



Thinking of giving up my social media accounts: PM Modi  
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## NEARBY



### No larger Bench for Article 370 case

NEW DELHI  
A five-judge Constitution Bench led by Justice N.V. Ramana on Monday declined a plea to refer to a larger Bench petitions challenging the abrogation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution. The Bench said it would continue to hear the case on merits.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 12

### Bhim Army chief meets SBSP president Rajbhar

LUCKNOW  
Signalling a possible new anti-BJP front in Uttar Pradesh, Bhim Army leader Chandrashekhar Azad on Monday met Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party president Om Prakash Rajbhar in Lucknow. While no formal tie-up was announced, both sides pitched for the coming together of OBC and Dalit parties and outfits in U.P. if they wanted to pose a challenge to the BJP.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

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# Supreme Court to hear petition on Delhi violence tomorrow

We cannot stop things from happening, Chief Justice Bobde says on the riots

### KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI  
Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde on Monday orally said courts were not "equipped" to handle palpable "pressure" being created to somehow step in and prevent violence in Delhi.

"We are not saying people should die. But this kind of pressure we are not equipped to handle. We cannot stop things from happening. We cannot prevent anything... We feel a kind of pressure on us... We cannot handle that. It is as if the court is responsible," he remarked. Courts came into the picture only after an incident happened, he explained.

The observations came when senior advocate Colin Gonsalves made a mentioning before him to urgently intervene and pass directions to arrest those delivering hate speeches and to prevent the spread of violence.

Mr. Gonsalves was appearing for Maharashtra resident Shaikh Mujtaba Farooq and nine others from Delhi. The petitioners said they were attacked by mobs while peacefully protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Chief Justice Bobde agreed to hear their case on



**Hushed up:** Trinamool Congress MPs staging a demonstration outside Parliament on Monday against the recent violence in north-east Delhi. ▶ R.V. MOORTHY

Wednesday (March 4).

Mr. Gonsalves alleged that five or six prominent people were going about instigating violence. "At least 10 to 11 people are dying everyday. Last night, five or seven people died," he submitted. The court should either take up the case in the afternoon or latest by Tuesday, he said.

### 'Long adjournments'

He said despite the deaths of people, a Delhi High Court Bench, led by Chief Justice D.N. Patel, had "very disappointingly" adjourned the next hearing in the case by six weeks. Earlier, the same

High Court had adjourned a case for fair inquiry into the Jamia violence by several weeks, he submitted.

Such long adjournments allowed these human rights cases to stagnate and gave the government elbow room, he stated.

But Chief Justice Bobde said the courts could not handle such pressure.

"There are many things Your Lordships cannot handle, but we are here to help you... People are dying every day," Mr. Gonsalves responded.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

## Ruckus in Parliament

The Lok Sabha witnessed unruly scenes and four adjournments as Congress and BJP MPs jostled with each other over the Opposition's insistence that Home Minister Amit Shah resign taking responsibility for the Delhi riots. The Rajya Sabha witnessed multiple adjournments after the Opposition's demand for an "immediate discussion" was not accepted by the Chairman. ▶ PAGE 12

# Delhi court defers hanging of 4 Nirbhaya case convicts

One of them has moved a mercy plea before the President

### LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday deferred the execution of the death sentence of the four Nirbhaya gang-rape case convicts indefinitely.

The four condemned men were supposed to be hanged to death on March 3 at 6 a.m.

Hours before what was to be their execution, additional sessions judge Dharmender Rana put on hold their execution when informed that one of the four, Pawan Gupta, had moved a clemency petition before the President on Monday.

The mercy plea was filed shortly after a five-judge Supreme Court Bench, led by Justice N.V. Ramana, dismissed Pawan's curative petition for lack of merits.

The decision was taken by circulation by the judges in their chambers at 10.25 a.m. on Monday.

"We have gone through the curative petition and the relevant documents. In our opinion, no case is made out... The application for oral hearing is rejected. The application for stay of execution of death sentence is also rejected," the short order on the curative petition said.

Even if the President rejects the mercy plea of Pawan before 6 a.m. on March 3, the law laid down by the



**Waiting for justice:** Parents of Nirbhaya outside the Patiala House Courts in New Delhi on Monday. ▶ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Supreme Court in its *Shatrughan Chauhan* judgment of 2014 requires the convict to be given 14 days to set his affairs straight and "prepare" for the execution.

Recently, the Centre had blamed the Chauhan case judgment for being "convict-centric". It urged the Supreme Court to revisit the 2014 verdict and make it victim and society-centric.

Again, Pawan can legally challenge the rejection of the mercy plea in the Supreme Court. The fate of the other three convicts would also depend on how long his challenges continue to hold up.

The government has appealed to the Supreme Court for permission to separately execute convicts who have exhausted their legal and administrative remedies with

out waiting for their co-convicts in the same case to finish theirs in due time. This appeal is pending in the court.

### Organ donation

Separately, a Bench of Justices R. Banumathi and A.S. Boopanna dismissed a PIL petition filed by former High Court judge Michael Saldanha for directions to the government and the jail authorities to give the Nirbhaya convicts' organs for medical research.

"To execute a person is the saddest part for the family. You [petitioner] want their body to cut into pieces... Have a humane approach to these things... Organ donation has to be voluntary," Justice Banumathi addressed the petitioner.

"Again, Pawan can legally challenge the rejection of the mercy plea in the Supreme Court. The fate of the other three convicts would also depend on how long his challenges continue to hold up.

The government has appealed to the Supreme Court for permission to separately execute convicts who have exhausted their legal and administrative remedies with

# Day 5 at govt. relief camps: no one in sight +

Officials suspect fear, distance and lack of information keeping riot victims away

### HEMANI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI

At a relief camp set up by the AAP government in Shahdara's Panchsheel Garden, caretaker Amrit Gulati (65) has two other officials and two homeless persons for company. Not a single riot victim has come to take refuge here in the last five days.

The off-white tiles are clean, the mattresses piled up neatly in one corner and the water container untouched at the night shelter which can accommodate up to 40 people. An NGO representative who is supposed to take care of the food for riot victims also waits in anticipation.

### 'Arrangements in place'

"It has been four days since we started preparations to house riot victims, but no one has come. We will take care of their food, water and medication. All the necessary arrangements are in place," said Mr. Gulati.

homeless persons coming in



A relief camp at Shahdara's Panchsheel Garden. ▶ SANDEEP SAXENA

arrangements are in place," said Mr. Gulati.

An official who did not wish to be identified said the reason, he suspects, people are not coming is because of lack of knowledge and distance. "Few people are aware of the locations of the relief camps. This shelter is also over 2 km away from the affected areas."

Mr. Gulati said because of the riots, the number of

homeless persons coming in

at night has also reduced to about 10 because many of them are migrant labourers and have left for their villages. Even if the numbers increase, Mr. Gulati said they won't refuse anyone. "We will make sure they are all accommodated. Perhaps, ask two homeless persons to share a bed," he said.

Appealing to people to take refuge in the shelters,

Mr. Gulati said, "No matter what religion they belong to, we will take care of them. Our other caretaker is Mohammed Zaheer and we live here as a family. For us, everyone is equal."

A few kilometres away in Kabool Nagar, another government relief camp is empty. An official suspected the riot victims are not coming to the camp "because the area is dominated by Hindus". The official felt victims are scared and prefer the company "of their own".

In fact, the relief camp right outside Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, where hundreds of victims are undergoing treatment, has only been visited by three persons. The caretaker of the camp, Rajesh Kumar, said, "I go inside the hospital where the families of the injured sit and ask them to come, but they refuse. They prefer going to their relatives' houses."

# SC to take up plea for Omar's release 'quickly'

### LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed that a plea filed by Sara Abdullah Pilot against the continued detention of former J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah under the Public Safety Act (PSA) needs to be heard quickly as it concerns his personal liberty.

But the authorities told the court that Mr. Abdullah had been a "very vocal critic" of the abrogation of the special status of J&K under Article 370 even before it was actually withdrawn on August 5, 2019. They said his release may prove prejudicial to the maintenance of public order in the new Union Territory geographically proximate to Pakistan.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

+ Grim reminder



**When learning stopped:** A worker trying to salvage what remains of charred desks and benches at a school in Shiv Vihar that was set on fire by a mob during the recent violence in north-east Delhi. ▶ SANDEEP SAXENA (REPORTS ON PAGES 2, 3, 4 & 13)

Delhi, Telangana report a case each of COVID-19

Kin, acquaintances to be screened

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Two more cases of COVID-19 – one in Delhi and another in Telangana – have been reported in the country, taking the total number of positive cases to five, the Health Ministry said on Monday.

According to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, the person from Delhi had travelled to Italy, while the other one has a recent travel history to Dubai.

"Both the patients had self-reported after they developed symptoms. They tested positive. They are stable and being closely monitored. We are now contacting their family and others who have come in contact with them to ensure that the virus is contained and any

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

TOLL CROSSES 3,000 ▶ PAGE 14

# Baghel protests against use of CRPF in Chhattisgarh I-T raids

Action an affront to cooperative federalism, CM tells Modi



Bhupesh Baghel

Department has conducted at least 25 raids in a "clandestine manner" across various locations in the State since February 27.

"May I respectfully point out that the actions of Finance/Home Ministries of the Government of India are nothing short of an affront to

the idea of cooperative federalism that you have often spoken about," the Chief Minister's letter said.

Mr. Baghel said the action not only reflects "coercive and insecure centrism but also the actions of the Central agencies border on political vendetta on one hand and threaten the very core of our democracy on the other".

"... As a former Chief Minister, you would agree that Law and Order is a State subject and Central forces cannot be deployed in a State without consent and prior intimation to the State government," he wrote.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

# Nod for Wi-Fi on planes with pilot's permission

On board devices can access Internet

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Passengers travelling in domestic flights will now be able to use Wi-Fi following permission from the pilot-in-command, according to a government notification.

"The pilot-in-command may permit the access of Internet services by passengers on board an aircraft in flight, through Wi-Fi on board, when laptop, smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, e-reader or a point of sale device is used in flight mode or airplane mode, provided that the Director-General shall certify the aircraft for usage of Internet service in flight through Wi-Fi on board, subject to the procedures as specified in this behalf," the notification stated.



It added that for the purposes of this rule, an aircraft will be deemed to be in flight when all its external doors are closed following embarkation until the moment when any such door is opened for disembarkation. Vistara was one of the first players to secure the necessary approvals from the Department of Telecom near the end of last year.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

A ND-NDE



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Unsubstantiated reports of tense situation in Delhi are being mischievously circulated on social media and messaging Apps. It is to reiterate that such reports are being circulated to spread rumours and create panic amongst public. People are advised not to pay attention to such rumours.

Delhi Police is closely monitoring the Social Media accounts spreading fake news/rumours. Strict legal action will be taken against those who are found involved in spreading rumours.

People are advised to verify such reports from Delhi Police on the following telephone numbers:-

Sl. No.	Name of District	Helpline Number
1.	East District	011 - 22231905
2.	North-East District	011 - 22829334/35
3.	Shahdara District	011 - 22131114
4.	South District	011 - 26523967
5.	South-East District	011 - 26825825
6.	West District	011 - 25441909
7.	Dwarka District	011 - 28042979
8.	Outer District	011 - 27034876
9.	Central District	011 - 23270000
10.	North District	011 - 23818595
11.	North-West District	011 - 27229834
12.	Rohini District	011 - 27579011
13.	Outer North District	011 - 21710111
14.	New Delhi District	011 - 23362229
15.	South-West District	011 - 26140054
16.	Railway	011 - 23219007

If they come across any such hate material, they may complain at "Cyber Helpline No.-155260 or [www.cybercrime.gov.in](http://www.cybercrime.gov.in)

Apart from the above, information about such rumours can also be shared on ERSS –112. Please follow Delhi Police and Delhi Traffic Police on official Twitter handle @DelhiPolice and @ddtptraffic respectively for regular update. People's cooperation is solicited in maintaining peace and harmony in the city.

DELHI POLICE

For Immediate Help Call 112

To Share Information Call 1090

# A brother's search ends at the mortuary

Aftab was tortured and burnt alive before being thrown into the Karawal Nagar drain, alleges Qadir

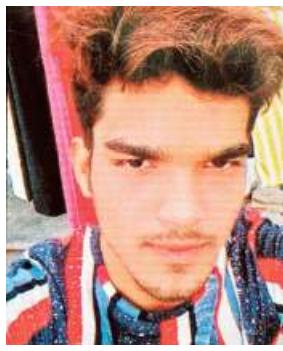
JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

Six days after he went missing, Mohammad Qadir's search for his younger brother Aftab ended at RML Hospital mortuary here on Monday.

Fearing how his family will react, Mr. Qadir said he has decided not to inform them about Aftab's death for the time being.

The 20-year-old is understood to be the only one – out of five bodies that were recovered from separate drains in north-east Delhi between Sunday and early Monday – to be identified by next of kin.

Not only were the fingers on both his hands "hanging by shreds of skin", the hair on Aftab's head was also missing, Mr. Qadir said, adding that this leads him to believe that his brother, a Class 11 student who had come to Delhi just a week ago from Bijnor, was tonsured, tortured and burnt alive before being thrown into



Mohammad Qadir and his younger brother Aftab.

a drain in Karawal Nagar.

peetne ke baad jalaya gaya

hai phir naali mein phenk diya [Does one lose one's hair after being thrown into a drain? They don't. My brother was beaten up and burnt alive before his body was thrown in a drain]," he alleged.

According to Qadir, Aftab wanted to learn welding so he could start a small workshop which he would manage along with his studies. Mr. Qadir said that Aftab's friends in Delhi had offered to help him

get initial training because of at which Aftab arrived in Delhi on February 23.

Aftab went incommunicado a little over a day later prompting his family to get in touch with his friends.

"His phone was unreachable, so we got in touch with his friends on Tuesday [February 25]. They told us that they had seen Aftab being assaulted by a mob on Monday evening when he was at a supplies store in Shiv Vihar," Mr. Qadir said.

"We came to Delhi on Wednesday and began looking for him. While in Loni area, my family and I asked a few Uttar Pradesh policemen about the situation in Delhi and they told us to go to GTB Hospital," he said. Over the next five days, Mr. Qadir and his father Mohammad Umar would make rounds of GTB, Lok Nayak and Jag Parvesh hospitals during the day. They would spend their nights at a

shelter at Kashmere Gate.

On Monday morning, one of the ambulance drivers at the GTB Hospital whom Mr. Qadir had befriended suggested that he visit RML Hospital where five bodies had arrived. These bodies were taken out of drains, including one from the drain in Karawal Nagar where Aftab had been with his friends.

"I sent my father and brother to RML mortuary who identified Aftab's body by the yellow jacket he was wearing when he left home a little less than a fortnight ago. They called me to the hospital to make sure it was him," Mr. Qadir said.

"His stomach was badly decomposed and bloated," said Mr. Qadir, adding that he identified Aftab by a mole on the left side of his chin. "We will not tell our family tonight. We will just take his body home for burial after the paperwork," he added.

## Unarmed policemen kept distance from mob

'Why were we deployed during the riots with just a cane and body protection?'

SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI

As mobs ran riot in north-east Delhi on February 23, Head Constable with the Armed Police Deepak Dhaiya confronted the armed men with just a cane in hand.

Facing an onslaught of rioters, Mr. Dhaiya appealed to his colleagues to control the miscreants, but instead of helping the constable, the policemen stopped Mr. Dhaiya from taking further action as they were unarmed.

As mobs vandalised and damaged property, most of the policemen remained on the backfoot even as several shops were set alight right in front of them.

With just a cane for de-

fence, the policemen were apprehensive of taking on men that were carrying stones and weapons.

### Low morale

Most of the lower-rank policemen that *The Hindu* talked to said the force was already suffering from low morale after several incidents saw policemen get severe punishment while the perpetrators walked away "scot-free".

A policeman, who wished not to be named, said that in June 2019, a video had gone viral of two constables beating up a Sikh tempo driver in Mukherjee Nagar after "he attacked them with a sword".

The policemen were dismis-

tempo driver was never arrested, he added.

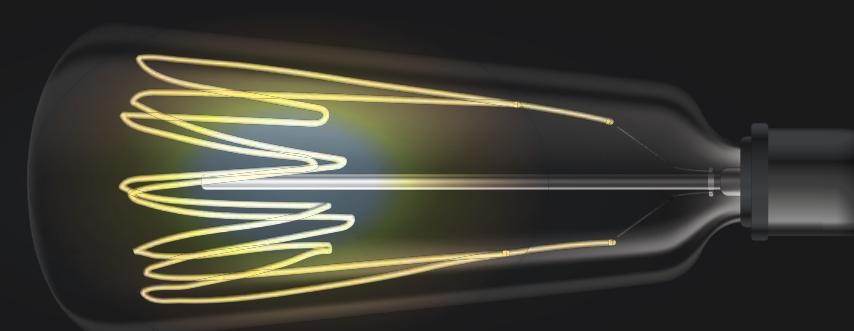
Another policeman, who was deployed in Maipuri during the violence, said he and his colleagues do not take any action unless they get specific orders from senior officers, "because in the end us lower ranks suffer". "Why were we deployed during the riots with just a cane and body protection? We also have families... no one wants to get killed. I was issued no long-range weapon. You cannot stop a mob with teargas and a cane," he added.

An Inspector-rank officer said that in the November 2019 Tis Hazari incident, when police and lawyers clashed, a special commis-

sioner-rank officer was removed from his post and a policeman was thrashed by lawyers at Saket Courts, but the accused were never arrested. "The riots could have been prevented if the police had opened fire on Day One. A policeman was killed and a DCP was brutally thrashed by the mob but still we waited for direction from seniors," added the officer.

Several policemen said that the Delhi Police was also in a leadership crisis when the violence broke out.

A senior police officer added that the incident revealed the complete failure of the police's intelligence network, which failed to assess the preparation of the rioters.



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₹10 lakh to jawan whose house was burnt in riots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The BSF on Monday handed over a cheque of ₹10 lakh to its jawan, Mohammed Anees, after his house in north-east Delhi was vandalised and burnt in the recent spate of violence.

The force has also pledged to re-build his house and hand it over to him as a "wedding gift", as he is scheduled to get married soon, a BSF spokesperson said.

The engineering and technical team of the force is already on the job, the spokesperson said.

Another official said the welfare funds of the force were utilised and other resources were mobilised to help their Mr. Anees whose house in Khajoori Khas here was burnt and vandalised by mobs last week.

## Woman awaits DNA report of leg found near father's house

The daughter has not found the man or his body since violence broke out last week

HEMAMI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

Gulshan (27) sat next to her husband, an acid accident survivor, at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital mortuary awaiting a DNA report of a leg which she believes is of her father. Ms. Gulshan, Mohammed Anwar's daughter, has been at the mortuary since February 26 after she was told by her uncle and the police that the leg had been found from near her father's burnt, rented accommodation in Shiv Vihar's Prem Vihar near Ramlila Ground.

"I think the leg is my father's because we have been told by the police that it was found from the place where my father lived. We have not been able to find him or his body," she said.

Mr. Anwar used to rear sheep and also gave street



Gulshan, her husband and their children were financially dependent on her father. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

carts on rent for a living. Ms. Gulshan's husband Mohammed Naseeruddin's face was burnt and he lost his eyeight four years ago when his face got acid accidentally splashed onto it. The couple reside in Pilakhwā near Hapur with their two minor sons.

"My father was taking care

of the four of us financially as my husband could not work any more," she said.

Recalling the violence that broke out on February 25, she said she was speaking to his father around 11 a.m. over the phone when she heard people shouting. "I asked him what had happened. He said there was a fight. Even-

tually, the phone got disconnected and I could not contact him again. I called my paternal uncle and he told me what had happened," she said.

The uncle, she said, told her that he saw a mob firing at him and then burning his house after before pushing him in the fire.

The uncle did not go to save him because he was scared for his own life, she said.

Ms. Gulshan has been coming to the hospital every day and spending the day there only in the hope to get some closure. She mostly leaves the hospital late in the evening for her relative's house in Seemapuri. "There is a relief camp, but we prefer to stay at our relative's house. It's close and we also feel secure there," she said.

'We had spoken to him an hour before his death'

Riot victim survived by wife, 8 daughters

SIDHARTH RAVI  
NEW DELHI

violence had also ensued in Mustafabad.

### Shot dead

Around the afternoon, when things seemed to have calmed down, Mudasir stepped out of the building to see if he could make his way back to Mustafabad, but was shot dead. "Before him, someone else was also shot dead," said a relative. "We have no idea which side [group] the bullets came from," said Mr. Yasin.

His body was taken to GTB Hospital for a post-mortem.

Mudasir's oldest daughter is just 14. His wife Ayesha is distraught and is observing the period of *iddah* following her husband's death.

Several officials of the Delhi government as well as the Lieutenant-Governor's office had visited the bereaved and assured of compensation, the family said.

CM declares ₹1 crore relief for IB man's family

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said that the Delhi government will give a compensation of ₹1 crore to the family of Intelligence Bureau (IB) officer Ankit Sharma, who died during the recent violence in north-east Delhi, and one person from his family will be given a job.

"The Delhi government has decided that his family will be given a compensation of ₹1 crore and will give job to one person of his family. May his soul rest in peace," Mr. Kejriwal said in a tweet.

The Chief Minister also asked citizens to inform the government about people in violence-hit areas who need assistance, using #DelhiRelief.

Officials of the departments concerned are engaged in assessing the losses in the affected areas. "The work is nearing completion and the victims will soon be given the declared compensation," a statement said.

## 40 arrested for spreading riot rumours

Police received over 2,000 distress calls on Sunday

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday arrested 40 people after they received over 2,000 distress calls on March 1 in connection with rumours that riots had broken out in many parts of the city.

The maximum calls were received from south-east Delhi localities such as Sha-

heen Bagh and Govindpuri. Calls were also received from west and central Delhi.

"We have arrested 21 people from North West district, one from Rohini district and 18 from South district. The people were booked for spreading rumours under Section 7/51 of the Criminal Code of Procedure," said a police officer.

As rumours about violence in several parts of the city spread like wildfire on March 1, news about a few metro stations shutting

down fuelled fears, said residents. Metro officials, however, maintained that some stations were closed after a security advisory was issued by the Delhi Police.

Around 8 p.m. on March 1, Ramesh Nagar Jyoti, a resident of west Delhi, received a call from his relative: "Do not go towards Rajouri Garden. Riots have broken out".

Even as she passed on the information to her neighbours, four gates of the colony were shut. Gurapada Mandal, a resi-

dent of Govindpuri, said: "I was on duty when I got a call from my wife saying there were shots being fired and people were running around with lathis. Most residents decided to lock themselves indoors. It was only later when the PCR vans started patrolling that the situation calmed down."

Several residents of Mandanpur Khadar also said they were "informed" about mobs roaming the streets even though "nothing happened to their houses".

## Muslim families shift from Chaman Park warehouses

The makeshift shelters had become overcrowded and dirty, say volunteers

SIDHARTH RAVI  
NEW DELHI

Hundreds of Muslim families, displaced from Shiv Vihar – one of the areas which saw the worst incidents of violence in north-east Delhi – who had taken refuge in warehouses in Chaman Park have been shifted, volunteers informed on Monday.

With a large number of media persons and aid efforts being directed to the

small lanes in which the warehouses are located, the area was becoming over-crowded and dirty, the volunteers informed. While some have been relocated to their relative's residence, smaller groups of people occupied houses of locals and others have been relocated to multiple tents set up at the Eidgah at Mustafabad. Legal clinics as well as centres to ensure that compensations

are paid have been set up.

"How long can you stay in other people's houses after all?" said Arshi Ansari who was living in a furniture warehouse in Chaman Park and shifted to the tents on Monday evening. Commenting on issues with government-run relief camps, most of which have reportedly seen no displaced people arriving, she said, there was a lack of facilities especially

for women at such places.

Houses of most of these

people were burnt down by

mobs during the recent spate of violence. Many of them said that they had narrowly escaped death. Husband and sons of many displaced women were still missing. A list of nearly 140 families, displaced from Shiv Vihar, was prepared and at least 50 are still reported missing, a volunteer added.

Give names of arrested people, Rai tells top cop

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Monday requested Delhi Police Commissioner S.N. Srivastava to give proper information to the families of people who were arrested from violence-hit areas.

"Family members of the arrested people are not getting information. I have requested the police to make a system that ensures that these families get proper information," Mr. Rai said.

Earlier in the day, the AAP Minister said that after talking to MLAs of Seelampur and Mustafabad, he understood that the police had picked up innocent people as well. "Their relatives have been searching for them in hospitals and police stations. The guilty should be caught and punished and the innocent should be released. A meeting has been scheduled with the Police Commissioner to discuss the issue," he said.

Several activists also wrote to Mr. Srivastava with a similar request.

They alleged that the police was not complying with Section 41-C of the CrPC that mandates displaying information regarding arrests and detentions.

The letter was signed by Anjali Bhardwaj, Annie Raja, Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan, Rahul Roy, Saba Dewan, Pamela Philipose, Amrita Johri, Navsharan Singh, Indira Unninaray.

New Era Public School organised a debate competition on how cycling and marathon trends have reduced the consumption of oil. This was done in association with the Indian Oil Corporation Limited during PCRA month to spread awareness on oil conservation among children. Two students from 8<sup>th</sup> standard won this competition. The prizes were distributed by the Principal.



### GOING BEYOND CURRICULUM

Ashok Memorial Public School, Faridabad, conducted their Prize Distribution ceremony to felicitate the meritorious students who have portrayed extraordinary performances in academics as well as co-curricular activities. Dr. Ms. Shakti Kapur was the Chief Guest for the occasion. The members of the school Managing Committee, Chairman Sh. Vinod Sachdeva, Sh. Prem Sagar, Manager Mrs. Geeta Sachdeva, Director Sh. K. K. Bhatt graced the occasion with their presence. Principal, Mrs. Mamta Singh presented the Annual Report. Various cultural events were performed by the students.

### CELEBRATIONS AT ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

St. Thomas School, Faridabad, conducted Tiny Tots Day. The Principal, Mr. Vinod Joseph, welcomed the Chief Guest Rev. Fr. Abraham John. The Annual Report was read by the Principal. The students performed various programmes that depicted each state of India. The meritorious students were honoured with mementoes and cash awards.



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## Situation peaceful: police chief

'Over 300 FIRs filed in connection with Delhi violence'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Commissioner S.N. Srivastava on Monday said the police have registered over 300 FIRs in connection with the riots in north-east Delhi.

He said that the situation remained peaceful across the city on Monday and requested people to verify any unconfirmed reports of riots or disturbance with the central police control room. "We request people to come with any electronic evidence or their own testimony if they have witnessed any kind of violence. We have issued a WhatsApp number and an e-mail where people can send

videos or other material that can help police identify the people involved in violence," said Mr. Srivastava.

The Police Commissioner did not make any references to the progress in investigation of previous cases of violence that broke out during anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in Central, South East and North East districts.

On December 18, protesters had pelted stones at policemen in the Seelampur-Jafarabad area.

Mr. Srivastava's predecessor Amulya Patnaik faced much criticism for police action as well as inaction during anti-CAA protests that started

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ALPINE SKIING  
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ICE STOCK  
SNOW RUGBY  
SNOW BASEBALL  
SNOW SLEDGING



## Activists demand medical, legal camps for riot-affected persons

Violence a matter of great shame: Harsh Mander

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Human rights and health activists on Monday demanded that the Centre and State governments immediately start trust-building measures and provide medical, legal and rehabilitation help for those affected by the violence in north-east Delhi.

At a press conference organised by Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA) on Monday, activists – including Harsh Mander, Anjali Bhadrwaj, Annie Raja and Harjit Singh Bhatti – released the group's field report on "The role of health systems in responding to communal violence in Delhi". The report documents the accounts of the injured, their families and volunteers.

Calling the violence a matter of great shame, Mr. Mander said it was hard to believe that the Delhi Police,

the second largest police force in the country, couldn't stop the violence. "The suffering, pain, fear that we are seeing now is a reflection of our collective failure. It is not the governments who came out to help; it is the common man in Delhi," he said.

Activists Anjali Bhadrwaj, Annie Raja and Harjit Singh Bhatti also participated in the press conference.

Dr. Harjit Singh Bhatti from the Progressive Medicos and Scientists said there was long delay in the treatment of those who suffered gunshot wounds "because police did not allow private medical help to reach the sites of violence".

"Police were rude.. and because of fear and disbelief, the wounded people were not ready to undergo treatment in government hospitals," the activists claimed.

## Probe conspiracy behind riots: BJP

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Monday led a delegation of BJP MLAs to Raj Niwas and sought a high-level enquiry into the "conspiracy" behind the recent violence in north-east Delhi that led to "heavy loss of precious human lives and property".

Mr. Bidhuri, the BJP said in a statement, submitted a memorandum to L-G Anil Baijal, demanding an in-depth probe into the conspiracy to "once again push Delhi into riots" by spreading "rumours", especially through the social media.

"Mr. Bidhuri emphasised that the rumours spread on Sunday evening were in all possibility the part of the conspiracy," the party said.

## Assembly panel to launch new email

### STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly's 'Committee on Peace and Harmony', after holding a meeting on Monday, said it will soon release a number and email address on which people can forward messages they think can incite violence.

The committee will investigate and forward the messages to law enforcement authorities to file FIRs, said AAP MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj, who is the chairman of the committee.

"If you are part of a WhatsApp group or other chat groups and someone sends a provocative message, then become a whistle-blower by making a complaint about it. The committee will propose that the people based on whose complaint an FIR gets registered should receive a reward of ₹10,000," he said.

## On road to becoming Gurugram's lifeline

Within two years of its launch, the Gurugram city bus service – also known as Gurugaman – is clocking over 88,000 passengers daily on its 154 buses

### ASHOK KUMAR

GURUGRAM

**A**s the bus negotiates its way through traffic at the busy Jharsa Chowk on the Delhi-Gurugram Expressway, commerce student Ashish says he has been availing the city's bus service, Gurugaman, for the past eight months. "Overall, the experience has been good, except for the congestion and some issues with the travel card," adds the 21-year-old student of Delhi's Sri Aurobindo College who commutes from his home in Badshahpur.

Ashish takes route 134-B (IFFCO Chowk and Dhana Mor) – one of the busiest routes for the service – at its point of origin but still fails to find a seat most of the time.

But that does not deter him, what he is most inconvenienced by is the fact that the travel card for the bus service cannot be recharged online. "The point of sale at IFFCO Chowk for recharging remains shut in the afternoon; there is no such facility at Rajiv Chowk," grumbles Ashish.

Even as Ashish recounts his experience, 54-year-old Daljeet Singh, a security guard at a private firm, interjects to add that the fare needs rationalisation.

"While the fare for the first ten stops is ₹10, it doubles to ₹20 for the next ten stops. It would be better if another slab of ₹15 is introduced in between and is increased at the rate of ₹5. It will be more affordable. The public transport is for the convenience of the masses. The government should not aim at making profit from it," he says, while praising the service for its frequency and comfortable seats.

Naveen Ranga, a Munsi at a district and sessions court,

private firm in Manesar's Industrial Model Township (IMT), travels on the route daily. Though the 34-year-old from Andhra Pradesh finds the service "reliable" and "convenient" compared to autorickshaws, he too feels that the fare is bit on the higher side.

"Travelling by the city bus costs around ₹5 more for each trip compared to autos. Workers with meagre earnings still prefer to take autos. Also, a large workforce travels to IMT from Hayatpur village and a bus should run on this route as well," suggests Mr. Rao, while praising the service for its "cleanliness, and courteous staff".

He adds that the new routes introduced around eight months ago has been a boon for the women workforce. "The women working in the factories in IMT Manesar earlier had safety concerns travelling by autorickshaws late in the evening. Now, they feel safe and take the city bus," says Mr. Rao, before he alights at Khandwa Mandi stop.

Bus conductor Vikram Singh admits that only 10-15 passengers daily use travel cards to pay for their trips. "If the passengers pay through the travel card, it is a win-win situation. The customers get a discount, and we do not have to worry about arranging for change," Mr. Singh adds.

Sunil Kumar, who drives a bus on the 28-km-long route – the longest in the service – says passengers mostly prefer to board or deboard at traffic signals and not at the designated stops. "The locations of most of the shelters is such that the passengers do not prefer to stand there," he adds.

Naveen Ranga, a Munsi at a



Commuters board a Gurugram bus.  
■MANOJ KUMAR

### City on the move

**154** total buses    **18** total routes

• The Gurugram city bus service, also called Gurugaman, started on September 2, 2018

• Daily ridership as on Feb. 27, 2020: **88,404** passengers

**High ridership routes:** 134-B (IFFCO Chowk metro station-IMT Manesar (Dhana Mode); 215-B (Gurugram bus stand to Dundahara); 111-A (HUDA City Centre to Subhash Chowk)

**Low ridership routes:** 111-E (Vatika Chowk-Sector 55/56); 254 (Farukhnagar bus stand-Mahaveer Chowk); 255 (Farukhnagar bus stand to Mahaveer Chowk)

• **Passenger weight in**

- **Like**
- High frequency • Comfortable
- Reliable • Safe • Clean
- Courteous behaviour of staff
- Economical

**WEEKLY CUMULATIVE PASSENGER COUNT**

JUNE 16-22, 2019	<b>51,92,505</b>
SEPTEMBER 22-28, 2019	<b>1,00,27,458</b>
DECEMBER 15-21, 2019	<b>1,51,65,481</b>

- Travel cards for the bus service are currently sold and recharged at six points of sale: HUDA City Center metro station, IFFCO Chowk, Krishna Chowk, Gurugram bus stand, Dundahara bus stop and Sector-56. The centres are open from 8 a.m. to noon, and again from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

SOURCE: GURUGRAM METROPOLITAN CITY BUS LIMITED

the morning and evening hours," says Mr. Ranga.

Chief Executive Officer of the Gurugram Metropolitan City Bus Limited, Sonal Goel, says that travel cards are given out for free and efforts are on to provide online recharge facility in the next couple of months. "The GMCLB is in talks with a couple of banks in this regard," she adds.

"They should also introduce air-conditioned buses as well as all-women buses, especially on route 221-D. Around 80 women employees from the court travel by the bus daily. The administration should think about running an all-women bus on this route, especially in

least one more year," says the 2008-batch IAS officer.

"There is no immediate plan to introduce new routes as there are no buses available," adds Ms. Goel, who has travelled on the city buses with her team a couple of times for a first-hand experience since she took over a month ago.

"There were not many complaints, but we felt the need for more cleanliness and behavioural change for the staff," says Ms. Goel, an awardee of Niti Aayog's Women Transforming India-2016.

## Nine Delhi districts had contaminated groundwater in 2019: Jal Shakti Minister

Data presented by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in Rajya Sabha

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Nine districts in Delhi had contaminated groundwater in 2019, according to data presented in the Rajya Sabha on Monday.

In the National Capital Region, which includes parts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh apart from Delhi, at least 30 districts had some form of pollutants in their groundwater, including arsenic, iron, heavy metals such as lead, cadmium and chromium, fluoride, nitrate and salinity, the data showed.

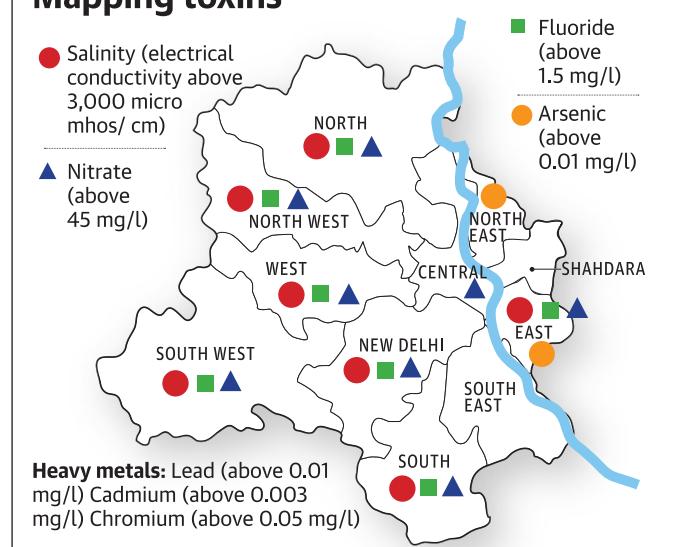
The data was presented by Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written response to a starred question asked by D.P. Vats, a BJP MP and retired Lt. General.

He had asked whether the government was aware of "increasing groundwater pollution" in Delhi-NCR and that what action is being taken to prevent over-exploitation of groundwater in these areas.

In response, the Jal Shakti Minister said that the Central Pollution Control Board's National Water Quality Monitoring Programme did not show any increasing or decreasing trends in Delhi's groundwater pollution levels in 2018 and 2019.

However, the Central Ground Water Board's quality monitoring data for 2019 showed that most districts in the Capital were partially affected by groundwa-

### Mapping toxins



0.01 mg/litre was found in the groundwater of east and north-east Delhi. Iron was not a contaminant in Delhi, but lead was found along the Najafgarh drain in the North, West and South-West districts. Cadmium was found in South-West, while chromium was found in the North-West, South, East and New Delhi districts.

Taking into account the data for all of NCR, 30 districts had high nitrate levels, while 25 districts had high fluoride levels.

### IN BRIEF

#### Five held after encounter with police in Noida

NOIDA

Five criminals were arrested on Monday following an encounter with the Noida Police here and led to the recovery of stolen jewellery worth ₹30 lakh and two cars among other items. The five accused, all from Bulandshahr, were travelling in a stolen car when they were stopped by the police. Two country-made pistols were also seized.

## Details sought on govt. housing

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed the Centre to give details of the government accommodations that have been vacated, re-allotted, and the recovery of dues or penal interest made in respect of illegally occupied residences.

The court also sought the details of the notices issued for vacating the bungalows and for recovery of dues from illegal occupants of the accommodations.

The direction came after the Housing Ministry told the court that of around 565 illegally occupied accommodations, 347 have been vacated and 69 have been re-allotted.

Of the remaining 149, seven were put in another department's pool, in 14 there is a stay against eviction, in 55 which were allotted to Kalmi migrants there is a stay against eviction and 73 units are yet to be vacated, the Ministry told the court.

Govt. of Bihar

Bihar Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd  
(A Govt. of Bihar Undertaking)  
West Boring Canal Road, Rajpur Puri, Patna, Bihar – 800 001  
Tel – 0612-2506109, Fax No - 0612-2506132, Website : <http://buidco.in>

**Corrigendum - 1**

**Extension Of Bid Submission Date**

**Loan No. and Title :** 2861-IND; Bihar Urban Development Investment Program – Tranche-1

This is with reference to the NIT NO. - BUIDCO/PMU/ADB Project) Yo – 217/19 – 10 dated – 08.02.2020, advertisement PR. 15499 (Ni.Ni) 2019-20 for the balance work of BS/WS/01 in 4 groups (Package 1 to 4) Improvement of Water Supply in Bhagalpur Municipal Corporation. Loan No. and Title may be read as 2861-IND, Bihar Urban Development Investment Program – Tranche-1 instead of 3612-IND, Bihar Urban Development Investment Program – Tranche-2. The bid submission date has been extended from 5th March, 2020 to 16th March, 2020 upto 03:00 PM (Monday) & Technical Bid will be opened on the same day at 03:30 PM. For more details like bid queries reply & Addendum please visit our website :- [www.buidco.in](http://www.buidco.in)

**Managing Director**  
BUIDCO

PR. No. 016770 (Ni.Ni) 2019-20  
अयं शास्त्र एवं मारक द्रव्य के सम्बन्ध में शिक्षायत टॉल फ्री नं. 18003456268 या 15545 पर करें।

**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**e-Procurement Notice**

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

1. The Executive Engineer, Karchham Division, HP.PWD, Bhaba Nagar Distt. Kinnaur H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD.

**Sr. No.** **Name of Work** **Estimated Cost** **EMD** **Cost of Tender** **Eligible class of Contractor** **Time allowed**

1.	Up gradation of Shongthong to Barong road km 0/0 to 5/0 SH- C/D. work , P/L BC, G-II and G-III , P/L BC, V-shape drain, parapets and P/F logo sign board etc. Km 0/0 to 5/0) Under NABARD RIDFXXV	Rs. 1,29,90,111/-	Rs. 2,59,900/-	Rs. 5,000/-	B' Class	Eighteen months
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2. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <https://hpptenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: <https://hpptenders.gov.in>. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender

3. Key Dates:-

1. Date of Online Publication	09.03.2020 10:00 HRS

Timings  
DELHI

TUESDAY, MAR. 03	
RISE 06:44	SET 18:23
RISE 11:56	SET 01:08
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 04	
RISE 06:43	SET 18:23
RISE 12:45	SET 02:06
THURSDAY, MAR. 05	
RISE 06:42	SET 18:24
RISE 13:41	SET 03:04

Delhi Weather max min  
Delhi City 28 15  
Safdarjung 28 15  
Palam 28 15

Delhi Palam Today  
28°C Mist/haze during cool morning is likely. Day will be comfortable with mainly sunny sky.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow  
29°C Dry weather with few clouds would continue. Rise in day temperature is likely. Night will be cool. Day will be comfortable.

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THE HINDU  
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# Bhim Army chief meets SBSP president Rajbhar

It triggers speculation of a new political front in U.P.

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

Signalling a possible new anti-BJP front in Uttar Pradesh, Dalit outfit Bhim Army leader Chandrashekhar Azad on Monday met Suhdev Bharatiya Samaj Party president Om Prakash Rajbhar in Lucknow.

While no formal tie-up was announced, both sides pitched for the coming together of OBC and Dalit parties and outfits in U.P. if they wanted to pose a challenge to the BJP, which has over 300 MLAs in the 403-member State Assembly.

**A new equation'**  
After meeting Mr. Azad at a State guesthouse here, Mr. Rajbhar's party in a statement said "a new equation is born in U.P".

The two discussed the 2022 State polls, dilution of reservations and the "oppression" faced by the OBC and Dalit communities under the BJP government, said Arun Rajbhar, general



SBSP president O.P. Rajbhar with Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad in Lucknow on Monday. • PTI

secretary of the SBSP.

"Till we don't come together and fight, the BJP will continue to violate our rights and keep us deprived. All this was discussed," said Mr. Arun.

Ousted from the U.P. Cabinet after the 2019 Lok Sabha results for his criticism of his former ally BJP, Mr. Om Prakash has since then stitched together a front of seven smaller OBC and Dalit-led parties, including former Minister Babu Singh Kushwaha's Jan Adhikar Par-

ty, under the banner of Bhangdihari Sankalp Morcha.

Mr. Arun said it was too early to comment on a formal alliance for the 2022 polls with the Bhim Army, as it was still not a registered political party. He, however, added that the SBSP-led front was open to "all options" to provide a new alternative in the State.

The Bhim Army has indicated that it would soon take the shape of a political party and contest the 2022 polls.

# Punjab Cabinet nod for Lokayukta Bill

New legislation will cover even the CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Cabinet on Monday approved introduction of the Punjab Lokayukta Bill, 2020, which will cover all levels of public functionaries up to the Chief Minister.

The decision, which was taken at a Cabinet meeting held here, will repeal the existing Punjab Lokpal Act, 1996, and the new legislation will be applicable to the Chief Minister, Ministers, non-officials-officials of all the public offices, with the aim of further enhancing governance and checking corruption.

## Probe into allegations

An official statement said the reform measure envisages an autonomous body to inquire into the grievances and allegations against public functionaries in the State, and to make provisions for appointment of Lokayukta and for the matters connected therewith.

"The Lokayukta shall have all the powers of a civil court under the Code of Civil



CM Amarinder Singh

Procedure, 1908. It will also provide for prosecution in case of false complaint. Prosecution of the Chief Ministers and MLAs can be sanctioned only with 2/3rd majority of the House under the new legislation. Further, all sanctions by the Assembly, whether or not permission to prosecute is granted, will be binding on the Lokpal," said the statement.

The Cabinet also announced emergency measures, including setting up of flu corners in all government and private hospitals, to prepare for any exigency arising from COVID-19.

# 8 AMU students among 15 booked

They incited anti-CAA protesters: police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

Fifteen people, including eight students of Aligarh Muslim University, have been booked for instigating protesters participating in anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Aligarh. Some of the students, including Sajid Subhan Rathar, former vice-president of Aligarh Muslim University Students' Union, are from Kashmir.

Shafey Kidwai, spokesperson of AMU, confirmed that Mr. Rathar, a PhD scholar, has been identified on the basis of information given by the police. "The information about the rest is not adequate," he said.

**C** The persons were identified on the basis of local intelligence, CCTVs

MUNIRAJ G.  
Aligarh SSP

garh. "The persons were identified on the basis of local intelligence and CCTV footage, and AMU administration has been informed about it."

Shafey Kidwai, spokesperson of AMU, confirmed that Mr. Rathar, a PhD scholar, has been identified on the basis of information given by the police. "The information about the rest is not adequate," he said.

**Solidarity march**  
Meanwhile, a section of AMU students took out a march on Sunday in solidarity with victims of Delhi violence. The Aligarh Muslim University Teachers' Association has appealed to all employees and pensioners of AMU to donate one-day salary/ pension or an amount of their choice to the riot victims.

## 'BJP leadership is ignoring backwards'

Party MLA praises Cong. govt. policies

SIDHARTH YADAV  
BHOJPAL

BJP MLA Sharad Kol on Monday spoke out against his party alleging its central and State leadership ignored backward communities by precluding them adequate representation at the top. Furthermore, he exhorted the Kamal Nath government for being "pro-poor".

The dissident MLA from Beohari in Shahdol district, Mr. Kol, a former Congressman who last year went against his party along with another MLA while voting on a crucial criminal amendment bill, warned the BJP central leadership in a video released to reporters on Monday: "There is still time to notice this and bring about a balance. Even B.R. Ambedkar has said that the oppressed have the right to equality."

"However, today we are seeing such days in the BJP leading the Central government that from top to bottom only one community is being given importance, which is a matter of concern," he said.

Mr. Kol asked the national leadership of the BJP and the RSS: "Why are you ignoring the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes?"

With MP V.D. Sharma being recently appointed the State BJP president, Mr. Kol

**T**oday we are seeing such days in the BJP that from top to bottom only one community is being given importance, which is a matter of concern

SHARAD KOL  
BJP MLA

pointed out that now the post of president, leader of the opposition (Gopal Bhargava) and whip (Narottam Mishra) all went to members of "one particular community", showing the party's ignorance towards SCs, STs and the other backward classes, which constituted more than 80% of the State's population.

"Without the support of backward communities, forget about forming a government," he cautioned the BJP, "Your existence will be put in danger".

Stating that even in the past the communities did not get opportunities, and the situation remained unchanged, he said, "They have continuously worked with the BJP, which is still ignoring them. It is a matter of concern that the party is taking such decisions. Where do they want to take the party?" Mr. Kol warned the public "will not tolerate this ignorance" if continued.

## Kisan credit card benefits extended to pisciculture

Loans will help to set up fisheries

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

The benefits of Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) have been extended for the first time to those engaged in pisciculture in Rajasthan for providing short-term loans to them, while covering the cost of establishing the fisheries units and their maintenance.

State Animal Husbandry & Fisheries Minister Lalchand Kataria said here on Monday that over 35,000 livestock rearers had been connected with the KCC following the scheme's extension to agri-business, dairy farming and fisheries, in addition to the farmers engaged in traditional agriculture.

Credits obtained through KCC will make available funds for purchasing feed for fish, meeting the cost of power and water and payment of wages to the labour-

**O**ver 35,000 livestock rearers had been connected with the KCC following the scheme's extension

LALCHAND KATARIA  
Animal Husbandry & Fisheries Minister

ers. Mr. Kataria said a campaign had been launched to include more pisciculture unit owners, dairy farmers and animal rearers in the KCC scheme.

**Credit limit extension**  
Those already availing of the scheme's benefit could get the credit limit of their cards extended, the Minister said.

The productivity from rearing fisheries in Rajasthan is above the national average, while the breeding and rearing of fish is also done in tanks, ponds and waterlogged areas in the State.

**New Development initiatives in Uttar Dinajpur District**  
In the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister  
**Mamata Banerjee**  
Inauguration of a Cluster of Projects  
Laying of Foundation Stones and Providing Services

Date: 3 March 2020      Venue: Kaliaganj College Ground      Time: 1-30 p.m.

## Inauguration

- 33/11 KV Power Sub-Stations at Tungidighi in Karandighi Block, Sonapur in Chopra Block and at Lakshania in Raiganj Block
- Kreta Suraksha Bhavan in Raiganj Block and modernization of Karnajora Sports Complex
- 10-bedded Panjipara Primary Health Centre in Goalpokhar-I Block
- Kichuktala Bridge over the Sirni River in Goalpokhar-I Block
- Byarong Bridge on Bhaishvita-Saldighi Road in Chopra Block
- Protection of Embankments: Along right side of the Sudhani River in Karandighi Block, right side of the Kulik River in Raiganj Block, and along the left side of the Sui River in Itahar Block
- From National Highway to Churaman in Itahar Block, from Baligora-Dharampur in Goalpokhar-II Block, from Shibpur Madanpur Pucca Road to Kunorhat Tala in Kaliaganj Block, Thakurbari-Bindol Road in Hemtabad Block, Ramganj-Udrail-Daspara Road in Islampur and Chopra Blocks and Kamalabari Kachimoha Road, Maharaja-Bhatol Road in Raiganj Block
- Water Supply Projects: Shripur, Chandol, Sahavita, Chandanpur, Surul and Pakhuria in Itahar Block, Barua, Maslandapur and Bindol in Raiganj Block, Majispur in Goalpokhar-I Block, Choprabari in Karandighi Block, Mahadebpur in Chopra Block and Majihir in Kaliaganj Block
- Renovation of two roads under Hemtabad Police Station
- Girls' Hostels: Chakulia High School and Manirul Ulum Nizam High Madrasah in Goalpokhar-II Block, Harbhanga High School in Karandighi Block and Rajgram High School in Itahar Block
- Boys' Hostel: I. M. Sirsi Senior Madrasah in Goalpokhar-II Block and Kantirapa High Madrasah in Karandighi Block
- Roads: 1 in Kaliaganj block, 5 in Goalpokhar-II Block, 1 in Karandighi Block, 1 in Raiganj Block and 2 in Chopra Block
- Altogether 8 nos. of Sadhbhab Mandap in Goalpokhar-I and-II, Karandighi, Hemtabad, Itahar, Raiganj, Chopra and Kaliaganj Block
- 31 nos. of Anganwadi Centre, 18 nos. of Computer Room, 7 nos. of Haat Shed 33 nos. of Boundary Wall and 166 nos. of additional classroom in different schools of the District
- 2 nos. of Dining Shed in Kaliaganj Block
- Haat Shed at Sernia in Goalpokhar-I Block and Paharia in Karandighi Block
- Tarangapur Baral Haralal Girls' High School K G B V Hostel in Kaliaganj Block
- Residential Hostel of Dalkhola High School in Karandighi Block
- Roads for the benefit of traders and farmers within the Market Place in Islampur Block
- Command and Control Centre and 5 nos. of Police Response Vehicle in Islampur Police District
- Children's Park at Sheth Colony under the area of Kaliaganj Municipality

## Laying of Foundation Stones

- 33/11 K.V. Power Sub-Station at Kasba in Raiganj Block and at Kanaki in Goalpokhar-II Block
- District Statistical Department at Karnajora in Raiganj Block
- Siksha Bhavan at Karnajora in Raiganj Block
- Re-Construction of Roadway Bridge at Gheragram in Itahar Block
- Bhendabari-Mahapukur Road in Itahar Block and Solpara-Rasakhoa Road in Karandighi and Goalpokhar-II Block
- Altogether 85 Water Supply Projects in different Blocks of the District
- Roads: 1 in Kaliaganj Block, 2 in Raiganj Block and 2 in Itahar Block
- 32 Tubewells and substitution of 16 Running Water and 38 additional class-rooms in Kaliaganj Block
- Substitution of altogether 90 Tubewells in different Blocks of the District
- Concrete roads in Goalpokhar-I, Chopra and Islampur Blocks
- Medical Stores in different Blocks of the District
- Renovation of Raiganj-Kaliaganj-Buniadpur Road in Kaliaganj Block
- Girls' Hostels in Lalganj Lagua High School and Baldibasa High school in Goalpokhar-II Block
- Additional class-rooms and Laboratories in Fatepur C.D. High school in Kaliaganj Block, Majhili High School, Lakshmpur High school and Kaliganj High school in Chopra Block
- Extension of hostels at Bangalbari High School in Hemtabad Block and at Durgapur Girls' school in Itahar Block
- 2 nos. of Community Hall in Goalpokhar-I Block
- Market Complex at Hemtabad Bus Stand
- Renovation of sluice gates of Shaktinagar and Debinagar in Raiganj Block and of Gheragram in Itahar Block

## Providing Services

- Snehalay
- Jay Johar Pension
- Tapashili Bandhu Pension
- Financial Assistance to Karmasathi Scheme
- Kanyasree
- Rupasree
- Gatidhara
- Sabuj Sathi
- Sabujisree
- Swasthya Sathi
- Samajik Suraksha Yojana
- Krishak Bandhu
- Swami Vivekananda Swamirbhar Karma Sangsthan Prakalpa
- Digital Ration Card in Khadya Sathi Prakalpa
- Helping tools for Sarva Siksha Mission
- Helmet
- Power Tiller
- Tools and equipments for artisans
- Fishing net, container and cycle fitted with thermo-insulated box to the fishermen
- Patta
- Anandadhara
- Ambulance
- Amar Dhaan Amar Chatal
- Mahila Samridhi Yojana
- Laghu byabsayee Yojana
- Freehold Title Deed
- Term Loan
- Direct Lending to the Self-Help Groups
- Dwelling House for all
- Crop reaper machine
- Tractor and Rotovator
- Widow Pension
- Grant to Raiganj Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank for infrastructural development

## Dignitaries to be present

- Sri Suvedu Adhikari**  
Hon'ble Minister, Government of West Bengal
- Janab Md. Gulam Rabbani**  
Hon'ble Minister, Government of West Bengal
- Smt. Kabita Barman**  
Hon'ble Sabhadhipati
- Janab Hamidul Rahaman**  
Hon'ble M. L.A.
- Sri Manodeb Sinha**  
Hon'ble M.L.A.
- Sri Amal Acharjee**  
Hon'ble M.L.A.
- Janab Abdul Karim Chowdhury**  
Hon'ble M.L.A.
- Sri Tapan Deb Singh**  
Hon'ble M.L.A.
- Sri Kanaia Lal Agarwal**  
Hon'ble Chairman, Islampur Municipality
- Sri Kartik Chandra Pal**  
Hon'ble Chairman, Kaliaganj Municipality
- Sri Rajiva Sinha**  
Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal

# 'Delhi violence planned genocide'

It was later portrayed as communal riots, says West Bengal Chief Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday called the violence in Delhi a "planned genocide" which was later dubbed as riots.

"Over the past few days the way people have been killed in Delhi, I think it's a planned genocide and it was later portrayed as communal riots," said Ms. Banerjee addressing a gathering of party supporters at the Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata.

Ms. Banerjee also questioned the role of the Delhi police and other agencies during the riots.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson blamed the BJP for the violence and said instead of seeking forgiveness, the party was trying to "capture new territories".

Ms. Banerjee's remarks come a day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's



Mamata Banerjee launching 'Banglar Gorbo Mamata' programme in Kolkata on Monday. ■ PTI

visit to Kolkata where he claimed that the BJP will form the next government in West Bengal with two-thirds majority after the Assembly elections.

Referring to Mr. Shah's claims, she said that in all the States ruled by the BJP, the law and order situation had deteriorated.

"They [BJP] come here and shamelessly say they will capture (kabza) West Bengal. The BJP is trying to

replicate the Gujarat model of riots across India, including in West Bengal. After the Gujarat riots of 2002, they did it in Uttar Pradesh and now Delhi," she added.

Ms. Banerjee also talked about the inflammatory slogans raised by BJP supporters en route to Mr. Shah's rally on Sunday.

## Three arrested

She said three persons have been arrested by the Kolkata police and efforts are on to identify others.

"Those who raised provocative slogans at the BJP rally talked in the language as in Delhi... the language is inflammatory, illegal and demoniac. Legal action will be taken... nobody will be spared," the Chief Minister said.

Emphasising that this was Kolkata, not Delhi, Ms. Banerjee said that it will be the "people who will decide

who is 'gaddar' (traitor) and who is not".

According to the Kolkata police, a case was registered at the New Market police station on a complaint by a city resident.

The police has pressed charges against the accused under sections dealing with promoting disharmony, enmity or feelings of hatred between different groups and criminal intimidation. All the three accused were produced before a city court. While two of them were sent to police custody, one was granted bail.

Ms. Banerjee launched the 'Banglar Gorbo Mama' (Bengal's pride Mamata) campaign. The campaign spread over two months is considered to be a follow-up of 'Didi ke Bolo' (Tell Didi).

Ms. Banerjee also urged party supporters to be "humble" and remain connected with the people.

# Over 1.13 lakh 'doubtful' voters in Assam

680 people declared foreigners being held in six detention centres, says govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The Assam government on Monday said there are more than 1.13 lakh 'doubtful' voters or D-voters in the State while six detention centres are currently holding 680 people declared as foreigners.

Speaking on behalf of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Monday, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary told the Assembly that 4,32,944 cases were registered against suspected foreigners between 1985 and 2019.

"After verification and trials, 1,26,998 people were declared foreigners, 1,18,367 were found to be Indians and 29,890 were deported. At the last count, there were 1,13,738 D-voters in the State.

Bartapur district leads the table with 17,227 D-voters followed by Sonitpur (16,437),



BSF personnel checking a farmer going to his land in the no man's area on the border with Bangladesh in Sonaghat, Assam. ■ FILE PHOTO

Nagaon (9,828) and Dhubri (7,133)," he said.

He added that 221 of these D-voters, a category struck out by the Election Commission, were being housed in the detention centres along with 680 declared foreigners ('D-voters' found to be non-citizens by Foreigners Tribunals).

The Assembly was told on Monday that the 19.06 lakh people excluded from the

applicants were processed.

The NRC exercise cost ₹1,348.1 crore, the Assembly was told.

On the issue of sealing the India-Bangladesh border, Mr. Patowary said only a 4.35 km stretch of the international boundary remains to be fenced. Assam shares a 262 km border with Bangladesh.

## 97% border fenced

"About 97% of the boundary is sealed. Bangladesh has objected to fencing the 4.35 km stretch in Karimganj district, so advanced technology is being employed there," he said.

He added that the State government has requested the Centre to relocate people in eight villages that are outside the barbed-wire fence, erected 150 metres from the "no man's land" or actual boundary line according to international norms.

## Assam mosque vandalised

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Unidentified miscreants on Sunday night vandalised a mosque in western Assam's Baksa district and burnt several Islamic holy books, including the Quran.

Baksa is one of the four districts under the politically volatile Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) where elections are due in April.

The locals and organisations, including the All Bodoland Minority Students' Union, condemned the crime committed at the Kapani Anchalik Mosque and on Monday demanded the arrest of the miscreants within 24 hours.

District Superintendent of Police Thube Pratik Bijoy Kumar said they were probing the incident. "The people have understood that they should maintain calm. The situation is under control now," he said, adding that the locals have been assured about bringing the culprits to book.

BTC chairman Hagrama Mohilary blamed the incident on "elements that want to create unrest" ahead of the elections. "I will demand a CBI probe," he said.

## Whale shark beached at Odisha's Sunapur coast dies

The carcass was buried using a crane after autopsy



The whale shark weighed around 2,000 kilogrammes. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

STAFF REPORTER  
BERHAMPUR

A 14.9-foot-long whale shark which was washed ashore near Sunapur in Odisha's Ganjam district died despite attempts by fishermen to save it.

According to forest officials, the whale shark was found by local fishermen on Sunday. As it was alive then, the fishermen pushed it into the sea. But late Sunday evening, it came to the shore with the high tide and then died.

According to Berhampur Divisional Forest Officer Am-

ilan Nayak, department officials seized the carcass for autopsy.

A veterinary surgeon from Chikiti veterinary hospital conducted the autopsy at Sunapur coast on Monday. Then the carcass was buried with the help of a crane.

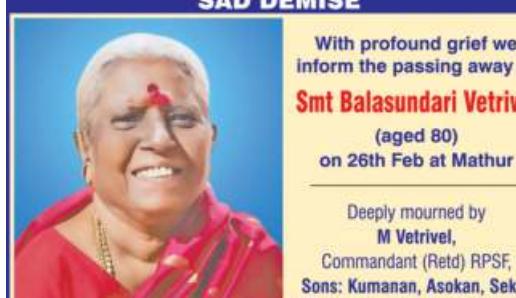
**No food found**  
The whale shark weighed around 2,000 kg. Initial autopsy findings him that it had no food in its stomach, suggesting that it may have been ailing for some time and had stopped taking food.

High tide had swept the

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH

#### SAD DEMISE



With profound grief we inform the passing away of  
**Smt Balasundari Retrivel**  
(aged 80)  
on 26th Feb at Mathur

Deeply mourned by  
**M Retrivel**,  
Commandant (Retd) RPSF,  
Sons: Kumanan, Asokan, Sekar  
Daughters-in-Law & Grandchildren  
Mob: 98402-99479

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Tender Schedule available Time & Date : From 17:00Hrs, 27.02.2020  
Bid Submission Closing Date & Time : up to 12:00Hrs, 19.03.2020.  
For further details visit website: [www.apgenco.gov.in](http://www.apgenco.gov.in) or <https://etender.apgenco.gov.in>.

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DGM (P&C) : NJHPS, SJVN Ltd., Jhakri, Dist. Shimla, HP-172201.

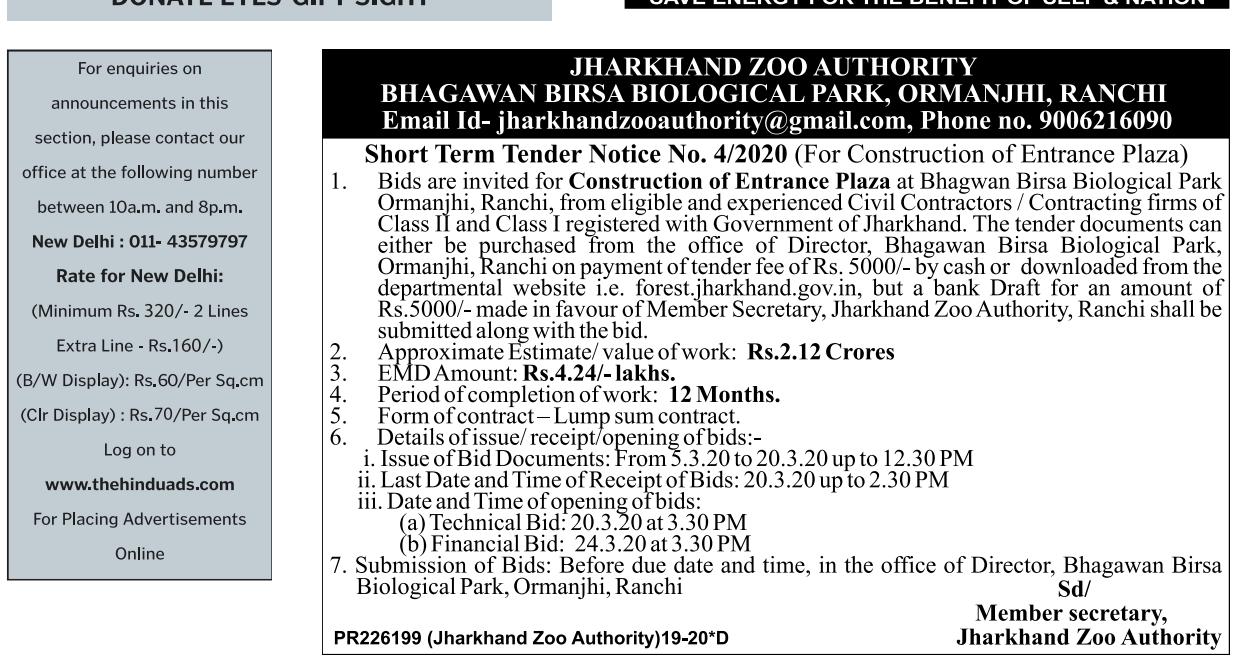
## SAVE ENERGY FOR THE BENEFIT OF SELF & NATION

Short Term Tender Notice No. 4/2020 (For Construction of Entrance Plaza)

- Bids are invited for **Construction of Entrance Plaza** at Bhagwan Birsa Biological Park Ormanjhali, Ranchi, from eligible and experienced Civil Contractors / Contracting firms of Class II and Class I registered with Government of Jharkhand. The tender documents can either be purchased from the office of Director, Bhagwan Birsa Biological Park, Ormanjhali, Ranchi on payment of tender fee of Rs. 5000/- by cash or downloaded from the departmental website i.e. [forest.jharkhand.gov.in](http://forest.jharkhand.gov.in), but a bank Draft for an amount of Rs.5000/- made in favour of Member Secretary, Jharkhand Zoo Authority, Ranchi shall be submitted along with the bid.
- Approximate Estimate/ value of work: **Rs.2.12 Crores**
- EMD Amount: **Rs.4.24/- lakhs.**
- Period of completion of work: **12 Months.**
- Form of contract—Lump sum contract.
- Details of issue/receipt/opening of bids:  
i. Issue of Bid Documents: From 5.3.20 to 20.3.20 up to 12.30 PM  
ii. Last Date and Time of opening of bids:  
    (a) Technical Bid: 20.3.20 at 3.30 PM  
    (b) Financial Bid: 24.3.20 at 3.30 PM
- Submission of Bids: Before due date and time, in the office of Director, Bhagwan Birsa Biological Park, Ormanjhali, Ranchi

Sd/  
Member secretary,

Jharkhand Zoo Authority



**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH**

**SAD DEMISE**

**With profound grief we inform the passing away of  
Smt Balasundari Retrivel  
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# Doubt if govt. can cope with rain damage'

Raju Shetti hits out at MVA govt. for 'floundering' in implementation of crop loan waiver scheme

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

With yet another bout of unseasonal rain ravaging parts of the State, farmers' leader and Swabhimani Paksha chief Raju Shetti has claimed that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government is incapable of dealing with this fresh crisis affecting the rabi crop.

"The scale of the damage wrought by the rain in the past 72 hours is undoubtedly massive. I doubt whether this government has the wherewithal to cope with this as it seems to be floundering in the implementation of its loan waiver scheme announced in December," Mr. Shetti said to *The Hindu*.

Intense rain has been pounding parts of Beed in Marathwada, Akola in Vidarbha, and tehsils in Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara and Solapur in western Maharashtra since Saturday, wreaking havoc on fruit orchards, especially the grape crop, as well as the Rabi sorghum (jowar)



**Flattened:** A farmer checks his wheat crop, damaged by rain, at Kondi village in Solapur on Monday. ■ RAJU SANADI

and chickpea crops.

The former Hatkanangale MP also alleged that officials in the State Revenue Department were in cahoots with their counterparts in companies offering crop insurance and were siphoning off money from farmers.

"While farmers have been bearing the brunt of erratic climatic changes in the past three years, crop insurance firms are making hay with

their corrupt practices. Despite [the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana] gathering evidence of their misdemeanour and submitting it to the government, no action has been forthcoming thus far," Mr. Shetti said, expressing disappointment with the previous and current governments.

The MVA government announced the Mahatma Jyotirao Phule farm loan waiver

scheme on December 21 last year. Last week, it rolled out the first two lists of beneficiaries.

However, Mr. Shetti criticised the slow pace of implementation. "We had gone with the Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress in the elections and then supported the MVA government with the expectation that it would work for the weal of the farmer. However, these hopes have been dashed," Mr. Shetti said.

Meanwhile, Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat and Agriculture Minister Dada Bhuse said district authorities have been directed to ensure that panchamas of the losses are done swiftly so as to decide the compensation.

Echoing Mr. Shetti, BJP State president Chandrakant Patil, too, accused the MVA of inefficiency in dealing with the latest crisis. "This government has yet to compensate farmers for the crop damage suffered in October last year," Mr. Patil said.

## Crops on 2,820 ha hit'

TANVI DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Unseasonal rain in the last few days has caused losses to the rabi crop on 2,820 hectares in 129 villages, Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Wadettiwar told the Legislative Council on Monday.

"I have directed all district collectors to carry out joint panchamas of the losses. We will take immediate steps to help these farmers," he said.

Leader of Opposition Pravin Darekar said, "Panchamas will go on, we have no faith in them. Farmers have still not got compensation for damage from the last unseasonal rain."

# 1,286 farmers ended lives in Vidarbha last year: Minister

242 farmer deaths recorded in State in December alone

TANVI DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Between January and December 2019, as many as 1,286 farmers committed suicide in Vidarbha, while there were 242 suicides in the State in December alone.

Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Wadettiwar informed the Legislative Council of the figures while responding to a query.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi government has repeatedly called farmers' welfare its priority and announced a waiver of loans up to ₹2 lakh soon after coming to power. The government last week released the first two lists of beneficiaries. With the State legislature in session, the Opposition has been trying to corner the government on farmers' issues, calling its measures inadequate.

Parinay Fuke (BJP) had asked the government for information on crop losses, re-

sultant farmers' suicides and the action taken.

In a written response to the House, Mr. Wadettiwar said unseasonal rain has caused losses of 70% of the kharif crop and a significant amount of the rabi crop in Vidarbha and Marathwada. In the 11 districts of Vidarbha,

has disbursed aid to the tune of ₹7,30,936 lakh to 93 lakh farmers.

Sharad Ransipe (Congress) had also raised a query related to farmers' suicides, also demanding to know if there were irregularities worth ₹9 crore in a farmers' welfare scheme.

Mr. Wadettiwar's response read, "Between October 2014 and August 2019, 14,591 farmers committed suicide. In November 2019, 308 farmers committed suicide." However, he said, there were no irregularities.

The first list of farm loan waiver beneficiaries had covered 15,358 farmers, prompting the Opposition to criticise the government for its piecemeal approach.

The government on February 29 announced the second list of 21.82 lakh eligible account holders, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 21.97 lakh.

## 5 die as tempo crashes into them on Mumbai-Pune Expressway

They were standing near exit point close to Khandala

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

In yet another accident along the Mumbai-Pune Expressway, five people standing near an exit point on a stretch near Khandala were crushed to death late on Sunday after a speeding tempo crashed into a

A sixth person who was part of the group sustained grievous injuries after the tempo, whose driver allegedly could not control the vehicle owing to its speed, turned on its side at a sharp bend, police authorities at the Khopoli police station said.

The deceased have been identified as Pradeep Prakash Chole (38); Amol Balaji Chilme (30); Narayan Ram Gundale (27) and his elder brother, Nivruuti (30); and Govind Nalwad (30). The injured person has been identified as Balaji Harishchandra Bhandari (35). All six were from Latur district.

According to the police, the accident occurred sometime between 11 p.m. and midnight on Sunday.

"The six deceased and injured, who worked at the Talegaon MIDC, were travelling on three bikes and were returning from a picnic in Alibaug. They had stopped by the roadside to attend nature's call when tragedy struck," said a police official.

All six were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital by the expressway emergency



The accident spot near Khandala on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway. ■ VISHAL VIKARI

response team. While four of them were declared brought dead on arrival, one succumbed to injuries during treatment.

The use of technology and surveillance equipment notwithstanding, accidents owing to rash driving continue unabated along the expressway.

In November last year, a car rammed into a tanker, killing four people of a family and injuring two more. In that case, the mishap occurred in the morning along the stretch near the Khalapur toll plaza with the driver of the vehicle losing control and ramming into the rear of the stationary HP gas tanker. It was the second major accident to take place on the expressway in less than a month.

Earlier, on November 4, 2019, five people were killed and 30 injured after a private passenger bus turned turtle and fell into a valley near Khandala.

In 2016, the State government had deployed drones for the first time to rein in incidents of rampant lane-cutting and overspeeding on the expressway. A 2018 study by a road safety research firm, JP Research India, said that 38% of the accidents that occurred on the expressway were due to the driver exceeding the 80 kmph limit.

The study, which was based on an analysis of 110 accidents that occurred in the previous year on the expressway, also found that 56% of all accidents occurred between midnight and 9 a.m.

## Govt. committed to resolving Dhangar quota issue, says CM

Opposition creates ruckus over reservation

TANVI DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the government is committed to giving justice to the Dhangar community, after the Opposition raised the issues of the community's pending demand for reservation, in the Legislative Council on Monday.

A special meeting on the matter will be held on Friday.

A question by Ramhari Ranparan (Congress) on the status of reservation to the community came up for discussion in the House on Monday. The community has been demanding reservation, and based on a Tata Institute of Social Sciences report, the State had formed a sub-committee in March 2019 to study the demands.

In his written response, Tribal Development Minister K.C. Padvi said, "The proposal has been sent to the Advocate General through the Law Department for remarks. Further action will be taken based on his remarks. The Home Department has asked for a re-

Many people promised to solve the issue and landed plum positions for themselves. They made their careers, but the community stayed deprived

UDDHAV THACKERAY  
Chief Minister

"The TISS report was presented on March 2, 2019. The CM is here. This is a complex and important issue. I request the CM to give his opinion." Leader of Opposition Pravin Darekar asked for a definite timeline for the decision.

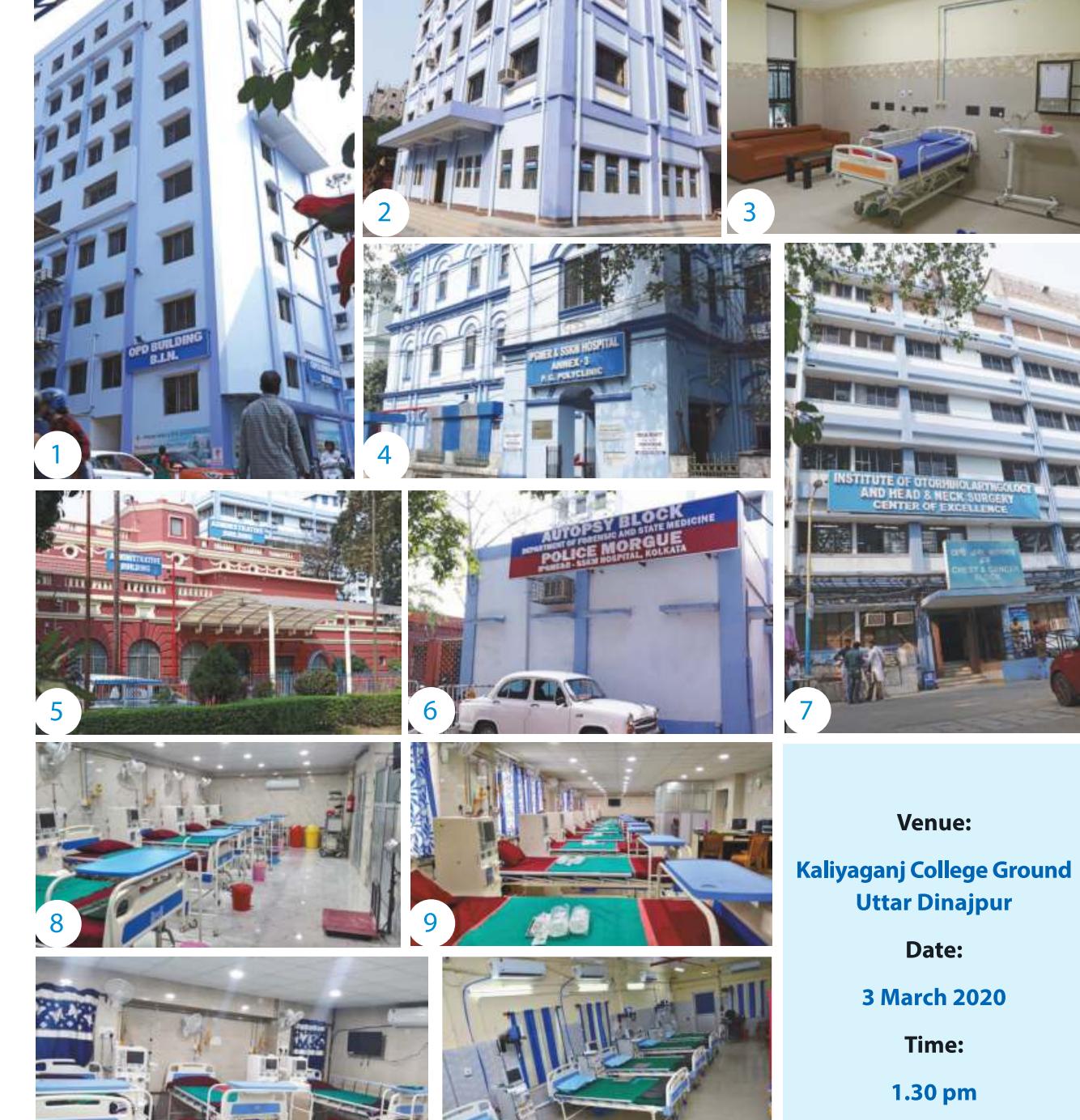
Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anil Parab announced that compounded cases against protesters will be withdrawn, but criminal cases will have to be investigated individually. Chairman Ramraje Nimbalkar directed that a meeting be held in his chambers on Friday.

When the question came up for discussion during Question Hour, the Opposition came down heavily on the government for failing to provide this reservation. Legislators rushed to the well, raising slogans against the government, whereas Maha Vikas Aghadi members asked the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) what it did for the community in its five-year rule. The House was adjourned twice over the issue.

BJP ally Vinayak Mete said,

ICA-492(17)/2020

1



1 G+8 storeyed building for Bangur Institute of Neurosciences, Annexe of SSKM Hospital 2 New OPD Building (B+9 storeyed building, finished up to 3rd floor) at SSKM Hospital 3 Renovated and remodelled Woodburn Block at SSKM Hospital 4 Renovated and remodelled PG Polyclinic with extension of School of Digestive and Liver Disease (SDLD) services at SSKM Hospital 5 Special renovation, remodelling of inside, and exterior facelift of Administrative Building at SSKM Hospital 6 Modernized morgue facility at SSKM Hospital 7 Institute of Otorhinolaryngology and Head & Neck Surgery as Centre of Excellence at SSKM Hospital 8 5-bedded dialysis unit at Baruipur SDH in PPP EOM mode 9 10-bedded dialysis unit at Vidyasagar SGH in PPP EOM mode 10 5-bedded dialysis unit at Garden Reach SGH in PPP EOM mode 11 5-bedded dialysis unit at Katwa SDH in PPP EOM mode

Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of West Bengal

Venue:

Kaliyaganj College Ground  
Uttar Dinajpur

Date:

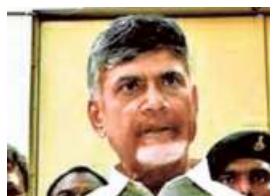
3 March 2020

Time:

1.30 pm

Photo: Mamata Banerjee

## IN BRIEF



DGP summoned over Naidu's detention

GUNTUR  
The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday directed Director-General of Police Gautam Sawang to appear in person before it on March 12 and explain the procedures followed in detaining TDP president and Opposition leader N. Chandrababu Naidu in Visakhapatnam four days ago. A Division Bench gave the ruling on a petition filed by former TDP MLA T. Sravan Kumar, who alleged that the detention was against the established procedure of law.

## Kerala to get condensed milk from Maharashtra

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
A milk co-operative in Maharashtra has agreed to supply condensed milk to the Kerala Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (Milma) to meet the summer milk demand in Kerala. The Godavari Khore Co-operative has agreed to a daily supply of 20,000 litres of condensed milk, an official said. Milma would finalise the deal after a quality check. The condensed milk, with a fat content of 20-25%, would be blended with the milk procured locally, the official said.

## Karnataka seeks Central funds for irrigation works

BENGALURU  
Seeking to fast-track irrigation projects, the Karnataka government has sought "special assistance" from the Centre to complete the pending works to expand the irrigated area, especially in the backward Kalyana-Karnataka region. Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in this regard, sources said. According to an Irrigation Department estimate, the State requires about ₹1.8 lakh crore to complete all irrigation works.



Opposition members protesting in the Legislative Council in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

## Ruckus over Yatnal in Karnataka house

CM forced to cut short his reply

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU  
Bharatiya Janata Party MLA and former Union Minister Basanagouda Patil Yatnal's controversial remarks – describing centenarian freedom fighter H.S. Doreswamy as a "fake" and "Pakistan agent" – sparked bedlam in the Karnataka Assembly on Monday with both the Opposition Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) members staging a dharna in the well of the House, seeking permission to discuss the issue.

The Opposition's protest disrupted Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's reply to the debate on the motion of thanks to the address by Governor Vajubhai R. Vala to the joint session. The Chief Minister had to wind up and restrict his reply to 15 minutes as nothing could be heard in the din.

Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri adjourned the House twice in a bid to restore normalcy before finally adjourning for the day as the Opposition members refused to withdraw their protest.

Earlier, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah raised the issue of "derogatory" remarks by Mr. Yatnal soon after the House paid tributes to three dignitaries who had died recently. But

## Telangana in combat mode after its first COVID-19 case

Techie was in contact with over 80 people, they are being tracked: Minister

K.SHIVA SHANKER RAVI REDDY  
HYDERABAD

After the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Telangana, the State government has started taking steps to prevent the spread of the virus.

The 24-year-old patient, who works for a software company in Bengaluru landed there on February 20 from Dubai, worked there for a day and reached Hyderabad by bus on February 22. In Dubai, he worked along with people from Hong Kong.

Health Minister Eatala Rajender said the man who developed cough and sneezing, consulted doctors at the Apollo Hospital, Secunderabad, as an outpatient and later got admitted there. Based on suspicion, he was referred to Gandhi Hospital.

The Minister said the man was in contact with over 80 people, including the doctors, staff and others at the corporate hospital and 27 passengers in the bus.

## Family members isolated

"The moment National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune report came, we rushed to his residence in Secunderabad and brought all the family members. They are under observation in Gandhi Hospital and their samples are being tested," said a top official.

The Health Department has also contacted all the 27 passengers who travelled by GO Tour Travels and Holidays AC sleeper bus that left Bengaluru at 9 p.m. on February 22. The bus reached Secunderabad at 7.15 a.m. the next day.

The management of the travel agency had shared the list of passengers of the said



Safety first: A dedicated lift for suspected coronavirus cases at the Government Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad on Monday. ■ AP

## Stranded fishermen appeal for help

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Even as the Centre began efforts for the safe return of Indians trapped in COVID-19-hit Iran, several fishermen from Kerala stranded in the west Asian country have made another appeal for help.

The men posted a video on Monday saying that their sponsor had threatened to

cut off their food and gas supplies and mobile phone connections. He reportedly told them that they would not be allowed to return to India unless he was compensated in full.

On Saturday, the fishermen posted a video describing their plight. They wanted the Indian government to evacuate them at the earliest, as they

were running low on food and water.

Meanwhile, it is understood that the men would have to undergo the 28-day observation period, after which the Centre would attempt their release.

On Sunday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan wrote to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar seeking his help.

bus with the Health Department. The officials have asked the passengers to go for self-quarantine.

The Karnataka Health Department too has taken up surveillance measures. "We are trying to track his movement from the time he alighted from the plane in Bengaluru and all those who came in contact with him.

All of them will be home isolated for the next 15 days," said State Joint Director

(Communicable Diseases), B.G. Prakash Kumar.

This apart, 42 persons in Apollo Hospital, Secunderabad are said to have come into contact with the techie, who came for a check-up on February 23.

"For the next three days, he had frequented the hospital till his swine flu test report came out negative," an official said. They were being asked to undergo all relevant tests, he said.

It is understood that two

staff members of the hospital have been brought to Gandhi Hospital with fever and cough.

The patient had travelled by an Indigo flight from Dubai to Bengaluru on February 20 and had worked with 13 colleagues in the Bengaluru office before coming to Hyderabad.

The Health Minister, along with officials, will hold a review meeting with various departments on Tuesday.

+

## Libraries in classrooms: Kerala capital shows way

District panchayat collects eight lakh books for project

STAFF REPORTER  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Thiruvananthapuram district has bagged the distinction of becoming the first in Kerala, and probably one of the few in the country, to establish libraries in all classrooms in public schools.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday made the formal declaration to mark the successful completion of the 'Sargavayana Sampoorna Vayana' project that was undertaken by the Thiruvananthapuram district panchayat.

The civic body amassed eight lakh books that were distributed among 10,681 classrooms in 988 government and aided schools in the district.

Lauding the achievement, the Chief Minister said the initiative had provided a great



New horizons: Schoolchildren performing at a function held in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday to mark the completion of the library project in government schools. ■ S. MAHINSHA

thrust for the General Education Protection Mission that aimed to transform schools across the State.

He said several public schools matched up to global standards with the setting up of computer laboratories

and classroom libraries.

Stressing on the importance of inculcating the habit of reading among youth, Mr. Vijayan said many classrooms were equipped to facilitate reading through books as well as online re-

sources. He said books were a great equaliser that enabled people from various backgrounds to gain knowledge and remain in tune with the changing times.

In his presidential address, Education Minister C.

Ravindranath said all classrooms of public schools across the State would be equipped with libraries by the next academic year. Besides, all classes from 1 to 12 would go hi-tech, thereby enabling the State to become the first one to digitalise its general education sector. With improved connectivity and easy access to a wide array of resources, classrooms were no longer confined within four walls, he added.

## Further boost

District panchayat president V.K. Madhu said the newly established classroom libraries were set to receive a further boost with the District Library Council agreeing to lend sets of books through its wide network of libraries for fixed periods.

The Chief Minister gave away prizes to schools for managing to collect the highest number of books in the lower primary, the upper primary, and the high school and higher secondary school categories.

## A.P. not in list for World Bank water scheme

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA  
Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti and Social Justice and Empowerment Rattan Lal Kataria has said Andhra Pradesh is not in the list of States that benefited from the ₹6,000-crore Atal Bhujal Yojana, partially funded by the World Bank.

Answering an unstarred question raised by leader of the YSR Congress Parliamentary Party V. Vijaya Sai Reddy in the Rajya Sabha, the Minister replied that 8,353 gram panchayats in seven States – Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh – have been selected for the scheme during the period 2020-21 to 2024-25.

## Selection criteria

The Minister said that under the Central Sector Scheme, groundwater resources would be developed and managed sustainably with community participation. The scheme was being implemented with the financial assistance of the World Bank with a sharing pattern of 50:50 between the Government of India and the World Bank.

## Criticality of situation

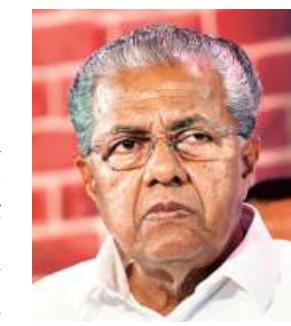
The names of the participating States were decided based on consultation, criticality of groundwater situation, willingness and degree of preparedness, Mr. Kataria said.

Mr. Vijaya Sai Reddy wanted to know why the Rayalaseema region which was water-stressed and the groundwater resources were overexploited was not included in the project.

He also sought the reasons for the exclusion of the drought-prone region, but the Minister's answer was a general one.

## No CBI probe into CAG report on police purchases: Pinarayi

Opposition forces adjournment of Assembly proceedings



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Members of the Opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) forced an adjournment of the Kerala Assembly on Monday with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan turning down their demands for a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) observations on the purchases made in connection with police modernisation and removal of State Police Chief Loknath Behera.

Congress legislator P.T. Thomas, who sought leave of the House to move an adjournment motion on the issue, alleged that the purchases were in violation of the Central Vigilance Commission and Store Purchase Manual norms. There was graft in the purchases for ₹300 crore and it should be probed by the CBI. If Mr. Vijayan refuses to remove Mr.

Mr. Vijayan clarified that

Behera and order an inquiry, it may give rise to a feeling that he too abetted the graft, Mr. Thomas said.

## CM's reply

Mr. Vijayan, in his reply, said the CAG report would be examined by the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and an action taken report would be tabled. No probe would be conducted ahead of this transparent process as it would amount to undermining the PAC.

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Based on the government explanation, Speaker P. Sreeramakrishnan denied leave for the notice. The Opposition members then trooped to the well of the House and shouted slogans. After completing the day's business, Mr. Sreeramakrishnan adjourned the House.

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"I wanted to be successful and cannot depend on this job. I want to own a company, but all my plans failed. Please forgive me, father," said Mr. Yadaiah quoting his son's letter.

(Dial +91466202000 or 66661111 to reach suicide intervention centre - Roshni)

+ A techie, wife and two children found dead in Hyderabad

STAFF REPORTER  
HYDERABAD

A techie, his wife and their two sons, including a toddler, were found dead at their residence at Hastinapuram in LB Nagar on the eastern fringes of the city on Monday morning.

The Rachakonda police said the 36-year-old techie, K. Pradeep Kumar, administered poison to his wife and their sons, aged six and one-and-a-half years, before resorting to the extreme step.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Kumar had in-

curred heavy debt and decided to end his life. He was at a senior position in IBM - India, while his wife Swati, 28, was a homemaker.

According to the police, the incident took place on Saturday night and came to light only on Monday morning when their parents and the police broke open the door and found them dead.

Swati's parents said their daughter was unaware of any suicide pact. "I spoke to her on Saturday morning while she was taking the elder son to school and she

+ sounded normal," said Swati's mother Pushpalatha.

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## A.P. HC strikes down GO on quota in civic polls

STAFF REPORTER  
GUNTUR

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday struck down GO Ms no 176, which has fixed reservation for BCs/SCs/STs at 59.85 %, in the local body elections.

Further, the court asked the State government to furnish within four weeks the new quota without exceeding the 50% cap.

A Division Bench headed by Chief Justice J.K. Maheswari also declared *ultra vires* the Panchayat Raj Act.

In January, the Supreme Court stayed the GO stating that reservation cannot exceed 50%.

It had asked the High Court to decide on the matter within four weeks from the date of the stay order –

January 20.

With this judgment, holding of local body elections has hit a roadblock again. Intermediate examinations are set to begin from March 4 and later Class 10 examinations and the government machinery would be preoccupied with them.

The government had issued the GO on January 28, 2019, fixing 59.85 % – 34 % for BCs, 19.08 % for SCs, and 6.77 % for STs.

Earlier, Birru Prathap Reddy and others filed a public interest litigation petition in the Supreme Court challenging the Andhra Pradesh government's move to fix reservation at 59.85% for local bodies on the ground that it is against the apex court's decision.

IN BRIEF



**Farmers turn to solar energy for pest control**

KOTTAYAM  
Paddy farmers in Kerala are now harnessing solar energy to get rid of pests that have infested their fields. Solar light traps comprise a stand with a vessel, besides a solar panel and an LED bulb. The light attracts the insects that die after falling into the homemade insecticide kept in the vessel.

**BJP MLA prescribes cow dung for COVID-19**

GUWAHATI  
A BJP legislator in Assam has claimed to have found in cow dung a cure for COVID-19 that has killed thousands in China, South Korea and elsewhere across the globe. Suman Haripriya, who represents the Hajo constituency, also says there are reasons to believe that 'gomutra' (cow urine) can be an antidote for cancer.

**Army rescues 111 people in Arunachal Pradesh**

GUWAHATI  
Soldiers of the Indian Army have rescued 111 civilians trapped in snow and sub-zero conditions at 14,000 feet in Arunachal Pradesh. The operation to rescue the people, including women and children in 70 vehicles, started on the late night of February 29 and ended on the early morning of March 1.

**Onion export to resume from March 15**

NEW DELHI  
The Centre will allow the export of onions from March 15, according to the Directorate General of Foreign Trade. The move comes in the wake of a bumper harvest that is likely to push down prices of the kitchen staple. The decision has been taken in the interest of farmers, said Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

# Delay in hanging shows failure of system: Nirbhaya's mother

'I lose hope every day but I stand tall every day'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI



**Resolute face:** Nirbhaya's mother speaking to the media in Delhi on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Delhi gangrape victim Nirbhaya's mother on Monday said no matter what the convicts did, they would be hanged for their crime, after a Delhi court deferred the execution of the death penalty in the case till further orders.

"This shows the failure of our system. The whole world is watching how justice is being delayed in India," she told reporters.

It is the third time that the hanging of the four convicts has been deferred.

Nirbhaya's mother said she "loses hope every day" but the convicts will be hanged no matter what they do.

"I lose hope every day but I stand tall every day. They would have to be hanged. There could not have been a worse case than Nirbhaya but still I am struggling to get

justice. The courts are sitting and watching the drama," she added.

**Prison preparation**

Delhi's Tihar Jail authorities had made all necessary preparations for the hanging of the four convicts, officials said on Monday.

"We had made all the necessary arrangements for the execution of the four

convicts which was scheduled for Tuesday at 6 a.m. Now, the execution has been postponed and we are waiting for the further order by the court," a senior jail official said.

"We had checked the ropes. The hangman was called and dummy executions were carried out," another senior jail official said.

Barring Pawan Gupta, the other three – Mukesh Kumar Singh, 32, Vinay Kumar Sharma, 26, Akshay Kumar Singh, 31, had in the previous weeks moved curative petitions and mercy pleas, all of which were dismissed.

The first date of execution – January 22 – fixed on January 7, was postponed by the court to February 1. But on January 31, the court indefinitely postponed the hanging. On February 17, the court again issued fresh date for execution of death warrants for March 3.

However, the Delhi government on Monday recommended rejecting mercy petition of Pawan Gupta.

Sources said that the Delhi government made the recommendation just a few minutes after it received the mercy petition from the Union Home Ministry. "The Delhi government has recommended rejecting mercy petition of Pawan Gupta.

The file has now been sent to Lt Governor Anil Baijal for his recommendation," a source said.

## Sharp decline in PSB fraud amount, Centre tells Parliament

A searchable database of frauds reported by banks has been set up to enable mitigation of fraud risk

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Comprehensive steps taken to curb fraud in public sector banks (PSBs) have resulted in a sharp decline in the amount involved, from ₹50,329 crore in 2013-14 to just ₹3,781 crore in the first three quarters of 2019-20, according to the Finance Ministry.

An online searchable database of frauds reported by banks, in the form of Central

Fraud Registry, has been set up to enable timely identification, control and mitigation of fraud risk and for carrying out due diligence during the credit sanction process, the Ministry said in response to a question in the Lok Sabha.

The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act is being invoked to attach and confiscate the assets of violators and strip them of the entitlement to defend any civil claim.

The PSBs have been told to get certified copies of passports of promoters and directors and other authorised signatories of companies availing themselves of loan facilities of more than ₹50 crore. They also have been advised to decide on publishing photographs of wilful defaulters as per procedure.

The government has also asked these banks to strictly ensure rotational transfer of officials to mitigate the possibility of their involvement in any fraud. The bank heads have been empowered to issue requests for opening look-out circulars against suspects.

**Inoperative companies**

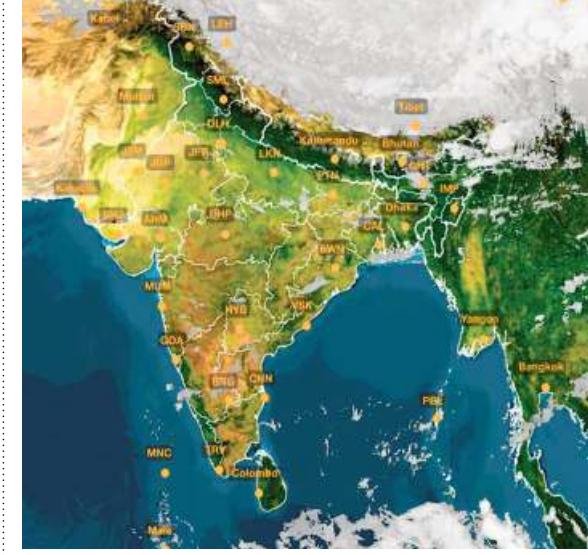
"For enforcement of auditing standards and ensuring the quality of audits, the government has established the National Financial Reporting Authority as an inde-

pendent regulator... bank accounts of 3.38 lakh inoperative companies have been frozen," said the government.

The Ministry, in reply to another question, said over 21,000 instances of fraud related to ATMs, debit/credit cards and Internet banking, involving about ₹128 crore, were reported by the commercial banks and select financial institutions from October to December 2019.

**WEATHER WATCH**

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

**Forecast for Tuesday:** Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.6	16.3	Kozhikode	—	34.4	26.2
Ahmedabad	—	34.4	17.4	Kurnool	—	36.5	24.6
Aizawl	—	21.9	11.0	Lucknow	—	29.5	16.0
Alahabad	—	32.0	15.5	Madurai	—	36.6	23.5
Bengaluru	—	30.6	20.4	Mangalore	28.1	35.0	23.0
Bhopal	3.8	31.2	18.4	Mumbai	—	30.7	17.0
Bhubaneswar	—	33.4	18.2	Mysuru	8.2	32.9	20.0
Chandigarh	—	26.3	12.1	New Delhi	—	28.2	14.6
Chennai	—	32.2	17.7	Patna	—	—	—
Coimbatore	—	34.1	23.2	Port Blair	—	30.6	24.2
Dehradoon	—	—	—	Puducherry	—	31.8	23.0
Gangtok	31.4	14.6	8.1	Pune	—	33.4	16.1
Goa	—	33.6	21.8	Raipur	—	—	17.4
Guwahati	—	31.8	14.8	Ranchi	—	28.4	15.0
Hubballi	—	32.0	22.0	Shillong	—	19.5	8.5
Hyderabad	9.2	33.6	21.0	Shimla	1.3	16.6	5.7
Imphal	—	27.6	10.9	Srinagar	—	17.7	1.9
Jaipur	—	—	—	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.5	25.0
Kochi	—	31.8	26.2	Tiruchi	—	35.3	22.9
Kohima	—	24.2	14.4	Vijaywada	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	—	—	Visakhapatnam	—	31.0	22.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

Yesterday

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	85	78	41	.97	.124	■■■
Bengaluru	—	31	76	103	.114	■■■
Chennai	52	25	63	.115	—	■■■
Delhi	24	72	78	.285	.226	■■■
Hyderabad	—	54	46	.105	.109	■■■
Kolkata	15	53	23	.305	.182	■■■
Lucknow	4	57	68	.225	—	■■■
Mumbai	12	52	55	.171	.193	■■■
Pune	64	23	88	.110	.94	■■■
Visakhapatnam	—	—	44	—	—	■■■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 256 indicating a hazardous level of pollution.

In contrast, Khanna, Punjab recorded a healthy AQI score of 42

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

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**NO<sub>x</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

## After tax deduction shocks veterans, MoD tries to fix issue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Several veterans entitled to disability pensions had a shock when they received just a few hundred rupees in their bank accounts as pension for the month of February.

This was due to an order by the Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (PCDA), Allahabad, to deduct tax on disability pensions despite assurances to the contrary

## Hackers may have access to your smart device

Cybersecurity firm blames Wi-Fi chips



The device is prone to threats when it faces disconnection with network.

Retina 13-inch 2018, Google Nexus 5, 6, and 6s, Samsung Galaxy S4 GT-19505, Samsung Galaxy S8 and Xiaomi Redmi 3s, as well as some WiFi access points by Huawei and Asus.

ESET, a Slovak cybersecurity firm, has for the last one year been working in collaboration with manufacturers of two specific WiFi chips, which were found to have been vulnerable to attack by hostile parties.

**Problem plugged**

The manufacturers have since released for all the vulnerable devices security patches that users can install to address the vulnerability.

ESET discovered that WiFi chips manufactured by Broadcom and Cypress had the Kr00k vulnerability.

ESET said the devices that tested positive for the vulnerability include the Amazon Echo (2nd generation), Amazon Kindle (8th generation), Apple iPad mini 2, Apple iPhone 6, 6s, 8 and XR, Apple MacBook Air

## Pension scheme fails to take off

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Just over 34,000 people have signed up for the National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons, which was introduced on September 12, 2019, Union Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar informed the Lok Sabha on Monday.

The Labour Ministry's vision document in 2019 had set a target of 25 lakh enrolments for the scheme in 2019-2020. Retail traders, shopkeepers and self-employed persons who are between 18 and 40 years of age and have an annual turnover of ₹1.5 crore or less are eligible for the scheme.

BJP MP Saumitra Khan had sought to know whether the number of enrolments had been below the government's expectations.

"As the scheme has been launched on September 12, 2019, only, the scheme is being popularised



## Safeguard undermined

Delhi govt's policy decision to grant sanction to prosecute in all cases is questionable

The law on granting sanction for prosecution imposes a duty on the government concerned to apply its mind to the facts of each case and render a decision based on its assessment whether, *prima facie*, a case has been made out. The process cannot be based on a uniform policy. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) regime's justification that it cleared the prosecution of former JNU students' union leader Kanhaiya Kumar and others on charges of sedition and conspiracy because it adopts a policy of non-interference in judicial matters is completely unacceptable. Superior courts have repeatedly stressed that giving sanction is not a mechanical process, but requires application of mind. The government is required to decide whether there is enough material to conclude that the speech or slogans had a tendency to create public disorder or contained incitement to violence. The prior sanction norm is a vital procedural safeguard against frivolous prosecution. The sanction requirement has seen criticism only in corruption cases, as the power could be used to shield corrupt public servants. However, the sanction contemplated by Section 196 of the CrPC, for "offences against the state" in the Indian Penal Code, as well as "conspiracy" to commit them, is different. Such sanction is also needed for Section 153A (promoting enmity between different groups) and Section 295A (malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings). The reason is that a police officer's understanding of the offence should be subject to the government's scrutiny so that these provisions are not unlawfully used against free speech.

In reducing its role to a policy that only the judiciary can decide the case on merits, the Delhi government has done a disservice to those charged with the serious offence under Section 124A. Mr. Kumar and nine others were booked for allegedly supporting "seditious" slogans raised during an event at JNU on February 9, 2016. The Delhi police filed a charge sheet in January 2019. There was criticism from the ruling BJP that the AAP government was delaying the grant of sanction. There was a court deadline for the regime to give its decision. However, this did not mean that it was asked to accord sanction mechanically. After video footage purportedly showing the students raising "anti-India" slogans was found to be doctored, one would have thought the NCT government would be wary of endorsing the police claim. Moreover, the decision goes against the emerging body of opinion that the sedition provision needs to be revisited, if not scrapped altogether. The political narrative behind the belated grant of sanction may be that Mr. Kejriwal and his party might not want to concede the nationalistic space entirely to the BJP. What is of greater concern is that its action may end up legitimising the imaginary construct that these students and their supporters constitute a 'tukde tukde' gang bent on breaking up the country.

## Bottom or mirage?

While data revisions have lifted first-half growth, actual numbers reveal a softening

Official estimates of gross domestic product for the fiscal third quarter have pegged growth in the festival demand-filled October-December period at 4.7%, a distinct slowdown from the revised year-earlier and preceding quarters' 5.6% and 5.1% paces respectively. Manufacturing, which contributes just under a fifth to gross value added (GVA), was the biggest drag posting a 0.2% decline and extending the sector's contraction into a second straight quarter. Output at electricity and allied utility services also shrank 0.7%, reflecting lack of demand from becalmed factories. And activity in construction, a generator of orders for goods from cement to steel, softened worryingly to a 0.3% expansion, prolonging the industry's slowdown for a third consecutive quarter. However, agriculture and the three largest services sectors, including public administration and defence, shored up overall GVA, with farm output expanding by 3.5% and the government-centred services growing by 9.7%, according to NSO estimates. The Centre was quick to assert that the economy appeared to have "bottomed out", with the Economic Affairs Secretary citing an improvement in output at the eight core industries as an uptick in momentum. To be sure, overall growth at the eight industries that include coal, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity averaged 2.2% in January, propelled by an 8% increase in coal production. And the survey-based IHS Markit India Manufacturing PMI for February pointed to an improvement in manufacturing, clearly a positive augury.

Still, a closer look at the actual numbers for private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) and gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) – key components of GDP – across the three quarters belies hope that the economy is out of the woods. While a downward revision of data for 2018-19 have lent a statistical boost of 0.6 percentage point to the first and second quarter GDP growth estimates, disconcertingly the second-quarter PFCE and GFCF figures have been revised downward from what was projected earlier. And of concern is the second successive contraction in capital formation. GFCF shrank 5.2% in the third quarter, after declining 4.1% over July-September, signalling that investment activity is just not recovering, the government's corporate tax cuts notwithstanding. Consumption spending too remains palpably soft with the pace of growth for all three quarters lagging the year-earlier levels even after the revision. With automobile sales still floundering, the RBI's consumer confidence survey pointing to a fall in non-essential consumption and the coronavirus outbreak's impact on global demand yet to be factored in, the bottom may still be some distance away.

# The message from Delhi

More than mere 'communal violence', the recent events mark a disturbing turning point in contemporary Indian politics



SATISH DESHPANDE

**D**espite surface similarities, what happened in Delhi last week was not a "riot", at least not what we used to mean by that term. Nor is it accurately described by other old-fashioned terms such as "communal violence" or "pogrom". The truth is that we do not have a single word or phrase yet that can name this phenomenon, because it is really the newest stage of an ongoing project rather than a stand-alone event. Before discussing this project, it may be helpful to note some of the reasons why older descriptions do not fit.

### Graphic depictions

If the 2002 riots of Gujarat were our first in the age of the mobile phone, the rampaging mobs of Delhi have scripted India's first encounter with public violence in the era of the smart phone. Despite the inevitable risk of fakery, this is undoubtedly the first time that copious audio-visual documentation of wholesale violence has emerged almost immediately. Video clips of horrific acts of wanton cruelty are criss-crossing social media, speaking eloquently of the unspeakable. Deeply shocking as these images are, their effect is even more stunning. Graphic depictions of inhumanity have not elicited remorse or changed minds; rather, they have deepened biases and hardened stances. At least this is how it seems a week later.

One explanation for this is the

media, particularly television and digital platforms. Our society has never been as media saturated, nor have our media been as blatantly one-sided as they are now. The bulk of the electronic media are strongly and blindly supportive of the ruling party and the government, and they fawn on the Prime Minister, who can do no wrong in their eyes. Even when confronted with damning evidence, the so-called "godi" (or lapdog) media finds ways to defend the indefensible, the more aggressive elements even going on the offensive with "alternative facts".

But the major part of the explanation lies elsewhere, and is far more important. The Delhi violence and its aftermath point to the truth that, today, a large mass of people have been injected with hate and inoculated against all antidotes. Such people are convinced that they already have all the facts they need. They are programmed to regard arguments against their worldview as proof of a conspiracy against it. Their staunch beliefs are not random perversions, or a legacy from the past. They are the fruit of long and painstaking ideological work at the grass roots. How to counter this work and undo its effects is the central question of our time.

### The Shaheen Bagh model

Another striking difference from the major riots of the past is the absence of a clear and commensurable provocation; 1984 had the assassination of a Prime Minister by her Sikh bodyguards as the trigger, while 2002 had the Godhra train deaths attributed to Muslims. The year 2020 has nothing comparable, except the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, or the CAA, and the Na-

tional Register of Citizens (NRC) iconised by Shaheen Bagh. More an inspiring model than a place, Shaheen Bagh is quite exceptional as a provocation for unrestrained brutality and killings. It is a peaceful protest led by women of all ages including the elderly; it constantly invokes nationalist symbols, speaks a non-sectarian language, and adopts the Preamble to the Constitution as its manifesto. Spreading quickly (albeit unevenly) across much of the country, the Shaheen Bagh model of protest is the first significant political challenge faced by the Modi-Shah duo since their rise to power in 2014.

No matter how annoying these

protests were to daily commuters,

and regardless of the local conflicts between rival groups of activists, there was nothing here to justify the organised looting, arson and murder that ensued. The argument that this was Delhi's "punishment" for rejecting the ruling party in the recent Delhi Assembly election is an inadequate explanation because the loss did not matter a great deal in the larger scheme of things. The acts of omission and commission of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) both before and specially after the violence point to another major truth about contemporary politics. It is one of the most significant achievements of the Modi-Shah project that no

major party is willing to take even the slightest risk of appearing to be pro-Muslim today.

### Game-changing point

This argument can be taken further. The Delhi violence may mark a decisive turning point in the post-2019 phase of the Modi-Shah project when the nationalist-cum-anti-Muslim agenda has generated enough momentum to break free of electoral compulsions. If true, this is a momentous event. It implies that the Hindu-majoritarian agenda has won the political battle so decisively that it can even afford to lose elections. In other words, elections will be won or lost on "lesser" local or current issues, but both winners and losers will support Hindu-majoritarianism.

Seen from the reverse angle, this

means that challenges to Hindu-majoritarianism can only be staged outside of electoral politics.

But the Modi-Shah project is more than and different from a Hindu-majoritarian agenda. This distinction is vital because it is the only ray of hope for those who oppose both.

Put simply, the Modi-Shah project is a deeply authoritarian two-man bid for capturing and retaining power that is riding two horses simultaneously, namely crony corporatism and Hindu-majoritarianism. Only after its second consecutive landslide win in 2019 has the Modi-Shah duo acquired enough leverage to become the dominant partner vis-à-vis its allies, but it still needs both. Sites of probable friction between the dynamic duo and each of their two allies, or between the allies themselves, are the most productive sites for mounting a challenge to the Modi-Shah project itself.

The daunting but urgent task is



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to begin mapping these sites in concrete political terms. Frankly, this is uncharted territory, and the success of the Modi-Shah project has transformed the landscape. Challengers must contend with the almost complete subversion of all the institutions that are constitutionally designed to protect and nurture precisely this kind of democratic contestation, including the judiciary, the police, the bureaucracy, the media, universities, and even data-gathering organisations.

### Looking inwards

In the last analysis, Delhi 2020 is different from earlier instances of "communal violence" for two main reasons. First because it marks the launching of a sophisticated campaign to "Dalitise" Muslims, a story that cannot be told here. Second, because it identifies a turning point in contemporary Indian politics. The clearest signs that we may arrived at this point came not during but after the violence. A message was hidden in the decided lack of regret and in the shocking continuity of the same voices shouting the same slogans (including "goli maaro"), now calling it a "peace march". In the language of map apps, this message said that the mindset called "Hindu Rashtra" may no longer be our destination – it may have become our current location.

There is a crucial question that we Indians should be asking ourselves before it is too late, particularly the vast majority who identify, or are identified by others, as Hindus. Is this really what we want?

Satish Deshpande teaches Sociology at Delhi University. The views expressed are personal

## Pushing the wrong energy buttons

The idea of India importing nuclear reactors is a zombie one with serious concerns about their cost and safety



M.V. RAMANA & SUVRAT RAJU

**F**or more than a decade, no major meeting between an Indian Prime Minister and a U.S. President has passed without a ritual reference to India's promise made in 2008 to purchase American nuclear reactors. This was the case in the latest joint statement issued during U.S. President Donald Trump's first official two-day visit to India (February 24-25), which stated that "Prime Minister Modi and President Trump encouraged the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited and Westinghouse Electric Company to finalize the technocommercial offer for the construction of six nuclear reactors in India at the earliest date".

### Red flags in the U.S. deal

Because of serious concerns about cost and safety, the two organisations should have been told to abandon, not finalise, the proposal.

Indeed, it has been clear for years that electricity from Ameri-

can reactors would be more expensive than competing sources of energy. Moreover, nuclear reactors can undergo serious accidents, as shown by the 2011 Fukushima disaster. Westinghouse has insisted on a prior assurance that India would not hold it responsible for the consequences of a nuclear disaster, which is effectively an admission that it is unable to guarantee the safety of its reactors.

The main beneficiaries from India's import of reactors would be Westinghouse and India's atomic energy establishment that is struggling to retain its relevance given the rapid growth of renewables. But Mr. Trump has reasons to press for the sale too. His re-election campaign for the U.S. presidential election in November, centrally involves the revival of U.S. manufacturing and he has been lobbied by several nuclear reactor vendors, including Westinghouse, reportedly to "highlight the role U.S. nuclear developers can play in providing power to other countries".

Finally, he also has a conflict-of-interest, thanks to his son-in-law and adviser, Jared Kushner, who accompanied him during the India visit.

In 2018, the Kushner family's real-estate business was bailed out by a Canadian company that in-

vested at least \$1.1-billion in a highly unprofitable building in New York. Earlier that year, Brookfield Business Partners, a subsidiary of that Canadian company, acquired Westinghouse Electric Company. It violates all norms of propriety for Mr. Kushner to be anywhere near a multi-billion dollar sale that would profit Brookfield enormously.

What renewables can offer

Analysts estimate that each of the two AP1000 units being constructed in the U.S. state of Georgia may cost about \$13.8 billion. At these rates, the six reactors being offered to India by Westinghouse would cost almost ₹6 lakh crore. If India purchases these reactors, the economic burden will fall upon consumers and taxpayers. In 2013, we estimated that even after reducing these prices by 30%, to account for lower construction costs in India, the first year tariff for electricity would be about ₹25 per unit. On the other hand, recent solar energy bids in India are around ₹3 per unit. Lazard, the

Wall Street firm, estimates that wind and solar energy costs have declined by around 70% to 90% in just the last 10 years and may decline further in the future.

### How safe?

Nuclear power can also impose long-term costs. Large areas continue to be contaminated with radioactive materials from the 1986 Chernobyl accident and thousands of square kilometres remain closed off for human inhabitation. Nearly a decade after the 2011 disaster, the Fukushima prefecture retains radioactive hotspots and the cost of clean-up has been variously estimated to range from \$200-billion to over \$600-billion.

The Fukushima accident was partly caused by weaknesses in the General Electric company's Mark I nuclear reactor design. But that company paid nothing towards clean-up costs, or as compensation to the victims, due to an indemnity clause in Japanese law. Westinghouse wants a similar arrangement with India. Although the Indian liability law is heavily skewed towards manufacturers, it still does not completely indemnify them. So nuclear vendors have tried to chip away at the law. Instead of resisting foreign suppliers, the Indian government has tacitly supported this process.

Starting with the Tarapur 1 and 2 reactors, in Maharashtra, India's experiences with imported reactors have been poor. The Kudankulam 1 and 2 reactors, in Tamil Nadu, the only ones to have been imported and commissioned in the last decade, have been repeatedly shut down. In 2018-19, these reactors produced just 32% and 38%, respectively, of the electricity they were designed to produce. These difficulties are illustrative of the dismal history of India's nuclear establishment. In spite of its tall claims, the fraction of electricity generated by nuclear power in India has remained stagnant at about 3% for decades.

The idea of importing nuclear reactors is a "zombie idea" that, from a rational viewpoint, should have been dead long ago. In fact an earlier plan to install AP1000s in Mithi Virdi, Gujarat was cancelled because of strong local opposition. In 2018, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani declared that the reactors "will never come up" in Gujarat. The Prime Minister should take a cue from his own State and make a similar announcement for the rest of the country.

M.V. Ramana and Suvrat Raju are physicists with the Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace. The views expressed are personal



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## 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.

### Bullet points

Apropos the report "No minority in Bengal will lose citizenship due to CAA":

Shah" (March 2), it is

unbelievable that pro-CAA

BJP workers, carrying party

flags, had the gall to shout

the *goli maro* (shoot to

death) slogan *en route* to

Shaheed Minar grounds in

Kolkata, where Home Minister Amit

Shah addressed a

gathering. Significantly, top

officials of the Kolkata

Police, who were present at

the scene, stood as

spectators and the

vociferous State Chief

Minister, who also holds the

home portfolio, went

incommunicado. Mr. Shah's

assurance is misleading

since a heavily biased Act

that grants refuge on the

basis of religion adds to an

ominous trend to further

the BJP's own political

ideology of Hindutva.

S.S. PAUL,

Chakdaha, Nadia, West Bengal

■ Slogans emerging from a

political party's meetings can

foretell a thing or two about its

ideological trajectory. The

recent slogans emanating from the BJP's rallies do not leave anything to imagination as regards its proximate priorities. If the actions of the regime in Delhi is any indication, it is futile to expect that law enforcement agencies will

# Return to chaos in Afghanistan?

An intra-Afghan dialogue should have preceded the Doha deal



D. SUBA CHANDRAN

The U.S.-Taliban deal in Doha will probably lead to another civil war in Afghanistan, instead of a lasting peace. The deal should have followed an intra-Afghan dialogue between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah. Instead, it expects that an intra-Afghan dialogue will follow, leading to peace and stability. An intra-Afghan dialogue has been elusive since the establishment of the Afghan High Peace Council in 2010 by then President Hamid Karzai.

At the most, the Doha deal is likely to provide a face-saving exit for the U.S. and an electoral trump card for U.S. President Donald Trump. It will also legitimise the Taliban as a political actor in Afghanistan.

#### The beneficiaries

President Trump desperately wanted to seal this deal. His primary objective is not to ensure stability in Afghanistan by making the Taliban a stakeholder in any future political framework; instead, it is domestic. Mr. Trump wants to be seen as the deal-maker who brought American troops back home and ended the longest U.S. war. And he wants this before the U.S. presidential election.

The second objective of the U.S. is a face-saving exit from Afghanistan. The focus of the deal is on the Taliban severing its links with other international terror groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS). Mr. Trump can sell the deal to his domestic audience by stating that American troops can return home as the Taliban will not support any other international terrorist groups in Afghanistan. After all, the U.S. troops entered Afghanistan to neutralise al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden after 9/11.

Undoubtedly, the biggest beneficiary of the Doha deal is the Taliban. First, the deal legitimises the Taliban as the primary actor in deciding the future of Afghanistan. The Taliban has been waiting for this moment, waiting for this deal. It was fully aware that the U.S. troops would not



"The Doha deal is likely to provide a face-saving exit for the U.S. and an electoral trump card for U.S. President Donald Trump." Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the leader of the Taliban delegation, and Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. envoy for peace in Afghanistan, in Doha on February 29. ■REUTERS

stay on indefinitely in Afghanistan. Perhaps, the Taliban's advisers also knew how desperate Mr. Trump would become and therefore decided to play the strategy of 'hit and wait'. The Taliban increased the intensity of violence in the last few years, without breaking off negotiations with the U.S. It never agreed to a ceasefire; even when the proposed deal in 2019 was cancelled in the last minute by President Trump, it continued with this strategy.

The Taliban also did not yield to the intra-Afghan dialogue proposal by the U.S. It consistently stated that it does not recognise the elected government in Kabul led by Mr. Ghani. It continued targeting the Afghan security forces making 2018-19 one of the most violent years in recent Afghan history. The Taliban has also been consistent with another position – that any dialogue within Afghanistan will take place only after the foreign troops leave.

The Taliban leadership will be smiling now as they have not yielded to any of the American demands. True, they have agreed not to support al-Qaeda and the IS, but there is no al-Qaeda today in Afghanistan. Moreover, the Taliban is fighting the IS internally. Hence, yielding to this American demand will not affect its position in Afghanistan.

The Taliban will wait and watch the American troops draw down

further in the next three months. It may not target them but it will continue fighting the Afghan security forces. The U.S. will watch this drama and perhaps use it as a strategy to retain a residue force. It could do this to watch Iran. This would be acceptable to the Taliban.

#### An intra-Afghan dialogue

The deal may talk about an intra-Afghan dialogue, but is the Taliban interested in it? The Taliban's objective would be to capture Kabul, and not share power there with anyone. An intra-Afghan dialogue should have preceded the Doha deal. The Taliban never wanted to negotiate with Kabul. Had it wanted to, such a negotiation would have taken place earlier. After all, the Afghan High Peace Council was established with the same purpose. The Taliban targeted many of the Afghan High Peace Council members, including the chairman of the Council, Burhanuddin Rabbani, in 2011. The Taliban will probably scuttle any attempt towards an intra-Afghan dialogue. Even if it agrees to a dialogue, it may use some pretext or the other to walk away from it – for example, the prisoner swap clause in the Doha deal (which would see the government release 5,000 Taliban prisoners and the Taliban release 1,000 captives),

which President Ghani says his government never agreed to. Hence, a

principal objective of the deal would be a non-starter.

Finally, the deal came at the wrong time. Kabul remains deeply divided. Instead of ushering in political stability, the 2019 elections situated Mr. Ghani and Mr. Abdullah in opposite camps. Both have declared victory and both have announced formation of their own governments. The U.S. should have brought both the leaders on a common platform and negotiated a deal, as it did after the presidential election in 2014. As a result, a national unity government was formed with Mr. Ghani as the President and Mr. Abdullah as the Chief Executive.

However, this time, neither did Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, pursue a serious strategy nor did President Trump have the patience to negotiate with two regional satraps, far away from Washington. Instead, they decided to deal with the Taliban and leave Kabul to its own fate.

To be fair to Mr. Trump and Mr. Khalilzad, Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Ghani should have realised the futility of their internal divide. Perhaps, both saw it as part of their final push to have their authority stamped on Kabul. That move backfired. Now they have to face the onslaught of the Taliban either individually or together.

The question now is not whether there will be another civil war in Afghanistan, but when. With the divide between Mr. Ghani and Mr. Abdullah in Kabul, any announcement on government formation is likely to increase the fault lines in the bureaucracy and the Afghan security forces. This is what the Taliban is probably expecting. Instead of engaging in any internal dialogue, the Taliban will attempt to impose itself on Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan.

The Afghan security forces may not collapse in the immediate withdrawal; they will fight back. The Taliban will want to capture the cities one after another, as it did in the 1990s. The Afghan security forces will try to prevent this from happening. All this will probably lead to what the majority of the Afghans want to avoid – a return to chaos.

D. Suba Chandran is a professor and a dean at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

# A tragic pattern of inaction

The police, the government and the courts have been found wanting amidst another outbreak of communal violence



KAPIL SIBAL

The response of the government was no less disappointing. When Ministers of the ruling establishment and those belonging to the party in power brazenly stoke communal sentiments, the outcome is not surprising. While the Election Commission chose to place an embargo on some of those who spoke to polarise, it also chose not to register FIRs. The words uttered in the course of such speeches are actionable. Section 153A of the Indian Penal Code makes it an offence if by words, spoken or otherwise, attempts are made to promote, on grounds of religion, disharmony, feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religions, or acts are committed which are prejudicial to maintenance of harmony between different religions – such activity can be met with imprisonment up to three years. The motivation and intent of those utterances could not be doubted. Yet, the Home Minister, the Commissioner of Police and the entire police force chose to turn a blind eye.

Are we then to believe that the government and the police force were acting in tandem? If true – and the pattern seems to be replicated from time to time in various parts of the country – the seriousness of the situation cannot just be brushed aside.

#### Judiciary did not act

The judiciary has also not responded with alacrity and the kind of sensitivity expected of it. There was a time when it would have *suo motu* taken up the issue and ensured that engineered violence of this kind was dealt with expeditiously. In an age when the social media is replete with images that act as evidence, the courts could easily have taken up the matter, asked for a response overnight and ensured that possible acts of violence were nipped in the bud. Nothing prevented the judiciary from *suo motu* taking action for the kind of speeches that were made with the intent to incite.

When the executive is aware that the judiciary is ready to protect our citizens, it will hesitate to let things slide. But if judges who seek accountability are transferred in the midst of a hearing, the executive will be emboldened. The arrogance of the executive must never be allowed to come in the way of protecting the lives of our people.

One silver lining in this saga of despair is the fact that there are stories of communities protecting each other. This only shows that the common man wants peace and the social fabric of this country has not yet fallen apart. The scars and wounds perpetrated by violence need a healing touch. Those who have fallen from grace must pause and reflect.

Kapil Sibal is a Rajya Sabha MP and a Congress leader

#### FACTWISE

## Fishy claims about cows

The S&T Ministry's claims must be subject to scrutiny

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Recently, the Science and Technology Ministry called for R&D proposals under the inter-ministerial programme SUTRA-PIC India (Scientific Utilization through Research Augmentation-Prime Products from Indigenous Cows). The programme calls for research proposals under five themes. Opening with the statement, "Indian cows are believed to process unique qualities and characteristics," the document invites "systematic scientific investigation of uniqueness of pure indigenous Indian cows".

#### Are indigenous cows unique?

Evolutionary biology tells us that multiple species can co-evolve and become highly suitable for each other. For instance, some humans are lactose intolerant. Lactose intolerance is a digestive disorder caused by the inability to digest lactose, a primary component of milk and dairy products. Studies have shown that people living in northern and western India are more tolerant to lactose compared to south Indians. As northern and western Indians have lived with cows for hundreds of years, breeding them and feeding on their products, they are able to digest milk better. This reasoning would hold for other domesticated animals too. The co-evolution argument holds good for all breeds of cow and their local human populations across the world.

**Can cow urine and panchgavya (cow dung, urine, milk, curd, ghee) help treat cancer and other diseases?**

The call invites applications for research on cowpathy – treatment based on products obtained from indigenous cow as used in ayurveda. It lists many illnesses for which it claims that ancient ayurvedic texts suggested pharmacological applications of products from indigenous cows. The listed diseases are those associated with exclusive symptoms such as psoriasis, eczema and diarrhoea as well as those without particular symptoms such as blood pressure (primary hypertension) and asymptomatic diabetes mellitus.

This at the outset strikes a jarring

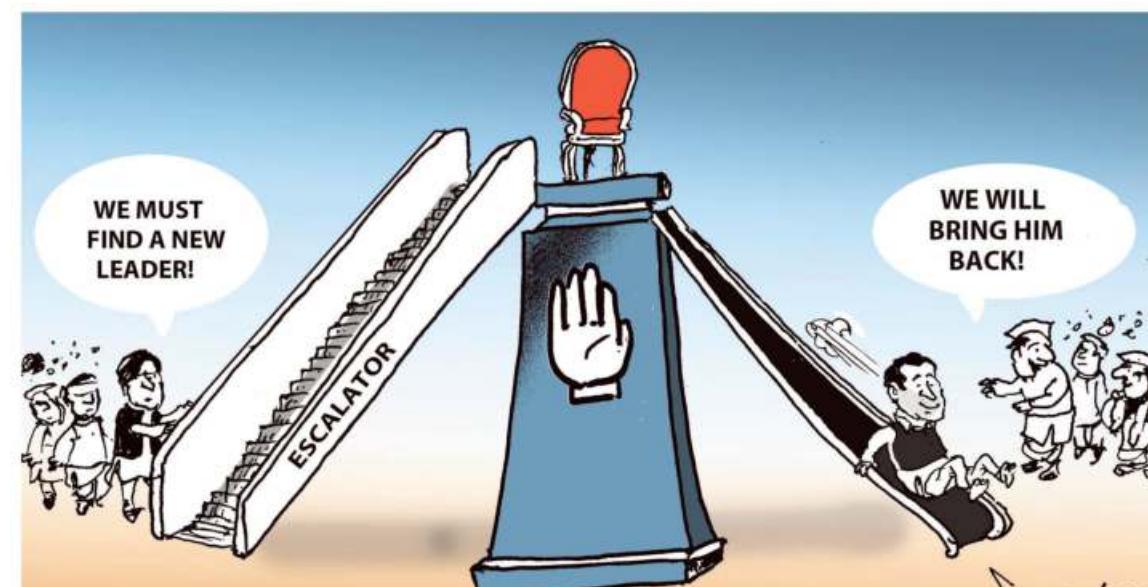
note. For one, many symptoms of high blood pressure such as giddiness may be attributed to other diseases. Hypertension cannot really be measured without a BP apparatus which came into being later. Experts in ayurveda acknowledge this.

"Ayurveda does not have a clear approach for the management of diseases that do not manifest symptoms. While it does deal with eczema or psoriasis, which have symptoms, it does not have a clear protocol for the management of primary hypertension and diabetes when it is asymptomatic," says G.L. Krishna, a practising ayurvedic doctor from Bengaluru, who is interested in Vedanta and Vedic literature. "Further, cancer is a generic term used to describe a spectrum of diseases that result from abnormal cells that are rapidly proliferating. It is not a single disease. The concept of cell in Vedic times was still nascent. Therefore, it would be wrong to presume that ancient ayurvedic texts could have discussed a generic disease entity that results from abnormal cell proliferation," he says.

#### Why is cow urine not exclusive?

Cow urine was used in ayurveda, but so was goat, camel and elephant urine. Ayurveda practitioners use beers, wines and meat, even that of cows, for different medical preparations and conditions. (*The Legacy of Vagbhata*, M.S. Valiathan). While cow milk was generally preferred over goat's milk, the latter was used to treat tuberculosis.

Rather than glorify cow excreta and urine, a more scientifically valid enterprise would be to have the Ministry of AYUSH undertake a serious review of ayurvedic texts and subject them to a scientific scrutiny. Many concepts may get falsified, but a true science should not be afraid of falsification. And, as Dr. Krishna says, "A strict scientific attitude and a sympathy with traditional systems are both required in approaching our ancient medical classics. An approach bereft of the former leads to pseudoscience masquerading as traditional wisdom while that bereft of the latter leads to a hasty undermining of valuable medical experience."



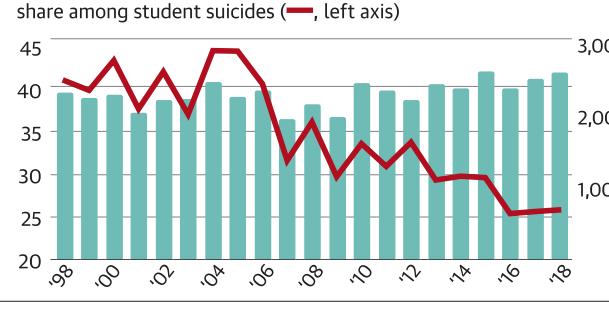
#### DATA POINT

## Student suicides

**WORRYING RISE** | An increasing number of students are committing suicide in India, with their share among all such deaths steadily going up over the years. The chart plots the number of student suicides (■, left axis) and its % share among all suicides (—, right axis). Since 2016, >7% of all suicides were by students

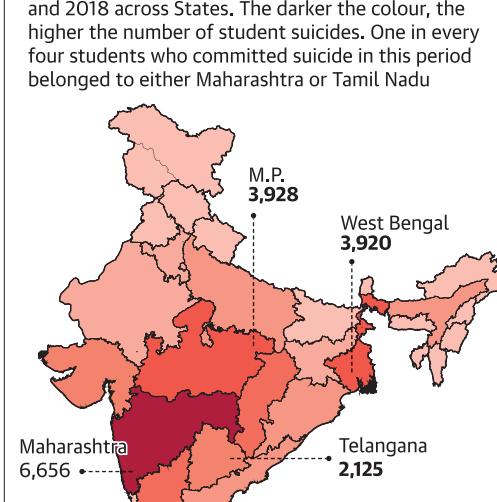


**EXAM PRESSURE** | The number of suicides due to poor performance in exams has remained stagnant over the years, with the share among student suicides\* steadily going down. In 1998, suicides due to failure in exams formed about 41% of all student suicides, while in 2018, the share came down to 26%. The chart plots the number of suicides due to failure in exams (■, left axis) and its share among student suicides (—, right axis)



Compared to the early 2000s, the number of students who committed suicide nearly doubled in the late 2010s in India. Back then, while the main reason for student suicides was poor performance in examinations, lately other reasons such as family issues, illnesses and love affairs have become major factors. Between 2014 and 2018, most student suicides occurred in Maharashtra. By Naresh Singaravelu and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**STATE OF AFFAIRS** | The map depicts the total number of student suicides recorded between 2014 and 2018 across States. The darker the colour, the higher the number of student suicides. One in every four students who committed suicide in this period belonged to either Maharashtra or Tamil Nadu



Assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts is available on Sneha's suicide prevention helpline 044-24640050 and iCALL (022-25521111 - available from Monday to Saturday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

Source: National Crime Records Bureau

#### The Hindu

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 3, 1970

#### Isle of Dogs declares 'independence'

The Isle of Dogs has followed Rhodesia – it proclaimed unilateral independence yesterday [March 1]. The Isle of Dogs, in the heart of London's dockland area, is a narrow peninsula jutting out into the Thames estuary. Tired of the Greater London Council's failure to improve their housing conditions the 10,000 inhabitants of the peninsula decided to "break away and govern" themselves. The head of the movement, Mr. Fred Jones, called a news conference to outline his "State's" policy. "The people lead a dog's life in the Isle of Dogs. That is why we have declared unilateral independence," he said. A citizens council would be formed, he said. "We are capable of governing ourselves."

It was, of course, a blood-less revolution. The most militant action of the day was when some of the "rebels" captured London transport buses which had "illegally" entered the isle.

The Isle of Dogs got its name because King Richard III and other kings had dog kennels built there.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 3, 1920.

#### Water Hyacinth.

In spite, however, of its natural charm and beauty, it ranks among the enemies of mankind. It grows exceedingly rapidly in wells, ponds, rivers, channels, in fact wherever there is water.

If it becomes at all common in our Presidency it may most grievously affect our water and irrigation supply on the preservation of which the economic future of the Madras Presidency and the health of its people so largely depend. Also it has been found in Chingleput that the close vegetation which this plant forms makes an ideal breeding place for mosquitoes. Thus alike from considerations of material profit and of general health all ought to combine to stamp out this pest.

In the early stages of growth it is easy to lift it out dry and burn it. It is not enough to leave it to rot, because the seeds readily germinate in moist earth. Thus if anyone sees it anywhere in water over which he has any control, he ought to uproot it at once and burn it.

All gentlemen are requested to assist in eradicating this weed which if left to spread unchecked may cause serious economic loss. It flourishes chiefly in stagnant freshwater.

## FROM PAGE ONE

## SC to hear plea on Delhi violence tomorrow

Chief Justice Bobde said, "We will hear, but you have to understand we cannot prevent such things from happening. We do wish peace, but we know we have limitations. We read media reports... it is as if we are somehow responsible."

The petition sought to register FIRs against BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Anurag Thakur, Pravesh Verma and all those who had engaged in hate speech and "criminal activities" such as rioting, murder and arson.

It also sought the setting up of a special investigation team with officers from outside Delhi to probe the Fe-

## Delhi, Telangana report a case each of COVID-19

The three students from Kerala, who were found positive with the virus, had been discharged from hospital after they recovered and tested negative.

As many as 25,738 people are under community surveillance across the country.

Dr. Vardhan said he had advised people to avoid non-essential travel to Iran, Italy, South Korea and Singapore. Thirty-seven people across the country were currently hospitalised after

bruyri riots. An inquiry committee headed by a retired judge should probe the police persons involved and exemplary compensation granted to victims.

The Centre should be directed to call in the Army if the law and order situation further deteriorated, it stated.

The petition wanted the full list of persons detained by the police and paramilitary forces made public and CCTV footage of riot-affected areas preserved. It also demanded the immediate release of post-mortem reports to the victims' families.

showing symptoms of COVID-19.

The Union government was in discussion with Iran and Italian authorities to evacuate Indians there.

"So far 3,217 samples have been tested, out of which five have tested positive for COVID-19, while reports of 23 are awaited. Italy is reeling under a large number of cases of COVID-19. China has so far witnessed 2,912 deaths due to coronavirus," said the Minister.

## Plea for Omar's release to be heard on March 5

They reminded the court that 41,866 persons lost their lives in J&K in 71,038 "incidents" since 1990. A detention order under the PSA was not based on any objective determination but rather on the "subjective satisfaction" of the detaining authority, they argued. The court cannot substitute its opinion for that of the detaining authority.

However, a Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra informed Ms. Abdullah's lawyers – Kapil Sibal and Gopal Sankaranarayanan – that the case would indeed be heard on March 5.

"This is a matter of personal liberty," Justice Mishra said. Justice Indira Banerjee, the other judge on the Bench, nodded in agreement.

Ms. Pilot has asked the top court to direct the authorities to produce her brother in court and set him free immediately.

Mr. Abdullah was first detained on August 5 last, when the President notified the abrogation of the special rights of the people of J&K. After detaining him for the maximum six months, a fresh detention order under the PSA was issued on February 2020.

## Baghel protests against use of CRPF in I-T raids

"If each one of us fails to adhere to this cardinal principle of our Constitutional democracy, we would become an undemocratic anarchy," the letter stated.

The Chief Minister also questioned the "unconstitutional" use of CRPF personnel, who are to be used only for "emergencies" and exceptional circumstances, during the raids.

"May I respectfully point out that our State government has never refused any assistance to Income Tax or any other department of the Union. I take this opportunity to reiterate the availability of the police machinery or any other assistance in the quest to find and prosecute the corrupt. I am certain you will support my government's endeavour to expose corruption bereft of any ideology. This would be in tune with your good self's assertions," Mr. Baghel said.

Income Tax Department searches in Raipur on February 27 uncovered evi-

dence of huge amounts of "unaccounted cash" generated from liquor and mining businesses, being paid to public servants and others every month, a statement from the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said. So far, total unaccounted transactions amounting to ₹150 crore have been uncovered in the raids on a group of individuals, hawala dealers and businessmen, the CBDT added.

Incriminating documents and electronic data seized during the search show that substantial amount of illegal gratification was being paid to public servants and others every month," said the statement adding that unaccounted bank accounts and transactions have also been found. "Details of benami vehicles, hawala transfers, transfer to Kolkata-based companies and creation of shell companies with huge land bank have also been found and seized."

## Parliament stalls as Opposition wants Shah out

Multiple adjournments, unruly scenes in both Houses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI



In the line of fire: Home Minister Amit Shah arriving to attend the Parliament session on Monday. ■ R. V. MOORTHY

Bittu, and Hibi Eden. Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury accused the government of tearing democracy to shreds, and said a BJP MP had assaulted Congress MP from Kerala Ramya Haridas.

## Speaker 'pained'

"I am personally pained at the developments in the House. You are not pained. I do not want to run proceedings under such circumstances... Everybody should deliberate to ensure that the dignity of the House is maintained," Mr. Birla said before adjourning the House for the day.

When the Lok Sabha met at 2 p.m. after the first half of the proceedings were adjourned to mourn Baidyanath Prasad Mahto, Janata Dal(U) MP, the Opposition

trooped into the Well and started shouting slogans.

As the Speaker took up the listed business, the Congress MPs walked across to the Treasury side, holding up a black banner calling for Mr. Shah's resignation.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said the Congress was now talking about Delhi riots when 3,000 people were killed in Delhi in 1984 [anti-Sikh riots] under its watch.

Amid slogans of "Amit Shah murdab" (Down with Amit Shah), when the Speaker initiated discussions on the tax settlement Bill, Mr. Gogoi and Mr. Bittu went to the Treasury benches where Sanjay Jaiswal of the BJP was speaking on the *Vivad Se Vishwas* Bill.

BJP members, including Ramesh Bidhuri and Nishi-

kant Dubey, then rushed to the Well and in the melee, some Congress MPs tore papers and tossed them in the air.

Members from both sides then began pushing and shoving each other till the proceedings were adjourned till 3 p.m.

While Union Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad and Smriti Irani were seen trying to pacify the agitated members, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi were present in the House.

## Multi-party din

In the Rajya Sabha, MPs from the Congress, the Trinamool, the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Left were up on their feet, shouting slogans.

"The matter [Delhi riots] is definitely important and deserves to be discussed," Mr. Naidu said, adding he would admit a discussion and allot time after discussing with the Minister, the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition.

"Our priority should be restoring normalcy. We should see that normalcy is restored and then we can discuss ways and means of preventing it [such violence]," he added as he asked the House to send out a message in one voice on the issue.

I was beaten up, Cong. MP complains to Birla

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI



Ramya Haridas

Ramya Haridas, Congress MP from Kerala, on Monday alleged that she was "physically assaulted" by Jaskaur Meena of the BJP in the Lok Sabha and that she was being targeted repeatedly because she was a Dalit.

The incident has left her shaken, and she burst into tears in the Lok Sabha.

"To raise slogans or march into the well of the House is a regular parliamentary strategy used by the Opposition parties to express their protest. We were not doing anything unusual," Ms. Haridas told *The Hindu*.

In her complaint to Mr. Birla, Ms. Haridas sought action against Ms. Meena. She said that the BJP had been targeting her for being a Dalit and a woman.

During the winter session last year, the Congress had alleged that two of its women parliamentarians, including Ms. Haridas, were "manhandled" by marshals in the Lok Sabha when they were protesting in the well of the House over the Maharashtra government formation. Both the MPs had lodged a complaint with the Speaker.

"I was shocked when suddenly someone hit me on my shoulder from back. We don't expect to be beaten up inside Parliament. It is unfortunate that the House, which so far was a safe space, has been reduced to this," Ms. Haridas said.

## Standing panels make up for fewer sittings'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

District Magistrate of Srinagar Shahid Iqbal Chaudhary informed the court in his affidavit that Mr. Abdullah "was and continues to be detained in conformity with the mandatory provisions of the PSA and is kept in Hari Niwas, which has been temporarily declared a subsidiary jail".

Mr. Chaudhary, represented by Attorney General K.K. Venugopal and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, justified that the continued detention under the PSA was based on material and documents showing that Mr. Abdullah's "activities", even before his first detention in August 2019, was "calculated to disturb public peace and tranquillity".

There are 24 such committees, and eight of them are with the Rajya Sabha and remaining 16 with the Lok Sabha. The eight Rajya Sabha committees consist of 244 members from both Houses, with 78 from the

Upper House and 166 from the Lower House.

The general impression, he said, is that the sittings of Parliament are compensated by the working of department-related standing committees (DRSCs), Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu said on Monday. During the three week recess between the first and second halves of the current Budget session, the committees have done work worth 30 sittings of Parliament, he said.

During an usual sitting of Parliament, the Houses are convened for six hours. Accordingly, the meetings of these committees amount to 10 sittings.

His social media team refused to comment, only stat-

## PM hints at quitting social media

Modi thinking of giving up Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube accounts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi triggered a flurry of speculation after he took to Twitter late Monday evening to say that he was considering giving up his social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram from Sunday.

"This Sunday, thinking of giving up my social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & YouTube. Will keep you all posted," tweeted Mr. Modi, immediately setting off a hashtag #NoSir to persuade him not to do so.

Power of social media in India and one of the highest followed leaders in the world over, would announce such a thing.

On Facebook, he tops the list of world leaders with 44 million people liking his page.

ing that it was the Prime Minister himself who would do the big reveal of his reasons.

Speculation ran rife on social media over why Mr. Modi, one of the first among politicians to unleash the

power of social media in India and one of the highest followed leaders in the world over, would announce such a thing.

It ranged from plans for launching an India-specific platform on the lines of "Weibo" in China, to a social media detox following the role played by certain accounts in fanning communal riots in Delhi.

One source said that since Mr. Modi had asked, in the past, for public campaigns on certain issues, he may be considering a campaign around social media detox with offline social intercourse aimed at social cohesion.

The opposition Congress has been protesting in Parliament against the government's handling of the Delhi riots and demanded the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

## No larger Bench for Article 370 case

Supreme Court also denies conflict between the 1959 and 1970 judgments

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Constitution Bench led by Justice N.V. Ramana on Monday declined a plea to refer to a larger Bench petitions challenging the abrogation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution.

The Bench said it would continue to hear the case on merits.

After the order was pronounced, one of the lawyers for the petitioners sought an early date to resume the hearing. The Bench said a date would be fixed after considering the dates for the nine-judge Sabarimala

Bench.

The Bench had heard arguments and reserved its decision on whether there was a "direct conflict" between the judgments of 1959 and 1970 on the nature and extent of Article 370.

Justice Ramana, who pronounced the 42-page order, concluded that there was no conflict.

ern its relationship with J&K.

The court explained that the "Constitution Bench in the *Prem Nath Kaul* case did not discuss the continuation or cessation of the operation of Article 370 after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly of the State. This was not an issue in question before the court, unlike in the *Sampat Prakash* case, where the contention was specifically made before, and refuted by, the court".

Finally, the order concluded that the court saw no reason to read into the *Prem Nath Kaul* case an interpretation that resulted in it being in conflict with its subsequent judgments.

## EC not for state funding of polls: Thakur tells LS

Won't be able to verify spending: EC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission has informed the Government that it is not in favour of state funding of elections, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur told the Lok Sabha in a written reply on Monday. The commission is of the view that it would not be able to prohibit or check candidates' expenditure over and above the state's provision, he said.

Mr. Thakur was responding to a question from Congress MP Anumula Revanth Reddy on whether the government was mulling the introduction of state fund-

ing of polls as recommended by the Indrajit Gupta Committee in 1998.

That panel had suggested that state funding would ensure a level playing field for poorer political parties and argued that such a move would be in public interest. The committee had recommended some limitations, saying that state funds should only be given to recognised national and State parties and that funding should be given in kind, including free facilities provided to these parties and their candidates. The panel admitted that only partial funding may be possible.

## India monitoring impact of US-Taliban deal'

Comparing it to the release of a delayed film, Jaishankar says gains of past 18 years should be protected

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Likening the U.S.-Taliban agreement at Doha to the long-awaited release of a film, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Monday that India was "watching the space" closely to ensure that gains of the past two decades were not lost. "[The agreement] has been talked about for so long it is almost like finally seeing *Pakeezah* after 17 trailers," Mr. Jaishankar said, referring to the 1972 Hindi film which took 15 years to complete.

"How it plays out, only

time will tell... This is not the Afghanistan of 2001. To the United States and the West, our message is that the achievements of the last 18 years should be protected and not jeopardised."

**Concerns not addressed**

While India has raised concerns over the future of democracy, human rights, women's rights and other achievements made in Afghanistan since 2001, when the Taliban regime was last defeated, the issues were not addressed in the agreement between the U.S. and Tali-

ban signed by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on February 29. The agreement provides a timetable for withdrawal of the U.S. troops

from Afghanistan by May 2021 and an intra-Afghan dialogue in March 2020.

Speaking at the Centre for Policy Research's "Dialogue 2020", in conversation with former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, Mr. Jaishankar said he believed the "real negotiations" would begin only now – a possible reference to the intra-Afghan dialogue due to begin on March 10, as well as a Pakistan-Afghanistan dialogue facilitated by Washington on securing borders and ending terror safe havens.

"How cohesive are the va-

## Imam held for 'provocative' speech in J&amp;K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

The J&K police on Monday filed a chargesheet against two persons, including an Imam (preacher), for "provocative speeches" at the funeral of militant Mohammad Rafiq Bhat in May 2018. The Ganderbal police said it presented a chargesheet against the two accused, Muhammad Rafiq Shah, a resident of Shuhama, Ganderbal and Bashir Ahmad Lone, a resident of Brein Nishat, "pertaining to provocative speech at Chundua Ganderbal".



"How cohesive are the various players... does the Taliban join the democratic set-up, or will the democratic set-up have to adjust to the Taliban... We are all watching this space," he said. India stopped short of welcoming the

Chakma groups want 'illegal' NRC stopped

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

Political leaders and NGOs belonging to the Chakma community have sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention to stop the "illegal National Register of Citizens (NRC)" being conducted by the Mizoram government to identify alleged foreigners. A memorandum was submitted to Mr. Modi on Monday.

The team lead by Chakma Autonomous District Council chief executive member Rashik Mohan Chakma included BJP's lone legislator in Mizoram Buddha Dhan Chakma and the party's national council member Nirupam Chakma.

They said that the Mizoram government had so far conducted the NRC, neither sanctioned by the Centre nor the Supreme Court, in at least 14 Chakma-inhabited villages in Mizoram's Lunglei district. No such survey was conducted in any village inhabited by the Mizos, who comprise almost 90% of the State's population.

## BJP luring Cong. MLAs in M.P.: Digvijaya

SIDHARTH YADAV  
BHOPAL

The Congress and the BJP in Madhya Pradesh on Monday launched into a spat over the stability of the Kamal Nath government, with Congress MP Digvijaya Singh accusing BJP leaders of bribing its MLAs with ₹25-35 crore, a charge dismissed by BJP vice-president Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Stating that the BJP was not ready to sit in the Opposition, he told reporters in New Delhi that Mr. Chouhan, former Minister Narottam Mishra and everyone who "looted M.P. for 15 years", were openly offering MLAs the bribe.

Mr. Chouhan, in Bhopal, rubbished the allegations by describing Mr. Singh a "habitual liar".

# Priority to restore peace, says Delhi L-G

Board exams resume in riot-hit areas; police deny permission for march in protest against the CAA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Monday visited Shiv Vihar, Karawal Nagar, Brijpuri, Chand Bagh and other violence-hit areas of northeast Delhi, along with Commissioner of Police S.N. Shrivastava.

After interacting with the residents, Mr. Baijal said the situation was gradually improving and the topmost priority was to bring back peace and tranquillity.

He urged people not to believe rumours and circulate unconfirmed messages.

"Delhi police should keep strong vigil on social media and ensure timely and effective action against rumour mongers. Any attempt to spread false and malicious news should be nipped in the bud," Mr. Baijal said.

**Cleanliness drive**  
He directed the East Delhi Municipal Corporation to take up an extensive cleanliness drive of the area on a war footing.

Meanwhile, considering the "sensitive situation", the



**Testing times:** Students getting their hall tickets checked for the Class XII Board examinations at Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, Jaffrabad, in northeast Delhi on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

police denied permission for a students' march from Ramlila Maidan to Parliament in protest against the CAA on Tuesday.

The Young India Coordination Committee, which comprises members of student organisations from across the country, has called

the march. The organisers said that they would gather at Ramlila Maidan at 11 p.m. and go ahead with their protest.

**Good attendance**  
Around 98% attendance was recorded in the exams held in violence-hit northeast Del-

hi on Monday, the Central Board for Secondary Exams (CBSE) said.

"A total of 2,888 students were to appear for the Class 12 exam, of which 2,837 sat for the paper today, registering a 98.2% attendance," a senior CBSE official said.

On Sunday, the CBSE said

any further delay may hamper chances of students securing admission to professional courses such as medicine and engineering.

It added that it is ready to conduct fresh exams for students who are not able to appear.

(With PTI inputs)

## Stop violence targeting Muslims, Iran tells India

External Affairs Ministry yet to reply

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI



Javad Zarif

Iran has asked India to stop "thuggery" and communal violence targeting Muslim citizens. The unusually strong statement from Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif came five days after India fast-tracked infrastructure work on Iran's Chabahar port.

"Iran condemns the wave of organised violence against Indian Muslims. For centuries, Iran has been a friend of India. We urge Indian authorities to ensure the wellbeing of ALL Indians and not let senseless thuggery prevail. Path forward lies in peaceful dialogue and rule of law," said Foreign Minister Zarif in a social media post.

The Ministry of External Affairs is yet to respond to the Iranian Minister's condemnation of Delhi riots.

Mr. Zarif was a leading guest in January's Raisina Dialogue, India's biggest foreign policy discussion forum.

He also hosted External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in December for the 19th Joint Commission Meeting of the two countries.

## Curfew lifted in Khasi Hills of Meghalaya

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Authorities in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district eased curfew on Monday in view of school exams and relative peace after clashes had claimed three lives since February 28.

The curfew had been reimposed for 12 hours from 6 p.m. due to a perceived threat to peace and tranquillity, District Magistrate M. War Nongbri said.

Mobile Internet service in East Khasi Hills and five other districts remained suspended.

This followed an ultimatum issued by the extremist Hymiewtrep Na-

tional Liberation Council (HNLC) to all Bengali Hindus to leave the Ichamati and Majai areas of the district within one month.

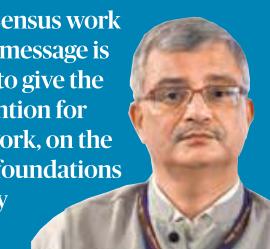
## 34 queries in Census 2020 form

Registrar-General asks States to give top priority to survey and the NPR

VIJAYA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

**Q** District-level officials must be reminded of the importance of the Census work and must ensure that a clear message is sent to the officers in charge to give the highest importance and attention for the House Listing and NPR work, on the results of which depend the foundations of the statistics of the country

VIVEK JOSHI, Registrar General



The Registrar-General of India has asked all States to "give highest importance, attention and time" to the Census and National Population Register (NPR) work as "the foundations of the statistics of the country" depend on them.

In a 14-page letter dated January 29 and addressed to the Directors of Census Operations (DCOs) in the States, Registrar-General and Census Commissioner Vivek Joshi said, "The district-level officials must be reminded of the importance of the census work and must ensure that a clear message is sent to the officers in charge to give the highest importance and attention (as well to devote sufficient time) for the House

Listing and NPR work, on the results of which depend the foundations of the statistics of the country."

The decennial census exercise will be conducted in two phases – house listing and housing census from April to September 2020, and population enumeration from February 9 to 28, 2021.

The Centre has proposed that the next phase of the NPR be conducted with the

first phase of the census. On Sunday, the Uttar Pradesh government kick-started the process – the Census-NPR exercise will be conducted in the State from May 16 to June 30.

According to Citizenship Rules 2003, the NPR is the first step towards compilation of the NRC, though the government informed Parliament on February 4 that "till now, the government has

not taken any decision to prepare National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC)."

N.S. Pandey, Uttar Pradesh DCO, told *The Hindu*: "There are 34 questions in the census proforma and 14 questions in the NPR. The NPR is only being updated, no new register is being created. Giving Aadhaar details [for the NPR] is voluntary." The "pretest", or trial NPR form, collected details from 30 lakh respondents last year on 21 parameters, seeking details of "place of birth of father and mother, last place of residence" +

## Access to Internet is not negotiable: Law Minister

'It flows from our right to information'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Monday said access to Internet is plainly non-negotiable as it flows from the right to information.

The Minister was speaking at the launch of the fourth edition of the 'Commentary on Arbitration' authored by Supreme Court judge, Justice Indu Malhotra, here.

"On the whole issue of net neutrality, I told Parliament that I will not go into the debate at all. Access to Internet in India is plainly not negotiable. It flows from our right to have information," he said.

Mr. Prasad assured that the international arbitration



Ravi Shankar Prasad

## 'Solid proof not must for establishing citizenship'

HC directive to Foreigners Tribunal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Proof beyond all reasonable doubts is not required in a Foreigners Tribunal (FT) for establishing one's citizenship, the Gauhati High Court has observed in the case of a 65-year-old "declared foreigner" in Assam.

The court made the observation while allowing a petition of one Idrish Ali to set aside an order by an FT in eastern Assam's Jorhat town. The FT had declared Mr. Ali, from No. 2 Korigaon village in the adjoining Golaghat district, a foreigner in September 2018.

The petitioner had shown the FT 11 documents, including the voters' lists of 1985 and 1989 that contained his name. The FT rejected these

documents while observing that he was not included in the electoral rolls of 1974 and 1975, concluding that he was unable to establish his stay in Assam prior to 1971.

A Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justices Manojit Bhuyan and Parthivjyoti Saikia criticised the FTs but observed that strict rules of evidence were not applicable to the tribunals "established for quick disposal of the matters sent to it".

The Bench observed: "Nothing is required to be proved beyond all reasonable doubt".

Terming the FT ruling "perverse" and unsustainable, the court asked the tribunal to take a fresh decision on merits.

The book launch was also attended by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde.

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### CORIGENDUM TO NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sl. No.	Description	Scheduled Date of Bid Submission	Revised Date of Bid Submission
1	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 110kV switchyard including 25MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer for TNPL Unit-II MEP.	04.03.2020	30.03.2020

Bidders may request the tender document at the above address by Post/Mail. Detailed NIB Revised may be viewed in websites: [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) / [www.tnpl.com](http://www.tnpl.com)

DIPR/1151/Tender/2020 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

### GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

#### e-Procurement Tender Notice

1) Short Tender Notice No.1SE/2019-20, Dated:29-02-2020

2) Name of Work : Balance work of GNSS Package No.30 -Investigation, Design, Excavation and Lining of Owk Tunnel-II and Diversion Tunnel-I&II for feeding to Owk Reservoir from Km 57.700 of GNSS Flood Flow Canal including construction of Adit, 3) Estimate Contract Value : Rs.126,00,00,000/-,

4) Bid Document download start date & time : 05-03-2020 @ 11:00 AM onwards (online only), 5) Bid submission closing date & time : 12-03-2020 upto 05:00 PM (online only), 6) Opening date of Price Bid : 16-03-2020, 7) Contact Details of Office : Sri K.Ravi, Superintending Engineer, SRBC Circle No-2, Nandyal-518501, A.P., Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh, Phone No. : 7013702229, 6309314799. For other details website e-procurement market place @ [www.e-procurement.gov.in](http://www.e-procurement.gov.in)

DIPR 424PP/CL, Dt.02.03.2020 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, SRBC Circle No-2, Nandyal,

DIPR 424PP/CL, Dt.02.03.2020

### CORIGENDUM

Date Extension for Bid Date : 03.03.2020

The bid submission deadline for the works 'Development of S&D Network in Bakrahat Road Catchment (Ward 125) by Cut & Cover method and laying of RCC Sewer Line along Bakrahat Road and DH Road by Microtunnelling method' (Contract No. KEIIP/NCB/TR-3/SD1R2/2019-20) is extended up to 16.03.2020.

Bidders may view the details in <https://wbtenders.gov.in>

KIIP Kolkata Environmental Improvement Investment Program

Kolkata Municipal Corporation

### BHARAT DYNAMICS LIMITED

(A Government of India Enterprise)  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
GACHIBOWLI, HYDERABAD-500 032.

Ref : BDL/CC/OT/GT/025/2019-20 Dt : 03.03.2020

### e-PROCUREMENT ABRIDGED TENDER NOTICE

Inviting Indigenous Competitive Bidding

Sl.No. Tender ID Description

1 61761 Centrifuge Test System

2 61853 Implementation of SAP File Lifecycle Management

3 61943 Supply, Installation & Commissioning of (a) Mobile Storage Rack & (b) Vertical Carousel

4 61849 DC-DC Converters- MARTEC make

Please visit website <http://bdltenders.abprocure.com> for further details. Bids should be submitted online only.

"Corrigendum if any shall be issued through our e-portal only and not in Newspapers".

Addl. General Manager (Corp. Comm'l.)

### NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

No. PETS/EOI/02

Punjab Effluent Treatment Society for Tanneries, 58-Leather Complex, Jalandhar hereby invite expression of interest from the competent agencies to be appointed as Project Consultant for the up-gradation of 5 MLD tannery CETP, Leather Complex, Jalandhar on the basis of the approval to the project accorded by DPIT, Govt. of India in 16th meeting of Empowered Committee for a total cost of Rs. 2725.54 lacs.

### SCOPE OF WORK:

</div

# EU raises alert as virus toll crosses 3,000

Nine times more new COVID-19 cases outside China than inside: WHO; Italy toll rises to 52

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BRUSSELS

The death toll from COVID-19 outbreak surpassed 3,000 on Monday as more people died in China, Iran and the U.S. and Europe raised its state of alert.

The new coronavirus, also called SARS-CoV-2, has now infected more than 89,000, spread to over 60 countries and threatens to cause a global economic slowdown – after first emerging in China late last year.

With fears of a pandemic on the rise, the World Health Organization urged all countries to stock up on critical care ventilators to treat patients with severe symptoms.

China reported 42 more deaths on Monday – all in central Hubei province. The death toll in China alone rose to 2,912, but it is also surging abroad.

The World Health Organization said on Monday that the number of new coronavirus cases registered in the past day in China was far lower than in the rest of the world.

"In the last 24 hours there were almost nine times more COVID-19 cases reported outside China than inside China," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told



**Safe voting:** People quarantined for coronavirus arriving to cast their votes in a specially made tent in Tel Aviv, Israel, on Monday. ■AP

reporters in Geneva.

In Brussels, EU president Ursula von der Leyen said the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) had increased its risk assessment for Europeans after Italy's outbreak doubled in 48 hours. Italy reported a jump in the death toll to 52, with more than 2,000 people infected, most in the country's northern Lombardy region.

Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides said: "As of this morning, we have 2,100 confirmed cases in 18 EU member states and we have 38 citizens who have lost their lives."

**Elderly are vulnerable'** In France, a woman, in her eighties, has died. The

virus has raised fears for the world economy, with the OECD lowering its global growth forecast by half a point to 2.4%, the worst performance since the 2008 crisis.

China's economy has ground to a halt with large swathes of the country under quarantine or measures to restrict travel.

Health officials monitoring the virus at the ECDC announced that it had increased its risk assessment to "moderate to high".

**Louvre – the world's most visited museum – closed on Monday after staff refused to work because of fears about the virus.**

The WHO says the virus appears to particularly hit those over the age of 60 and people already weakened by other illness. It has a mortality rate of between 2-5%.

Saudi Arabia on Monday announced its first case of the virus, the Health Ministry said.

Iran reported 12 more deaths on Monday, raising the country's toll to 66, the second biggest after China.

South Korea, the biggest nest of infections outside

Iran, which has 10 confirmed cases, held its first election since the outbreak.

China, reported nearly 500 new cases on Monday, raising its total past 4,000. Four more people died, taking its toll to 22.

The leader of a secretive South Korean sect linked to more than half the cases apologised on Monday for the spread of the disease.

Shincheonji head Lee Man-hee's plea for forgiveness came after Seoul city authorities filed a murder complaint against him for failing to cooperate in containing the epidemic.

**U.S. deaths**

A second person died in the northwestern U.S. state of Washington as President Donald Trump, who has downplayed the risk of a major outbreak, faced criticism over his administration's preparedness.

After an increase on Sunday, China's National Health Commission reported 202 new infections on Monday, the lowest daily rise since late January, bringing the nationwide total over 80,000.

By contrast, Iran reported more than 500 new cases, raising its total number of infections to 1,501.

Israel, which has 10 confirmed cases, held its first election since the outbreak.

Mr. Rajapaksa rode to power criticising the pre-

## Sri Lankan President dissolves Parliament

Snap elections will be held on April 25

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa dissolved Parliament ahead of schedule on Monday and set new elections for April, in which he aims to secure a strong majority that will enable him to push for constitutional changes to increase presidential powers.

The dissolution comes six months before the parliamentary term was scheduled to end. The decree signed by Mr. Rajapaksa said elections will be held on April 25.

Mr. Rajapaksa was elected to office last November but has said he cannot work freely because his presidential powers were reduced. He has also faced restrictions because the opposition commanded a majority in the 225-member Parliament.

The election campaign period will include the first anniversary of a series of Islamic State-inspired suicide bombings that killed more than 250 people in churches and tourist hotels on Easter Sunday last year.

Mr. Rajapaksa rode to power criticising the pre-

vious government of serious security and intelligence lapses that paved the way for the bombings, the worst incident of violence since the country's 26-year civil war ended in May 2009.

Constitutional changes initiated by Mr. Rajapaksa's predecessor, Maithripala Sirisena, reduced presidential powers and gave them to the Parliament and to independent commissions.

The change virtually created two political power centers – the President and the Prime Minister, with the PM in charge of Parliament and government Ministers.

Mr. Rajapaksa needs two-thirds parliamentary support to pass changes to the constitution.

**Taliban ends partial truce in Afghanistan**

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL

A deadly blast shattered a period of relative calm in Afghanistan on Monday, as the Taliban told fighters to resume operations against Afghan security forces – just days after signing a peace deal.

The blast at a football ground in Khost occurred at around the same time the Taliban ordered fighters to start attacks against Afghan Army and police forces, bringing to an apparent end the "reduction in violence" period that had seen a dramatic drop in bloodshed. Three brothers were killed in the blast.

The partial truce between the U.S., the Taliban and Afghan security forces lasted for the week running up to the signing of an accord between the U.S. and the insurgents in Doha on Saturday. "The reduction in violence... has ended now and our operations will continue," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said. "As per the (U.S.-Taliban) agreement, our mujahideen will not attack foreign forces but our operations will continue against the Kabul administration forces."

## Ex-guard frees hostages in Manila mall, arrested

He was disgruntled after being fired



Police take hostage taker Archie Paray into custody at the V-Mall in Manila, Philippines, on Monday. ■AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA

A recently dismissed security guard freed his hostages and walked out of a shopping mall in the Philippine capital on Monday, ending a daylong hostage crisis in an upscale commercial district, officials said.

The former guard at the commercial complex, identified as Archie Paray, left the V-Mall in San Juan city in Manila with his hostages, who were secured by police.

The suspect was allowed to speak before reporters to describe his grievances against his superiors, whom he accused of corruption and abuse, before police approached and subdued him.

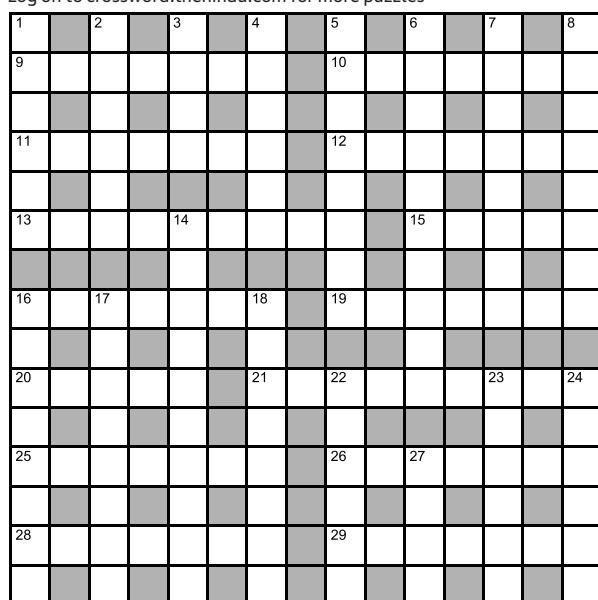
"He felt bad because he was removed as a guard," Mr. Zamora told reporters.

In a bid to appease the hostage taker, six officers in charge of overseeing the mall's security apologised to the suspect.

"I'm asking for his forgiveness, and because of this, I'll resign from my job so this crisis will come to an end," said Oscar Hernandez, a security officer.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12873

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



### ACROSS

- 9 Guts people have to follow a second class party (7)
- 10 Commercial goods kept outside; middlemen taking time using small gimmicks (7)
- 11 Aunts dance without hesitation on seasons (7)
- 12 Start deal (4,3)
- 13 Creature is warm; hotter when exposed (9)

- 1 Man has dues. Get some capital (6)
- 2 Boss in news having wrong diet? It's shown first on recipe (6)
- 3 Religious leader will reveal his heart on Monday morning (4)
- 4 Somehow no clues on money spent in world body (6)

- 5 Perhaps a regulation to have silver? Over time to keep fifty ingots primarily (3,5)
- 6 Saw a sign held by worker inside school mentioning good points (10)
- 7 Hefner starting to distribute editions barring one Playboy, say (8)
- 8 Advantageously America舞动Laden; top enemy confined fifty years (8)
- 14 Order to hit detailed. Time to take bridge front to back and pound (10)
- 16 Exercise a right with internal energy, only with pen and words finally (8)
- 17 Breakfast food given to royal (Keta without egg) taken by high-income consumers (8)
- 18 I puked little spurious beer; Obvious (8)
- 21 6100 peacekeepers to catch an animal (6)
- 23 Over time, internet operating system gets erratic primarily and becomes ineffective (6)
- 24 Duffel with Reverend for part of mountaineering (3,3)
- 25 Playful child is seen on a road (4)

- 19 Note to general hospital; Tally often stringently (7)
- 20 Dance is strange, gets to a bad start; atrocious primarily (5)
- 21 Cattle survives today, by break of day will be taken by heartless cook (9)
- 25 Soup is broth boiled without some salt and clove (7)
- 26 Partying? Take a drink first in vehicle, say (7)
- 28 White amongst coloured is culpable in a way to give up power (3,4)
- 29 I am entering new casino in European city (7)

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(set by Afterdark)

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## SUDOKU

			6	2	9	5		
2					7			
	7	8	3	5				
	3				8	4		
	2			8	3			
6	4					5		
		4		8	5	6		
	1						3	
4	5	7	6					

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12872

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

7	1	3	8	5	4	2	9	6
6	9	5	7	1	2	8	3	4
8	4	2	6	9	3	1	7	5
2	7	9	1	4	6	5	8	3
3	5	6	9	8	7	4	1	2
1	8	4	3	2	5	7	6	9
9	2	7	4	6	1	3	5	8
5	6	1	2	3	8	9	4	7
4	3	8	5	7	9	6	2	1

No. SS 646 Distribution: www.mightyfingers.com

## FAITH

### Safe and sure refuge

The path to salvation is demanding and requires long and arduous practice. At the end of many births perhaps one among countless jivatmas may become a jnani, says Krishna in the Gita. The Vishnu Purana also echoes the same fact when it states that in the course of different births it is likely that one attains Him. Still, every jivatma wishes to lead a comfortable life free of problems, enjoy good health, and also attain salvation by the grace of the Lord, pointed out Mukur Sri Srinivasan in a discourse.

But the practice of karma, jnana and bhakti by many in Kali Yuga remains unsatisfactory and imperfect as the mind is filled with doubt, confusion, uncertainty, and so on. Being misled by the material world and sense objects, a major part of one's lifetime is spent in fulfilling worldly attainments. As a result it becomes difficult to control the mind and only few are able to clear their sins by merits gained by performance of good and virtuous acts and good conduct through many births. In such a situation, chanting the innumerable auspicious names of the Lord can confer untold benefits on jivatmas, says Bhishma when he instructs the Vishnu Sahasranama to Yudhishtira and others in the presence of Krishna. That jivatma who makes it the practice to think of His greatness and to sing His glories at all times has no need to worry about practice of jnana, karma or bhakti yogas.

The fruits of all these are automatically gained by chanting His names. The Lord is ever present in all objects and beings as the indwelling essence and is

## MARKET WATCH

	02-03-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	38144	-0.40
US Dollar	72.76	-0.76
Gold	42616	0.93
Brent oil	50.62	0.26

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	340.65	-1.55
Asian Paints	1786.80	-11.15
Axism Bank	684.20	-13.10
Bajaj Auto	2792.20	-97.80
Bajaj Finserv	8914.50	-136.25
Bajaj Finance	4360.75	-10.10
Bharti Airtel	518.35	-5.15
BPCL	412.35	-14.00
Britannia Ind	2949.10	-21.10
Cipla	401.95	-0.15
Coal India	169.35	0.95
Dr Reddys Lab	2095.55	-21.55
Eicher Motors	17013.40	-41.05
GAIL (India)	99.65	-4.75
Grasim Ind	668.45	-18.75
HCL Tech	549.70	-15.35
HDFC	2179.65	3.90
HDFC Bank	1179.60	1.95
Hero MotoCorp	1975.45	-76.30
Hindalco	149.75	-6.15
Hind Unilever	2159.45	-15.30
ICICI Bank	506.10	8.85
IndusInd Bank	1079.25	-24.80
Bharti Infralet	216.85	2.40
Infosys	741.05	9.35
Indian Oil Corp	103.95	-1.80
ITC	195.30	-2.25
JSW Steel	235.00	-0.70
Kotak Bank	1599.00	-21.35
L&T	1160.90	-26.65
M&M	458.30	1.25
Maruti Suzuki	6285.15	2.05
Nestle India Ltd.	16109.95	331.10
NTPC	103.90	-2.65
ONGC	89.10	-2.85
PowerGrid Corp	183.50	2.00
Reliance Ind	1316.15	-12.50
State Bank	287.40	-15.60
Sun Pharma	369.50	-3.40
Tata Motors	125.40	-3.55
Tata Steel	364.05	-17.70
TCS	2001.30	1.15
Tech Mahindra	744.55	0.15
Titan	1244.15	-10.35
UltraTech Cement	4141.70	-77.90
UPL	514.35	-5.35
Vedanta	110.95	-3.05
Wipro	220.80	-0.65
YES Bank	31.55	-3.05
Zee Entertainment	233.85	-5.45

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.53	72.85
Euro	80.58	80.97
British Pound	92.52	92.93
Japanese Yen (100)	67.27	67.59
Chinese Yuan	10.42	10.46
Swiss Franc	75.67	76.01
Singapore Dollar	52.20	52.43
Canadian Dollar	54.28	54.53
Malaysian Ringgit	17.24	17.34

Source: Indian Bank

## BULLION RATES CHENNAI

Rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses
Retail Silver (1g) ..... 48.6 ..... (49)
22 ct gold (1g) ..... 4005 ..... (4064)

RBI receives  
₹1.71 lakh  
crore in LTRO

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Reserve Bank of India on Monday said it had received ₹1.71 lakh crore in the third long-term repo operation (LTRO) conducted for an amount of ₹25,000 crore. The central bank received 66 bids in the three-year tenor LTRO, which has reversal date on March 1, 2023.

"The total bids that were received amounted to ₹1,71,965 crore, implying a bid to cover ratio (i.e., the amount of bids received relative to the notified amount) of 6.9," the RBI said in a release.

As against this, the RBI allotted an amount of ₹25,028 crore, with a pro-rata allotment percentage to 14.54%. The RBI will conduct another LTRO for a three-year tenor worth ₹25,000 crore on March 9.

It has already conducted two LTROS for ₹25,000 crore each on February 17 and February 24.

In the February 17 LTRO for the three-year tenor, it received bids amounting to ₹1,944 lakh crore.

# Sensex sheds more than 900 points on virus alarm in India

New COVID-19 cases spur change in sentiment, resulting in over 1,500 declines

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

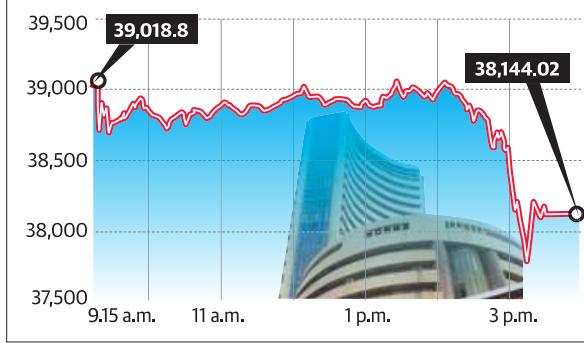
It was a volatile day at the stock markets on Monday with the benchmark Sensex falling more than 900 points from the day's high, as reports of COVID-19 cases in India affected investor sentiment, even as most other leading Asian markets gained ground after the recent sell-off.

The 30-share Sensex, which lost more than 3,000 points in the previous six trading sessions, opened the day strong and surged nearly 800 points to touch a high of 39,083.17. It traded with significant gains for most part of the trading session before news poured in that two fresh COVID-19 cases had been detected in India. The news spooked investors and the benchmark Sensex fell to a low of 37,785.99, before closing at 38,144.02, down 153.27 points or 0.40%.

The broader Nifty settled

## Bourse fever

Foreign portfolio investors continued to remain sellers, with Monday's net sales pegged at nearly ₹1,355 crore



the day at 11,132.75, down 69 points, or 0.62%. The India VIX index – a barometer for volatility – jumped nearly 8.5% to move further close to its 52-week high levels.

**Nips pullback**  
"Detection of new cases of coronavirus in India has nipped the nascent pullback in the Indian equity market," said Gaurav Dua, head, Capital

Market Strategy & Investments, Sharekhan, adding that though the new developments were a worrying factor that could lead to further volatility in the short-term, the correction also offered a buying opportunity for investors.

On Monday, the Ministry of Health said that two individuals – one each in Delhi and Telangana – have tested

positive for the virus after having returned from Italy and Dubai. The losses in the Indian market were in the midst of a pull-back rally in most other leading Asian bourses with Nikkei, Hang Seng and Kospi, all gaining ground on Monday.

In India, the reversal of sentiment was sudden with across-the-board selling, as the morning session saw less than 400 stocks losing ground, but as the session ended, there were more than 1,500 declines.

Foreign portfolio investors continued to sell Indian equities, with Monday's net sales pegged at nearly ₹1,355 crore, even as their domestic counterparts attempted to provide some support with net purchases of ₹1,139 crore. In the Sensex pack, stocks such as Axis Bank, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, ONGC, Tata Steel, NTPC and Tata Steel lost more than 2% each.

## Virus reports send rupee to 15-month low

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The fall in the equity markets – following reports of fresh cases of COVID-19 in India – spilled onto the currency market, with the rupee closing the day at a 15-month low, despite a strong opening.

The rupee opened higher at 72.07 against the dollar compared with the previous close of 72.18, but fell sharply during the latter part of trade and closed the day at 72.76 a dollar, down 0.76% from its previous close. The rupee was the only Asian currency that weakened on Monday.

The uncertainty around the virus impact is worrying investors, currency dealers said and added that the crisis was still unfolding. The silver lining for the currency market is that the Reserve Bank has an adequate foreign exchange reserves – \$476.12 billion, or 10 months worth of imports – which act as a cushion in times of high volatility.

## OECD lowers India's FY21 GDP growth to 5.1%

Agency factors in impact of COVID-19

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Global agency OECD on Monday lowered its India's GDP growth forecast to 5.1% from the earlier projection for 2020-21 is 1.1 percentage points lower than the November 2019 forecast. The Economic Survey tabled by the government in Parliament has projected India's economic growth at 6-6.5% in the next financial year starting April 1, 2020 and improve to 5.6% in the following year. The latest projection for 2020-21 is 1.1 percentage points lower than the November 2019 forecast.

The National Statistical Office (NSO) estimates India's GDP growth at 5% during 2019-20. OECD has projected the growth at 4.9% for the financial year ending March 2020.

The report said the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak had already brought considerable human suffering and major economic disruption. Output contractions in China are being felt around the world, reflecting the key and rising role China has in global supply chains, travel and commodity markets. Subsequent outbreaks in other economies are having similar effects, albeit on a smaller scale.

## GE's 'Neutron Jack' is no more

He grew the company from \$12 bn to \$410 bn in market cap

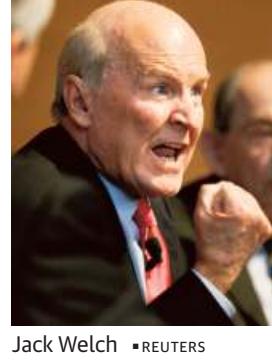
## REUTERS

Jack Welch, who grew General Electric Co. during the 1980s and 1990s into the most valuable public company in the United States, has died at age of 84, the conglomerate said on Monday.

Mr. Welch, known as 'Neutron Jack' for cutting thousands of jobs, bought and sold scores of businesses, expanding the industrial giant into financial services and consulting.

Under him, GE's market value grew from \$12 billion to \$40 billion. But his push to build out the GE Capital financing business nearly proved the undoing of the entire enterprise during the global financial crisis more than a decade ago, and GE now trades at a fraction of its peak value.

President Donald Trump tweeted: "There was no corporate leader like Neutron Jack. He was my friend and supporter. We made won-



Jack Welch ■ REUTERS

derful deals together. He will never be forgotten. My warmest sympathies to his wonderful wife & family!"

In December 1980, it was announced he would succeed CEO Reginald Jones and in April 1981, he took over as the company's eighth chairman and CEO. He served in that position until he retired in September 2001.

GE saw great growth and expansion under Mr. Welch's leadership. Through stream-

lining operations, acquiring new businesses and ensuring that each business under the GE umbrella was one of the best in its field, the company was able to expand dramatically from 1981 to 2001.

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others," Mr. Welch wrote in a book called "Winning."

In 1960, Mr. Welch joined GE as a chemical engineer for its plastics division in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He was elected the youngest vice-president in 1972 and became vice-chairman in 1979. In 1980, the year before Mr. Welch became CEO, GE recorded revenues of roughly \$26.8 billion; in 2000, the year before he left, they were nearly \$30 billion. The company was one of the most valuable and largest companies in the world at the time of his retirement.

It was the first gain for both benchmarks after six sessions of losses triggered by worries about COVID-19, which has killed nearly 3,000 people and roiled global markets.

## Oil up over 2% on OPEC cut, stimuli hopes

## REUTERS

NEW DELHI

Oil prices rose over 2% on Monday, reversing an early fall to multi-year lows, as hopes of a deeper cut in output by OPEC and stimulus from central banks countered worries about damage to demand from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Brent crude futures rose \$1.16, or 2.3%, to \$50.83 a barrel by 9.40 p.m. The session low of \$48.40 was its lowest since July 2017.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures rose \$1.26, or 2.8%, to \$46.02 a barrel. The session low of \$43.32 a barrel was the lowest since December 2018.

It was the first gain for both benchmarks after six sessions of losses triggered by worries about COVID-19, which has killed nearly 3,000 people and roiled global markets.

Exports, though, dropped 22% to 683 units, taking total tractor sales during the month to 22,561 units. This is a growth of 19% from February 2019.

Exports, though, dropped 22% to 683 units, taking total tractor

Global Adjustments India Living Awards captures the different shades of the country as perceived by expatriates



Godman

**Sang Jun Lee, South Korea (Faces category)**

"I was on a school trip to Varanasi and we were near the Ganga. Amidst all the chaos of this religious site teeming with devotees, this one man with a very calm face caught my attention. He looked really at peace with himself. This calmness that I saw in his face contrasted with the commotion that surrounded him."



GOWRI S.

From an aerial view of Kasimedu fishing harbour lined with catamarans to an empty gateway of an airport in monotone and a smiling face that basks in the soft glow of early morning sunlight – Global Adjustments India Living Awards' photography exhibition in Chennai, housed 300 frames that define aspects of the country in more ways than one. What binds them together is that they are all clicked by expatriates, lending them a different perspective. "They see things that we often seem to easily miss," says Rohini Manian, CEO, Global Adjustments. The idea behind the competition and the exhibition, she adds, "...was to say that India is more than just cows crossing roads or traffic." The winners from each of the four categories – Places,

Culture and Festivals, Faces and Into India – narrate the stories behind each of these frames.

### Music I have never heard before

**Thibaut Dejean de la Batie, France (Into India category)**

"It was in October 2016, during a trip to Rajasthan. We (my wife and children) were going to spend the weekend at Jaisalmer. This was on the way back from the desert. We stopped beside a roadside stall for tea and the kids had their mango juice. Seeing us, this man suddenly started playing traditional Rajasthani folk music. It was not really a tourist place; we were literally in the middle of nowhere. The music was something that struck us, especially my son. He went and sat with him while he played the music."



### In the hands of Ganesha

**Edgar Gaillot, France (Culture and Festivals category)**

"This was taken during Ganesh Chaturthi on the *visarjan* day at Marina beach. I had my helper's little girl Akshaya on my shoulders. As we were watching, she came up with an interesting parallel. One of the statues of Ganesha had a little girl in its hands; she pointed to it and said we look the same. At that moment, I knew I had to capture this. So I have tried to bring in both perspectives through this particular frame. It was all her idea."



With her own website, Insta account, and Facebook page, 90-year-old Latika Chakrabarty, an entrepreneur making bags in Mumbai, is giving millennials a run for their money

## Paati's potlis on Instagram



**Age no bar** Latika uses a 65-year-old sewing machine • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tiple iterations of Ragini, Kaira, and standalone pieces Falak, Himani, and Aaliya, all done with a keen eye for detail.

"We have customers from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, the U.K., Germany, France, U.A.E., to name a few. Some of her most ardent fans are in Brazil – her story went viral there and was covered by the two prominent newspapers in the country," explains Joy.

Each bag is fashioned out of silk, cotton, or mixed fabric, with hand-stitched embellishments. They are sold for \$10 internationally or ₹700 within India. They are all given feminine names. For instance, the red and gold satin one with an inverted Superman-inspired motif, is called Shakti. Then, there are mul-

So why use old *kurtas* and dress material? Latika muses, "I liked collecting old things which could be put to use later. About four years ago, my daughter-in-law asked me to make a *potli* bag to match her suit. I realised then I had a natural talent for making bags." She adds, "I look at piece of cloth and see the possibilities. I take my time, I don't have to meet any deadlines. When the picture of the end pro-

duct has been formed, I procure the accessories and other material and set about completing the bag."

Born on the banks of the river Brahmaputra, at Dhubri, Assam, in 1930, Latika has fond memories of her growing years. "We belonged to a big family of 14 brothers and sisters. My daughters would joke that we were a football team with three extras."

In her second year of college, Latika met her husband, Krishna Lal

Chakrabarty, an Officer-Surveyor in the Survey of India. "I completed my education after I got married and my two daughters were born soon. On my 25th birthday, my husband presented me an Usha sewing machine. Every time I use it, I am reminded of him and his love and affection for me."

The sewing machine doubles up as a time machine, transporting Latika to a time when she watched her children grow up, as she moved to Dehradun, lovingly tending to an orchard, filled with fruit trees like guava, mango, litchi, papaya, plum, jamun and bel.

"My daughters were married one after the other in the early '70s. To augment our income, we started a school, but then, I fell sick and had to shelve that plan. Following the death of my husband in 1981, I started living with my son, Raj, daughter-in-law Sumita and their son Joy," states Latika.

Didibai, is another moniker that has happily attached itself to the senior entrepreneur. Latika adds, "I am happy with my loving family. I am a social person with friends of all ages."

Latika is deft with not just the needle, but with the pen as well. She has dabbled in writing in both English and Bengali. Her book *My Days at Foreshore Road* was self-published in 2010. Now she blogs at latikasbags.com/blog.

Find her on social media: @latikasbags on Instagram; Facebook.com/latikasbags

### 5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



PERFORMANCE

**Kathak and Bharatanatyam**

India Habitat Centre is hosting two dance performances this evening. The first event, a solo Kathak recital by Harish Gangani from Jaipur gharana, will begin with a Vandana by his disciples. This will be followed by a Bharatanatyam recital by Pratibha Prahlad, a noted choreographer and arts administrator.

**VENUE:** The Stein Auditorium IHC

**TIME:** 7 p.m.



EXHIBITION

**Indigenous art**

An ongoing exhibition titled Many Indias III, presents rare artworks of 70 artists, curated by Tulika Kedia. It showcases the different genres of folk and indigenous art from various parts of the country, including Worli art, Bengal scroll paintings, and Pichwai and miniatures from Rajasthan.

**VENUE:** Must Art Gallery, Panchsheel Park

**TIME:** 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



FOOD

**Pickle fest**

Teen Paeteela, a Delhi-based food outlet that's part of the Café Turtle group, has organised a two-week long Punjabi Pickle Festival. In addition to the outlet's regular food which uses farm-fresh vegetables, visitors can relish a wide range of natural pickles, ranging from lemon, carrots, ginger, haldi to green chillies.

**VENUE:** Meharchand Market, Lodhi Road.

**TIME:** 12 noon - 10 p.m.



PHOTOGRAPHY

**Courtesy : The Japan Foundation**

Hindu Deities and Sanskrit in Japan, an exhibition of photographs by Benoy K. Behl, a well-known photographer and cultural historian, begins today. There are at least a score of Hindu deities very actively worshipped in Japan; Sanskrit is also taught in Siddham script of the 5th-6th centuries.

**VENUE:** Kamaladevi Complex, 2nd floor, IIC

**TIME:** 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

### PEOPLE

#### Allegory on canvas

Milburn Cherian, a Mumbai-based artist, brings to the city 20 years of her work, in a solo exhibition



In her second solo in Delhi, Milburn Cherian shows her characteristic style of people and possessions living in tight spaces on her artwork. In her 80 works, titled Living between the Times 2020, Cherian, a Mumbai-based artist, who has had solo shows in Kolkata, London, and group shows across the world, talks of how displacement is one of the major themes, apart from suffering and healing.

For instance, "Outside The City Walls," done in 2011, shows "people having to move with families and all their belongings in the hope of seeking shelter elsewhere," she says. "The light in the gateway is to give some hope to their plight and separation from the new life they look forward to." Her work also has the stain-glass-like quality of a church window.

Maybe one had a premonition about the crisis (Delhi riots)," she adds, speaking about how, in the post-Babri Masjid demolition riots, her husband, E. Cherian, an interior designer, helped Muslim artists stay safe: "He hid them in his car."

Uma Nair, an art curator and critic who introduces the show to visitors through an essay, says Cherian's work has always been about the people: "To look at Milburn's paintings is to see a picture from a Shakespearean tragedy. Just as Shakespeare's histories were crowded with ordinary people making or witnessing history, mingling the high drama of politics with earthy tales, in the same way Milburn re-imagines narratives as tumultuous, abundant, and resonant human."

Her paintings "Village Resettled", "The Healing", "Give Ear To My Prayer", "Life Goes on", "Feed The Hungry", and "Broken Bridges" best show the parables of the poor and the oppressed.

"Many of my works depicts the human condition, obviously manmade. I paint because I am well aware of how selfishness and greed has kept this country divided and in constant turmoil," says Cherian.

The works on display, most acrylic on canvas, and some watercolours, measure about 14x12 inches, while some like "Tsunami", "Sienna Earth" and "The Healing", spread out to 61 inches.

"I like detailing," says Cherian, who can take upto 11 months on a single work. Life was sometimes a struggle, especially since she lost her parents at 18. Though an NID grad, she calls herself self-taught. She grew up reading Asterix and was inspired by Pieter Brueghel the Elder, when her sister gave her a book on the Flemish printmaker, when she was 27.

MADHUR TANKHA

Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; on until March 7

### PUBLICATION

#### Food forecast 2020



The third edition of the Godrej Food Trends Report 2020, released in the last week of February, indicates that the industry will be looking East and local. For example, since eating-out and ordering-in are trumping cooking at home, we will long for more home-style cooking. This will in turn lead to a rise in the number of local foodpreneurs, who will cater to this demand. We will also be consuming more healthy fats this year, including *desi* ghee and cold-pressed seed oils that our ancestors would've traditionally used. This will mean a further proliferation of Indian flavours in the food industry – even in cocktails and desserts. At the same time, the country's food-scape will also deepen its understanding of South East Asian dining, "from previously unexplored...cuisines from the region". The report had inputs from "over 150 experts – chefs, thought leaders and food influencers across major cities," including Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Mumbai.

For more, [Vikhrolicucina.com](http://vikhrolicucina.com)

Contact us at [delhimetro@thehindu.co.in](mailto:delhimetro@thehindu.co.in)

### GIG

#### Jazz

Playing live tonight at the Piano Man in Gurugram is the award-winning Canadian jazz music outfit, Kirk MacDonald Generations Quartet. The band consists of Kirk MacDonald on the saxophone, Virginia MacDonald on the clarinet, Neil Swainson on the bass, and Morgan Childs on the drums.

**VENUE:** 32nd Avenue, Sector 15, Part 2

**TIME:** 9 p.m.

### CMYK

AN-DOE

REVIEW

The Netgear Nighthawk AX12 (RAX200) Tri-Band Wi-Fi 6 router is a monster for data speeds and network security, but with a couple of glitches

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

This year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas once again proved that Netgear is one of the big guys with their Nighthawk and Orbi series. The San Jose tech company has released quite a line-up of spaceship-esque network appliances since around 2016. This market is a competitive one, with demands for a safer network at home or at work on the continuous rise.

Reviewing the latest from the Nighthawk (Marvel fans would love the name for the species of supervillains-turned-superheroes) AX12 series, the RAX200, would familiarise me with the industry's quick progress.

While I have not interacted much with Orbi or Nighthawk, the Netgear family is no stranger to my home. My daily router is the Netgear R6120 AC1200 Dual Band, which is paired with a TP-Link TL-WA850RE extender. The extender – while certainly furthering coverage – has compromised my existing bandwidth to less than half of my paid-for speed.

So, I would not just be testing the AX12 RAX200, but I would also gauge its ability to work with an extender.

Pretty on the outside

Unboxing the AX12 RAX200 was not a cumbersome experience; minimal packaging (high-five to the environment) still lent support to the fragile yet mammoth router that would be unveiled. The router itself is not too heavy at just over a kilogram. The glossy finish and wing-like antennae offer



## A pricey superhero

a futuristic finish to the industrial design. According to Netgear, the antennae are positioned at slight angles to offer optimal Wi-Fi delivery. Yes, this is a good-looking gadget for the modern home.

Since last spring, my home has converged with smart tech, the entire ecosystem requiring a stronger bandwidth with no dropouts. Naturally, bringing the AX12 RAX200 into this equation was exciting. And considering it is priced at just under ₹75k, I almost wanted to power up my entire building.

Setting up the AX12 RAX200 was no small feat. First, one has to download the Nighthawk app (available on iOS and Android) which is

not only a setup wizard but also helps you monitor and manage your network, both remotely and on-site. The app itself works pretty seamlessly, but I would suggest setting it up on a tablet or an Android rather than an iPhone.

The configuration documentation, available online as a standard, was helpful with the initial stages, but when it came to final configurations, I started feeling palpitations from the sheer stress. Much to my shame, I had to bring in a third party to help with the final configuration, but I was deeply comforted by the fact that my helper was also scratching his head in confusion and that there was a problem with the lines in my area.

Just silly fast

The security protocols on the Nighthawk series are layered and complex, and should be satisfactory to most users. In the six days of testing the device, there were two firmware updates; do not ignore these – for any router system you are using.

Probably one of the most aggravating experiences had to be the continual logout from the Wi-Fi. While my daily step count was upped from the back-and-forth

SPECIFICATIONS

**PHYSICAL:** 11.63 x 8.92 x 2.14 in; just over 1 kg

**WI-FI TECH:** Wi-Fi 6 (802.11ax); Tri-Band WiFi (AX11000); 2.4GHz AX: 4x4 (Tx/Rx) 1024 QAM 20/40MHz, up to 1.2GB/s; 5GHz AX: 4x4 (Tx/Rx) 1024 QAM 20/40/80/160MHz, up to 4.8GB/s; 5GHz AX: 4x4 (Tx/Rx) 1024 QAM 20/40/80/160MHz, up to 4.8GB/s; Backwards compatible with 802.11a/b/g/n/ac WiFi

**PROCESSOR:** 64-bit Quad-core 1.8GHz processor

**PERFORMANCE:** AX11000 WiFi

**RANGE:** Large to very large homes

**SECURITY:** Standards-based WiFi Security (802.11i, 128-bit AES encryption with PSK); Automatic firmware update delivers latest security patches to the router; Guest network access; VPN Support

cash over for a separate name.

But when the Nighthawk AX12 RAX200 is connected, it feels like a bullet train. Random speed tests across the six days through the Nighthawk app showed consistent speeds of 99.5 megabytes for download and uploads, and it reflected consistently in activities as simple as web browsing to using IoT devices which were more 'on the ball' with the data playground they were given. Responses came faster and smoother. Mobile phones can enjoy gigabit speeds too.

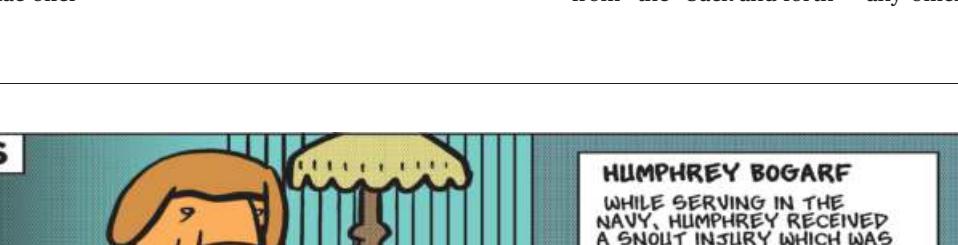
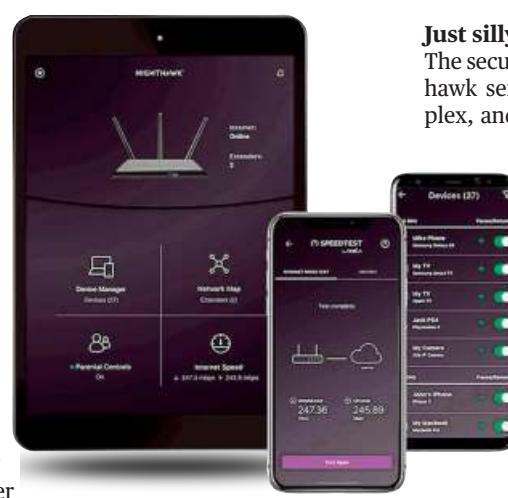
While using Netflix in Ultra HDR, paired with the streaming platform's Adaptive Streaming technology, there were no glitches and experimental rapid switching between shows presented no issues. Apple TV+, which used to really grind my gums with its forever buffering, was the ultimate test, and the AX12 RAX200 passed.

The battle royale of speed and capacity was surely running every IoT device, mobile phone, smart television, laptop and tablet at the same time.

A speed test via Ookla showed a drop of nine megabytes a second. Not bad for Wi-Fi 6.

Would I pay around ₹75k for this? Not really, as I am sure there would be equally good router systems for a fraction of the cost which would actually have the sufficient coverage power.

The Netgear Nighthawk AX12 (RAX200) Tri-Band WiFi 6 is available through authorised online and offline Netgear partners at a price of ₹74,999.



POOCH CAFE



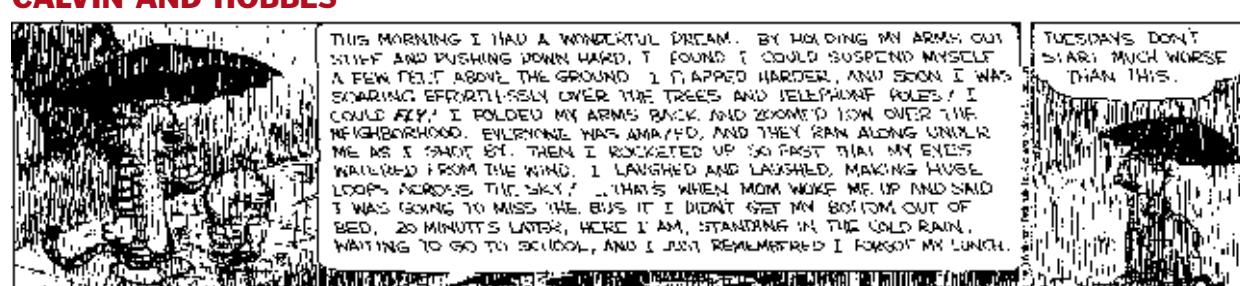
PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



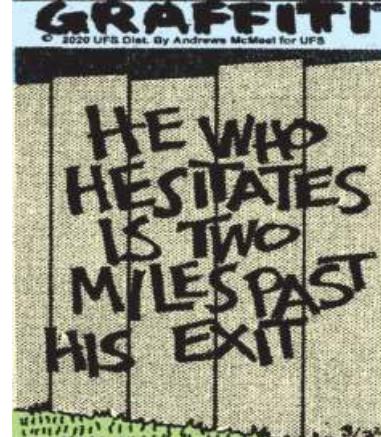
CALVIN AND HOBBES



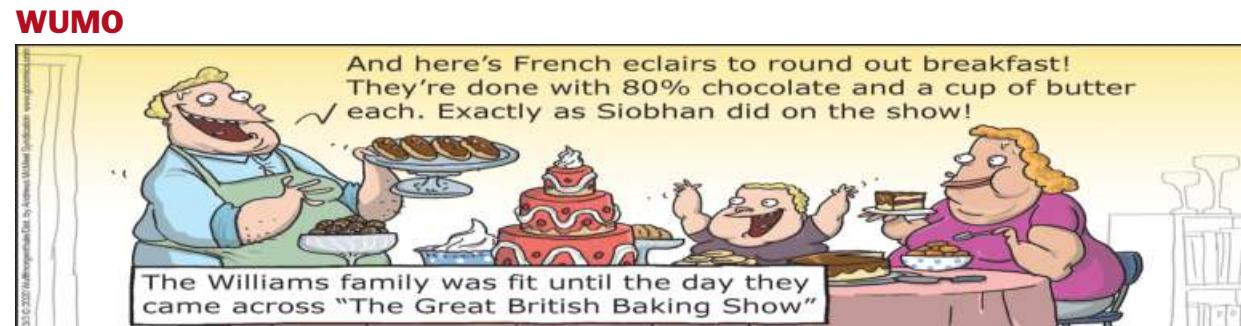
TIGER



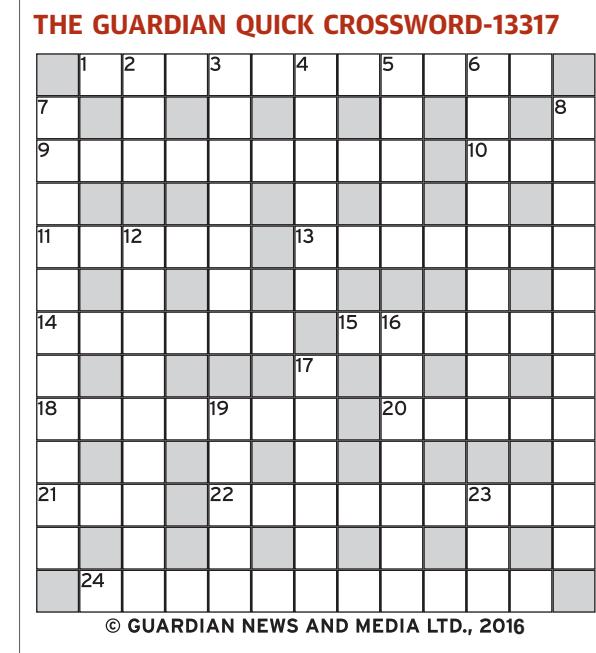
GRAFFITI



WUMO



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13317



To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

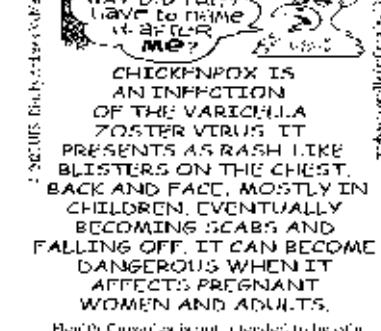
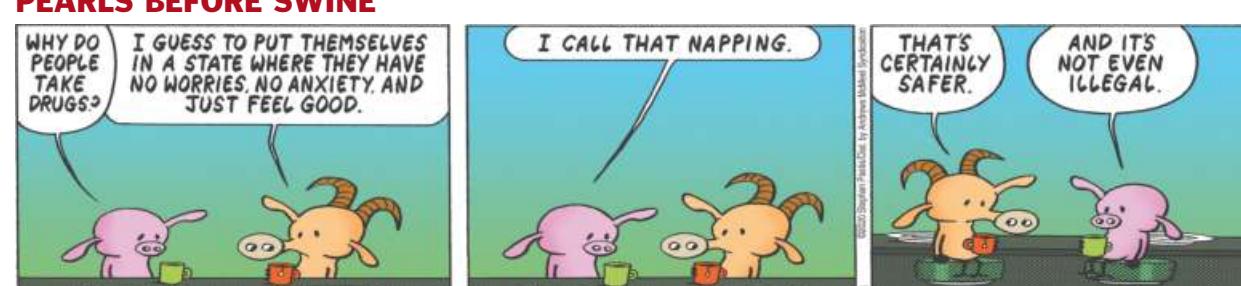
- 5 Follow-my-leader dance (5)
- 6 Small citrus fruit with a loose skin (9)
- 7 Escorted (11)
- 8 Cause of serious back pain (7,4)
- 12 Strong waterproof sheet (9)
- 16 Relevant to the subject in question – coin pot (anag) (2-5)
- 17 Dexterous (6)
- 19 Hindu hereditary class (5)
- 23 Deity (3)

The solution will appear on March 4, 2020.

Solution No. 13316

A	C	C	U	S	E	D	T	A	L
T	A	O	E	R	T	I	C	A	S
H	A	M	B	U	R	G	N	I	K
O	E	N	R	E	G	A	I	N	S
S	C	O	L	D	E	U	D	I	O
O	T	H	E	R	E	F	O	R	E
C	L	I	V	E	D	U	I	U	S
A	N	A	N	C	O	C	K	C	N
M	U	F	F	L	R	H	A	E	C
E	A	A	E	T	E	N	R	O	O
I	N	N	R	D	S	O	O	L	N
N	T	M	T	A	K	I	T	A	G

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



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- 20 (On social media) become popular (5)
- 21 Old measure equivalent to about 45 inches in England (3)
- 22 Amounts deducted from wages (9)
- 23 Satirical imitation (6)
- 24 Chemical used for pest control (11)
- 25 Dexterous (6)
- 26 Relevent to the subject in question – coin pot (anag) (2-5)
- 27 Characterised by subtle shades of meaning (7)
- 28 Relaxed (2,4)

## Phisher-folk go crypto

While crypto policy in the country has not been officially cemented by RBI, it certainly has piqued our interest – especially if you are keen on the move towards decentralisation. But with every emerging technology come some concerns.

A Reddit thread by u/signinigma from two months ago, detailed a crypto-scam in which a faux Elon Musk account announced a tempting giveaway on the condition of an investment of 0.4 Bitcoins or around US\$3000. It was only after the funds were transferred that the user did some digging and realised it was a scam.

In his blog post, Satnam encourages people to do some digging into the account of the user putting out crypto-related invitations.

One can check the followers and follows lists of these accounts, sometimes the bio picture might be warped, and there might even be some inconsistencies in their tweeted content. But the best way to avoid being scammed is to not be tempted by such. Better safe than sorry!

But now, the latest tac-



# New Zealand gallops to victory and series sweep

India's abject surrender is complete as hosts win by seven wickets

## INDIA IN NZ

S. DINAKAR  
CHRISTCHURCH

The rout was complete. The Indians had nowhere to hide at the Hagley Oval. Outplayed in both skill and strategy by the New Zealanders, the Indians seemed to be looking for the earliest flight to catch home.

### Clinical approach

New Zealand, clinical with its end-game skills and winning the key moments of the game, won the second Test by a whopping seven wickets and swept the series 2-0 on Monday, only the third day of the Test.

The exciting Kyle Jamieson was Man-of-the-Match and ace of swing Tim Southee Player-of-the-Series.

India added only 34 runs for its last four wickets in the morning – the late-order fightback remaining an illusion – and a target of 132 was hardly going to stretch New Zealand.

Kane Williamson's men also picked up 120 points from the series. New Zealand, in all, has 180 points while India stays on 360.

Save Jasprit Bumrah after lunch, when he fired out Kane Williamson with a mean lifter which the Kiwi

captain fended into the cordon, and then sent down the pacy off-cutter that accounted for the attractive Tom Blundell (55), the Indian attack did not appear threatening.

The fluent left-hander, Tom Latham (52), was the only other wicket to fall, well caught by a leaping Rishabh Pant as he attempted to pull Umesh Yadav.

### Fine start

New Zealand's opening pair of Latham and Blundell played with the right blend of offence and defence under a cloud cover, with a stiff wind blowing across the ground. The duo's 103-run opening partnership settled the issue.

Blundell crouches in his stance but if the ball is pitched short, he can quickly stand tall and drive the sphere to the cover fence. A fine back-foot player, he was airborne as he punched Umesh through point and rose on his toes to strike Mohammed Shami between point and cover.

The opener with a rather high backlift also on-drove Shami – who bowled despite a “batting impact injury” – and gloriously cover-drove Bumrah to the fence.

At the other end, Latham



**High-fliers:** The New Zealanders have every reason to be pleased having comprehensively beaten India in the Test series. ■ AP

collected runs with typical efficiency. He timed Bumrah to the cover fence, the ball meeting the sweet spot in the willow.

After lunch, Latham pulled and hooked short-pitched offerings from Umesh. The Kiwi innings was galloping along.

Latham is a compact organised player whose foot-

work and strokeplay are dictated by the length of the ball.

His back-lift is measured and there are occasions when his boundaries are just an extension of a defensive push.

In the morning, the Indians had to build partnerships, see through the first hour. They didn't.

Trent Boult, who had bowled magnificently in this innings with his left-arm's angle and precision in his swing, and Southee teamed up again.

Wickets continued to tumble. Hanuma Vihari was a tad unlucky, though, attempting to work Southee fine only to see ‘keeper B.J. Watling fling himself to his

left and come up with the ball.

Then Pant perished to a tame push as Boult angled one across the left-hander.

Picked more for the X-factor

in his batting than ‘keeping

in the eleven, India needed Pant to go after the bowling instead of coming up with ‘nothing’ shots.

Shami, at least, freed his

arms. He was held at deep square-leg off Southee.

Jadeja fires

It was left to Ravindra Jadeja, that wonderful athlete, to launch into the bowling. He did just that.

A natural striker of the ball, the left-hander waded into Boult, striking a full-length delivery straight over

## SCOREBOARD

INDIA – 1ST INNINGS: 242  
NEW ZEALAND – 1ST INNINGS: 235

INDIA – 2ND INNINGS  
Prithvi Shaw c Latham b Southee (14, 24b, 2x4), Mayank Agarwal lbw b Boult 3 (6b), Cheteshwar Pujara b Boult 24 (88b, 2x4), Virat Kohli lbw b Grandhomme 14 (30b, 3x4), Ajinkya Rahane b Wagner 9 (43b, 1x4), Umesh Yadav b Boult 1 (12b), Hanuma Vihari c Watling b Southee 9 (18b, 2x4), Rishabh Pant c Watling b Boult 12 (14b), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 16 (22b, 1x4, 1x6), Mohammed Shami c Blundell b Southee 5 (11b), Jasprit Bumrah run out 4 (8b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, lb-8, nb-1): 10; Total (for three wkts. in 36 overs): 132.

FALL OF WICKETS  
1-8 (Agarwal, 1.5), 2-26 (Shaw, 8.1), 3-51 (Kohli, 17.1), 4-72 (Rahane, 30.3), 5-84 (Pujara, 33.1), 6-89 (Umesh, 35.1), 7-97 (Vihari, 38.4), 8-97 (Pant, 39.3), 9-108 (Shami, 42.4).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING  
Southee 11-2-36-3, Boult 14-4-28-2, Jamieson 8-4-18-0, Grandhomme 5-3-3-1, Wagner 8-1-18-1.

NEW ZEALAND – 2ND INNINGS  
Tom Latham c Pant b Umesh 52 (74b, 10x4), Tom Blundell b Bumrah 55 (113b, 8x4, 1x6), Kane Williamson c Rahane b Bumrah 5 (8b, 1x4), Ross Taylor (not out) 5 (9b, 1x4), Henry Nicholls (not out) 5 (13b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, lb-8, nb-1): 10; Total (for three wkts. in 36 overs): 132.

FALL OF WICKETS  
1-103 (Latham, 27.6), 2-112 (Williamson 30.6), 3-121 (Blundell, 32.5).

INDIA BOWLING  
Bumrah 13-2-39-2, Umesh 14-3-45-1, Shami 3-1-11-0, Jadeja 50-24-0, Kohli 1-0-4-0.

Man-of-the-Match: Jamieson.

Man-of-the-Series: Southee.

New Zealand won by seven wickets to sweep series 2-0.

## Didn't play to our potential, admits Kohli

S. DINAKAR  
CHRISTCHURCH

Virat Kohli's demeanour reflected his mood.

He was bitterly disappointed at India's capitulation. There was no fight, no resistance as the Indians slumped to yet another defeat on day three here.

On India's last tour of South Africa, Kohli had spoken passionately following India's Test series defeat at Centurion. He had said: “To win Test series abroad you got to keep thinking and dreaming about it everyday.”

### Pragmatic

But then, as he answered questions here on Monday, Kohli appeared more pragmatic. He had taken the hard knocks as a batsman and captain in the series. He was sober; that fire you saw at Centurion was missing.

Kohli said: “Obviously, quite disappointed with how



**Well played!** Indians congratulate the New Zealanders at the end of the match. ■ AP

we played in this series.

“Every challenge that comes our way, we try to take it head-on. I feel like we were completely outplayed in this series. There is no shame in being outplayed at the international level.”

He added: “We obviously didn't play the kind of cricket we do as a team. The thing to

take away from here is to not shy away from things that have gone wrong. Instead, address them straight up, and not be in denial. Acceptance is the first word.”

The India skipper elaborated: “Because we do have a lot of cricket away from home coming this season.”

“It is something we are optimistic about, and looking forward to. Things that have not gone right here, we would like to be in similar situations and correct them.”

Kohli admitted India had not been positive enough in the series. “We were not brave enough in moments, which we have done in the past. Even though we lost, we still competed. Skills follow your mind-set. We needed to have more clarity as batsmen. Perhaps we made too much of the conditions.”

Kohli was not willing to blame any particular batsman for getting stuck at the crease. “You take the hit collectively,” he said.

**On Pant**

On Rishabh Pant not delivering despite being given chances, he said, “You got to strike a balance.”

“You cannot push a player out too early. It can damage his confidence.”

Kohli said the team was not dependent on his batting alone. “It's not like that at all. If you take the Australia series, Pujara made the biggest contribution there.”

When asked by a local reporter about his alleged swear words against Kane Williamson, Kohli snapped back, “I have spoken to the match referee. There is nothing to it.”

About batting on seaming tracks with bounce, he observed: “The conditions

## Williamson pleased at outplaying world's best

Kiwi skipper enthused by Jamieson's rise as an all-rounder

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHRISTCHURCH

Kane Williamson flashed a smile before getting down to answering questions. He was pleased by his team's 2-0 sweep over the No. 1-ranked Test team in the world.

This was New Zealand's sixth straight Test series win at home and even in his moment of triumph, Williamson was measured and insightful with his views. No brave talk, just plain common sense.

### Plainspeak

It was a lot like his flowing batting and smart captaincy. No fancy stuff; just hard substance. The New Zealand captain said: “An outstanding performance. I don't think the result reflects how competitive this match was. Perhaps another 50 more runs from the Indians would have made it quite a balanced-looking game.”

Williamson said his team had stepped up after the debacle against Australia. “We all know how strong India are all around the world and there has been a lot of talk about their pace attack and they certainly showed their quality in this series. A lot to take from the series against the best team in the world at the moment.”

About batting on seaming tracks with bounce, he observed: “The conditions

## STAT SPHERE

**1** India suffered its first whitewash in Tests after the 4-0 defeat at the hands of Australia in 2011-12

**1** Latham (1,431) has scored 1 more Test runs as an opener than any other player since the start of 2018, averaging 51.1 in the process

**1/4** India crossed the 200-mark only once in four innings in this series (242 – first innings of second Test)

**58** The highest score by an Indian (Mayank, second innings of the first Test) in this series

■ The last time India conceded two 50-plus opening partnerships in a Test was the Boxing Day Test against South Africa in Durban in 2013

■ The previous occasion the Kiwis had a 50-plus stand for the first wicket against India at home was in March 1994 (19 innings ago)

**2** With scores of 2, 19, 3 & 14, Kohli completed his second worst Test series in terms of average

**KOHLI'S LOWEST AVERAGES**

9.20 Australia in India, 2017

9.50 India in NZ, 2020

13.40 India in England, 2014

15.20 India in WI, 2011

30.00 WI in India, 2013

**Kyle Jamieson..** making his presence felt.

were a massive factor. Even if you do adapt quickly, you may still have a good ball with your name on it.”

On playing England, Australia and India in back-to-back Test series, he said: “Probably the three top Test teams in the world. Disappointing showing in Australia but then at the same time it was important that we continued to play the style of cricket that wins us matches at the middle.”

On Kyle Jamieson's development as an all-rounder, he said: “He is batting beautifully and can truly bat in terms of technique and how

he looks to approach his innings. His runs were very valuable. As a bowler, it's not only his height and the bounce that he gets but he bowls a very, very good line to challenge guys around the fourth stump.”

Although the toss was important, Williamson felt it was not the only factor in the series. “The ball moved considerably throughout the two games. So bowling first was not the game.”

## Real ends six-year league Clasico drought

Beats Barcelona at the Bernabeu for the first time since 2014; Zapata is Atalanta's hat-trick hero

### EURO LEAGUES

AGENCIES  
MADRID

Real Madrid beat Barcelona 2-0 in Sunday's top-of-the-table ‘Clasico’, leapfrogging its rival at the LaLiga summit after a week in which its pride had taken a beating at home and in Europe.

Brazilian teenager Vinicius Jr scored the opener in the 71st minute with a strike that deflected off Gerard Pique, flummoxing goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen who had made some jaw-dropping saves, and substitute Mariano added the second in injury time.

Real's victory means it leads the standings on 56 points after 26 games, with Barca static on 55, while Zinedine Zidane's side also crucially has the better head-to-head record in the event both sides finish level on points.



**Breaking through:** Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior celebrates after finding a way past Barcelona goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen. ■ AP

was confirmed by an unlikely source in forward Mariano, who had only just come off the bench to make his first league appearance of the season.

### Postponed

Meanwhile, Sampdoria's Se-

rie A match with Hellas Verona has become the sixth match this week to be postponed, Italy's top flight announced on Sunday as the coronavirus outbreak plays havoc with the country's football calendar.

In a statement, the league

said that the match had been rescheduled for May 13 alongside the five other games from this week's round that had already been shelved due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Duvan Zapata's hat-trick

fired Atalanta to a huge 7-2 win over lowly Lecce to maintain its grip on the Champions League spots.

(Savic 24-og) drew with Atletico Madrid 1 (Saul 47); Real Madrid 0 to Getafe 1 (Maksimovic 67).

Real Madrid 2 (Vinicius 71,

# Karnataka has a tough job on hand

Chasing a target of 352, visitors finish the day at 98 for three; Bengal looks to enter final after 13 years

## RANJI TROPHY

**Y.B. SARANGI**

KOLKATA

Bengal's hopes of securing a berth in the Ranji Trophy final, after a 13-year gap, brightened as it took the upper hand against Karnataka at the end of day three in the semifinal at the Eden Gardens here on Monday.

Resuming at 72 for four, Bengal made 161 in its second innings and set Karnataka a stiff target of 352. The visitors were 98 for three at stumps.

### Testing conditions

Sudip Chatterjee and Anustup Majumdar, the overnight Bengal batsmen, fought for an hour in testing conditions in the morning.

Sudip (45, 94b, 8x4) had a lucky escape on 44 when he was hit wicket. Ronit More, who had Majumdar caught off a no-ball in Bengal's first innings, had overstepped again.

Later, More, bowling a good line, had Sudip – who survived a caught-behind call off Abhimanyu Mithun – and Shreerav Goswami off successive deliveries.

### Using DRS

The gutsy Majumdar (41, 108b, 4x4), who received a few blows on the body and also used the DRS successfully after being adjudged caught-behind off Prasidh Krishna, played yet another responsible knock in difficult circumstances.

He added 61 with Shahbaz Ahmed (31, 40b, 4x4, 1x6) as the lead swelled to 340. Off-spinner K. Gowtham picked up three wickets, including that of Shahbaz and Majumdar, and Mithun captured his fourth to restrict Bengal.

### Rahul goes early

Karnataka's chase was jolted early as Ishan Porel, continuing his dazzling form, trapped K.L. Rahul in front of the second ball.

However, R. Samarth (27, 69b, 2x4) and Devdutt Padikkal (50 batting, 109b, 6x4) showed a lot of grit, grinding it out for nearly two hours.

Bengal utilised its resources better when Manoj Tiwary, who had a hand injury, returned to the field.

A hardworking Akash Deep rapped Samarth on the backfoot and Bengal used the DRS to turn the decision in its favour. Mukesh got rid of Karnataka captain Karun Nair.

A disciplined Padikkal, who hit some fine boundaries and scored a fifty after seven innings, and Manish Pandey lived to fight another day.

### The scores: Bengal – 1st innings:

Karnataka – 1st innings: 122. Bengal – 2nd innings: Abhishek Raman c Sharath b Mithun 1, Abhimanyu Easwaran b Mithun 11, Sudip Chatterjee lbw b More 45, Arnaud Nandi lbw b Mithun 0, Manoj Tiwary c Sharath b Prasidh 13, Anustup Majumdar st Sharath b Gowtham 41, Shreerav Goswami c Sharath b More 10-1-32-1, Nandi 4-0-10-0.

O, Shahbaz Ahmed lbw b Gowtham 31, Akash Deep c Sharath b Mithun 1, Mukesh Kumar (not out) 6, Ishan Porel st Sharath b Gowtham 0; Extras (b-2, lb-8, nb-2): 12, Total (in 54.4 overs): 161.

### Fall of wickets:

1-2, 2-23, 3-23,

4-61, 5-89, 6-89, 7-150, 8-153,

9-155.

### Karnataka bowling:

Mithun 16-

5-23-4, Prasidh 16-2-45-1, More 13-1-56-2, Gowtham 7.4-4-1-3,

Karun 2-0-12.

### Karnataka – 2nd innings:

K.L. Rahul lbw b Porel 0, R. Samarth lbw b Akash 27, Devdutt Padikkal (batting) 50, Karun Nair lbw b Mukesh 6, Manish Pandey (batting) 11; Extras (b-2, lb-2): 4; Total (for three wkts. in 38 overs): 98.

### Fall of wickets:

1-0, 2-57, 3-76.

### Bengal bowling:

Porel 12-4-

19-1, Mukesh 12-1-33-1, Akash 10-1-32-1, Nandi 4-0-10-0.



**Gotcha!** Anustup Majumdar, who played a responsible knock yet again, is stumped by S. Sharath off K. Gowtham. ■ PTI

# Gaja's heroics keep Gujarat in the hunt

Hammers Saurashtra's bowlers before rattling its batsmen with sensational spell

**AMOL KARHADKAR**

RAJKOT

Chintan Gaja's all-round heroics brought Gujarat back into the game and kept the Ranji Trophy semifinal hanging in the balance at the SCA Stadium on Monday.

Chirag Jani's double strike in the morning saw hosts Saurashtra reduce Gujarat to 155 for eight, in quest of 304. However, Gaja's (61, 103b, 6x4, 4x6) 87-run partnership with a gritty Rujul Bhatt (71, 212b, 6x4) meant Gujarat cut the deficit to 52, after being bowled out for 252.

The right-arm pacer then bowled a sensational opening spell of 6-3-14-5 to rattle Saurashtra. Chetan Sakariya (32 n.o., 70b, 5x4), the No. 11 promoted to No. 5 to negate Gaja's advantage, then combined with the seasoned Arpit Vasavada (23 batting, 54b, 3x4). The left-handed pair's unbroken 51-run partnership helped Saurashtra end day three at 66 for five, a lead of 118.

### Undisputed hero

Gaja was the undisputed hero of the day. With Gujarat in danger of conceding a decisive lead, Gaja adopted an aggressive approach while Bhatt put a price tag on his wicket. With the softer ball of little aid for the bowlers, Gaja opened his shoulders against all Saurashtra bowlers, even the in-form Jaydev Unadkat. Of the 20 he scored off Unadkat, the stand-out stroke was the charge down the track for a huge six over long-on.

Carrying that confidence with the ball, Gaja's effort upfront spelt doom for Saurashtra. He bowled almost all 36 balls of this spell in the perfect channel and Saurashtra's batsmen suc-



**Star of the day:** Chintan Gaja celebrates a dismissal with his teammates. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

cumbed to the pressure of playing at virtually every delivery. While openers Kishan Parmar and Harvik Desai were caught by the wicket-keeper – Dhruv Raval kept wickets instead of Parthiv Patel – Avi Barot gave a bat-pad catch to forward short-leg.

### Peach

The peach of his dismissals was the one that sneaked through between Vishwaraj Jadeja's bat and pad to take the top of off-stump. Sheldon Jackson, the first Innings century maker, nicked the next into the cordon to leave Vasavada the job of saving a hat-trick.

Had Bhatt not made a mess of an edge off Sakariya that would have given Arzan Nagwaswalla a wicket in the dying moments, Gujarat may have ended the day right on top. With the all-rounder duo of Jani and Prerak Mankad yet to bat, Saurashtra will hope that its lower-order fires, just like Gujarat's, to set a challenging target.

**The scores: Saurashtra – 1st innings:** 304.

**Gujarat – 1st innings:** Samit Gohel b Sakariya 1, Priyank Panthal lbw b Unadkat 0, Bhargav Merai c Jackson b Mankad 13, Dhruv Raval c Parmar b Unadkat 35, Rujul Bhatt c Barot b Unadkat 71, Parthiv Patel c Sakariya b Dharmendrasinh 27, Chirag Gandhi c Parmar b Dharmendrasinh 0, Axar Patel c Barot b Jani 21, Roosh Kalaria c Mankad b Jani 0, Chintan Gaja c Barot b Sakariya 61, Arzan Nagwaswalla (not out) 0; Extras (lb-2, lb-2, w-9) 23; Total (in 87.3 overs): 252.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-1, 2-1, 3-37, 4-58, 5-95, 6-97, 7-154, 8-155, 9-242.

### Saurashtra bowling:

Unadkat

## The one-man army

**AMOL KARHADKAR**

RAJKOT

Chintan Gaja, the one-man army, helped Gujarat make a stunning comeback with his all-round effort. "We (Bhatt and I) were positive in our approach. Our aim was to get as close to the target (Saurashtra's total) as possible," revealed Gaja.

"With the ball, the plan was simple: to bowl around the fourth stump as we were getting help from there."

After stumps, Gaja and Jaydev Unadkat were called for a hearing by match-referee Sanjay Verma for their verbal outbursts on the field.

# Australia pips NZ, enters semifinals

Sri Lanka relegates Bangladesh to the bottom

## T20 WORLD CUP

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

MELBOURNE

Defending champion Australia advanced to the ICC Women's T20 World Cup semifinals, knocking out New Zealand with a four-run victory in its must-win final Group A match here on Monday.

Beth Mooney's brilliant half-century (60, 50b) proved the difference as four-time champion Australia halted New Zealand, needing 156, four runs short. Leg-spinner Georgia Wareham returned three for 17.

Mooney's 60 runs from 50 balls, including six fours and two sixes, helped Australia to 155 for five with the White Ferns requiring the highest successful chase of the tournament to win at the Junction Oval.

The nine-wicket win was Sri Lanka's only one of the event to leave it fourth in Group A. Bangladesh brought up the bottom, hav-



**Timely strikes:** Georgia Wareham's three wickets ended New Zealand's hopes of making a fight of it. ■ AFP

its campaign on a high with a crushing victory over Bangladesh in a fitting farewell to retiring veteran Shashikala Siriwardena, who bagged a tournament-best four for 16.

The nine-wicket win was Sri Lanka's only one of the event to leave it fourth in Group A. Bangladesh brought up the bottom, hav-

ing lost all its four games.

**The scores:** Australia 155/5 in 20 overs (Beth Mooney 60) bt New Zealand 151/7 in 20 overs (Katy Martin 37 n.o., Georgia Wareham 3/17, Megan Schutt 3/28).

Bangladesh 91/8 in 20 overs (Nigar Sultan 39; Shashikala Siriwardena 4/16, Achini Kulasekera 2/19) lost to Sri Lanka 92/1 in 15.3 overs (Hasini Perera 39, Chamari Athapathu 30).

## PK Banerjee on ventilator

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

KOLKATA

Legendary footballer and 1962 Asian Games gold medallist 83-year-old P.K. Banerjee, who has been battling a chest infection for a month, was put on ventilator and his condition is said to be critical.

The hospital issued a statement, saying that there had been a sudden deterioration in his condition.

Banerjee led India in the 1960 Rome Olympics where he scored the equaliser against a formidable French team in a 1-1 draw. Before that Banerjee represented India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and played a key role in the 4-2 quarterfinal win over Australia. Banerjee's contribution to Indian football was recognised by FIFA, which awarded him the Centennial Order of Merit in 2004.

THE HINDU GROUP

## MEET THE DUMBEST CREATURE ON THE PLANET.

Introducing the sea turtle. Such is its lack of intelligence that the average sea turtle (which is every sea turtle, if you get the drift)

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fish. That says a lot when you consider that the jelly fish is the turtle's favourite food. As a result, the shelled idiot gobble down

floating plastic bags in the ocean and ends up choking

to death. This plastic diet has reached an almost feeding

frenzy that it has driven the species to the brink

of extinction. Not irritable bowel syndrome.

Not a few rashes beneath

that dense shell.

But

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proves otherwise. The perfect

culmination of the evolution curve.

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The writers who penned history. And, the visionaries who wrote

the future. We are the wizards who turned air into water

and water into light. The masterminds who harnessed

energy and took firm reins of it. The brains that fought disease and

delayed death. The Einsteins, the Teslas and the Musks.

The geniuses that put a vehicle on the red planet, a man on the faraway moon, and that plastic bag in the vast ocean.

The same one that killed that stupid turtle.

What would you do to help these victims of plastic pollution? Write to us at [hello@thehindu.co.in](mailto:hello@thehindu.co.in) and get featured.

3rd March, 2020

## TV PICKS

**NBA:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 6 a.m.**Ranji Trophy:** Star Sports 1 (HD), SS Select 1 (SD & HD), Star Sports 3, 9.15 a.m.**ICC Women's T20:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m. & 1.30 p.m.**Bangladesh v Zimbabwe:** 2nd ODI, SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



Antetokounmpo shines as Bucks sting Hornets

LOS ANGELES Giannis Antetokounmpo poured in 41 points as Milwaukee Bucks notched up another dominant NBA victory, but the Bucks' streak of 100-point games ended at 83 with their 93-85 victory over Charlotte Hornets.

**The results:** New Orleans Pelicans 114 lost to LA Lakers 122; Golden State Warriors 110 lost to Washington Wizards 124; Denver Nuggets 133 bt Toronto Raptors 118; Sacramento Kings 106 bt Detroit Pistons 100;

Minnesota Timberwolves 91 lost to Dallas Mavericks 111; Charlotte Hornets 85 lost to Milwaukee Bucks 93; LA Clippers 136 bt Philadelphia 76ers 130. AFP

## Wild emulates Nadal with 'Golden Swing' title

JOHANNESBURG

Brazilian teenager Thiago Seyboth Wild on Sunday became the youngest champion on Latin America's clay court 'Golden Swing' since Rafael Nadal in 2005. The 19-year-old defeated second-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway 7-5, 4-6, 6-3. Nadal was 18 when he triumphed at Acapulco in 2005. AFP

## Rathore, Chauhan star in 61st Cavalry's triumph

NEW DELHI

Four goals each by Ravi Rathore and Vishal Chauhan resulted in 61st Cavalry beating Navy 10 goals to 8-1/2 in the final of the Rao Raja Hanum Singh Cup polo tournament at the Army Equestrian Centre, Delhi Cantonment, on Monday. **The results (final):** 61st Cavalry 10 (Ravi Rathore 4, Vishal Chauhan 4, Aman Singh, Anant Rajpurohit) bt Navy 8-1/2 (Akhil Sirohi 3, handicap 5-1/2).

## Asian team squash put off

CHENNAI The Asian Squash Federation (ASF) has notified that the Asian Team championship – Kuala Lumpur March 25 to 29 – the Asian junior individual championship – Qingshao, China, June 29 to July 3 – have been postponed in view of the coronavirus disease.

## Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament postponed

NEW DELHI The 29th edition of the prestigious Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament was on Monday pushed from April to September in the wake of the novel coronavirus outbreak. Scheduled to be held from April 11 to 18, it will now be held from September 24 to October 3, the organisers said in a statement. PTI



Boxer Sumit Sangwan's doping ban lifted

NEW DELHI The one-year doping ban, imposed last December, on former Asian silver-medallist boxer Sumit Sangwan was on Monday lifted after he proved that his intake of a banned substance was unintentional in a hearing conducted by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) here. "Sumit has been cleared and his ban lifted as he has convinced the NADA panel that the diuretic he tested positive for was a case of unintentional intake," a Boxing Federation of India official told. PTI

## Dhoni gets down to brass tacks

Good news for CSK fans as the crowd favourite hits the nets

## IPL

SPORTS REPORTER  
CHENNAI

The wait is over. Mahendra Singh Dhoni was back in action wielding his willow, at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Monday.

The Chennai Super Kings skipper hit the nets to kick-start his preparations for the upcoming Indian Premier League that starts on March 29.

## Long break

Dhoni, who last played in the World Cup semifinals, arrived in the city late last night and had a nets session with his CSK mates on Monday evening.

The World Cup-winning former India skipper has been out of competitive action since last July and the IPL will be his first major tournament after a long break.

The 38-year-old was recently dropped from the BCCI's centrally contracted players' list and has not re-



Sight for sore eyes! After a long break M.S. Dhoni is back on the ground. Here he is seen with, from left, Karn Sharma, Ambati Rayudu and assistant coach Rajiv Kumar at the CSK nets session. ■ K. PICHUMANI

vealed much about his future plans. With the ICC World T20 to be held later this year

in Australia, the IPL will be crucial if he aims to make a comeback.

Like it has been in the past few years, a sizeable crowd was waiting at the gates since

## du Plessis returns for India tour

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JOHANNESBURG

Former captain Faf du Plessis will return to South Africa's One-Day International squad for a three-match tour of India later this month.

du Plessis and fellow batsman Rassie van der Dussen were rested for the current series against Australia but both were named in a 15-man squad announced by Cricket South Africa on Monday.

A statement from Cricket South Africa said the selections were a continuation of a search for the next generation of players who will potentially represent the country in the 2023 Cricket World Cup in India.

give birth to their first child. Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada was unavailable because of a groin injury.

Kyle Verreyne, who made an impressive international debut scoring 48 and taking three catches in the first match against Australia on Saturday, has been retained but Janneman Malan, who failed to score on debut in the same match, was left out.

The squad: Quinton de Kock (Capt., wk), Temba Bavuma, Faf du Plessis, Beuran Hendricks, Heinrich Klaasen, George Linde, Keshav Maharaj, David Miller, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Andile Phehlukwayo, Lutho Sipamla, Jon-Jon Smuts, Rassie van der Dussen and Kyle Verreyne.

It is a good opportunity for the players selected to put their hands up and show what they are capable of in the tough playing conditions of India," the statement said.

The first match in India will be played at Dharamshala on March 12.

The second and third matches will be in Lucknow on March 15 and Kolkata on March 18.

The squad: Quinton de Kock (Capt., wk), Temba Bavuma, Faf

du Plessis, Beuran Hendricks, Heinrich Klaasen, George

Linde, Keshav Maharaj, David

Miller, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich

Nortje, Andile Phehlukwayo,

Lutho Sipamla, Jon-Jon Smuts,

Rassie van der Dussen and Kyle

Verreyne.

The meeting has been delayed for reasons unknown,

but the CAC, comprising Madan Lal, Rudra Pratap Singh and Sulakshana Naik, will finally sit down along with the BCCI office-bearers for the first time since their appointment on January 31.

The deadline for applying for the posts ended on Janu-

ary 24. While the ongoing camp is for players who are available at the moment, the official camp for the three-time champion starts on March 19 with coach Stephen Fleming likely to arrive in the city a day before. Bowling coach L. Balaji and assistant coach Rajiv Kumar were in charge of practice on Monday.

## Full camp

While the ongoing camp is for players who are available at the moment, the official camp for the three-time champion starts on March 19 with coach Stephen Fleming likely to arrive in the city a day before. Bowling coach L. Balaji and assistant coach Rajiv Kumar were in charge of practice on Monday.

## Be sensitive

Even as it doesn't affect one of India's biggest medal prospects at Tokyo 2020, Bajrang Punia, qualify as he did quite early, the 26-year-old said it was important to be sensitive to the crisis at a humanitarian level.

A lot of people have died and that's horrible," Bajrang said at an event held to announce an association between JSW Group's Inspire Institute of Sport and Herba-

life Nutrition. "It's not only about athletes, it's about every person. As athletes in this country we don't have to worry about it. But you can't just ignore it."

China, Italy, Iran and

## Bajrang aims to peak during the Olympics

Sakshi hopes the coronavirus crisis won't 'crush her dreams'

many places in Europe...people can't come from there or go there. What if there is an emergency and they can't travel?"

Thus far the Tokyo 2020 authorities have been steadfast in their belief that the Olympics will go ahead as scheduled.

It is with this certainty that Bajrang plans to train, though he is unsure of the events he will take part in to fine-tune his preparations.

"My target is to peak during the Olympics," Bajrang said.

Every wrestler, including me, comes to the Olympics with the dream of winning a medal. I should not make any mistakes. My category (65 kg) is a tough one. There are around 12-13 wrestlers who can beat anyone."

At the recent Asian Wrestling Championship at home, Bajrang lost to Japan's Takuto Otoguro, an opponent who he had failed to defeat in the 2018 World Championship title clash too.

"I couldn't give my 100%. There was pressure and a few days before that I had typhoid. But I am working on my weaknesses. My leg defence has improved. Also, I used to concede points early and would recover later in the contest. I need to work towards that a bit more."



Flexing their muscles! Wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik, two of India's best hopes for the Tokyo Games, at a promotional event on Monday. ■ PTI

## Coronavirus cloud over 3x3 tourney

ASHWIN ACHAL

BENGALURU

Fears over the coronavirus has cast doubts over participation of a few teams in the FIBA 3x3 Olympic basketball qualifying tournament, which commences at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on March 18.

Chinese Taipei and Italy, two countries badly affected by the virus, sit alongside India, Switzerland and Spain in Pool D.

Players from these two countries could face difficult

ties in securing visas to travel to India. As it stands now, the Indian government has placed restrictions on the entry of visitors from Chinese Taipei and Italy.

While Chinese Taipei and Italy are not competing in the men's section, South Korea – another coronavirus-affected nation – is in men's Pool B.

Basketball Federation of India secretary-general Chander Mukhi Sharma stated the host would take a wait and watch policy.

With the top two from the six teams making it to the next stage, India may have to win against tough teams to make progress.

## Ankita the top choice

Ankita Raina will be the obvious No.1 player, and there should perhaps be no doubt that former World No. 1 and six-time Grand Slam champion Sania Mirza would figure in the doubles team. Sania and the rest of the team did have a good training session on Sunday. The captain may have to take a crucial decision on the second singles player from among Rutuja Bhosale, Riya Bhatia and Sowjanya Bavisetti. Karman Kaur Thandi pulled out owing to a stress fracture, paving the way for National champion Sowjanya, who was originally a reserve.

"Our team nominations will not be revealed till one hour before the tie," said Vishal.

India is scheduled to play Uzbekistan, Korea, Chinese Taipei and Indonesia in that order after the match against China.

## Fed Cup: India has tough start

Takes on a full-strength China on Tuesday

## TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India will open against the top-ranked team in the field, China, in the opening match of the Fed Cup Asia-Oceania women's tennis tournament scheduled to be played in Dubai from Tuesday.

The Chinese team is pretty strong with Wang Qiang, Shuai Zhang, Zheng Saisai, Shuai Peng and YiFan Xu.

Interestingly, the players have been competing in the circuit and not returned home after the Australian Open.

The Indian team captain Vishal Uppal said that it was a good thing that India



All set: The Indian Fed Cup squad of Riya Bhatia, Rutuja Bhosale, Sowjanya Bavisetti, Ankita Raina and Sania Mirza, along with coach Ankita Bhambri, physio Anand Dubey and captain Vishal Uppal, prior to the competition in Dubai. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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In the name of protecting family honour, forces of caste supremacy and patriarchy continue to hunt down young couples opting to marry across the caste divide in Tamil Nadu



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