all that they had endured.

It emerged that the names of many persons were dropped from the draft NRC only because of minor differences in the spelling of Bengali names in English in different documents. We encountered several instances where the variation of a single letter, for example between Omar and Onar, was enough to rule that a person is a foreigner. Likewise, the rural unlettered are typically vague about their dates of birth. A person could be excluded from citizenship if she told the tribunal that she was 40 when her documents recorded her to be 42.

### Tougher on women

Women are especially in danger of exclusion from the citizenship register. Typically, they have no birth certificates, are not sent to school, and are married before they become adults. Therefore, by the time their names first appear in voters' lists, these are in the villages where they live after marriage, which are different from those of their parents. They are told that they have no documents to prove that they are indeed the children of the people they claim are their parents. There were cases of being excluded from citizenship on this ground alone.

Impoverished migrant workers often travel to other districts of Assam in search of work, as construction workers, road-builders and coal-miners. In the districts to



which they migrate, the local police frequently record their names as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. The police then mark them out as illegal immigrants. They receive notices from foreigners' tribunals located in districts where they might have worked years earlier, far away from their home district; they have to travel to every hearing, adding further to their costs.

The NRC is not the only institution through which the state challenges them to prove their citizenship. A second process began in the mid-1990s when the then Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan, as a one-time measure, directed officials to identify "doubtful voters" by marking a "D" against their names on the voters' list. This would temporarily bar them from voting or standing for elections, until an inquiry was completed.

But this temporary measure became permanent. The power was vested permanently with junior officials who could doubt the citizenship of any person at any time without assigning any reason. Those with the dreaded "D" beside their names had no recourse for appeal under the rules, with years passing without any inquiry.

The "D" also debarred them from being included in the draft NRC.

A third process empowers the Assam Police to identify anyone it suspects to be a 'foreigner'. Again, all that the police claim in most cases is that the person was unable to show them documents establishing his or her citizenship. People consistently deny that the police even asked them for documents. Why would they not show them these, when they all know the dangers of not allaying the suspicions of the police?

### Opaque processes

All cases referred by the police are heard by Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs). Earlier, retired judges were appointed to these tribunals. The Bharatiya Janata Party government has appointed many lawyers (often members of the ruling party or the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) who have never been judges. There are now FTs in which not a single person has been declared an Indian citizen over several months. Many allege that both the police and presiding officers in FTs work to fulfil informal targets to declare people foreigners.

Even if a person finds her name in the NRC, the police can still refer her case to an FT; an election official can even deem her to be a "D"-voter. Article 20 of the Constitution includes as a fundamental right that "no person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once". But this principle has been waived for FTs. We found that even after an FT had confirmed a person to be an Indian citizen, another FT and often the same FT can again issue notice to the same person to prove her legitimate citizenship once more. A person is never be allowed to feel secure that the

state has finally accepted that she is an Indian citizen.

In this way, the sword permanently hangs low over their heads. Who will be challenged before which institution to prove that they are Indian citizens? Will they or their loved ones be stripped of their citizenship rights, and by processes that are opaque, unreasonable and discriminatory?

No person in any one of the testimonies that we heard was given legal aid by the state, which is bound to deploy lawyers paid by the state to fight their cases in the FTs and higher courts. People instead spoke of panic spending, of enormous amounts of money to pay lawyers, as well as for costs of travel of witnesses who they bring with them to testify in their favour.

For this, they have had to sell all their assets or borrow from private moneylenders. The large majority of them are poorly educated and very impoverished, doing low-paid work such as drawing rickshaws, or working as domestic work or farm labour.

With the entire burden of proving citizenship on their shoulders and the arbitrary and opaque multiple forums to which they are summoned, people deprived of both education and resources are caught in a Kafkaesque bureaucratic maze from which they find it hard to emerge.

Trapped at the crossroads of history, their destinies depend on institutions that treat them with undisguised hostility and bias. There are indeed few parallels anywhere in the world of the state itself producing statelessness on the scale and in the manner that it is doing in Assam.

Harsh Mander is a human rights worker, writer and teacher

## An appeasement Budget

The Interim Budget makes clear the class hierarchy in the Modi government's scheme of populism



PUJA MEHRA

Interim Budget 2019 has sought to make amends for all the wrongs of almost five years of the Narendra Modi government. For example, the debilitating impact of demonetisation on the informal sector that employs nearly 90% of the workforce had long been suspected on the basis of anecdotal evidence. The findings of the National Sample Survey Office's surveys – leaked last week after they were approved by the National Statistical Commission – show that unemployment rose to a 45-year high in the demonetisation year. The note ban, these findings suggest, has caused severe distress.

### Some social security

To reach out to the segment worst hit, the Interim Budget announced the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan for unorganised sector workers with monthly incomes of less than ₹15,000. With a token allocation of ₹500 crore, a direct benefit transfer of ₹3,000 a month as old-age pension has been proposed. Pensioners will receive the payments once they attain the age of 60. To be eligible, workers will

have to start contributing ₹55 every month from the age of 18. Those over 29 will have to contribute ₹100 every month. The government will match these contributions. The scheme targets workers in sectors such as leather, handloom and construction which took a body blow from demonetisation.

A possible inference can be that the Modi government does not expect – nor is it promising – upward mobility for this class to better quality jobs over the span of their working lives.

### For the farmer

The Modi government's tenure has been marked by acute rural distress. Among the reasons to which it can be ascribed are legacy farm sector policy issues which no government has addressed in a meaningful way. In this, Mr. Modi's government has been no different. The minimum support prices and procurement policies it followed were more ineffective than is normal. In fact these policies reversed some of the corrections made by the previous United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in the terms of trade for agriculture. The Modi government has also failed to respond adequately to the back-to-back droughts of 2014 and 2015. The import-export policy errors it made added to the gluts caused by bumper harvests in 2017 and 2018, which further depressed market prices and increased farmer



losses.

The non-farming classes did profit to an extent from these policy failures. Falling food prices spelt losses for farmers but benefited kitchen budgets in middle-class households that had suffered from severe inflation under the UPA.

The Interim Budget offers farmers a peace offering in the form of income support of ₹6,000 a year, or ₹500 a month, financed fully by the Central government. The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) – inspired by Telangana's Rythu Bandhu – targets only landed farmers who own up to 2 hectares, while bypassing landless cultivators, the most vulnerable class in the agriculture sector.

In handing out these fiscal giveaways, Mr. Modi has bitten the bullet by reaching out to a class of voters who are traditionally not a constituency of the BJP. But these giveaways suffer from the same populist, rather than reformist, approach seen earlier with demonetisation which was planned as a

big bang intervention to downsize the black economy, and the design and implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). These measures, which were not thought through properly, led to perverse consequences.

### The downside

In a similar way, the PM-KISAN scheme is likely to encourage further fragmentation of already much fragmented landholdings. Farming households holding larger land parcels will try to split holdings to try to qualify for the benefits under the scheme. Had the scheme been dovetailed with a replacement of the highly distortionary fertilizer subsidy with a direct benefit cash transfer, not only would a long-pending reform have been accomplished but the income support offered to farmers could have been nearly twice as much as has been announced. Bureaucrats had made a case for adding the fertilizer subsidy as a cash component to the income support, but Mr. Modi showed no appetite for the reform.

Even so, the Interim Budget leaves no doubt about which class of voters Mr. Modi is most eager to please. The gifts showered on the middle class outstrip those to the poorer sections who have borne the brunt of demonetisation and an incompetently designed GST. The income-tax rebate for individuals drawing incomes of up to ₹5 lakh will leave nearly ₹1,000 a

month more in their wallets. This is twice the amount farmers will receive from the PM-KISAN scheme.

And, middle class Indians will not, unlike unorganised sector workers, have to wait till they are 60 to receive the rebate or the other tax benefits announced, such as on fixed deposits and two self-owned houses.

There was something for the rich too. The most positive, and the only reforms-oriented announcement, was reserved for them – a promise of a complete digitalised experience in their dealings with the income-tax department. This could end the excessive harassment and the tax terror that have been unleashed in the past couple of years.

### Compromising economics

Finally, apart from making clear the class hierarchy in Mr. Modi's scheme of populism, the Interim Budget provides evidence, if any more was needed, that Indian electoral politics is dependent even more now on schemes involving handouts and fiscal goodies. That the need to spend money on the voting classes is felt by successive governments confirms that no serious gains from economic reforms are reaching the non-rich. Politicians appear to be compromising good economics with increasing ease and relish.

Puja Mehra is a Delhi-based journalist

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Protest in Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has taken her political hostility towards the Bharatiya Janata Party to a dangerous level (Page 1, "Mamata goes on stir after CBI tries to quiz Kolkata police boss", February 4). The action of stopping Central Bureau of Investigation officials from discharging their duties is a serious breach of constitutional propriety because she has interfered in the due process of the law. It appears that she has embarked on a dangerous brinkmanship because of her inability to distinguish between Central agencies and the ruling party at the Centre. Victimhood loses its legitimacy when it turns into paranoia.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,  
Thiruvananthapuram

politics. Leaders such as Ms. Banerjee and Arvind Kejriwal, being the street fighters, subsequently continue to behave like what they were.

In a democratic system, State governments should work within the framework of the Constitution and respect the Central government irrespective of party affiliations. Otherwise, it will result in anarchy and chaos. Why is Ms. Banerjee shying away from the Central Bureau of Investigation? Has she forgotten that this is an investigation into activities that siphoned off life-long earnings from the poor?

SHALINI MURTHY,  
Bengaluru

One feels sorry for the people of West Bengal.

V.S. GIRI,  
Chennai

■ While Ms. Banerjee's angry response was a needless over-reaction to what is being made out to be a routine attempt to initiate an inquiry, one is left wondering why a little more decorum and protocol was not shown by the CBI. Had the Kolkata police commissioner cooperated with the inquiry, much of the sting in the action would have been taken out too. It is also very odd that a large posse of CBI officers landed up unannounced at the commissioner's residence late on Sunday evening. The ponzi scheme scam is certainly not one that warrants such dramatic action by the CBI. This oddity makes the episode appear to have been hatched at the behest of the Central

C.V. ARAVIND,  
Bengaluru

government, especially in the face of recent snubs that the TMC has inflicted on the BJP. One waits to see what the Supreme Court will have to say.

ANAND ARAVAMUDHAN,  
Chennai

■ As can only be expected, the Opposition has quickly rallied around Ms. Banerjee and wasted no time in lambasting the Central government for using agencies like the CBI to further its own ends. What supports the Opposition claim is that in almost all the cases so far, the targets have been States where the Opposition parties are in power and the spotlight is on leaders who could pose a threat to the BJP.

C.V. ARAVIND,  
Bengaluru

inquiry" that took place at the Indian Science Congress recently, the article on the crisis in public education (OpEd page, "Imagining alternative futures", February 4) tells us how fictionalised data are attempting to pull us into a dream of development from which we may never wake up. That education, far from being a right reinforced and guaranteed by a constitutional amendment, continues to be "a tradable commodity" is a nauseating truth being fed to young people, as public education buckles under the pressure to privatise being imposed by transnational capital. The implications for the quality and credibility of knowledge created in India are as unpalatable a truth as the subversion of facts being churned out to suit a regressive social agenda.

VASANTHA SURYA,  
Bengaluru

### Derailed

It is disconcerting that the derailment of the Delhi-bound Jogbani-Anand Vihar Seemanchal Express happened just a few days after Union

# America has lost the Afghan war

Once U.S. troops leave, the Taliban is sure to challenge Kabul one way or the other



STANLY JOHNY

The Remnants of an Army, a famous oil on canvas by Elizabeth Butler, is a lasting image of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842). It depicts William Brydon, a medical officer in the British Indian Army, arriving in Jalalabad from Kabul on horseback in 1842. Both Brydon, who was wounded, and his horse look exhausted. Brydon was the only survivor of the 16,000 soldiers and camp followers who were retreating from Kabul after the British invasion went awry.

One hundred and thirty-seven years later, the Soviet Union sent troops to Afghanistan to bolster its client communist regime. A decade passed before the Soviet troops too withdrew in ignominy. And again in 2001, the U.S., the sole superpower of the post-Soviet world, sent troops to Afghanistan launching its 'War on Terror'. Now, after 17 years of the war, with the U.S. and the Taliban agreeing 'in-principle' to a framework for peace that would provide the Americans a face-saving exit from Afghanistan, it's hard to miss the echoes from history.

**Repeating mistakes of the past**  
Afghanistan has historically been a difficult place for external invaders, thanks to its complex tribal equations and its rugged mountainous terrain. It's a classic example of a country whose geopolitical destiny is defined by geography. The British Empire sent troops to Afghanistan in 1839 as part of the 'Great Game'. They feared that the Russians would take over Afghanistan and be at the border of India, "the jewel in the British Crown". To pre-empt that, they conquered Kabul, toppled the Emir of Afghanistan, Dost Mohammad Khan, and installed their protege Shah Shujah Durani in power.

Given their defeat in the Vietnam War and their loss of Iran following the 1979 Revolution, the Americans saw the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as an opportunity. They began supporting the mujahideen, the tribal warriors who were fighting both the communist regime and its Soviet backers, with help from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which were worried about the expansion of communism to the Muslim world. A decade later, the Soviets realised that the occupation had become unsustainable and pulled back.



"After 17 years of fighting, the war has reached nowhere." An injured American soldier in Arghandab Valley, Afghanistan, in 2010. ■ REUTERS

sacred, and Dost Mohammad went on to recapture Kabul.

The Soviets made the same mistake. They sent troops to Afghanistan after an intra-party coup in the country. The Soviets were wary of Hafizullah Amin, who captured power and assassinated Nur Mohammad Taraki, the leader of the 1978 communist coup. In December 1979, Leonid Brezhnev deployed troops to Afghanistan. The Soviets staged another coup, murdered Amin, and installed Babrak Karmal, a Moscow loyalist, as President.

Given their defeat in the Vietnam War and their loss of Iran following the 1979 Revolution, the Americans saw the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as an opportunity. They began supporting the mujahideen, the tribal warriors who were fighting both the communist regime and its Soviet backers, with help from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which were worried about the expansion of communism to the Muslim world. A decade later, the Soviets realised that the occupation had become unsustainable and pulled back.

When the U.S. decided to attack

the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, President George W. Bush said the 'War on Terror' would not end "until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated". This was a tall order. The U.S. toppled the Taliban quickly and Afghanistan eventually got an elected government under President Hamid Karzai. But after 17 years of fighting, the war has reached nowhere. Since 2009, when the United Nations started documenting the casualties of the war, nearly 20,000 Afghan civilians have been killed in conflict and another 50,000 wounded. The U.S., which has spent some \$877 billion on the war, has lost at least 2,000 military personnel in Afghanistan since the war began.

## An unsustainable war

And what did it get in return? The Taliban, which retreated in 2001, is on the comeback trail. Some estimates suggest that nearly half of Afghanistan, mostly the mountainous hinterlands, is now controlled by the Taliban. In the east, a small cell of the Islamic State is well-entrenched and has carried out a series of sectarian

attacks in recent months, killing hundreds of Hazara Shias. The government is grappling with chronic corruption, and regional satraps call the shots outside Kabul.

U.S. President Donald Trump has made it clear many times that he wants to bring American troops back home. Yet he decided to send more troops to Afghanistan in 2017 to step up the fight against the Taliban. Since then, the U.S. has carried out large-scale air operations in Afghanistan, but it has failed to arrest the Taliban's momentum. The group continues to hold sway in rural Afghanistan and retains the capability to strike anywhere in the country. Just since 2014, Afghanistan has lost some 45,000 soldiers in battle. Amid mounting losses and an inability to break the stalemate in the conflict, the Americans, like the British Empire in the 19th century and the Soviets in the 20th century, seem to have realised that the first major war of the 21st century is no longer sustainable.

## The role of the Taliban

The question is, what next? The U.S. says it has got assurance from the Taliban that the group won't provide a safe haven to terror groups in Afghanistan. It will also push for a ceasefire and intra-Afghan talks. But the fact remains that the U.S. has already conceded a lot to the Taliban. The Taliban said it would not talk to the Afghan administration; it does not acknowledge the government's legitimacy. The Americans accepted this and held direct talks with the insurgents, who negotiated from a position of strength. The U.S. has also agreed, in principle, to pull out troops, the biggest Taliban demand, without any clear agreement on the future role of the Taliban. This shows how desperate the U.S. is to get out of Afghanistan, a war it has lost badly. It will be exiting on terms largely dictated by the Taliban. It would be naive to say that the Taliban fought the war for 17 years only to reach an agreement with the Americans. It fought for power, which it lost with the arrival of American troops in 2001. And it's certain that once the Americans leave, the Taliban will challenge Kabul one way or the other.

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# Wrong on the Rohingya

Deportation of refugees is legally and morally problematic



THULASI K. RAJ

In January, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) called for a report from India on the deportation of a group of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar in October 2018. India's repatriation of the refugees contravenes international principles on refugee law as well as domestic constitutional rights.

## Global framework

Refugee law is a part of international human rights law. In order to address the problem of mass inter-state influx of refugees, a Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the UN adopted the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1951. This was followed by the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1967. One of the most significant features of the Convention is the principle of non-refoulement.

The norm requires that "no contracting State shall expel or return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." This idea of prohibition of expulsion lies at the heart of refugee protection in international law.



It is often argued that the principle does not bind India since it is a party to neither the 1951 Convention nor the Protocol. However, the prohibition of non-refoulement by refugees constitutes a norm of customary international law, which binds even non-parties to the Convention. According to the Advisory Opinion on the Extraterritorial Application of Non-Refoulement Obligations, UNHCR, 2007, the principle "is binding on all States, including those which have not yet become party to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol."

Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. Moreover, Article 51 of the Constitution imposes an obligation on the state to endeavour to promote international peace and security. Article 51(c) talks about promotion of respect for international law and treaty obligations. Therefore, the Constitution conceives of incorporation of international law into the domestic realm. Thus the argument that the nation has not

violated international obligations during the deportation is a mistaken one.

## Domestic obligations

The chapter on fundamental rights in the Constitution differentiates citizens from persons. While all rights are available to citizens, persons including foreign citizens are entitled to the right to equality and the right to life, among others. The Rohingya refugees, while under the jurisdiction of the national government, cannot be deprived of the right to life and personal liberty.

The Rohingya are "among the world's least wanted and most persecuted people," according to a BBC report. In Myanmar, they are denied citizenship, the right to own land and travel, or to even marry without permission, says the report. According to the UN, the Rohingya issue is one of systematic and widespread ethnic cleansing by Myanmar.

Therefore, the discrimination that the Rohingya face is unparalleled in contemporary world politics. In *National Human Rights Commission v. State of Arunachal Pradesh* (1996), the Supreme Court held: "Our Constitution confers... rights on every human being and certain other rights on citizens. Every person is entitled to equality before the law and equal protection of the laws. So also, no person can be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. Thus the State is bound to protect the life and liberty of every human-being, be he a citizen or otherwise..."

India lacks a specific legislation to address the problem of refugees, in spite of their increasing inflow. The Foreigners Act, 1946, fails to address the peculiar problems faced by refugees as a class. It also gives unbridled power to the Central government to deport any foreign citizen. Further, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill of 2019 strikingly excludes Muslims from its purview and seeks to provide citizenship only to Hindu, Christian, Jain, Parsi, Sikh and Buddhist immigrants persecuted in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The majority of the Rohingya are Muslims. This limitation on the basis of religion fails to stand the test of equality under Article 14 of the Constitution and offends secularism, a basic feature of the Constitution.

The American philosopher Ronald Dworkin argues that if we claim international law to be law, we must understand it as part of the greater morality. In such a conception, the deportation of refugees by India is not only unlawful but breaches a significant moral obligation.

Thulasi K. Raj is a lawyer at the Kerala High Court

## SINGLE FILE

### The danger of cash transfers

It might incentivise the state to shirk its constitutional responsibility of providing basic entitlements to all

AKRITI BHATIA & CHANDAN KUMAR



With the general election around the corner and NSSO data revealing that the unemployment rate has hit a 45-year high, there is a spike in concern for the economic security of the people. Several recent proposals – whether the Congress's pre-emptive announcement of a minimum income guarantee scheme, or

the Interim Budget's promise of a range of income transfers to farmers (albeit as low as ₹3 per day for a family of five) and a pension scheme for workers aged over 60 years in the unorganised sector, or the government's announcement of a 10% quota for the "economically weaker sections" in the general category – might appear promising but raise questions about their impact on the working poor.

If uplift of the poor is a priority, why not provide decent employment opportunities, minimum wages and social security to all workers? Why not spend on universalising access to, and provision of, basic public services to all? Why, contrarily, are there periodic cuts in social sector spending, including on public education and primary health; amendments in labour laws in favour of corporates; and privatisation and contractualisation even within the public sector?

In this context, cash transfers to the "poor" – also subject to gross exclusionary errors of identification – do not ensure accessibility, affordability or even sustained economic security given falling real wages. The scheme also doesn't indicate where that money would be spent by the beneficiaries. More importantly, the concern is that these cash transfers could replace, rather than supplement, existing schemes that provide subsidised goods and services. This would imply that citizens could be left at the mercy of private, for-profit players to avail even basic services. This might incentivise the state to shirk its constitutional responsibility of providing basic entitlements to all.

Case studies around Direct Benefit Transfers have shown that they play an instrumental role in dismantling existing welfare schemes and deprive ASHA and Anganwadi workers of their wages. These workers have been pillars in creating an ecosystem for ensuring nutritional security to women and children. Even in Europe, wherever guaranteed basic income has been implemented, provision of services has increasingly moved towards greater privatisation.

Finally, it is surprising that the same government that earlier opposed cash transfer schemes as "doles" is now advocating them. Politically the scheme seems to be the most viable option now, given the unemployment catastrophe. Hurried income transfers before the election could be considered as 'cash for votes', but the larger danger entails the state's diminishing accountability towards its citizens, of upholding their rights to basic entitlements and to work.

Akriti Bhatia is a Ph.D. Scholar at the Delhi School of Economics. Chandan Kumar works with the Working Peoples' Charter, a collective that works with informal labour across India



## NOTEBOOK

### 'Why must we tell you?'

Often people revisit traumatic memories only to tell journalists their stories

MEERA SRINIVASAN

As journalists, we are often guilty of behaving like an entitled bunch. We ask questions, demand answers, call people at odd hours with or without an apology, or trouble a friend for a phone number we have lost.

It is one thing to pose difficult questions to those in power, those who are accountable to the people, or those who think privilege ought not to be challenged. But it is quite another to nudge people who are in the lap of danger or adversity to share their stories with us, so we can tell them.

It was late 2003, and I was in journalism school. A group of us were taken to Pappappatti, Keeripatti and Nattamangalam in Madurai district to report on how locals felt about the imminent commissioning of the controversial Kudankulam nuclear power plant. I walked

tant sections of the dominant Thevar caste group unleashed on the oppressed Dalits. Despite the panchayats being reserved for Dalit candidates, most were forced to stay out of the contest. The few who took a risk paid with physical injury or, at times, life.

We approached a middle-aged woman in the Dalit village, hoping to get her perspective. "Why must we tell you?" she screamed. "Who are you? So many media folk come here and ask us questions, but has anything changed for us? Can you assure me that you can publish the truth and make a difference?" Obviously, we couldn't promise change, but we reported what we saw.

About a decade later, in 2012, I went to Idinthakarai in Tirunelveli district to report on how locals felt about the imminent commissioning of the controversial Kudankulam nuclear power plant. I walked

towards a woman seated in front of her house and even before I could say a word, she said: "What? Interview? We don't need the nuclear plant." Clearly she was in no mood to tell us. But after some time, when more women joined her, she began speaking with less anger, and explained in painstaking detail why they were opposed to the plant that, they believed, would endanger their health, community and village.

From time to time, I sense scepticism among some people I meet in the war-affected areas of Sri Lanka, especially those under continuing military surveillance. After speaking to them, we reporters might come back with a compelling human story, but the residents have to continue living there, at risk and experiencing anxiety everyday. Invariably though, a few minutes into the conversation, they begin sharing very personal stories of love, pain, loss and distress. Retelling them means revisiting traumatic memories but they still do. They let a complete stranger into their homes, serve tea, and are willing to trust sooner than we'd think.

For a decade now, Sri Lankan activist Sandya Elkarnigoda has been campaigning for the truth about her disappeared husband, the dissident journalist-cartoonist Praeeth Elkarnigoda. Sandya challenges powerful politicians boldly, turns up for every other protest on enforced disappearances – be it in Colombo or in the north. She has given many interviews to local and foreign media, meticulously sharing details of Praeeth's disappearance each time. Some time ago I asked her, "How do you agree to tell this story again and again, it must be hard." She said: "Yes, it is. But since giving up is not an option, I do it."

## FROM The Hindu ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 5, 1969

### Ajitha's bail application rejected

Mr. P.K. Lakshmanan, District and Sessions Judge, to-day [February 4, Calicut] rejected the bail application filed on behalf of Miss Ajitha, said to be one of the top Naxalite leaders, now under remand in connection with the attack on Pulpally wireless station. The Judge, however, granted bail to another accused, Mohanan, on health grounds. The Judge observed that though the investigations in the case had not yet been completed, a prima facie case had been made out against Miss Ajitha in all the cases in which she was alleged to have been involved. Miss Ajitha was credited with being the "motive force or live wire" of the group which was alleged to have committed the offences. The Judge said that since several others alleged to be involved in the crimes were yet to be apprehended, the danger of the crimes being committed again if the accused was enlarged on bail, could not be overruled.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 5, 1919

### Tragedy in a Hotel.

About 1 O'clock this afternoon [February 4] a report of a revolver was heard in Taj Mahal Hotel [in Bombay]. The waiters, thinking that it must have been the sound of the bursting of a motor tyre at the taxi stand below, took no notice of it. A little later someone was heard calling out for help from room No. 442, and on a waiter peeping through the half-closed doors he found a gentleman lying flat on his chest on the floor. The waiter immediately rushed downstairs to the Manager's Office to obtain help. On his way down he was stopped by an officer who enquired of him as to what was the matter. On the waiter informing him that something serious had happened in room No. 442 the officer at once rushed upstairs to the room, picked up the gentleman and put him on his cot. Assistance came in promptly and the gentleman, whose name is Lt. H.R. Playfair, was placed in a motor ambulance and removed to Colaba War Hospital. He had a bullet wound on his right shoulder. Lt. Playfair has been staying at Taj Mahal Hotel for some time and he was alone in his room when the revolver was heard to go off. The police found a revolver in his room with an empty cartridge in one of its chamber. The matter is under investigation.

## CONCEPTUAL

### Matching hypothesis

PSYCHOLOGY

This refers to the idea that people are more likely to be romantically attracted towards people who are as attractive as themselves than those less or more attractive. While physical attractiveness can determine the mating preferences of people to a significant extent, social and other non-physical forms of attraction can also determine mating patterns prevalent across various human societies.

## MORE ON THE WEB

The Hindu explains: What is the polar vortex?

<http://bit.ly/Polarvortex>

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Opposition leaders support Mamata

Among those who visited the Chief Minister was SP leader Kiranmay Nanda. A number of leaders from the Opposition including Congress president Rahul Gandhi had called and expressed their solidarity with Ms. Banerjee on Sunday evening.

While continuing with her satyagraha, Ms. Banerjee held a Cabinet meeting with over a dozen of her Ministers to approve the State Budget, addressed a gathering of farmers through video conferencing and also gave medals to over 100 policemen.

Throughout the day thousands of people were present at the dharna site trying to catch a glimpse of the Chief Minister and raising slogans in her support and against the Centre.

With daybreak on Monday, Ms. Banerjee went out

for a morning walk near the protest venue but remained seated on the stage for most part of the day.

She addressed the crowd and media persons a number of times and assured everyone that she would carry on with the affairs of the state from the dharna site. While it is not clear how long the protest will continue, the Chief Minister said microphones can be used at the venue only till February 8 on account of State Board Examinations.

Ms. Banerjee said the BJP was trying to stage a coup using the Central investigation agencies.

Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi who had summoned key officials of the State government over the past 24 hours sent a confidential report to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

## Centre seeks report from Bengal Governor

The Opposition, on the other hand, accused the BJP-led government of using the CBI as a 'weapon' to destroy political rivals and target opposition-ruled States.

The lower House didn't see any business as it was adjourned for the day after repeated disruptions.

"There may be a constitutional breakdown in West Bengal...Under the Constitution, the Central government has been vested with the power to maintain normalcy in any part of the country," Mr. Singh said, amid sloganising from Trinamool members.

**'No cooperation'**

"Whatever happened on Sunday, it indicates constitutional breakdown," he said, even as Trinamool members were shouting slogans like "CBI tota hain (CBI is a parrot) and Chowkidar chor hain."

Mr. Singh said Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar was not cooperating with the CBI that was investigating chit fund scam cases in the State under the Supreme Court's direction.

Earlier, a united Opposition attacked the Centre for the alleged misuse of the investigating agency against political rivals.

Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy said the Constitutional crisis was due to the Centre wanting to politically capture the State using the CBI.

The Centre was "constantly using the CBI to throttle the Opposition", alleged Mr. Roy and said the Trinamool was strongly

protesting this, including with a dharna by party chief and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

**'CBI being misused'**

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge accused the Centre of using the CBI as a weapon to finish the Opposition and put in place an 'autocratic' dispensation.

The Congress leader said whether it was Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka or Tamil Nadu, the CBI was being misused to target opponents.

"Neither the people nor any party would bow down before such actions," Mr. Kharge said.

Biju Janata Dal leader B. Mahtab said the entire incident raised questions about the integrity of the CBI.

"We are not a banana republic," he said and added that the CBI was becoming a 'political weapon' in the hands of the Centre.

The BJD leader also claimed that the agency was being used to target the BJD government in Odisha.

NCP leader Supriya Sule condemned the CBI for using its muscle power against a woman Chief Minister.

Dharmendra Yadav (SP) and Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav (RJD) also spoke against the Centre.

Maintaining equidistance from the Centre and the State government, Badaruddoza Khan of the CPI (M) said that while the CBI didn't take any action for the past four and a half years, the Chief Minister defending a bureaucrat was "dangerous for democracy."

## Bring proof against police chief: CBI told

The hearing coincided with a sit-in by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee against the Narendra Modi government.

**'Exceptional situation'**

In an oral mentioning for an urgent hearing, Mr. Mehta termed the face-off in Kolkata as an "exceptional situation" as he sought the court's intervention over what happened to the CBI's officers.

"The 25 CBI officers were kept hostage in the Park Street police station," Mr. Mehta submitted.

"They [the police] retreated only after we found we are moving the Supreme Court. The West Bengal police laid siege to the official residence of Pankaj Shrivastava, a Joint Director with the CBI stationed in Kolkata. The family of the Joint Director was held hostage. They were released only after the Joint Director held a teleconference, telling the media about his predicament. This is a flagrant and shameless de-

fiance of the Constitution... an undemocratic hooliganism," the Solicitor-General said.

Mr. Mehta said Mr. Kumar, despite repeated summonses, did not co-operate with the investigation. An intimation to the DGP about the conduct of Mr. Kumar was ignored.

**'Complete anarchy'**

In its application, the CBI said the police had laid siege to its Kolkata office on January 3, adding that the investigation records were in that office.

The law officer highlighted that the DGP and other senior police officers had joined the 'dharna', citing it as an example of "complete anarchy" in West Bengal.

The court rejected Mr. Mehta's plea to schedule a hearing for Monday afternoon.

It said the intervening time till 10.30 a.m. on February 5 could be availed by the "Solicitor-General or any party" to bring proof to support his case.

## EVMs a worry, says Opposition

At meeting with CEC, leaders said 50% of results should be checked with VVPATs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Leaders of Opposition parties approached the Election Commission on Monday to express concerns about the possibility of the electronic voting machines (EVMs) being tampered with.

They demanded that the ECI should ensure that 50% of the EVM results were matched and cross-checked with voter verifiable paper audit trails (VVPATs) before it declared the results in the Lok Sabha election.

"All the parties told the Commission that in the past three or four years, there have been instances when a voter presses the 'Hand' [Congress symbol] button or 'Elephant' [BSP] or 'Cycle' [SP] buttons and the vote gets registered against 'Lotus' [of the BJP]. This has led to fights and arguments at booths. EC officials, however, have never been able to satisfactorily explain to political parties why this has happened," said Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad.

**Voters' doubts**

Opposition leaders, who met the Chief Election Commissioner and other members of the EC, told the poll panel that the issue needed to be addressed as the people now doubted the efficacy of EVMs.

Earlier, the Opposition had advocated reverting back to the ballot paper sys-



Note of caution: Congress leaders Vivek Tankha, Kapil Sibal, Kamal Nath and Ahmed Patel after meeting the Election Commission in New Delhi on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

tem, but the Election Commission made it clear that there was no possibility of going back.

The delegation included Ghulam Nabi Azad, Mallikarjun Kharge, Ahmed Patel and Anand Sharma of the Congress, Chandrababu Naidu (TDP), Majid Memon (NCP), Derek O'Brien (Trinamool Congress), Ramgopal Yadav (SP), Satish Chandra Misra (BSP), Omar Abdullah (NC), Mohd. Salim and T.K. Rangarajan (CPI-M), Manoj Jha (RJD), Sanjay Singh (AAP), D. Raja (CPI), Danish Ali (JD-S), N K Premchandran (RSP), Badruddin Ajmal (AIUDF) and K.G. Kenye

(NPF). "Instances of EVMs and strong rooms becoming vulnerable to attacks and manipulations were widely recorded and reported. Added to this were incidents of power outages, failure of CCTV cameras in the strong rooms, detection of signals of wireless/mobile networks of a particular telecom operator in the vicinity of polling centres and strong rooms and so on and so forth," Opposition parties said in their memorandum.

"The Commission heard the concerns of the representatives [of the parties] regarding the demands related to the counting of Voter Ver-

ifiable Paper Audit Trail machine (VVPAT) slips," said the EC.

The poll body assured the political parties that issues raised by them would be deliberated upon.

The EC said: "While considering the averments made by the political parties, the Commission shall also keep in view the pronouncements made by the different Hon'ble Courts as well as the report expected shortly from the Indian Statistical Institute on the subject, besides the overall administrative and operational feasibility on the ground, before firming up a response."

## PM-KISAN: Aadhaar must for second instalment

Unique identification is not compulsory for first transfer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Farmers who wish to avail themselves of benefits under PM-KISAN, the new income support scheme announced in the Union Budget, must have Aadhaar identification to get the money from the second instalment, which would be paid by July 2019.

However, this would not be compulsory for the first instalment expected to be disbursed by March 31, before the Lok Sabha polls.

In a letter to the Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories, Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agarwal spelt out guidelines for the States, which would have to do the lion's share of work in actual implementation of the scheme, especially since the first transfer is due in less than two months.

States have been told to prepare a database of beneficiaries – small and marginal landholder farmer families in all villages – including whether they belong to SC/ST, bank account, mobile and Aadhaar details. For transfer of the first instalment, Aadhaar number "shall be collected wherever available", wrote Mr. Agarwal. An alternate list of identification documents has also been provided, as options.

"However, for transfer of subsequent instalments, Aadhaar number shall have to be compulsorily captured," the secretary wrote.

**Land records**

States have also been told to update their land records, as that would serve as the basis for determination of landholding for beneficiaries.

However, the secretary also said that the cut-off date for determination of ownership of land (as per land records) under the scheme was already over; the cut-off date was

February 1, 2019. "Changes thereafter in land records shall not be considered for eligibility of the benefit to the new land holder for next 5 years," Mr. Agarwal wrote, clarifying that transfer of ownership on account of succession would, however, be allowed.

The situation is slightly more complicated in the northeastern States, as land ownership rights in the region are community-based, making it difficult to identify beneficiaries. An alternate implementation mechanism would be developed by a committee including the State governments, as well as the Union Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Land Resources ministry and Agriculture ministry, the official wrote.

States would be given a maximum of 0.25% of funds transferred to beneficiaries in the first instalment to pay for their administrative expenses in the implementation of the scheme. That amount would drop to 0.125% for all further instalments.

## 'No unemployment data post-demonetisation'

Labour Minister replies to Parliament

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

There is no data available on unemployment subsequent to the period of demonetisation, Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar told Parliament on Monday, in a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha.

More than a third of the questions asked by Members of Parliament to the Labour Ministry on Monday were related to unemployment data. The Ministry held firmly to citing Labour Bureau surveys on unemployment, for which the latest data available is pre-demonetisation. According to this data, the unemployment rate in 2015-16 was 3.7%, Mr. Gangwar said.

**'Not centrally'**

In response to another question, Mr. Gangwar said, "Information related to impact of demonetisation on employment in the unorganised sector is not maintained centrally."

With regard to the NSSO's survey, Mr. Gangwar only said that the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has "initiated" the PLFS, whose primary objective is "to measure quarterly changes of key Labour Force Indicators such as Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR) and Unemployment Rate (UR) in urban areas as well as generate the annual estimates of different labour force indicators both in rural and urban areas...The report of the same has not been published," he said.

Asked why the Labour Bureau's Quarterly Employment Surveys have been put on hold, he said that a committee under the chairmanship of former MoSPI secretary T.C.A. Anant had submitted a report examining the current relevance of these surveys and that the report was being studied.



Santosh Gangwar

## PMO's dignity brought down, says Kharge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge has said the government's handling of the crisis within the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has lowered the dignity of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

In a letter written on Sunday, Mr. Kharge responded to Union Minister Arun Jaitley's comments in a blog accusing the Congress leader of lowering the 'value of dissent' by opposing every government nominee to the post of the CBI Director.

Mr. Kharge also called for the minutes of the Selection Committee meeting to be made public for the people to decide whether his objections were justified. "Going by the way the government has conducted itself in the matter of the appointment of the CBI Director, particularly the way the Justice Patnaik report was suppressed and courts have been misguided regarding the appointment of the interim Director, I am pained to say that the value of the Prime Minister's office has been brought down," he said.

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# Day 2: Mamata stir finds echo in Supreme Court, Parliament

CBI team lands in Delhi with files

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A team of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials reached Delhi on Monday with the documents the agency is required to submit before the Supreme Court in support of the petition against the Kolkata Police Commissioner in connection with the chit-fund cases.

The matter is scheduled to come up for hearing on Tuesday.

The new CBI Director, Rishi Kumar Shukla, who took charge on Monday, remained tight-lipped on the issue during his first interaction with the media.

The CBI in its application against the Police Commissioner, said it had substantial material to exercise its power of arrest "without warrant".

**Destroying evidence**  
The agency alleged that the officer did not respond properly to summons and was also suspected to be destroying evidence pertaining to the case.

However, in the same application, the CBI said all the evidence pertaining to its submissions were lying in its Kolkata office and they could not be presented due to paucity of time and the "unprecedented events" that had taken place.

"It is submitted that the local police did not permit even authorised officials of the CBI to enter the office. In effect, the West Bengal Police had laid siege to the CBI's Kolkata office," it alleged.



Holding fort: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the venue of her sit-in in Kolkata on Monday. •PTI

## Centre unlikely to go in for President's rule in Bengal

Situation not grave enough to invoke Article 356: officials

VIIA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

After the "unprecedented" turn of events in Kolkata over the CBI's bid to question City Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar in the Saradha chit fund scam on Sunday evening, the Centre is unlikely to recommend President's rule in the State.

Though Home Minister Rajnath Singh told the Lok Sabha on Monday that the incident "bordered on the failure of constitutional machinery", senior officials said the situation was not grave enough to invoke Article



356 of the Constitution enabling President's rule.

The government has decided to tread cautiously on the subject of sending notices to the police officers in Kolkata. Their conduct violated service rules," another official said.

A senior Home Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday criticised West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's dharna, and questioned Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar's presence among political leaders at the venue of the protest.

"What is happening? A Police Commissioner is sitting on a dharna with politicians? What does it mean? By sitting on a dharna, West Bengal Chief Minister is following in the footsteps of Arvind Kejriwal," Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

"The totally suspicious circumstances surrounding this [situation] proves that this Police Commissioner knows a lot and therefore, he has to be saved."

Mr. Prasad termed the support from other political parties to Ms. Banerjee an "alliance of the corrupt".

He said Ms. Banerjee had not protested when Madan



Fighting on: A BJP team led by Nirmala Sitharaman at the Election Commission. •SANDEEP SAXENA

Mitra, Sports and Transport Minister and her confidant, was arrested on December 12, 2014, but was sitting on a dharna for Mr. Kumar. Mr. Mitra got bail on September

10, 2016, after spending 21 months in jail. Other Trinamool functionaries to be jailed were Rajya Sabha member Srinjoy Bose and vice-president Rajat Majum

dar. The BJP approached the Election Commission on Monday with a high-power delegation headed by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, along with Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and party general secretary in charge of West Bengal Kailash Vijayvargiya. They complained to the EC against the denial of permission to BJP leaders' meetings in the State.

"In the interest of wanting a free and fair environment in which Lok Sabha polls can be conducted, we have come to bring to the notice of EC certain happenings in West Bengal which has the complete cooperation of the Trinamool Congress. Instances we highlighted point out that the TMC doesn't believe in democracy," she said.

## CBI plea skirts SC advice on moving HC

Apex court passed the order on agency's complaint of harassment of its officers

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The CBI's application before the Supreme Court seeking the court's intervention for ensuring the "immediate surrender" of the Kolkata Police Commissioner highlights a July 16, 2018, order of the court, in which the Bench ruled that the State police must work "in tandem" with the CBI to complete the chit fund scam investigation.

The CBI has, however, omitted in its application any reference to another part of the same Supreme Court order, where the Bench advises the agency to approach the Calcutta High



Court in case it encounters any "obstruction" from the West Bengal government or its machinery.

The West Bengal government, meanwhile, moved the High Court on Monday. The State did so shortly after a Supreme Court Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, asked the CBI to produce proof, within 24 hours, to back its claim that Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar tampered with evidence.

The July 16, 2018, order was the last in a series of orders passed by the Supreme Court on a miscellaneous application filed by the CBI in 2017 alleging harassment faced by its officers at the hands of the West Bengal police.

The CBI had complained that its officers were frequently "called" by the State police.

Acting on the 2017 application, the Supreme Court first barred the State police

from calling CBI officers. This interim order of December 15, 2017, was then extended from time to time.

On July 16 last year, while disposing of the 2017 application, a Bench of Justices Arun Mishra and S. Abdul Nazeer commented in their order that "it is not a happy state of affairs that CBI officers should be called by the State Police."

The Bench then, in the same order, said the CBI and the State Police "have to work in tandem with each other."

The Bench said this was the "expectation of the court as far investigation of the criminal case is required."

## Opposition parties close ranks behind Mamata

Parliament adjourned over CBI row; leaders fly into Kolkata

SOBHA N. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties put their weight behind the Trinamool Congress as the stand-off between the CBI and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee continued on Monday.

Both Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day as the Opposition united to protest against the CBI action in seeking to question the Kolkata Police Commissioner late on Sunday.

Bahujan Samaj Party leader Mayawati, who has been staying away from all Opposition events, is among the many leaders who spoke to Ms. Banerjee on Sunday evening expressing support.

Support has poured in from unexpected quarters too, including the Biju Janata



Mayawati

Dal, which has largely maintained a neutral stance. In a strong speech in the Lok Sabha, BJD Parliamentary Party leader Bhartruhari Mahtab said India was not a "banana republic" and the CBI should demonstrate institutional integrity.

In the Rajya Sabha, multiple notices to discuss the

West Bengal situation were given. Protesting Trinamool MPs were joined in the well by other Opposition MPs.

"There has been excellent coordination between the opposition parties and we got an overwhelming response from every one," TMC Parliamentary Party leader in the Upper House Derek O'Brien said.

Later, at a meeting of Opposition MPs in Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's room in the afternoon, the West Bengal situation was once again discussed briefly.

A few Opposition leaders including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Trinamool leaders met at NCP chief Sharad Pawar's residence later at night.

## Cong. State unit disagrees with Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

The West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee has declared that it will organise a "massive protest demonstration" to challenge the ruling Trinamool Congress. Party president Rahul Gandhi, on the other hand, tweeted on Sunday night that he fully supported Trinamool chief Mamata Banerjee in her fight to protect the country's institutions.

"I spoke with Mamata tonight [Sunday] and told her we stand shoulder to shoulder with her... The entire opposition will stand together & defeat these fascist forces," Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

Virtually challenging Mr. Gandhi, a PCC statement said the party was set to organise a "massive protest demonstration" on Wednesday.

In the Rajya Sabha, multiple notices to discuss the

## RAIL VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED (A Govt. of India Enterprise)

**INVITATION FOR BIDS**  
Tender Notice No.CPML/RVNL/WAT/SBP-TIG/ROB No.79A/HKG-GBO/2018/01/40/DL 16-12-2018  
Name of the work: Execution of Superstructure with RDOS's composite Bow-string Girder of 72.00 m length with approach roads of ROB No.79A at Km.571/7-8 between HKG-GBO stations of SBP division of East Coast Railway in connection with SBP-TIG doubling project.

The above tender opening date has been postponed from 12-02-2019 to 12-03-2019. For further details please visit RVNL website: www.rvnl.org.in and ePROCUREMENT portal: eprocurement.gov.in

Address: The Chief Project Manager/I, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, Right wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Jeevan Sudamli LIC building, Thikkana Road, VISAKHAPATNAM-530004 (AP). Telephone No. (0891)- 2520029 Tele/Fax No. (0891)- 2520029

Sd/- DIRECTOR

## AP Drinking Water Supply Corporation (Govt. of AP Undertaking)

Bids are invited from reputed agencies with the enclosed tender ID's for "RFP for Work of Third Party Quality and Quantity monitoring of Construction of Drinking Water Supply Projects in Districts of Chittoor (1st Call), Srikakulam (1st call) and SPSR Nellore (2nd Call) districts". Interested Bidders may visit e-procurement portal of AP Government (PRED Department). For further details contact: 9490720175. Email: dppadwsc@apdwsc.com. Download of bids starts from: 04-02-2019 DIPR 700PPCL, Dt.04/02/2019 Sd/- MD, APDWSC

## RAIL WHEEL FACTORY MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DIVISION

YELAHANKA, BENGALURU - 560 064, Website: www.indianrailways.gov.in  
**TENDER NOTICE No. RWF/S/OC-0\_2018-19 Dated: 01.02.2019**

E-TENDER: On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager/RWF invites electronic tender for the following work online through the website http://www.resips.gov.in experienced/reputed contractors in the field.

Tender No.	RWF_S_OC_2018-19
Due Date & Time	27.02.2019 Tender closing at 14.15 hrs.
Scope of Work	Oxy-Cutting of Scrap Rails of all sorts and sizes provided by RWF/YFNK into lengths of not more than 12 inches at contractor's premises and returning the processed/cut rails
Quantity	7000 Metric Tonnes
Estt. Tender value	Rs.1,55,75,000/-
Cost of Tender Document	Rs.5,250/-
EMD amount	Rs.2,27,880/-
Contract Period	12 (Twelve) months from the date of commencement of work

PRINCIPAL CHIEF MATERIALS MANAGER

## CPWD

## NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

The Executive Engineer (E), Bangalore Central Electrical Division-I, CPWD, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, C Wing Kendriya Sadan, Koramangala, Bangalore-34, (Tel: 080-25534963), on behalf of The President of India invites online percentage rate bid in Two bid system from the specialized agencies / CPWD enlisted contractors in composite category of appropriate class for the following work.

**1. NIT No. 115/EE(E)/BCED-1/SE(E)/2018-19 Name of Work:** SITC of Precision AC, VRF AC and Access Control System for Hi-Tech Laboratory building at RRSL, Jakkur, Bangalore. **Estimated Cost : Rs. 1,51,39,161/- Earnest Money : Rs. 3,02,738/- Time allowed : 03 (Three) Months.**

Last date and time of submission of above bids 13.02.2019 upto 15:00 Hrs.

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website www.tenderwizard.com/CPWD or www.eprocure.gov.in

## BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LTD.

## (Wholly Owned Unit of Karnataka Electricity Board)

## (CIN-U04010KA2002SCGC030438)

## BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement Portal)

BESCOM invites tender through e-procurement for the following. Enquiry No. & Date : BESCOM/DGM/SC/E&V/BC-53/2018-19/ENQ-06 dated: 02.02.2019. Work Description: "Providing 22 Nos. of Electric Vehicles on Monthly Rental Basis to BESCOM". Issue of Bid Documents: From 15.02.2019 @ 17:00 hrs. Last Date for Bid Submission: Upto 16.03.2019 @ 17:00 hrs. Last Date for Submission of Queries through e-portal: Upto 27.02.2019 before 17:00 hrs. Pre- bid meeting: On 01.03.2019 @ 11:00 hrs at Board Room, Corporate Office, BESCOM, Bangalore. Contact No: 080-22204344.

The Bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the e-procurement portal from the Web site https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. Aspiring bidders need to register on e-procurement portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the office of the Deputy General Manager(Ele), SG & EV, 2<sup>nd</sup> Block, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Corporate Office, BESCOM, Bangalore. Contact No: 080-22204344.

Sd/-

For electricity related complaints Call : 19121  
Download BESCOM Mithra mobile app

The Deputy General Manager(Ele), SG & EV, BESCOM.

## E-TENDER NOTICE

## MAHATRANSO

## MAHATRANSO

## Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

## MTCL SRM

## SRM</

# 11 EU nations back Guaido as President

Move comes after an ultimatum given to President Nicolas Maduro to call fresh elections expired

REUTERS  
BRUSSELS/MADRID

Eleven European nations joined the U.S. in recognising opposition leader Juan Guaido as Venezuela's interim President on Monday, heightening a global showdown over Nicolas Maduro's socialist rule.

The EU members' coordinated move followed the expiry of an ultimatum for Mr. Maduro to call a new election and aligned them with Washington against Russia and China.

The sitting Venezuelan leader has defied European heads of state and called them sycophants for following President Donald Trump.

Mr. Guaido, who leads the National Assembly, declared himself caretaker leader last month in a move that has fed into a global geopolitical divide and brought Venezuelans onto the streets. Mr. Trump quickly recognised him, but Europe had been hesitant.

"From today, we will spare no effort in helping all Venezuelans achieve freedom, prosperity and harmony," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said, recognising Mr. Guaido.

Another 10 EU nations followed suit: Austria, Britain, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Poland, Portugal, and Sweden.

In response, Caracas said it would revise its relations with Europe, while Mr. Ma-

## Who backs whom in Venezuela

**Military**  
Maduro, through his allies, controls most of Venezuela's main state institutions – most importantly the military

**China**  
Venezuela's biggest creditor, with some \$20 billion owed, says it opposes "external interference"

■ Senior officers have reaffirmed support for him, though there have been signs of wavering

■ A senior Air Force General recognised Guaido as President on Saturday

Nicolas Maduro

**Russia**  
Venezuela's number two creditor also backs it militarily

■ In December, Moscow sent two bombers and some 100 officers to Caracas for joint exercises

**Other allies** Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Mexico, North Korea, Turkey, Uruguay and Greece back Maduro as leader



Inside the country, opposition leader Juan Guaido is trying to lure military commanders to switch their allegiance to him

Source: AFP

duro singled out "cowardly" Spain. "If one day, there is a coup, if one day there is a gringo military intervention, your hands will be stained with blood, Mr. Pedro Sanchez," he said in a speech.

Mr. Maduro, 56, a former union leader, bus driver and Foreign Minister, replaced former President Hugo Chavez in 2013 after his death from cancer. But he has presided over an economic collapse and exodus of 3 million Venezuelans.

He accuses Washington of waging "economic war" on

Venezuela and harbouring coup pretensions aimed at gaining control over its oil. Venezuela's oil reserves are the largest in the world but production has plunged under Mr. Maduro.

**Incompetent policies**  
Critics say incompetent policies and corruption have impoverished the once-wealthy nation while dissent has been brutally crushed. "The oppression of the illegitimate, kleptocratic Maduro regime must end," said British Foreign Secretary Jeremy

World powers are taking sides in Venezuela's power struggle, which has pitted some Western nations against Russia and China

**U.S.**  
President Donald Trump quickly recognised Guaido when he proclaimed himself acting President

**Regional powers**  
Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil and Colombia followed, as did the head of the Organization of American States, Uruguayan Luis Almagro

**Legislature**  
Maduro's opponents control the National Assembly



■ SUPPORTING MADURO  
■ SUPPORTING GUAIIDO  
■ CALLING FOR DIALOGUE

**European powers** Austria, Britain, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden recognise Guaido on Monday

**Legislature**  
Maduro's opponents control the National Assembly

**Legislature**  
Maduro's opponents control the National Assembly

Source: AFP

Hunt. Moscow and Beijing, which have poured billions of dollars of investment and loans into Venezuela, are supporting Mr. Maduro and warning of the dangers of foreign intervention.

"Imposing some kind of decisions or trying to legitimise an attempt to usurp power is both direct and indirect interference," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Mr. Maduro won re-election last year, but critics say the vote was a sham. Two opposition rivals with a good

chance of winning were barred, while food handouts to hungry Venezuelans were linked with political support.

Italy, whose coalition government is divided over Venezuela, dissented from other major European powers and blocked a joint statement, saying that individual nations had the prerogative to recognise Mr. Guaido. Italy's 5-Star Movement says it cannot recognise self-appointed leaders.

Ireland shared that reluctance and declined to recognise Mr. Guaido specifically.

in northeast England was "very disappointing," he said, adding however that the company had confirmed no jobs would be lost as a result.

Business Secretary Greg Clark was also due to make a statement to parliament on Nissan as Brexit supporters and opponents fiercely debated whether the decision

was motivated by Britain's impending withdrawal from the EU.

Britain is on course to crash out of the bloc on March 29 after MPs last month voted massively against a divorce deal struck between May and EU leaders in December.

Mr. Clark, himself, told the *Financial Times* that Nis-

sanne told him their decision was a "warning sign" of the damage that a no-deal Brexit could have on Britain's car sector.

Ms. May is now seeking to renegotiate her deal, particularly its contentious "backstop" provision to keep the Irish border free-flowing, in a bid to secure parliament's support.

Glaciers in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region are a critical water source for some 250 million people in the mountains as well as to 1.65 billion others in the river valleys below, the report said.

Monday. And even if the "most ambitious" Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C is achieved, one-third of the glaciers would go, according to the Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment.

Glaciers in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region are a critical water source for some 250 million people in the mountains as well as to 1.65 billion others in the river valleys below, the report said.

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## MARKET WATCH

	04-02-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	36,583	-0.31
US Dollar	71.80	-0.77
Gold	34,450	1.00
Brent oil	61.86	-0.41

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	335.65	-2.80
Asian Paints	1446.35	-10.85
Axis Bank	720.50	3.25
Bajaj Auto	2642.50	-39.75
Bajaj Finserv	6009.20	-87.75
Bajaj Finance	2594.45	-33.95
Bharti Airtel	306.55	-5.30
BPCL	338.55	-2.45
Cipla	509.60	-11.75
Coal India	222.10	-1.10
Dr Reddys Lab	2735.20	-56.05
Eicher Motors	2018.30	464.90
GAIL (India)	329.75	-3.75
Grasim Ind	706.75	-12.20
HCL Tech	1044.80	0.95
HDFC	1978.50	17.25
HDFC Bank	2104.90	14.45
Hero MotoCorp	2780.15	-27.10
Hindalco	204.20	-7.20
HPCL	226.50	-7.50
Hind Unilever	1802.60	3.30
Indiabulls HFL	650.75	-27.90
ICICI Bank	354.55	-0.10
IndusInd Bank	1504.65	-10.50
Bharti Infratech	295.05	-1.15
Infosys	755.90	-1.15
Indian Oil Corp	135.90	-1.30
ITC	277.10	-3.75
JSW Steel	273.50	-1.45
Kotak Bank	1272.20	16.50
L&T	1307.40	-17.20
M&M	674.45	-13.95
Maurti Suzuki	6988.20	25.90
NTPC	137.25	-2.90
ONGC	146.25	4.45
PowerGrid Corp	184.60	-5.60
Reliance Ind	1290.90	40.95
State Bank	283.95	-0.45
Sun Pharma	414.80	-8.45
Tata Motors	180.25	-1.40
Tata Steel	476.05	1.35
TCI	2050.25	20.30
Tech Mahindra	749.15	2.55
Titan	1025.75	34.20
UltraTech Cement	3447.50	-36.15
UPL	770.90	-8.95
Vedanta	161.35	-0.80
Wipro	371.25	-0.30
YES Bank	179.80	-5.80
Zee Entertainment	347.75	-6.65

## EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on February 04		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.60	71.92
Euro	82.00	82.36
British Pound	93.57	93.99
Japanese Yen (100)	65.16	65.45
Chinese Yuan	10.62	10.67
Swiss Franc	71.81	72.13
Singapore Dollar	52.93	53.17
Canadian Dollar	54.64	54.89
Malaysian Ringgit	17.48	17.58

Source: Indian Bank

## BULLION RATES CHENNAI

February 04 rates in rupees per gramme
Retail Silver (1g)..... 43.70 (43.9)
22 ct gold (1g)..... 3081 (3163)

## Centre may relax angel tax norms for start-ups, sets up panel

Agrees to raise exemption threshold to ₹25 crore; networth, I-T returns ceiling to be lowered for investors; start-up's definition to be amended

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN  
NEW DELHI

The government on Monday decided to set up a five-member working committee to look into the angel tax issue and come up with guidelines in one week. It also agreed to implement some key changes requested by start-ups regarding the issue.

The 'angel tax', as it is commonly called, is a tax on the excess capital raised by an unlisted company through the issue of shares over and above the fair market value of those shares. This excess capital is treated as income and taxed accordingly.

This tax most commonly affects start-ups and the angel investors who back them. The decisions were taken during a meeting between officials of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), including its Secretary Ramesh Abhishek, officials of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), including Member Akhilesh Ranjan and Joint Secretary Rajesh Bhoot, and representatives of the start-up community.

According to a January 16 notification, start-ups whose aggregate amount of paid-up share capital and share premium after the proposed issue of share does not exceed ₹10 crore are eligible for exemption from the tax.

The *Hindu* has learnt that during the meeting, officials representing the government agreed to raise this limit to ₹25 crore. They also agreed to amend the definition of a start-up to include companies that have been in



Fact check: The Centre is concerned about differentiating genuine start-ups from shell companies. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

operation for up to 10 years rather than the previous limit of seven years. On the investor side, the notification had said that the angel investor should have filed income

tax returns of at least ₹50 lakh for the year preceding the year in which the investment was made and have a net worth of ₹2 crore. This, according to a source who at

the meeting they agreed to three of our requests, which had to do with the size of the start-up, the duration of its operation, and the income of the angel investor," the company official added.

These agreements could still result in an 'inspector-raj', where start-ups would have to apply to the DPIIT and the CBDT each time they find an investor, Sachin Taparia, founder and chairman of LocalCircles said.

The government, for its part, was concerned about how to differentiate genuine start-ups from companies set up for money-laundering purposes. "Money-laundering companies will fail the test," Mr. Taparia, who was also at the meeting, said. "The government should

ask for documents from each of the 15,000-16,000 start-ups registered with it, including two years' monthly expenses, employee details, and income details. This will immediately weed out the money-laundering companies as they will not be able to provide these details."

In addition, the start-ups made the point that this database of genuine companies could be shared with the CBDT, thereby allowing it to exempt these companies from angel tax scrutiny in the first stage itself.

"The panel formed is to look into how to go ahead with this," Mr. Taparia added. "The CBDT was very open to this idea. They have decided to issue a fresh notification with all the rule changes in a week."

## April-Dec. fiscal deficit at 112.4% of budget target

Pressure visible more on revenue side than on expenditure, says Ind-Ra's Pant

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The fiscal deficit for the period April-December 2018 has touched 112.4% of the budget target of ₹6.24 lakh crore for the financial year 2018-19, data from the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) showed.

**Marginally better**  
In absolute figures, the fiscal deficit was at ₹7.01 lakh crore during April-December of this financial year. The situation, however, is marginally better than last year, where the fiscal deficit at the end of December 2017 was 113.6% of that year's budget estimate.

It should be noted, though, that the fiscal deficit came in at 3.5% for 2017-18 against a target of 3.2%. In the Interim Budget, the government said it would be



The Centre, in its interim Budget, said it would miss its fiscal deficit target of 3.3% for this year too. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

missing its fiscal deficit target of 3.3% for this year as well. The fiscal deficit is expected to come in at 3.4%.

Fiscal deficit in the first nine months of FY19 came in at 112.4% of FY19 (BE) and 110.6% of FY19 (RE)," Devendra Kumar Pant, chief economist at India Ratings and

Research, said. "The pressure is more visible on the revenue side rather than on the expenditure side."

According to Mr. Pant, in order to meet the revised target for FY19, monthly revenue receipts in the last three months of the financial year would have to be 1.8 times

the average monthly collections in the first nine months, which, he said, appeared difficult to achieve.

The CGA data shows that the government's revenue receipts stood at ₹10.84 lakh crore in the April-December period, which works out to 62.8% of the ₹17.25 lakh crore budgeted for the year.

However, the total amount expected for the year was revised upwards recently to ₹17.29 trillion, which means the April-Dec. collections make up a marginally lower 62.7% of the revised figure.

On the expenditure side, data shows that the total expenditure of the government at the end of December stood at ₹18.32 lakh crore,

which is 75% of the budget estimate and 74.5% of the revised figure.

## NCLAT bars RCom from selling any asset sans prior approval

Telco filed an appeal for withdrawing plea against Ericsson

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) had said that Reliance Communications (RCom) or any third party cannot sell, transfer or alienate any of its assets (movable and immovable) without the appellate tribunal's or the Supreme Court's permission.

The directive came after RCom on Monday moved the NCLAT for withdrawal of its appeal against an NCLT order, directing the firm to pay ₹550 crore to Ericsson, to pursue the resolution plan through the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) process.

Accepting RCom's application for withdrawal of the NCLAT's or Supreme Court's

said appeal, the NCLAT directed Ericsson to file its reply in the matter by February 8 and listed the matter for hearing for February 12.

NCLAT also prohibited RCom's guarantors and any third party from invoking any guarantee, mortgage or any other instrument without the NCLAT's or Supreme Court's permission.

In a separate development, Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal upheld RCom's petition against the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), challenging DoT's decision to impose one-time spectrum charge on its contracted CDMA and GSM spectrum resources.

shares fall

RCom shares fell by almost 54% on Monday morning as the firm planned to file for insolvency under the IBC, being unable to sell its assets to pare debt. The company, with an outstanding debt of ₹42,000 crore, announced its intention to file for bankruptcy in the NCLT.

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## DHFL looks to rope in a strategic partner

To broad-base professional ownership to boost investor confidence: Wadhawan



Kapil Wadhawan

parallel discussions to achieve this over the next 90 days. "This is not an afterthought but something we started post September 21, 2018," he said.

On September 21, the DHFL stock tanked 42% following the crisis at IL&FS, which impacted many other NBFC stocks.

**Recent allegations**  
The stock came under further pressure last week, when a portal alleged that the company had siphoned off ₹31,000 crore of public money. DHFL, however, refuted the allegations.

Mr. Wadhawan said he was 'surprised and shocked' with the recent rating downgrade but clarified that the company had enough liquidity to service its debt.

"We intend taking this further to pave way for onboarding a strategic partner and we have already started

negotiations to contain the slippages which were ₹2,211 crore – the lowest in the last seven quarters. Recovery from NPAs improved to ₹3,440 crore during the quarter compared with ₹537 crore.

Last month, Life Insurance Corporation of India became the promoter of the bank after it completed the acquisition of 51% stake held by the government.

Provision towards non-performing assets was ₹5,075 crore during the quarter compared with ₹3,637 crore.

While gross non-performing assets (NPA) ratio increased to 29.67% from 24.72% in the year-earlier period, it declined sequentially from 31.78%.

The new petition before the NCLT was moved on February 1 by the former managing director of Essar Steel Dilip Oommen, along with its project director, Rajiv Kumar Bhatnagar, as well as Mr. Ruia.

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The new petition before the NCLT was moved

## IN BRIEF



## Renault India launches new Kwid at ₹2.67 lakh

NEW DELHI

French auto major Renault launched a new range of its entry-level small car Kwid equipped with enhanced safety features, in India, in the price bracket of ₹2.67-4.63 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). The range will be available in both 0.8 litre and 1 litre petrol engines in manual and automated transmission options, Renault India said. The car complies with advanced safety regulations. PTI

## State-run MSTC files IPO papers with SEBI

NEW DELHI

State-run MSTC has filed draft papers with capital markets regulator SEBI to float an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO will see sale of 17,600,000 shares, amounting to 25% stake through the offer for sale (OFS) route by the government, the draft prospectus showed.

Currently, the government holds 89.85% stake in MSTC. The divestment would bring down government holding to 64.85%. PTI

## Raw material costs hit Srikanthasthi Pipes' profit

CHENNAI

Srikanthasthi Pipes Ltd., has posted a 21.07% dip in its standalone net profit for the third quarter ended December 2018 to ₹31.15 crore against ₹39.47 crore in the year-earlier period on account of higher cost of raw materials. The company posted a total income of ₹409.80 crore against ₹424.63 crore. On Thursday, the board appointed R.K. Khanna, independent director, as chairman with effect from January 31.

# Merchandise exports may touch new high

Poised to race past the \$314-billion mark of 2013-14 in the current fiscal, says Commerce Secretary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

India's merchandise exports in the current fiscal are poised to race past the \$314-billion mark of 2013-14 that remains the best performance thus far. Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan said here on Monday.

"We will comfortably go beyond that... achieve a new peak," he said, seeking to underscore the challenges amid which the performance is being achieved in 2018-19. "It is a very challenging global environment where petroleum prices are coming down... 15% of the exports are petroleum products," the senior official explained.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of IndiaSoft 2019 international IT exhibition and conference, a



Aboard for abroad: Exports touched \$275.78 billion in 2016-17 and \$303.52 billion last fiscal. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

two-day event of the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC), Mr. Wadhawan said merchandise exports, of which electronics hardware is a component, were growing consistently in

the last three years. From \$314.4 billion in 2013-14, merchandise exports declined to \$310.4 billion and \$262.3 billion in 2014-15 and 2015-16, respectively. The exports picked up in the next two years, touching \$275.78 bil-

lion in 2016-17 and \$303.52 billion last fiscal.

On factors behind the growth this fiscal and key sectors, the Commerce Secretary counted pharmaceuticals, engineering products, petroleum, gems and jewellery, leather and textiles among the sectors. "India is doing better because [a] lot of efforts have been put into it, from the policy side, regulatory side, in terms of [improving] ease of doing business, simplification of procedures, making credit available at affordable rates and interventional schemes," he added.

With regard to current account deficit, he said it was "well under control, thanks to the fact that exports are growing. Petroleum prices have also stabilised to some

extent and are falling in recent months... the economy is in good shape."

## New e-com rules

To a query on the new rules for e-commerce firms, he said it was a set of clarifications of the long-standing policy. "We have market based model... which means the entity that provides marketplace for e-commerce should not influence the transaction on the platform, in terms of influencing pricing. That's a longstanding policy... all that DIPP has done is clarified that, so there is nothing new."

This is to ensure that the competition will be fair. "It is not a matter of being unwelcome to anyone... it is just laying down of rules," he said.

# IIFL sells CV finance business to IndoStar

Acquisition includes AUM of ₹3,949 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

India Infoline Finance, a subsidiary of IIFL Holdings, has signed a binding agreement with IndoStar Capital Finance, a non-banking finance company (NBFC), to sell its commercial vehicle (CV) finance business.

The acquisition includes the entire CV finance assets under management (AUM) of ₹3,949 crore as on December 31, 2018, comprising ₹2,450 crore loan portfolio and ₹1,499 crore securitisation/assignment portfolio, according to a joint statement issued by IIFL and IndoStar.

The deal will enhance the AUM of IndoStar from ₹7,748 crore as on December 31 to ₹11,697 crore, with the share

of retail AUM pegged at 62% or ₹7,217 crore. The number of branches of the NBFC would also increase to 320 across 18 States servicing 75,000 customers.

## Staff strength

Incidentally, IndoStar will also acquire a total of 1,337 employees spread across 161 branches in 18 States as part of the deal, the statement said. With this, the CV finance business of IndoStar will see the staff strength increase to 2,337. Meanwhile, IIFL Finance will continue to focus on its core business of affordable home loans, small business loans, gold loans and microfinance while looking for growth in these segments through organic and inorganic means.

## NCLAT upholds lenders' decision to approve JSW's bid for BPSL

Dismisses Tata Steel plea for Bhushan Power & Steel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) on Monday dismissed Tata Steel's plea and upheld lenders' decision to approve resolution plan of JSW Steel for the debt-ridden Bhushan Power & Steel Ltd. (BPSL).

A two-member Bench, headed by Justice S.J. Mukhopadhyaya, said that the Committee of Creditors' (CoC) decision was well within its rights to negotiate better terms with resolution applicants.

Tata Steel had challenged an NCLT order that had allowed the CoC of Bhushan Power and Steel to consider the resolution plan submitted by Liberty House

Group. Tata Steel had contended that the NCLT cannot provide numerous opportunities at the belated stage.

Dismissing Tata Steel's appeal, the NCLAT also directed the resolution professional of Bhushan Power and Steel to "immediately place the approved Resolution Plan before the Adjudicating Authority (NCLT) for its order."

"The case is remitted to the Adjudicating Authority (NCLT), Principal Bench, New Delhi, for passing appropriate order under Section 31," the NCLAT said.

The tribunal also observed that 97.12% of the lenders had cast vote in favour of JSW Steel and it noted that

the 'Resolution Plan' submitted by JSW Steel has been approved with 100% voting shares.

Tata Steel, JSW Steel, and Liberty House had submitted bids for Bhushan Power and Steel, which owes about ₹45,000 crore to its lenders.

The NCLAT also directed the NCLT to ensure that all the stakeholders, particularly the 'Operational Creditors,' are treated similarly while considering the approved 'Resolution Plan' of JSW Steel. "It should ensure that no discrimination is being made between the financial creditors or the operational creditors as held by this Appellate Tribunal," the NCLAT said.

## Swiggy acquires AI start-up Kint.io

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Online food ordering and delivery firm Swiggy said it had acquired Bengaluru-based Artificial Intelligence (AI) start-up Kint.io. As part of this acquisition, the founding-members of Kint.io – Pavithra Solai Jawahar and Jagannathan Veeraraghavan – will join the company's team, Swiggy said.

Swiggy, however, did not disclose the financial details of the deal.

Acquiring refers to buying out a company for the skills and expertise of its staff, rather than products or services. The team at Kint.io will join the firm to boost its computer vision technology and superior consumer experience.

## LVB loss zooms on bad loans

Fresh slippages worth ₹385 crore alone relate to corporates



In view of the constraint related to raising fresh capital, we reported a net loss of ₹373.49 crore, said P. Mukherjee, managing director and chief executive officer, Lakshmi Vilas Bank.

Mentioning that LVB had commissioned an independent study of asset book for residual stress and value at risk, he said: "The worst is over."

Fresh slippages during the next five foreseeable quarters is ₹600 crore cumulative (January to March 2020). We should be able to recover ₹400 crore to ₹500 crore in the fourth quarter."

The bank would close down loss-making branches and ATMs, Mr. Mukherjee added.

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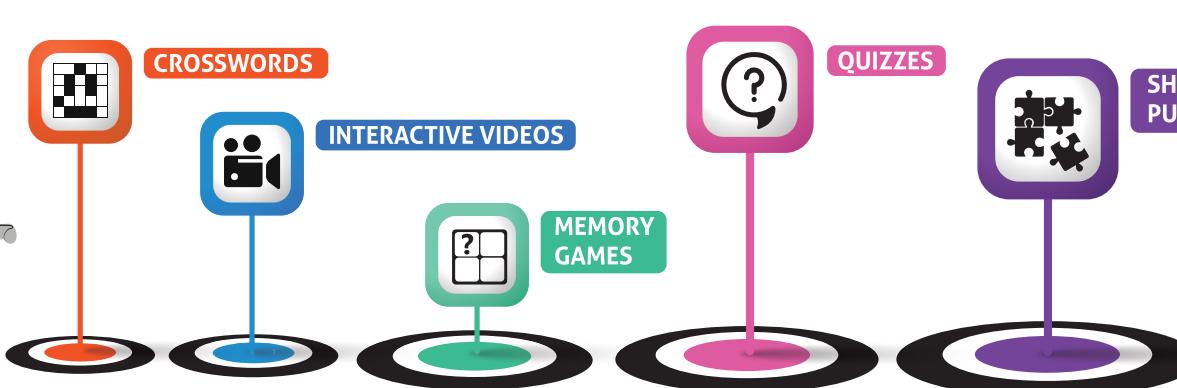
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## TV PICKS

**NBA:** Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m.  
**Ranji Trophy final:** Star Sports 2 & HD, 9.20 a.m.  
**Pro Volleyball League:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 7 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



WI captain Holder banned for slow over-rate

DUBAI West Indies captain Jason Holder has been suspended for the third and final Test against England due to his team's slow over-rate in Antigua last week, the ICC announced on Monday. The ICC said in a statement the West Indies was two overs short of its target for the match. Holder was previously found guilty of a slow over-rate during his team's third Test defeat by Sri Lanka last June. AFP



Injured Guttill ruled out of T20 series

WELLINGTON Senior New Zealand opener Martin Guttill has been ruled out of the upcoming three-match T20I series against India after failing to recover from a back injury. The squad also includes rookie all-rounder Daryl Mitchell (in pic.), who is the son of former All Blacks coach John Mitchell. The three-match series begins here on February 6, followed by games at Auckland (Feb. 8) and Hamilton (Feb. 10). **The squad:** Kane Williamson (Capt.), Doug Bracewell, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Scott Kuggeleijn, Daryl Mitchell, Colin Munro, Jimmy Neesham, Mitchell Santner, Tim Seifert, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee and Ross Taylor. PTI

## Navjot completes 150 hockey internationals

MURCIA Indian women's hockey team midfielder Navjot Kaur has reached the milestone of having played 150 international matches. The Kurukshetra-born player achieved the feat on Sunday against Ireland during India's tour of Spain. Kaur made her international debut in 2012 against New Zealand in Napier. ANI



Irving helps Celtics snap Thunder winning streak

NEW YORK Toronto Raptors ripped Los Angeles Clippers 121-103 behind 18 points from Kawhi Leonard plus 16 points and 12 rebounds from Congo-born Spaniard Serge Ibaka. Canada's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, a 20-year-old guard playing in his homeland, led Clippers with 19 points. **The results:** Memphis Grizzlies 96 bt New York Knicks 84; Boston Celtics 134 bt Oklahoma City Thunder 129; Toronto Raptors 121 bt Los Angeles Clippers 103. AFP

## FC Goa fails to break through Dynamos

NEW DELHI Delhi Dynamos and FC Goa were involved in a goalless draw in a closely contested Indian Super League (ISL) match at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Monday. Goa did ramp up the pressure throughout the game but just could not score a goal. With the draw, Goa increased its tally to 25 points from 14 matches and remained third in the standings. Dynamos were rooted to the eighth spot with 11 points from 14 games. The Delhi side had no shots on target during the entire contest. **The result:** Delhi Dynamos 0 drew with FC Goa 0. PTI



Firmly ensconced: Virat Kohli has not only been tough to dislodge from the top of the batsmen's rankings but also engineered India's rise in the team list. AP

## India rises to No. 2

Kohli, Bumrah remain on top in ODIs; Dhoni moves up

## ICC RANKINGS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DUBAI

The Indian cricket team rose a rung to second in the International Cricket Council (ICC) One-Day International rankings, released on Monday. Captain Virat Kohli and pacer Jasprit Bumrah continued to top the charts for batsmen and bowlers.

India has accumulated 122 points on the back of series wins over Australia and New Zealand and is placed behind England (126) in the fresh list, the ICC said in a statement.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni also moved up owing to a strong showing against Australia last month, which fetched him the Player-of-the-Series award.

Dhoni has moved up three places to 17th in the batting list for a run that included three consecutive half-centuries against Australia.

India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (one place to fifth) and fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar (six places to 17th) are among others to move up in the latest rankings.

Kedar Jadhav has also advanced eight places to 35th. The latest update also

takes into account India's preceding three-match series against Australia.

In team rankings, New Zealand has slipped behind South Africa to fourth place. Nepal now has a full ranking after crossing the threshold of eight matches and is tied with the UAE at 15 points.

## Shining stars

The top five batsmen and bowlers from the five-match ODI series between India and New Zealand

## Batsmen

	Inn	Runs	HS	Ave	SR	50s
Rayudu	5	190	90	63.33	82.25	1
Dhawan	5	188	75*	47.00	81.73	2
Taylor	5	177	93	44.25	88.05	1
Rohit	5	169	87	33.80	71.61	2
Williamson	5	162	64	32.40	70.12	1

## Bowlers

	Inn	Overs	Wkts	BB	Eco	Ave
Boult	5	45.5	12	5/21	3.92	15.00
Shami	4	29.0	9	3/19	4.75	15.33
Chahal	5	41.0	9	3/41	5.34	24.33
Kuldeep	4	29.0	8	4/39	4.31	15.62
Bhuvneshwar	5	34.1	7	2/25	5.00	24.42

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# Ishan Kishan stars in BP XI's big win

Set an improbable target, England Lions labour to 82 for two

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
The intent and eagerness of the Board President's XI players to impress was the cornerstone of a fine 152-run win over England Lions in the two-day warm up match at the KCA-St. Xavier's College ground here on Monday.

Captain Ishan Kishan (55 not out) led a slew of impressive batting performances on the final day that set England Lions an improbable target of 235 to chase in 30 overs.

The visitors' response was muted as it didn't make any attempt to chase down the target.

The Lions batsmen played in a traditional Test match style rather than the T20 style, which was required to force a win, and in the end the side laboured to 82 for two off 30 overs.

The only positive for Lions in the second innings was captain Sam Billings' confident knock of 36 not out. He looked comfortable and played a few attractive strokes during his stay in the middle.

Ishan's love affair with the ground, which launched him on to the big league, continued as he belted a quick-fire half century off 55 balls studded with four sixes and five fours.



**Sweeping success:** Ishan Kishan's assault on the England Lions spinners took BPXI to a big total. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The BPXI innings was given impetus by Ishan's late assault on the England spinners as it finished with 246 for six off 60 overs.

In the morning, Lions chose to test their bowling resources giving extended spells to medium pacers.

The quicker bowlers struck to the virtues of nagging accuracy which made scoring difficult.

Jamie Overton, most impressive of the pacers, drew first blood when he had opener Dhruv Shorey ballooning a return catch.

However, Akshath Reddy (49) and Ricky Bhui (51 retired) survived a torrid testing phase and scored freely when the spinners came on.

The duo added 81 runs for the second wicket until Akshath holed out to the deep. Bhui completed his de-

served half-century before retiring.

**The scores:** England Lions 145 for six & 82 for two in 30 overs (Sam Billings 36 not out) lost to Board President's XI 134 for five & 246 for six in 60 overs (Ishan Kishan 55 not out, Ricky Bhui 51 rtd, Akshath Reddy 49).

## Productive day for the Indians

Khade, Vijay Sundar and Nagal win first round matches

### CHALLENGER

S. DIPAK RAGAV

CHENNAI

It was a fairly productive opening day for the Indians in the ATP Chennai Open Challenger at the SDAT Nungambakkam Tennis Stadium here on Monday.

In their first round matches, Arjun Khade and Sumit Nagal breezed through, while Vijay Sundar Prashanth won in three sets.

In one of the first matches of the day on the outside court, Khade broke Ivan Nedelko in the first game of the match but Nedelko broke back to make it 2-2.

However, the 25-year-old kept persisting and found the crucial break in the ninth game to go up 5-4.

### Brilliant winner

He produced a brilliant forehand winner at 30-30 to get to break point and then a forehand unforced error by Nedelko gave him the break. Khade easily served out the set and broke the Russian thrice in the second to seal the match 6-4, 6-1.

On the Centre court, Vijay Sundar, who had not won a single ATP point in the last 12 months, came out of the blocks attacking Carlos Boluda-Purkiss of Spain in the second game and dominated

with another break at 5-2 to take the set.

The 32-year-old Indian was not afraid to go up to the net and was brilliant with his drops and volleys.

In the second, the inverse happened and Vijay was broken in the second game before being broken once again at 2-5.

Even though he lost the set, Vijay kept up the pressure on the Spaniard and had many break points at 0-2 and 1-3 though he couldn't convert any of it.

The Chennai lad then got his act together in the third set and broke in the fifth game to go 3-2 up. From there, the Spaniard went off the rails and Vijay sealed it



**Stretched:** Vijay Sundar Prashanth rallied after losing the second set to ward off the challenge from Carlos Boluda-Purkiss of Spain. ■ R. RAGU

6-2 to pocket a minimum of three ATP points.

**The results: Men: First round:** Daniel Altmaier (Ger) bt Daniel Nguyen (USA) 6-3, 6-2; Arjun Kadhe bt Ivan Nedelko (Rus) 6-4, 6-1; Blake Ellis (Aus) bt Siddharth Vishwakarma 6-2, 6-2; Andrea Pellegrino (Ita) bt Rubin Statham (Nz) 6-4, 6-4; Sebastian Fanselow (Ger) bt Tung-Lin Wu (Tpe) 6-4, 7-5; Antoine Escosseff (Fra) bt Evgenii Tiurnev (Rus) 6-2, 6-2; Renata Tokuda (Jpn) bt Abhinav Sanjeev 6-3, 6-4.

Vijay Sundar Prashanth bt Carlos Boluda-Purkiss (Esp) 6-2, 2-6, 6-2; Nam Hoang Ly (Vie) bt Bradley Mousley (Aus) 6-7(4), 6-1, 6-3.

Sumit Nagal bt David Perez Sanz (Esp) 6-3, 6-2; Andrew Harris (Aus) bt Aleksandar Vukic (Aus) 6-4, 6-4.

**Dipak Gupta and P. Gopi Chand:** ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Gopi foundation, Kotak Mahindra Bank ink MoU

To set up a new world class indoor facility

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

P. Gopi Chand's efforts to take coaching to the next level got a major fillip with Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. signing an MoU with the Pullela Gopi Chand Badminton Foundation on Monday towards setting up a new world class indoor facility and other related centres at a cost of ₹35 crores.

"We need to start the construction of the new facility, which will have six air-conditioned courts, a full-fledged sports science centre and a research and development and documentation wings, soon," said Gopi.

### Drift factor

"At the international level, the drift factor has been one of the major issues which often posed serious problems to the Indians. Once this facility is in place, we will ensure they are better equipped to handle it."

"With the setting up of this facility, I am sure coaches development centre here would usher in a new chapter in ensuring enough number of coaches," Gopi said.

The sports science centre will have top quality resi-



Dipak Gupta and P. Gopi Chand. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dents nutritionists, physiotherapists, strength and conditioning experts on board for the all-round development of the players.

### Identifying coaches

"We need to do lot of research in identifying prospective coaches to ensure that the gifted, young talent doesn't drift away for want of support," Gopi added.

"The whole project may be ready in about 15 months and should make a huge difference to the sport and to the players in particular," Gopi said.

Dipak Gupta, Joint MD, Kotak Mahindra, said the project is part of the Corporate Social Responsibility and that they would also support the coach certification and fellowship programme for coaches and players.

SSCB, Haryana, UP register wins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GWALIOR

Services Sports Control Board (SSCB), Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Canara Bank on Monday registered crucial wins in their respective pool matches to stay in contention for a quarterfinal berth at the ninth Hockey India Senior Men National Championship (Division A) here.

In a pool A match SSCB defeated Association of Indian Universities 5-1.

Haryana eked out a close 2-1 win over Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in pool B.

Uttar Pradesh defeated Punjab National Bank (PNB) 1-0 in pool C, while Canara Bank beat Namdhari XI 3-1 in pool D.

Defending champion Punjab continues to lead pool A with SSCB in second spot. In pool B, Petroleum Sports Control Board remained unbeaten to lead the chart.

Haryana stands a close second, while Railway Sports Promotion Board is atop pool C ahead of Uttar Pradesh Hockey.

In pool D, Air India Sports Promotion Board is at the top ahead of Karnataka.

Welcome mats out for Smith, Warner

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE CANBERRA

Skipper Tim Paine said on Monday he expects the banned Steve Smith and David Warner to play "a huge" role in this year's Ashes series against England, with Australia now in "a really good place."

After a torrid 12 months marred by the ball-tampering row and poor form without top stars, Australia ended the summer on a high by emphatically winning two Tests against Sri Lanka.

Australia claimed the first in Brisbane by an innings and 40 runs and the second in Canberra by 366 runs, following a tough home series defeat to top-ranked India.

### Return next month

Smith and Warner's bans for their role in trying to alter the ball in South Africa expire late next month and they are widely expected to quickly return to the national set-up.

"I think everyone to a degree has to earn their stripes. I think those two have got plenty of runs in the bank if you like," Paine said when asked if they could slot straight back in.



**The missing link:** David Warner & Steve Smith. ■ AFP

"I see us going to the Ashes and them having a huge part in us winning the series. That's how I see how important they are to this team."

Without the experienced pair, Australias struggled. But at least they broke a century drought stretching back to October in Canberra, with Joe Burns, Travis Head, Kurtis Patterson and Usman Khawaja all cashing in.

Their knocks put them in prime position for the Ashes against an England side reeling from an embarrassing capitulation in the West Indies.

## Divya reigns supreme

ABHEEK DASGUPTA CHENNAI

In a field comprising highly-qualified woman chess players from India and abroad, it was 13-year-old Indian prodigy Divya Deshmukh who had emerged victorious in the 2019 Velammal-AICF Woman Grandmaster round robin chess tournament held at the Abu Sarov Portico Hotel here on Monday.

The Maharashtra wunderkind scored eight points from eleven rounds to secure the title and prize money of ₹1.5 lakh. This is the first tournament win in the open category for the 2017 under-12 World champion.

The TN athletes were impressive in both track and field events in the under-16 as well as under-14 age group to top the medals tally with 144 points, while Punjab finished with 100.

Uttar Pradesh was third with 74 after intense competitions amongst 318 athletes from 13 States.

In the individual category, the top honours went to the three States which took the maximum medals (TN, Punjab and UP). High jumper Lalith Kumar of Tamil Nadu was declared the Most Valuable Player (MVP) in the boys' under-16 category while teammate and sprinter P. Shivani bagged the MVP award in the girls' under-16 section.

The day started with Divya trailing leader Michelle by half a point. While Divya beat Chandreyee Hajra in the final round, Michelle lost to Osmak, allowing Osmak to join Michelle at 7.5 points. With this result, the Ukrainian took the second spot as head-to-head results were used to break ties.

Rating this as a special victory, Divya has set high benchmarks for herself. "My aim is to become a Grandmaster as soon as possible. I will try to become an

International Master by 2019. My next tournament will be the Aeroflot Open in Russia and after that, I would be playing the HD Bank Open in Vietnam."

"Here I just wanted to play good chess and let the results follow," said the teenager who counts World No. 2 Fabiano Caruana and Viswanathan Anand among her idols.

**The results:** Round 11: P. Michelle Catherine 7.5 lost to Osmak Iulija (Ukr) 7.5; Divya Deshmukh 8 bt Chandreyee Hajra 2; Sapale Satoni 6.5 drew with Aakanksha Haga-wane 6.5; Munguntul Batkhuyag (Mgl) 7 bt Baby Olga (Ukr) 6; V. Varshini 3 lost to Uurintuya Uurtsaikhan (Mgl) 5.5; Franco Valencia Angela (Col) 3.5 drew with Nakhbayeva Guliskhan (Kaz) 5.

**Final standings:** 1. Divya Deshmukh 8.0 points; 2. Iulija Osmak (Ukr) 7.5; 3. P. Michelle Catherine (7.5); 4. Batkhuyagiin Mongontul (Mgl), 7; 5. Aakanksha Haga-wane (6.5); 6. Olga Baby (Ukr) 6; 7. Uurintuya Uurtsaikhan (Mgl, 5.5); 8. Guliskhan Nakhbayeva (Kaz), 5; 9. Saloni Sapale (4.5); 10. Angela Franco Valencia (Col, 3.5); 11. V. Varshini (3); 12. Chandreyee Hajra (2).

**Faith**

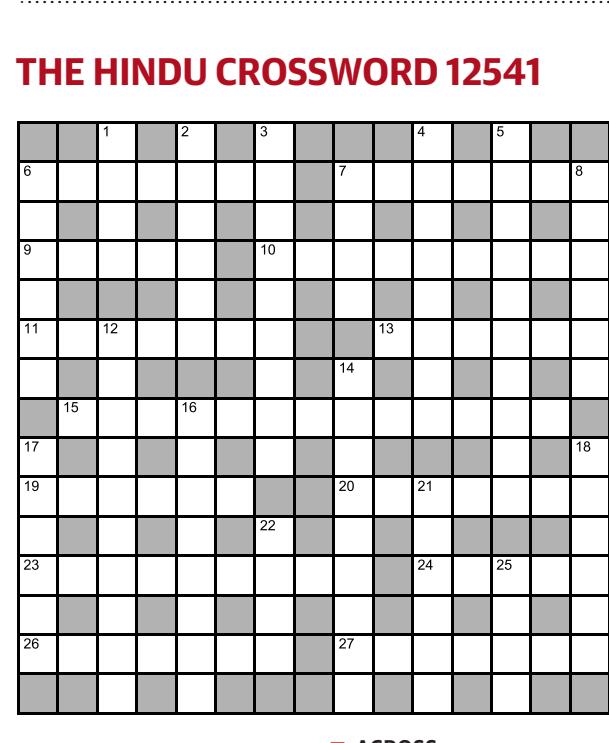
## Epic's stress on values

Epics such as the Ramayana continue to have an impact and influence till date in terms of instilling eternal truths and moral values, in addition to fostering the culture and tradition of the people and society, pointed out Sri Ram Mohan Doss in a discourse. For instance, it is clear that adharma can never succeed and dharma always reigns supreme and this is shown in the life of Ravana.

Ravana is hailed for his might and prowess as much as for his extraordinary proficiency in the scriptures and in fine arts. He holds sway over all the worlds, including the celestial regions. His physical appearance with ten heads and corresponding twenty arms, and the power of his rakshasa army are highlighted to suggest the extent and might of his superior strength. All this is pitted against Rama who is a human being with only the monkey brigade to wage the battle against the rakshasas. Ravana has also obtained many boons from Siva and Brahma by his austere penance. Had he used these boons for the welfare of the people, he would have been a great ruler. But he commits the sin of taking Sita from Rama and thus nullifies all his other merits. He is thus forced to accept defeat for his act of adharma.

The epic also shows that values such as observing family relationships, the greatness of friendship, the perception of marriage as an institution to be honoured at all costs, etc, form the society's moral worth. 'Wherever Rama is Ayodhya is,' has come to stay as a household adage to the extent that even the common unlettered folk understand its tremendous significance. Rama and Sita exemplify the togetherness of husband and wife. Sita quotes Rama's advice to Kausalya, to take care of Dasaratha which is her prime duty, to convince Rama to take her along with Him to the forest.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12541



### ACROSS

- 6 Picture of stable auctioned (7)
- 7 Today, masses took chief east to find minerals (7)
- 9 Pay attention to strengthening exercise (3,2)
- 10 A nobleman said country national will leave for training (9)
- 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

### DOWN

- 1 Goes around selling king's death notice (4)
- 2 Friend from Nepal writes about people on top (3,3)
- 3 Remove every single leather covering (9)
- 4 Bestiary is maintained by playboy (8)
- 5 Kid in charge of organizing mobs drank mainly alcohol and made loud noises (5,5)
- 6 Clothing to be worn by saint has red smudge which he needs to inspect (6)
- 7 A spirit plant (4)
- 8 Political group gets letter against church attendant (6)
- 12 Festival to fairy god is being conducted – do get back in (4,6)
- 14 Factory panics over function (9)
- 16

## IN BRIEF



Bindra, Gopichand in jury for Sports Honours

MUMBAI  
Abhinav Bindra, in pic., and Pullela Gopichand have been named jury members for the second Indian Sports Honours (ISH) to be presented here on February 16. Sardar Singh, Mahesh Bhupathi, P.T. Usha and Anjali Bhagwat are also part of the selection panel. The Indian Sports Honours is a joint initiative of R.P.-Sanjiv Goenka Group and the Virat Kohli Foundation. The nominations were shortlisted by Sports Journalist Federation of India. PTI

## Johnson closes gap on Rose and Koepka

PARIS  
Dustin Johnson closed the gap on World No. 1 Justin Rose and second-ranked Brooks Koepka on Monday after his win in Saudi Arabia. Johnson claimed the inaugural Saudi International title and boost his hopes of extending his career tally of 81 weeks at the top of the world rankings.

**The rankings:** 1. Justin Rose (Eng); 2. Brooks Koepka (USA); 3. Dustin Johnson (USA); 4. Justin Thomas (USA); 5. Bryson DeChambeau (USA). AFP



**Kiki Bertens wins St. Petersburg Trophy**  
ST. PETERSBURG  
Second-seeded Kiki Bertens of the Netherlands rolled to a 7-6(2), 6-4 win over Croatia's Donna Vekic to clinch the St. Petersburg Trophy, the eighth title of her career. Bertens also avenged her recent loss to Vekic in the second round of the Brisbane International tournament. IANS

## OBITUARY &amp; REMEMBRANCE

## BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

## BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE



80th birthday (05.02.2019)

Mrs. Kalavathi Balachandran

05.02.1939 - 26.08.2018

ALWAYS LIVING IN OUR HEARTS

Fondly remembered by her family members.

Remembering.kalavathi@yahoo.com

## DEATH

## SAD DEMISE



Usha Swaminathan

(April 19, 1960 to Feb 03, 2019)

Deeply Mourned by:

Husband: Swaminathan R

Daughter: Mukti S

All bereaved relatives.

Ph: 8838227993

## Sad Demise



Shri C H Subramanian

Sr. Partner, C.S.Hariharan &amp; Co., Chartered Accountants

23-01-1939 - 04-02-2019

Last Rituals: 05-02-2019

Deeply mourned by Family, Relatives &amp; Friends.

No. 48 (Old No.17), Balaji Nagar,

1st Street, Royapettah, Chennai-14.

98401 81312 / 98403 55894

Mr. S.Kothandapani (71), Retired Senior Packer, The Hindu, Chennai, passed away on 02-02-2019. Address: 29/13, Bunder Garden Street, Perambur, Chennai - 600011, Mobile: 903919991.

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## Uppal confident of a good show

India up against tough conditions in the Fed Cup

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

The task is hard and conditions intimidating, but India's Fed Cup team is preparing in right earnest in Astana, Kazakhstan, for the Asia Oceania group-1 women's tennis event.

## Acclimatising

"We have been training hard. The girls are getting used to the conditions and feeling sharper with each day," said Vishal Uppal, the team captain. It has been snowing in Kazakhstan and forecast is for a further spell of severe cold.

"For the next two days, the weather is going to be brutal. But, mostly we are indoors. So it is not that bad," the captain said.

Having reached on Friday, the team has been acclimatising itself to the indoor playing conditions. "The hosts have treated us well. We have two more days of practice left

and we will be ready come Thursday," Uppal added.

The team of Ankita Raina, Karman Kaur Thandi, Prarthana Thombare, Mahak Jain and Riya Bhatia with Ankita Bham bri as coach and Anand Dubey as trainer will be keen to capitalise on the time on hand for the best possible preparation.

India has been clubbed with Thailand and host Kazakhstan, in a three-team group. The other group will have China, Korea, Indonesia and Pacific Oceania.

The group toppers, after the league phase, will face each other for a qualification berth to the World group-2 play off. The two teams among the seven that finish at the bottom will be relegated to group-2.

"I am happy with the preparation and team spirit so far," said Vishal, quite optimistic about the team's chances of performing at its best.



Happy bunch: The Indian Fed Cup team is hoping to do well in Kazakhstan. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Prajnesh targets a top 100 spot in ATP rankings

Says it would be nice to get the mark at home

S. DIPAK RAGAV  
CHENNAI

India's number one player Prajnesh Gunnaswelan is back in familiar surroundings for the ATP Chennai Open Challenger and the stage is set for the 29-year-old to break into the top 100 for the first time.

After making his Grand Slam debut at the Australian Open, Prajnesh had a forgettable outing at the Davis Cup losing both his matches against Italy.

"Coming into the season in October / November, I knew I was playing my best tennis.

"Overall it was a great experience playing the main draw at the Slams and I was knocking on the door a few



On the move up: Prajnesh has put his consistent improvement over the past two years to being largely injury free. ■ AFP

times," said Prajnesh.

Speaking about the Davis Cup, Prajnesh said, "I didn't play great. I tried everything possible to compete and get through the matches. Unfortunately I wasn't able to do

that. I wasn't able to step up to the level required. We were also playing a very tough team."

Keen to put the past behind, the local lad – who is the top seed here – will hope

to make a deep run in this tournament as that would set him up for regular participation in ATP Tour events.

"It is one of the goals for the year to be in the top 100 but I know I have enough time to get there.

"The next four months I'm not defending many points, so I should get there eventually as long as I don't lose in the first round of every tournament I play. But it will be nice to make it to 10 more Futures and Challengers.

"But I would have rather better training methods and a higher level of coaches. It's sort of a system from the ground up.

"It's not necessarily about the facilities but we need to have coaches who know how to produce good players who can set a benchmark and over a period of time everybody gets better."

## All set for FKH talent hunt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

In order to identify Future Kabaddi Heroes (FKH), a talent scouting programme under the aegis of Mashal Sports Pvt. Ltd. – organisers and rights owners of the Vivo-ProKabaddi League – will be conducted in 11 cities in three phases.

The programme will begin in Mumbai on February 5 and move to Patna, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Delhi, Lucknow, Nagpur, Guwahati, Bengaluru, Jaipur, and also at the junior Nationals.

Last year 3,420 young players took part in the programme and after a three-stage selection process, 85 players made it to the PKL auction pool.

Among the prominent players who have come through this programme are Nitesh Kumar (UP Yodha), Naveen Kumar (Dabang Delhi) and Surender Singh (U Mumba).

Launching the third edition of the programme PKL League Commissioner Anupam Goswami said, "With

the FKH programme, our aim is to identify promising talent and build successive generations of high quality kabaddi players.

"This initiative has been very successful in each of its two editions so far with aspirants being selected by the franchises.

"This is a testament to the depth of Kabaddi talent in our country and the ability of the programme to identify these new young heroes of the mat."

Former India captain Anup Kumar said, "This is a unique initiative that serves as a strong base for young players to move towards their dream of playing the sport at a professional level.

"It creates opportunities for them to demonstrate their mettle on the biggest kabaddi stage, the PKL."

The expert panel conducting the Phase 1 programme comprise Srinivas Reddy, Pratap Shetty, Ramesh Bhendigiri, Rakesh Kumar, Banani Saha, K. Bhaskaran, Chajuram and Ratanlal Thakur.

## Need to attack Indian spinners, says Bates

## INDIA IN NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WELLINGTON

New Zealand's senior batswoman Suzie Bates on Monday said figuring out a way to tackle spin twins Poonam Yadav and Ekta Bisht was her biggest takeaway from an otherwise disappointing One-Day International series defeat to India.

"The way we played the spinners (was the biggest positive)," Bates said.

"We have got to be aggressive when they toss the ball up and that has been my biggest lesson."

by a 2-1 margin. Bates finally had some form going her way in the final game where she brought up her 25th half-century in an eight-wicket victory.

"We really wanted to try and back our bowlers up with our chase," Bates said after the match.

"The way we played the spinners (was the biggest positive)," Bates said.

"We have got to be aggressive when they toss the ball up and that has been my biggest lesson."

## DEATH

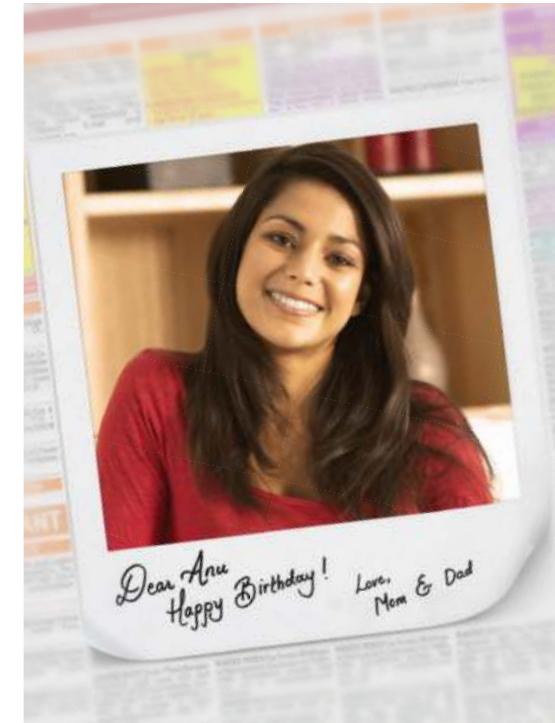
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Shri K. MAHESH



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## IN BRIEF



## 'Climate change may make species infertile'

LONDON  
Rising temperatures could drive some species to become sterile, making them succumb to the effects of climate change earlier than thought, says a study published in *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*. Researchers are trying to predict the places where species will be lost, so that suitable reserves could be built for their relocation. PTI



## Jolie visits Rohingya camp in Bangladesh

COX'S BAZAR  
Hollywood superstar Angelina Jolie visited a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh on Monday ahead of a new UN appeal for nearly one billion dollars to look after the refugee influx. Ms. Jolie, a special envoy of the UN refugee agency UNHCR, first visited a camp in Teknaf near the Myanmar border to speak to the people. AFP



## HPV vaccine is safe, says cancer agency

PARIS  
To mark World Cancer Day 2019, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) issued a statement, "unequivocally" confirming the efficacy and safety of HPV vaccination. The vaccine prevents cervical cancer, which kills over 3 lakh women every year. AFP

## Sombre clowns



**Prayer time:** Clowns attending the 73rd memorial service of the legendary 19th century performer Joseph Grimaldi at the All Saints church in London. • AFP

## Dads are happier than moms'

In studies, they reported greater satisfaction with their lives



Fatherhood is more frequently linked with greater well-being. • GETTY IMAGES

reas mothers reported more depressive symptoms than women who do not have children.

The third study considered parenthood and well-being while engaging in childcare or interacting with children compared to other daily activities. Men were found to be happier while caring for their children than women suggesting that gender significantly impacted the association between childcare and happiness.

In terms of daily interactions too, men reported greater happiness. One possible explanation given was that fathers were more likely to indicate they were playing with their children while they were caring for them or interacting with them as compared to the mothers.

their lives and feelings of connectedness to others.

They also reported greater positive emotions and fewer daily hassles than mothers, or relatives or peers without children.

They even showed fewer depressive symptoms than men without children, when

## 'Obesity-linked cancers on rise in young adults'

Study says diet, exercise are key to reducing body weight

## NICHOLAS BAKLAR

**T**he risk of developing obesity-related cancer is increasing in successive generations, along with increasing rates of obesity, according to a new study.

Researchers studied the incidence of 30 of the most common cancers, including 12 that are obesity related, from 1995 to 2014 in people ages 25-84 – more than 14.6 million cases. The study was published in *Lancet Public Health*.

Using five-year age cohorts, they found that for six of the 12 obesity-related cancers (multiple myeloma, colorectal, uterine, gallbladder, kidney and pancreatic) the risk for disease in-



The incidence of 30 most common cancers was studied. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

creased in adults in the 25-49 age bracket, with the magnitude of the increases steeper with younger age.

For example, compared with people born in 1950, those born in 1985 had a risk of multiple myeloma 59% higher, and a risk of pan-

creatic cancer more than twice as high at comparable ages.

At the same time, incidence decreased for smoking-related and infection-related cancers.

The senior author, Ahmedin Jemal, a scientist with the American Cancer Society, said that diet and exercise are of course essential in reducing obesity rates, but that interventions by health care professionals are also needed.

"Primary care physicians should regularly assess body weight," he said.

"Only a third of obese patients actually get a diagnosis of and counselling for obesity." NY TIMES

## Shakespeare's works, rare pictures await proper care at IIT-Roorkee

A visitor's book that has Jawaharlal Nehru's signature is among its collections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ROORKEE

A rare document bearing Jawaharlal Nehru's signature in Hindi, English and Urdu, and a priceless 1623 edition of William Shakespeare's complete works are among thousands of historic manuscripts and unseen photographs awaiting proper preservation at IIT-Roorkee's iconic library.

In a visitor's notebook kept at the Mahatma Gandhi Central Library of IIT-Roorkee, India's first Prime Minister signed his name in three languages along with the date 'November 25, 1949'. A tiny correction that

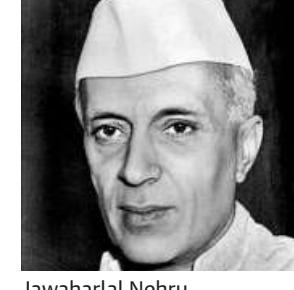
Nehru made while writing his name in Hindi is what makes the document especially interesting, Dr. C. Jayakumar, Librarian, MGCL said.

Having grown slowly since the British period, the library has a good archival collection, he said.

However, at present, the physical manuscripts and photographs are stored in basic conditions. Many important photos lie unlabelled.

Without an organised catalogue, these slices of history may soon bite the dust.

"We have one of the earliest prints of Shakespeare's



Jawaharlal Nehru

stacked inside a cardboard box in the librarian's office, its pages individually separated with tracing paper.

A handwritten '1623' on the half torn cover page indicates the date of its publication. Titled 'Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies,' it is the first edition of the Bard's collected works.

Published in 1623, it is referred to as the First Folio by modern scholars and is considered to be one of the most valuable printed books in the world. In 2001, a copy of this edition was sold at Christie's in New York for a whopping \$6.16 million.

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# DELHI METRO



## Funding of RRTS project

Can use ECC fund to pay Delhi's first-year share for RRTS corridor, EPCA tells Supreme Court [Page 2](#)



## Reducing road accidents

Delhi government launches 'Zero Fatality Corridor' project to bring down road accidents [Page 3](#)



## 2 in police net for murder

Police arrest two persons for allegedly killing a cab driver and later stealing his vehicle [Page 3](#)



## 15 years of drama

Known for his decadent style, Vikram Goyal on his Bikar House exhibition, why brass is his material of choice [Page 4](#)

### IN BRIEF



#### Five foreigners held for stealing cash from ATMs

NEW DELHI

Five foreign nationals, including two women, have been arrested for allegedly using skimming devices on ATMs to steal debit card details, said the police on Monday. With the arrests, DCP (North) Nupur Prasad said they have busted an international gang of cybercriminals with this arrest.

[CITY ▶ PAGE 3](#)

#### Govt issues advisory on impact of online games

NEW DELHI

'The Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights on Monday listed video and online games such as PUBG, Fortnite, Grand Theft Auto, God of War, Hitman, Plague Inc. and Pokemon as harmful, negative and having an adverse impact on the brain of children.

[CITY ▶ PAGE 2](#)

#### Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	288	Gurugram	209
Ghaziabad	358	Faridabad	-
Noida	316	Greater Noida	-
Good 0-50	51-100	Moderate 101-200	-
Poor 201-300	301-400	Very poor 401+	Severe >401

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

## Mercilessly harassed, Belgian tourist leaves India in 24 hours

Victim recounts tale of horror in letter to Embassy; probe under way, say cops

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

A Belgian woman who had come to India in December went back home less than 24 hours into her trip after allegedly being harassed by several people, the police said on Monday.

Upon returning to her country, the victim wrote to the Belgium Embassy, which further shared the complaint with the Ministry of External Affairs. A case has been registered and an investigation has started after the Ministry wrote to the Delhi Police.

In the complaint emailed to the Belgium Embassy, the woman wrote that she landed in Delhi on December 6 around 4 p.m. She bought a SIM card and reached "New Delhi [Railway Station]" from where she took an autorickshaw that took her to Minto Road.

**'Police centre'**  
The driver allegedly stopped in front of two men who showed her "cards of police" and told her that the area was cordoned off because of protests and that she cannot proceed further without permission from the tourist police. The two men gave her an address of a "police centre".

I took the first plane the next morning, totally shocked by what had just happened to me [sic]

BELGIAN TOURIST

The autorickshaw dropped her off a few minutes later at a spot where there were six men in uniform.

They told her that the zone was inaccessible and that she should immediately leave New Delhi, the victim wrote in her email.

**Shown videos, conned**  
The victim was allegedly shown videos of "violent protests" and was told that it was happening live. "He [one of the men in uniform] also asked me whether my jewellery was made of gold and then told me that I must remove them immediately as it would cut my fingers," she wrote. The men then offered to call the hotel she had booked. She was allegedly conned into believing that her booking was cancelled.

In her complaint, she said that the men made the call and from the other side of the phone line, she was informed that her booking had

been cancelled.

The men suggested she go to central Delhi and directed her towards an autorickshaw, which was waiting outside the "police centre".

The driver took her to a travel agency in NDMC market where she was received by two men. They allegedly made the woman talk to a few people over the phone for hotel booking.

"They could sense I am overwhelmed by the situation. I started to worry and was tired after wandering for five hours. They offered me a few hotels, which I said no to because they were expensive. Exhausted, I said yes to the one that suit me. I paid \$40 cash [sic]," she wrote.

She was then allegedly taken in a cab with a male driver and two women who dropped her at a hotel after she demanded a quick drop.

"The driver spoke to the receptionist and I was taken to the third floor in a room with no windows. They told me there was no internet connection. I locked myself in the room. Several times, someone knocked at the door [sic]," she wrote.

By then, her SIM card had been activated after which she contacted an acquain-

tance in Rishikesh and narrated the ordeal. The ac-

quaintance then called the hotel where the woman had made the booking earlier and was informed that her room was reserved and not cancelled. A staffer of the hotel where the victim had made the booking earlier, came and took her there.

"I took the first plane the next morning, totally shocked by what had just happened to me," she stated.

In the complaint to the police, the Ministry wrote that the woman was harassed by several people including an autorickshaw driver, a travel agency, a hotel as well as fake police forces. "Such incidents bring disrepute to the Indians thereby discouraging tourists to visit India," the complainant stated.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Madhur Verma said, "Based on the complaint, a case under relevant sections of Delhi Prevention of Touting and Mal-practices against Tourist Act and cheating has been registered on Saturday. The victim is being contacted." The police are also looking into the places mentioned by the victim in her complaint.

## Kejriwal accuses Modi and Shah of 'murdering' democracy

Throws his weight behind his West Bengal counterpart

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI



**C** Modi-Shah duo is the biggest danger for the country and if we are to save this country, we will have to get rid of this duo in the coming Lok Sabha elections

ARVIND KEJRIWAL  
Delhi Chief Minister

convener said.

The Modi government, Mr. Kejriwal alleged, had "consistently and strongly"

attacked the federal structure of the Constitution since May 2014 and, "through its blatant misuse of power" continues to "unleash Central agencies to terrorise State governments, paralyse them, trying to ruin the careers of officers working in States."

"I am of the firm view that the Modi-Shah duo is the biggest danger for the country and if we are to save this country, we will have to get rid of this duo in the coming Lok Sabha elections," he claimed.

"Kejriwal's support to Mamata Banerjee who has come out in shameless support of the corrupt". Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari said Ms. Banerjee and Mr. Kejriwal were "betraying" democracy by going against the directives of the courts. "The CBI went to West Bengal on directions of the Supreme Court. Leaders like Arvind Kejriwal are supporting Mamata Banerjee because they are scared of [Narendra] Modi who is dedicated to end corruption," he said.

## HC to the rescue of Damanjodi CISF personnel

Directs Centre to give extra pay to those posted in the Maoist violence-hit town

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI



The Delhi High Court has directed the Centre to give 'risk/hard area allowance' to Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel who are posted in Maoist-affected Damanjodi in Odisha to provide security to National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO).

The High Court ruling came after a serving Deputy Commandant of CISF, Satyendra Kumar Jha, challenged the decision of the Centre to reject risk/hardship based allowance to CISF personnel posted at the Public Sector Undertaking.

**CISF circulars**  
Mr. Jha, in his plea, contended that he was not granted 'risk/hard area allowance' after he was posted to the CISF unit at NALCO,

the CISF unit is at Damanjodi whereas the mines area is 20 km away. The road connecting the two is undulated and is highly susceptible to attack or ambush by the Maoists.

### Maoist attacks

Highlighting several incidents of Maoist attacks, Mr. Jha said in 2009 the CISF personnel valiantly foiled the Maoist attack to loot explosives at the mines of NALCO.

Unfortunately, 10 CISF personnel were killed, four of whom were posthumously awarded the President's Police Medal and the remaining six were awarded Police Medals.

In terms of the statistics of the Maoist violence in Odisha, Mr. Jha pointed out that Koraput district was amongst the most severely affected areas.

He said that the base of

Wing Extremism (LWE).

While the Centre defended its decision to refuse hardship-based allowance to the CISF unit at NALCO since it was a 'static location', a Bench of Justice S. Muralidhar and Justice Sanjeev Narula opined otherwise saying it was a field posting.

The Bench said Mr. Jha's posting with the CISF unit at NALCO would stand covered by the Home Ministry's April 2009 circular which provides for risk or hardship-based allowance to combat Central Para-military Forces personnel up to the rank of Commandant.

It additionally said that the MHA should on its own grant the above relief to all those similarly placed personnel of the CISF unit at NALCO without their having to file separate petitions.

## City reported first dengue case of 2019 in January

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Delhi reported its first dengue case this year in January even though the vector-borne disease is usually reported between July and November, revealed a municipal report released on Monday.

Last year, 2,798 dengue cases and four deaths were recorded by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, which tabulates data on vector-borne diseases in the city. Cases of such diseases are usually reported between July and November, but the period may stretch to mid-December. The dengue victims last year included a minor boy.

No fresh cases of malaria or chikungunya have been reported this year.



sues with the size of the flats, said senior DDA officials.

The urban body had launched the first phase of the housing scheme in January this year. While initially over 1,200 flats in Rammagar Colony, Seeraspur and Narela were put up for sale, more flats were added later.

"We got a good response to the first phase and added more under Phase-I. Out of the total 1,800 flats up for consideration, 1,150 have already been booked. They are all one-bedroom flats,"

said Mr. Gandhi. He added, "The online portal for the first phase is continuing and interested flat buyers can book the flats. It is on a first come first served basis. However, booking for the flats being put up for consideration under the second lot will be available only from Thursday evening."

While the DDA did not launch any housing scheme in 2018, DDA Vice-Chairman Tarun Kapoor had earlier said that this year, it will be launched in phases.

With the flats under the current scheme being ones which were returned under the 2017 scheme, senior officials had said that services in the various areas, including last-mile connectivity, have been improved to facilitate buyers.

## Young guns make emotional appeal as they join the fight against environmental pollution

Citizen activists of the Millennium City rope in children to volunteer in awareness campaigns; kids urge people to discontinue use of plastic bags when going for shopping

ASHOK KUMAR

GURUGRAM

The citizen activists of the Millennium City waging a battle against a host of environmental issues, including air pollution, waste management and use of plastic bags, under different campaigns, have now roped in young warriors as well in their army.

### Emotional appeal

This move will lend more "emotion" to their appeal to the masses and also ensure behavioural changes of these young ones in their formative years.

In one such instance, the young volunteers participated in a campaign by a civil society group – Citizens for Clean Air (CFCA) – at Courtyard Market in Sector 50 here recently to

create an awareness on the rising levels of the air pollution.

The campaign was to spread awareness among shoppers and consumers about their decision of not carrying bags when stepping out was actually adding to the pollution woes.

Seven-year-old Aarav, a young CFCA volunteer, told the shopkeepers and the shoppers that polypropylene bags, though freely available, were plastic molecules and caused high levels of air pollution when burnt.

### Harmful effects

Aayaan and Shaven, aged 5 and 11 years respectively, spoke to shoppers about the harmful effects of disposables and enthusiastically urged people to discontinue their

use and to never leave home without a reusable bag. They even offered to give shoppers their own cloth

bag. "Everyone must start from home with reusable cloth bag, like they never forget their wallets when going for shopping. This will greatly help in reducing waste generated on an everyday basis," said



Young volunteers during an awareness campaign on air pollution, at Courtyard market in Gurugram's Sector 50 on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**C** Everyone must start from home with reusable cloth bag, like they never forget their wallets when going for shopping. This will greatly help in reducing waste generated on an everyday basis

SHAVEN  
11-year-old volunteer

Shaven, making an emotional appeal.

Ruchika Sethi, a member of the CFCA, said that though it was not for the first time that children were being part of their activities on environmental issues, this was the first time they were actually interacting with the stakeholders to create awareness unlike before.

"The children were part of our signature campaign against air pollution two years ago and also campaigns against open burning of waste and cutting of trees at Lt. Atul Kataria Chowk. But they never directly interacted with the stakeholders earlier to create awareness like they did this time. We hope to create more such campaigns in the time to come," said Ms. Sethi, who also runs "Why Waste Your Waste" campaign to create awareness on waste management.

### Future stakeholders

Children are the stakeholders of the future. If they experienced change in their behaviour during their formative years

## IN BRIEF



Exempt scribes from paying toll tax: CM

NEW DELHI  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday wrote to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari requesting him for exemption to journalists from paying toll tax across the country. In a letter to Mr. Gadkari, Kejriwal sought the exemption for journalists, saying it was demanded by Haryana journalists at a meeting with him, a statement from the government said. PTI

## New app to book 5 Ashoka Road Bungalow

NEW DELHI  
Holding wedding ceremonies and private parties in Lutyen's Delhi will now become easier as the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry on Monday launched a mobile app to book its 5 Ashoka Road Bungalow. The app named after '5 Ashoka Road' is user friendly and works on any android based mobile phone. PTI

## Kejriwal inaugurates development works in 8 unauthorised colonies

Roads, streets and drains to be built at a cost of ₹97.86 crore

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday inaugurated development works in eight unauthorised colonies in the vicinity of Badli Assembly Constituency in north-west Delhi here.

According to the government, roads, streets and drains would be constructed under the project in the colonies at an expense of ₹97.86 crore. The inaugura-

## 'Can use ECC fund to pay Delhi's first-year share in RRTS corridor'

EPCA tells SC that project should not be delayed as it would hike cost further

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA) told the Supreme Court on Monday that money from the Environment Compensation Charge (ECC) could be used for funding the Delhi government's first-year share in the RRTS corridor project between Delhi, Ghaziabad and Meerut.

The Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) is a project of "national importance" and it should not be delayed as it would escalate the cost, the EPCA said.

The estimated cost of the 82.15-km corridor is ₹31,632 crore and since the Delhi government has said they do not have adequate finances to meet the cost of its share of ₹1,138 crore, funds from the ECC could be used for it, said the EPCA.

A Bench of Justices Arun Mishra and Deepak Gupta

was told by advocate Aparajita Singh, assisting the court as amicus curiae in the pollution matter, that ₹1,106 crore was available in the ECC.

"The first year cost of Delhi government will be ₹265 crore. The EPCA does not want any delay in the project as it would escalate the cost. In ECC, they have around ₹100 crore. Let first year fund (of the Delhi government) go from the ECC. This is a project of national importance," Mr. Singh told the Bench.

The counsel appearing for

Delhi government said "In principle, the Delhi government is agreed. So far as funding is concerned, I will seek instructions. Give me one week time."

The Bench has posted the matter for further hearing on February 11.

## 13-km stretch in Delhi

Of the 82.15 kilometre long corridor, Delhi will have a 13-km section with stations at Sarai Kale Khan, New Ashok Nagar and Anand Vihar.

During the hearing, the amicus said that in pursuance to the apex court's direction, EPCA had convened a meeting of stakeholders concerned on January 25 to discuss the issues. "Delhi government had objections on two issues. The first is about change of station from underground to elevated at Sarai Kale Khan and the other was about funds. The elevated station at Sarai Kale Khan

helps them (Delhi government) also. The only issue is funding. Delhi government says that Union of India should fund their share," Singh told the court.

The EPCA, in its report filed in the court, said that Delhi government has accepted the change in plan to construct the elevated station in its letter addressed to the authority. EPCA also said that out of Delhi government's share of ₹1,138 crore, which is around 3.4% of the total cost and spread over four-five years, the cash fund needed is ₹686 crore and the rest is paid through tax waiver and land cost.

"In other words, Delhi government needs to provide ₹170-175 crore annually for the next four years as its cash component," the report said, adding, "It is clear that this is not a big amount for a project that can decongest Delhi and reduce pollution."

## Govt issues advisory on negative impact of video and online games

Lists a set of games; advises schools to keep tab on children

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) on Monday listed video and online games such as PUBG, Fortnite, Grand Theft Auto, God of War, Hitman, Plague Inc. and Pokemon as harmful, negative and having an adverse impact on the brain of children.

Ranjan Prasad, member of DCPCR has asked the Directorate of Education to issue necessary directions to heads of all schools to discuss the impact such games can have in the morning assembly as well as PTM/PTA meetings and that action taken should be shared with the commission within 20 days.

## Impact on brain

"There are several games in which children can murder zombies or drive vehicles at boisterous speeds. These games are full of misogyny,

hate, deceit and vengeance and it may negatively impact their brain," said the advisory issued to the Directorate of Education.

Schools, parents and counsellors have been advised to lookout for symptoms in their children like becoming withdrawn from friends and family, persistent low mood and unhappiness, sudden outbursts of anger, loss of interest in activities that he/she used to enjoy etc. as signs of video games having a negative impact.

The DCPCR has asked schools to monitor children's online activities. ■ FILE PHOTO

harmful, negative and having an adverse impact on the brain of children.

## Online portal for land pooling policy to be launched today

Policy will generate approximately 17 lakh houses in the Capital, including 5 lakh for EWS category

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Hardeep Puri will launch the online portal for the land pooling policy on Tuesday, said officials.

The policy is set to generate approximately 17 lakh houses in the national capital, including five lakh for the economically weaker section

## (EWS) category.

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) had earlier said that a single window system would be created to facilitate all stakeholders.

## Single window system

"Keeping in line with the goal of 'ease of doing business', a single-window sys-

tem is being created for the implementation of the policy.

Processes of receiving applications, verifications, grant of approvals and licenses will be completed in a time-bound manner," the urban body had said.

DDA officials added that a two-stage grievance redressal mechanism within the

land will be eligible to participate in the policy.

The DDA also said that an integrated sector-based planning approach will be followed and that a sector of 250 to 300 hectares of land will be eligible to be developed once a minimum of 70% contiguous land within a sector is assembled.

Kejriwal has unfollowed me on Twitter, says Lamba

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Alka Lamba on Monday claimed that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had unfollowed her on Twitter and said she was finding it hard to work in the party under the prevailing situation.

In December, Ms. Lamba had claimed that AAP had asked her to resign for protesting an alleged proposal seeking to revoke former PM Rajiv Gandhi's Bharat Ratna. The party had, however, rubbished her claims.

"I have a strong feeling that the party does not need my services at all. But till I am an MLA, I will continue serving the people of my constituency," the Chandni Chowk MLA said.

Ms. Lamba said she has sent a message to AAP leadership, asking them to clear their stand on her position in the party. The MLA claimed she was removed from all official WhatsApp groups of the party and Mr. Kejriwal unfollowed her on Twitter on Sunday.

However, she rejected speculation that she was cozying up to the Congress.

## + Congress takes out silent march to protest against 'insult to Gandhiji'

Killers of the Mahatma have again defamed India: Dikshit

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee led by president Sheila Dikshit on Monday held a silent dharna outside Rajghat to protest against the "insult to Mahatma Gandhi on Shaeedi Diwas when some people fired at a portrait of Gandhiji."

Ms. Dikshit said that the "killers of Mahatma Gandhi" have once again defamed the country in front of the world with their "deplorable action". She said under the



Delhi Congress chief Sheila Dikshit at a silent dharna on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

rule of the BJP government at the Centre, the insult to Mahatma Gandhi has created simmering anger among the people of the country, and the Congress party,

while strongly condemning it, held country-wide silent protests to uphold the feelings of the people of India.

"Such shameful incidents, which are happening under the communal and casteist BJP rule, had never happened in the country before," said Ms. Dikshit.

She added that the Congress would spare no effort to uproot the communal, divisive and destructive BJP government from the Centre to take revenge for the insult heaped on Gandhiji.

The weatherman has forecast cloudy skies with possibility of light rain or thunderstorms on Tuesday.

Despite having the most

minimum temperature settled at 8 degrees Celsius, a notch below average, while the maximum was 23.2 degrees Celsius, normal for this time of the year.

"A total of 27 trains were delayed by an average of four hours," the Railways said.

At Palam, the visibility was 50 metres between 5.30 a.m. and 8.30 a.m., which led to disruption of flight operations at Indira Gandhi International Airport.

The weatherman has forecast cloudy skies with possibility of light rain or thunderstorms on Tuesday.

## Dense fog delays 27 trains, disrupts flights at IGIA

Weatherman has forecast cloudy skies with possibility of light rain today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Twenty-seven trains were delayed and flight operations disrupted after thick fog engulfed the national capital on Monday morning.

The minimum temperature settled at 8 degrees Celsius, a notch below average, while the maximum was 23.2 degrees Celsius, normal for this time of the year.

"A total of 27 trains were delayed by an average of four hours," the Railways said.

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The weatherman has forecast cloudy skies with possibility of light rain or thunderstorms on Tuesday.



People at a bus stop in New Delhi on a foggy Monday morning. ■ PRADEEP KUMAR

## Consultation workshop held to design curriculum for coming academic year

Entrepreneurship mindset curriculum is being planned for six lakh students studying in Classes IX-XII of government schools

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Monday organised a consultation workshop for 'Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum' with stakeholders and experts to come up with a curriculum that the government hopes to introduce in the upcoming academic

year. The curriculum is being designed for 6 lakh students studying in Classes IX-XII of the government schools.

## Big day for job market

Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish Sisodia while addressing the participants said the introduction of the curriculum

would be a big day for the job market and the economy of the country. He said it was an uplifting fact that India boasts the biggest youth force in the world, but it is a worrying fact that it is also a nation of the biggest unemployed educated youth force in the world.

"Despite having the most

laborious and intelligent youth force, none of the 50 biggest companies of the world is Indian. Most Indian youth today wish to get placed in a multinational company and a job seeker economy can never compete with a job providing economy. The roots of the problems need a fix and we be-

lieve it lies in school education," said Mr. Sisodia.

## Courage to think

Briefing participants about what the entrepreneurship

mindset curriculum intends to do, the Education Minister said that the idea was not to impart financial/marketing/communi-

cation/management skills

in the students but to give them the courage to think big and new.

## Cites examples

"Although the fulcrum idea behind entrepreneurship mindset curriculum is to help students strive to become job givers, instead of job seekers, but having said

that, the entrepreneurial 'mindset' is important in all walks of life, for a businessman as well as for a officer. The same mindset led Mark Zuckerberg to build Facebook and a government officer Verghese Kurien to lead the second biggest dairy of India, AMUL, right from its inception," he said.

## IIT-D alumnus pledges financial aid to help fight pollution

Contributes ₹5 crore to Centre of Excellence for Research on Clean Air, inaugurated in February last year

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

To understand better the source of air pollution through systematic data generation and help come up with interventions to address these sources of pollution, Arun Duggal, an alumnus of IIT Delhi, has made a financial contribution to IIT Delhi's Centre of Excellence for Research on Clean Air (CERA). The institute said Mr. Duggal has pledged ₹5 crore for CERA, which was



the institute, we are now able to put a team together and connect them with the key government agencies to come up with technological and policy interventions to address the sources of pollution, whether it is the

paddy straw burning issue in neighbouring states or addressing the vehicular pollution levels in Delhi," Mr. Rao said.

## Report

According to CERA's annual review report, in order to improve the air quality in Delhi-NCR, stringent measures are required in all the sectors in addition to the already planned strategies. These include substantial investments in renewable energy, electric mobility,

public transportation, particularly electric buses, expanded use of gas for power generation and industry including brick kilns.

IIT Delhi also said that it was in the process of installing sophisticated Beta Attenuation Monitoring (BAM) equipment for continuous monitoring of ambient air quality in IIT campus to enable further research on air quality as well as for calibrating of other air quality monitoring equipment.

## Response of UP authorities highly unsatisfactory: NGT-appointed panel

Committee was set up in July to monitor cleaning of Yamuna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

A committee appointed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to monitor the Yamuna river cleaning operation has regretted that the response of the Uttar Pradesh authorities in this regard has been "highly unsatisfactory"

despite repeated letters to the State Chief Secretary, followed up by phone calls to his office. "The Secretary of Environment and Forests Department, UP, was told over phone on two occasions what was needed (to

be done to clean up the Yamuna)," the panel said in its report submitted to the NGT.

The monitoring committee was constituted only on October 17 comprising serving engineers which not only creates a conflict of interest but also is contrary to the orders of the tribunal which had ordered constitution of a full-time monitoring committee," it said.

The panel also said there needs to be clarity on the demarcation of the floodplain between UP and Delhi.

## IN BRIEF



'Agencies completed 31 tasks for decongesting'

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police informed the Supreme Court on Monday that the agencies concerned have completed 31 of the 68 tasks identified by December last on 77 congested traffic corridors in the Capital, which would help in decongesting roads. The police told a Bench comprising Justices Arun Mishra and Deepak Gupta that 27 tasks are in progress and will be completed within two-three months. PTI

## Businessman robbed of ₹28 lakh in Ghaziabad

GAZIABAD

A businessman from outer Delhi's Najafgarh was robbed of ₹28 lakh in Ghaziabad's Sahibabad after a dealer allegedly lured him into a trap by offering a low-price property, the police said Monday. The incident took place in Rajendra Nagar, they said, adding that the businessman had come there to make an advance payment to the dealer. The accused are said to be absconding, they added. PTI

## 650 cartons of liquor seized, two arrested

GAZIABAD

Two persons have been arrested after their truck, carrying 650 cartons of Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL), was confiscated here, police said Monday. The Crime Branch and Loni police arrested Manoj Yadav and Hanuman Yadav, who brought the IMFL from Haryana, they said. PTI

## Baby rescued from Ranchi airlifted to Delhi

NEW DELHI

A nine-month-old baby girl was rescued from Ranchi and airlifted to Delhi in critical condition, the police said on Monday. She has been admitted to a hospital after being rushed in an ambulance through a 12-km green corridor, they said. She has been "kept on a ventilator" at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, they said. PTI

## Constable on duty ends life

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old Delhi Police Constable allegedly died by suicide on Monday in north-east Delhi's Dayalpur while on duty, the police said.

The incident took place at 6 p.m., said DCP (North-East) Atul Kumar Thakur.

A suicide note was found where he mentioned being upset after his father's death, the DCP added.

The constable had been serving in the Delhi police since 2010, they added.

*Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.*

## DELHI TODAY

**Talk:** International Symposium on Creativity and Freedom: A two day symposium will discuss and address concerns in Art History, Fine Art Practice, Music, Theatre, Design, Literature, and Cultural Studies by various speakers at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre (IIC), 10 a.m. onwards

**Theatre:** 17th Ishara International Puppet Festival - My Shadow & Me (UK). Directed and performed by Drew Colby at Amphitheatre, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7:30 p.m.

**Exhibition:** "Journey Of Light", a group show of six artists from Norway, Taiwan, France, Britain and India at Prithvi Fine Art & Cultural Centre, A1/232, Safdarjung Enclave, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

**Exhibition:** "Oneness - Art for Bridging Humanity", a group show of paintings at All India Fine Arts & Craft Society (AIFACS), 1 Rafi Marg, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

**Exhibition:** "Scripted in Time - II", an exhibition of photographs and resin sculptures by artist Rameshwar Broto at Shridharan Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

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

# Govt strives to cut road deaths on Burari-Bhalswa stretch

Launches 'Zero Fatality Corridor' project to reduce road mishaps by 30% by 2020

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Monday launched a 'Zero Fatality Corridor' (ZFC) to reduce road crashes, and scientifically assess the cause of such accidents on the stretch between Burari Chowk and Bhalswa Chowk.

It launched the pilot project with the SaveLIFE Foundation, a leading road safety NGO. The project will also undertake "necessary interventions" to reduce crashes on the stretch.

"As part of its initiative to reduce road crash deaths, the government has partnered with SaveLIFE Foundation, to adopt the Burari to Bhalswa stretch as a pilot project with plans to replicate the model in other parts of the city. The activity is in line with the Delhi government's plan of action to reduce fatalities due to road crashes by 30% by 2020," the statement said.

**Over 1,000 killed in 2018** Delhi Traffic Police data show that 1,690 people were killed and 6,086 were injured in 6,515 road crashes in 2018.

The 3-km-stretch on the Outer Ring Road has been chosen for the ZFC, contains four black spots – Burari Chowk, Bhalswa Chowk, Jahangirpuri bus stand and Mukundpur Chowk – which witnessed 67 deaths in 2016-2017, the government said.

"As we mark the 30th Road Safety Week, we have released the first-ever Annual Action Plan that provides a blueprint to reduce road crash deaths in Delhi. The Capital has witnessed 1,691 road crash fatalities last year. Our government is adopting a new approach to tackle this pandemic.

The Annual Action Plan on

Through the ZFC pilot project, we aim to reduce the fatalities to near zero levels on this particular stretch. After evaluating the impact of the initiative, we will replicate the model in other parts of the city," said Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot.

As part of the project, Sa-

veLIFE Foundation will conduct a scientific crash investigation to study the reasons leading to road injuries and deaths.

## Counter-measures

Based on the causal factors identified, it will recommend counter-measures for Delhi government and Delhi Police to implement to make the corridor fatality-free, the statement said.

## Replicable partnership

Commenting on the development, SaveLIFE Foundation founder and CEO Piyush Teiwari said, "Delhi government is demonstrating exemplary leadership and political will to make Delhi's roads safe for all. Our partnership, in addition to reducing road crash deaths, aims to create a replicable partnership model for government and non-government organisations to collaborate on key issues affecting citizens in our country."

road safety, which is mandatory under Delhi's first Road Safety Policy released in 2018, binds all government agencies including Transport, PWD, Health and Education and the Delhi Traffic Police to a year-round set of actions.

Farhat had two criminal cases registered against him in Amroha including one of rape. We have sought five-day custody and further investigation is under way

VIJAYANTA ARYA  
Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-West)

added.

They then strangled Ram with a rope and kept his body in their house. The duo then took the cab to Moradabad to hide it with the intention of selling it later.

"They returned home the next day with a cutter and chopped Ram's body into pieces. They wrapped the parts in three separate bundles and dumped it in a drain near Greater Noida's Gaur City," the DCP said.

The police said they have recovered from Hapur by a local. The suspects had made an online transaction using the victim's phone. This gave us some clues about them. Thereafter, CCTV footage of the area was scanned, which showed the suspects moving in the victim's car," the officer said.

The accused were identified and nabbed soon after.

During interrogation, the duo, who lived in the same

house in Loni, allegedly told the police that they planned to sell the victim's car in a few days for easy money.

## Sedative in tea

"The accused said they took the cab at 1 a.m. from Gurugram's MG Road for their residence in Ghaziabad. On reaching home, they invited Ram in for a cup of tea and served it to him after mixing sedatives in it," Ms. Arya said.

Shivam had an argument with his girlfriend over a phone call... suddenly he poured petrol over his body and set himself ablaze... two passengers sustained severe burn injuries

POLICE OFFICER

old Shivam received 60% burn injuries and his 24-year-old cousin Arjun sustained 20% burn injuries.

The third injured, 60-year-old Bhagwan Singh, was discharged after first aid, the officer added.

## Narrow escape

The auto driver had a narrow escape as he left the vehicle and fled from the spot. Investigations revealed that just before the incident, Shivam was apparently speaking to a Kolkata-based woman, the police said.

A case has been registered and an investigation is under way to ascertain the reason behind Shivam's extreme step, they added.

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A case has been registered

## 4 SHOWCASE

THE HINDU  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2019

# Vikram Goyal: 15 years of drama

Known for his decadent style, the designer on his Bikaner House exhibition, why brass is his material of choice and how made-in-India needs every advantage it can get

SUNALINI MATHEW

I am five minutes late, confident that no one in Delhi's unsunny weather emerges before noon, but Vikram Goyal is standing outside, waiting for me, despite having had a late night of entertaining guests. "I've been a banker," he says, later in the conversation, which means relationships and businesses must hinge on mutual respect.

He's dressed in black, a colour Delhi-ites love because Paris does too, but it's obvious Goyal is his own person – he wears a black sleeveless Nehru jacket. "I'm a Virgo, fastidious about details, so my focus on quality and design," he says. His design house, Viya, does bespoke products and interiors for hotels, homes, and some business houses – on the bedrock of using natural materials in traditional craft forms, though the end result may not look 'Indian' or ethnic. More and more though, he's getting out of interiors and focussing on product design, his forte. "There are a few talented interior designers we'd like to collaborate with: Vinita Chaitanya from Bengaluru, Vikram Phadke from Chennai, Adil Ahmed from Delhi," he says.

Most of what he's displaying at his 15-year celebration in Delhi is larger-than-life sculptural pieces, the best of his work from over the years. It's ironic that he's hosting it at Bikaner House. "The irony isn't lost on me," he tells me. "We're sitting in a beautiful building which is created by the British, celebrating the best of Indian craftsmanship."



Celebrating his masterpieces: Vikram Goyal; some of his exhibits at Bikaner House ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Divya (who handles HR and operations) – and Kama is that they're both brands "working with an Indian language using international design and quality, to promote an Indian idea internationally".

**G** There are very few discerning people who want to celebrate made in India. Everyone wants foreign labels. It's ridiculous – we're so colonised that we've gone to the other extreme. It's taken a lot for us to get people to appreciate it, and to just say this is what Indians can do

He leads me to the first piece, his newest work, a screen or room divider called Shangri-La. Hand-crafted, as all his pieces are, out of brass and malachite, it's an interpretation of how urbanisation and a growing city would look from outer space – mostly buildings and some flora and fauna. "What we're looking at is architectural, abstract," he says. It could become a light source, a table base or a sculpture.

"We started with India Modern inspired by Mughal domes, the lotus, fish scale. It's there that we first made the finials. Then we moved to Art Deco and Brutalist to nature, from structured to unstructured. And then into free-flowing, sculptural, with no

frame," he says, as he leads me to Midnight Sun, another large sculpture that's an interpretation of what the sun may look like from another planet – abstract, celestial, with abalone, malachite and lapis lazuli. Somewhere in between he did Repoussage (a metalworking technique). Interiors were started in 2013 when a friend from Chennai loved his home in Delhi, and asked him to do.

**Experiments in brass**  
His 40-product exhibition shows made-in-India artisanal creations that meet at the intersection of utility, installation and skill. His wall sconces, for instance, are art that have lights ensconced in them (he dislikes direct light),

while the Art Deco bench commissioned by Christian Louboutin, about 10 years ago, had the legs of their original design tweaked, to look like heels.

**Finding his balance**

Brass, he says, meant they could revive the local, traditional material, and work with the artisans. Plus, it's versatile: malleable, ductile, and can be forged, hammered, inlaid, its colour transformed from bright to burnished. "People were already doing semi-precious stones in wood or stone, like the Taj Mahal; we started inlaying them in metal." Influences, he says, come from all over: mostly from travel, seeing other people's work, local materials, and even age.



His artisans work with sheet metal, and few pieces are cast, unless there's a purpose – like a frameless table. In the West, he says sculptors have machines, so it's possible to cast metal in large pieces, but in India we don't have such capacity. "We treat sheet metal almost like wood or fabric. So each little bit is cut by hand, crafted, treated, welded. Each part takes a couple of days. It's a much more laborious technique." The craftspeople, about 70 to 80 of them from around Delhi, had

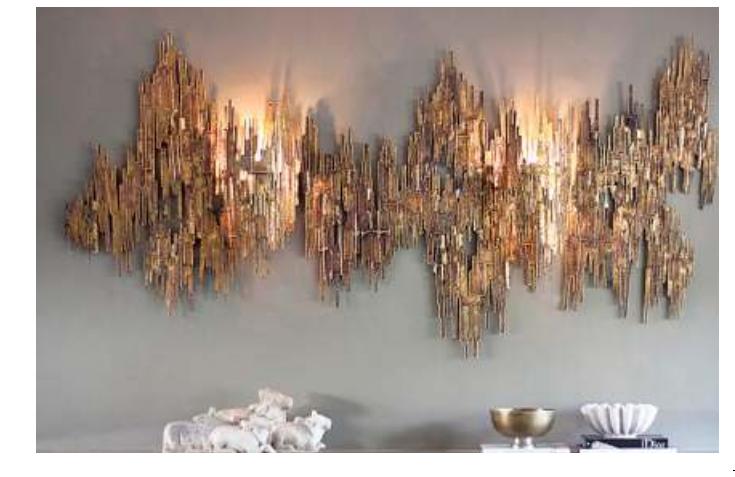
basic skills, which he honed.

Different things work for different markets, and sometimes, it's unpredictable. For instance, Kelly Hoppen, the British interior designer, picked up the finials for a restaurant in Mauritius. About half the business comes from abroad, but everything can be customised. The attempt, he says, is to have an international aesthetic, with pieces that can work across time. "I only ask my client, 'How do you want to live and what do you do in life?'"

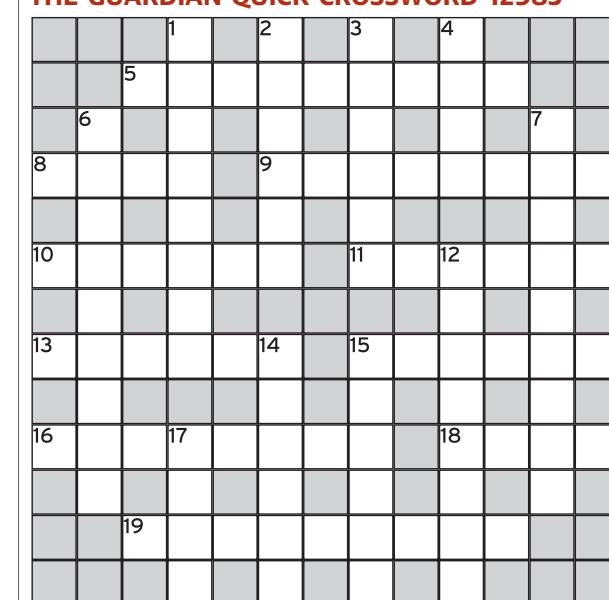
It's not all about the art, though. "There's balance between what is commercial versus what is fantasy. It's like couture. So if someone says, 'This is not what a divider should look like,' I'd say, 'This is what a divider could look like.' But we do have workers to pay, so we've got to make sure some things sell."

The challenge is that "there are very few discerning people who want to celebrate made in India. Everyone wants foreign labels. It's ridiculous – we're so colonised that we've gone to the other extreme. It's taken a lot for us to get people to appreciate it, and to say this is what Indians can do". His style is large, far from minimalist (he doesn't believe too many can it pull off), detailed, has movement, and sometimes makes you smile.

The exhibition is on until February 14, at Bikaner House. For more details visit : viyahome.com

**View from above**

There's more irony: Goyal worked in Morgan Stanley in New York, as an economist, after graduating in development economics from Princeton University. He came back to India because "I wanted to do something on my own, to work with something indigenous". So he and three others co-founded Kama, the luxury Ayurveda brand. The thread between Viya – co-founded with his sister,

**POOCH CAFE****PEANUTS****HAGAR THE HORRIBLE****CALVIN AND HOBBES****TIGER****GRAFFITI****THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-12985**

- 2 Road lined with buildings (6)
- 3 Gag understood only by a small group (2-4)
- 4 Minute fragment (4)
- 6 Lively – exciting (9)
- 7 Capitulate (9)
- 12 Loss of confidence (4,4)
- 14 Not subject to an obligation (6)
- 15 Expressing regret (6)
- 17 Tall stories (4)

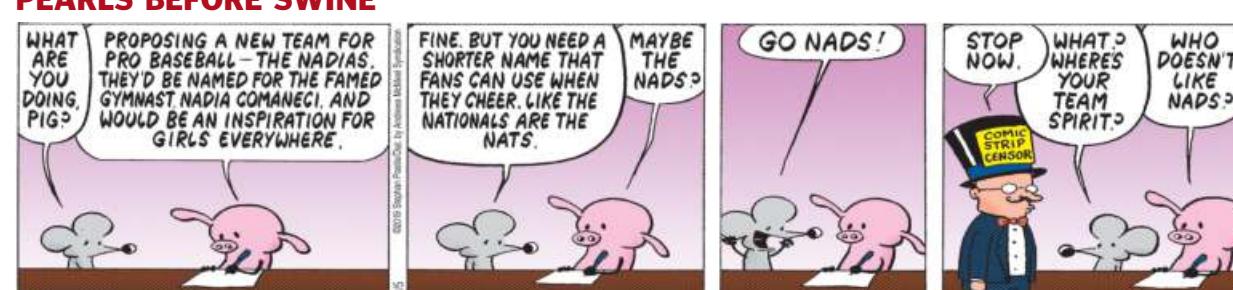
Solution will appear in Delhi Metro dated February 6, 2019.

Solution No.

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**WUMO****HEALTH CAPSULES****THE GUARDIAN NEWS AND MEDIA LTD., 2016**

- or pressure (6)
- 16 Large peppermint sweet (8)
- 18 Mist coming in from the sea (4)
- 19 Refrain from divulging sensitive information (4,5)
- Down
- 1 Drink lots of liquid on top of eating food (4,4)

**PEARLS BEFORE SWINE**

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, PROPOSING A NEW TEAM FOR PRO BASEBALL – THE NADIAS. THEY'D BE NAMED FOR THE FAMED GYMNAST NADIA COMANECI, AND WOULD BE AN INSPIRATION FOR GIRLS EVERYWHERE.  
FINE, BUT YOU NEED A SHORTER NAME THAT FANS CAN USE WHEN THEY CHEER. LIKE THE NATIONALS ARE THE NATS?  
GO NADS!  
STOP NOW. WHERE'S YOUR TEAM SPIRIT?  
WHO DOESN'T LIKE NADS?

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WHO DOESN'T LIKE NADS?

A NEW UNIVERSITY OF OREGON STUDY REVEALED THAT SUNLIGHT CAN IN FACT DESTROY AIRBORNE BACTERIA. THE SUNLIT ROOMS IN THE EXPERIMENT HAD 50% LESS BACTERIA THAN DARKENED ROOMS. INTERESTINGLY, THE ROOMS EXPOSED TO UV RAYS RETAINED EVEN LOWER BACTERIAL LEVELS.

Health Capsules comic, in tandem to the other Health comic strips.