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NEARBY

Verdict in Unnao rape case today

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court is scheduled to pronounce on Monday its judgment in the case of alleged kidnapping and rape of a woman by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Unnao in 2017. During the in-camera proceedings, District Judge Dharmesh Sharma had said he was likely to pronounce the verdict on December 16 after final arguments by the CBI and the accused in the case.

CITY ▸ PAGE 4

CRPF DIG killed in landslide in Ramban

BANIHAL/JAMMU

A Deputy Inspector General of CRPF and his driver were killed while his personal security officer was critically injured when their vehicle was hit by a landslide along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban district on Sunday, officials said. Shalinder Kumar Singh, DIG, north Kashmir, was moving along with his escort towards the Valley, they said.

NORTH ▸ PAGE 5

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EDUCATIONPLUS ▸ PAGES 16 & 17

Violence hits Delhi over citizenship law

Police resort to teargas, lathicharge to block protesters near Jamia Millia Islamia; buses set on fire

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

Violence erupted around Jamia Millia Islamia University here on Sunday afternoon as protesters opposing the amended Citizenship Act clashed with the police. Scores were injured as the police resorted to lathicharge and firing of teargas shells.

At least 51 people, who were injured in the police action near Jamia, have been admitted to the nearby Holy Family Hospital.

A mob set fire to public buses and damaged parked vehicles. Students, however, dissociated themselves from the violence.

Thousands of protesters from the area surrounding the university attempted to march towards Jantar Mantar, but were stopped by police barricades put up near The Surya Hotel located about a kilometre from the university's gates. The protesters took a detour through the parallel Mata Mandir Road, but were once again stopped by the police.

Following an altercation, police lathicharged the crowd and shot multiple rounds of teargas shells. Running from the police, some protesters threw stones at parked vehicles and public buses on Mata Mandir Road. Two buses there were set on fire and two more were damaged elsewhere in the area.

Rage on the street: A man runs past a bus that was set on fire in New Delhi on Sunday. ▪ REUTERS

Students of Jamia in a statement said: "We have time and again maintained that our protests are peaceful. We have maintained calm even when students have been lathicharged and some women protesters have been badly beaten up."

FULL COVERAGE PAGE 2

Some protesters, escaping police action, ran into the university, where students were sitting on a separate demonstration. Police pursuing them also entered the campus. Lathicharge took place inside the campus as well, students said. Videos shared by them also show damage to various buildings, including the university's reading room and mosque where police are said to have entered.

Chinmoy Biswal, DCP (South East), said that around 3 p.m. a mob vandalised vehicles and committed arson on Mathura Road.

Police chased the mob and some of them fled towards JMI campus and resorted to stone pelting. Police followed them to remove them from the campus. The JMI administration in a statement said the violence happened during the protest organised by the people of the nearby areas and not by JMI students.

Protest at ITO

Later, hundreds of students, teachers and civil society members turned up at the Delhi Police Headquarters at ITO in protest against the 'police brutality' on Jamia students.

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PM BLAMES CONG. ▸ PAGE 13
MANY MUTINIES ▸ EDITORIAL

Protest spreads in West Bengal

Violence continued to spread in West Bengal on Sunday despite repeated pleas for calm by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The protest spread to Nadia, North 24 Parganas and parts of Barddhaman. Officials said the violence was "largely sporadic", confined to setting fire to vehicles and damaging a few trains and shops. About 100 persons had been arrested and 2,000 detained in Assam. Curfew was relaxed in the Brahmaputra Valley districts and in Meghalaya's capital Shillong. ▸ PAGE 13

AMU closed after clashes

Hundreds of AMU students protesting against the Citizenship Act clashed with the police on Sunday at a campus gate after which the university administration announced closure of the institution till January 5. Aligarh Muslim University Registrar Abdul Hamid said the police entered the campus late on Sunday night and clashes were reported from inside. "Hostels are being evacuated," he said.

No deal as longest climate talks end

Carbon markets' regulation put off

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MADRID

Marathon international climate talks ended on Sunday, with major polluters resisting calls to ramp up efforts to keep global warming at bay and negotiators postponing the regulation of global carbon markets until next year.

Those failures came even after organisers added two more days to the 12 days of scheduled talks in Madrid. In the end, delegates from almost 200 nations endorsed a declaration to help poor countries that are suffering the effects of climate change, although they didn't allocate any new funds to do so.

The final declaration underscored the "urgent need" to cut planet-heating greenhouse gases in line with the goals of the landmark 2015 Paris climate change accord. That fell far short of promising to enhance countries' pledges to cut greenhouse gases next year which developing countries had lobbied the delegates to achieve.

The Paris accord established the goal of avoiding a temperature increase of more than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century. So far, the world is on course for a 3- to 4-degree Celsius rise, with potentially dramatic consequences for many countries.

Delegates were unable to agree on a system to trade carbon credits. ▪ GETTY IMAGES

Negotiators in Madrid left some of the thorniest issues for the next climate summit in Glasgow in a year, including the liability for damages caused by rising temperatures that developing countries were insisting on. That demand was resisted mainly by the United States. U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres said he was 'disappointed' by the outcome.

"The international community lost an important opportunity to show increased ambition on mitigation, adaptation and finance to tackle the climate crisis," he said. "We must not give up and I will not give up." "It's sad that we couldn't reach a final agreement on carbon markets," admitted the climate summit's chair, Carolina Schmidt, Chile's environment minister.

U.K. raised concerns over BJP affiliate's support to Conservatives

British diplomat met party's foreign cell head in Delhi

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Days before the U.K. election which resulted in a big majority for Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the British government sent a message to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to express its concerns that the party was taking a partisan stand on the election.

The Hindu has learnt that a senior British diplomat met the BJP's Foreign Cell head in Delhi to express the concerns, after interviews given by BJP-affiliated OFBJP (Overseas Friends of BJP) leaders, including president Kuldip Singh Shekhawat, that indicated that the Indian ruling party would prefer a Conservative win. "We raised concerns over remarks made in London by OFBJP that the BJP was supporting Conservative candidates," a source said.

Vijay Chauthaiwale. ▪ TWITTER

The interviews referred in particular to the Labour Party Conference's "emergency motion" on the "human rights situation" in Kashmir, which it subsequently regretted, where OFBJP officials spoke of the need to defeat what they called the "anti-India" Labour party.

Speaking to journalists, Mr. Shekhawat had said his group, which had previously not registered a party affiliation, had identified 48 marginal-lead seats where the Indian diaspora could make a difference, and would persuade voters to vote for the Conservative party.

He had also named specific constituencies where Labour MPs of Indian-origin were standing, where his organisation would mobilise support for the Conservative candidates instead. Mr. Shekhawat did not respond to attempts by *The Hindu* to reach him.

BJP sources confirmed that British diplomats had reached out to Vijay Chauthaiwale, who heads the party's foreign affairs cell, over this alleged mobilisation of support for Mr. Johnson.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 12

In the slow lane

Few takers: Vehicles waiting to pay toll by cash near Coimbatore on Sunday. Confusion prevailed at toll plazas after the Centre extended the deadline for FASTags by 30 days and reserved 25% of the lanes for cash transactions. ▪ M. PERIASAMY (PAGES 3 & 9)

RTI case: Centre files affidavit in sealed cover

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

With the Supreme Court set to hear the case on continuing vacancies at the Central and State Information Commissions on Monday, the Centre has filed its progress report in a sealed cover.

The Commissions are the courts of appeal under the RTI Act and continuing vacancies lead to long delays in settling cases.

At the Central Information Commission – which has four vacancies – there are more than 33,000 pending cases.

On November 6, the SC had issued a show-cause notice to the Centre and the governments of West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Odisha, Karnataka and Telangana on their progress in making timely and transparent appointments to the Commissions.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 12

Washing linen builds ties across borders

Hyderabadi start-up founder helps Pakistani entrepreneur set up an online laundry

ABHINAY DESHPANDE
HYDERABAD

It is a story of training without borders. An entrepreneur in Hyderabad has mentored a businesswoman in Pakistan, helping her set up a business.

In June 2018, Shifa Anwer, 23, from Faisalabad in Pakistan's Punjab province reached out to Dheeraj Balusani, 27, in Hyderabad. Ms. Anwer had been on the lookout for business ideas when she came across WashApp, a laundry service start-up founded by Mr. Balusani.

He launched WashApp in 2016 to make the daily chore easy for IT employees and students. His enterprise serves mainly the IT corridor, with an order book of over 50,000 clothes a month. Ms. Anwer's WashHub, launched in February 2019 and the winner of start-up competitions in Pakistan, averages 10,000 pieces a month.

As they connected, an impressed Ms. Anwer benefited from Mr. Balusani's business strategies. He helped her seek investments through the tough first phase of launching a new business. Ms. Anwer told *The Hindu*, "My start-up, WashHub, the first online laundry in Faisalabad, is now a full-fledged business, and it's all thanks to Dheeraj."

Amir Mahmood, one of her three brothers, has also joined her.

Winning idea: Shifa Anwer's WashHub launched in Faisalabad took cue from the Hyderabad firm. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Family sceptical

Initially, it was difficult to persuade her parents, who asked, "*Abb tu dhobi banti kya*?" (Will you become a washerwoman now?). "I somehow convinced them and started the business. Mr. Balusani did not just show me how to start an online laundry service, he also motivated me at every stage." she said.

Mr. Balusani, who hails from Godavarikhani in Telangana's Peddapalli district and is a graduate of the National Institute of Technology, Warangal, said he was initially unsure about a woman entrepreneur from the neighbouring country. "But after verifying her profile, I started providing inputs," he said.

Customers book the laundry service on an app or website, a delivery boy collects the clothes, which are then sent to a facility where they are washed, ironed and packed, to be returned at a time preferred by the customer.

Dalit biryani vendor assaulted in Greater Noida, 3 arrested

FIR registered after video of the incident came to light

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

After a video of a Dalit biryani vendor being allegedly abused and beaten up came to light on Saturday, three accused were arrested on Sunday evening. According to police sources, the video was recorded on the afternoon of December 13 in the Rabupura area of Greater Noida.

In the video, a man could be seen thrashing the biryani vendor and abusing him with a casteist slur under the busy Rabupura underpass. His pushcart was turned upside down and he was made to apologise for selling biryani in the area.

Meanwhile, the Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad tweeted that the local unit of the Bhim Army should reach out to the victim. The Noida police tweeted back and warned him not to create a law and order situation.

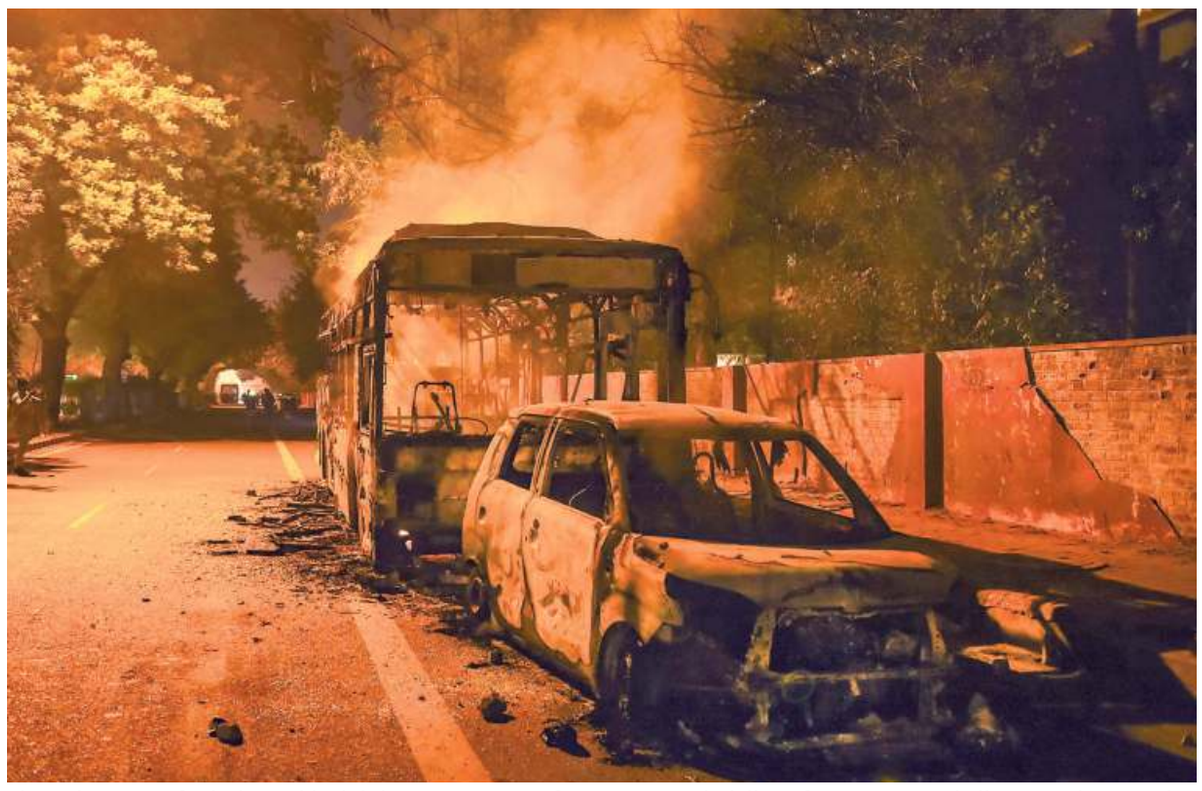
The accused in police custody. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"When the video came to our notice, we called the vendor to the police station and after his statement was recorded, registered an FIR against three persons under relevant Sections, including the SC/ST Act," Ranvijay Singh, SP (Rural), Gautam Buddh Nagar, said.

Known to each other

"Both the victim and the perpetrators are known to each other and belong to nearby villages. According to the victim, they slapped him and used a casteist abuse against him over a payment issue. While the victim belongs to the Scheduled Caste, the accused are of a higher caste," Mr. Singh told *The Hindu*.

"There is no perceptible threat to the security of the victim," Mr. Singh said.



Charred remains of vehicles and (right) demonstrators run for cover as smoke billows from a tear gas shell near Mathura Road on Sunday. ▪ PTI

Violence rocks Jamia as protesters hit the streets

Police enter Jamia Millia campus, march students out

Roads near university littered with glass, gutted vehicles

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

Jamia Millia Islamia and the areas surrounding it turned into a battlefield on Sunday as clashes erupted between thousands of protesters opposing the Citizenship Act and the Delhi Police.

The posh New Friends Colony was littered with tear gas shells, shattered glass from vehicles and the gutted remains of buses. What began as a peaceful demonstration culminated in lines of students being marched out of the university's campus, late in the evening, with their hands up in the air.

"Everything was peaceful, the protesters were at a distance... all of a sudden they started charging towards us and throwing stones," said Gulazar, a DTC bus driver whose vehicle was set on fire. With alternative routes blocked by protesters, he had taken a detour through the Mata Mandir Road where the incident occurred.

Thousands of protesters opposing the Act had gathered at the head of the road and were facing off with the police. At 4.30 p.m., as the crowds swelled, loud bangs of tear gas shells punctured the air and white smoke and chaos soon enveloped the area. Facing a lathi-charge by the police, protesters scurried in the opposite direction, some running towards the university.

The retreating protesters hurled stones at parked vehicles in the area. Though some tried to pacify the crowd, others goaded them on to set buses ablaze. A nearby two-wheeler was first set on fire and then placed below the bus to set it alight.

Those inside the campus were made to surrender and march out with their hands in the air. ▪ REUTERS

As thick black smoke from the burning buses floated over the neighbourhood, some protesters escaped to Jamia Millia Islamia campus where a separate demonstration by students was under way.

Students of the university disassociated themselves from the violence, stressing that their movement had always been peaceful. Chasing after the protesters, the police entered the campus and allegedly launched a lathi-charge here as well, shifting the site of the battle.

For several hours, the area outside the university witnessed heavy stone pelting between protesters and the police, with loud bangs of tear gas shells being heard till 7.30 p.m. Inside the campus, scared students spoke about police entering the university's reading room and mosque. Some shared videos showing damaged window panes. The students also claimed that several injured protesters had taken shelter in a hostel.

With the area cordoned off, normalcy was enforced by the police by evening.

Those inside the campus were made to surrender and march out with their hands in the air. While no arrests were reported, several protesters were detained. The situation in the area remains tense.

This is the second such clash between protesters and the police in the area in under a week. On December 13, JMI students attempting to march to Parliament street were stopped at the university gates resulting in a clash. Police action and the violence on Sunday drew widespread condemnation from multiple quarters, with spontaneous demonstration at the police headquarters at ITO late on Sunday.

Students staging a protest against the Citizenship Act at Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi on Sunday. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

JMI students disassociate themselves from violence

University administration stands by students, condemns police action

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) on Sunday disassociate themselves from the violence that has erupted in the area surrounding the university. The university administration has stood by them by having issued a statement saying none of the students of JMI was involved in the destruction of public property.

In a statement issued by the JMI students' community, the students said, "We have time and again maintained that our protests are peaceful and non-violent. We stand by this approach and condemn any party involved in the violence. We have maintained calm even when students have been lathi-charged and women protesters have been badly beaten up."

It added that violence by certain elements is an attempt to vilify and discredit genuine protests. University officials, commenting on the violent incidents, clarified that it happened during the protest organised by the people of the nearby areas and not by JMI students. "The university has already declared winter vacation and postponed semester exam after the December 13 incident. A large number of students staying in hostels have already left and V-C Najma Akhtar has appealed to the students to maintain peace."

The university had postponed examinations after students clashed with police during a call given by students to march to Jantar Mantar to oppose the Citizenship Amendment Bill. The Jamia Teachers' Association also condemned the violence and appealed to students, if any, "to keep away from directionless protest lead by local political leaders".

JMI Chief Proctor Waseem Ahmed Khan claimed that the police entered the campus forcibly without any permission and beat up staff members and students who were forced to leave the campus. Students claimed that they were trapped inside the library into which the police fired tear gas shells. JMI V-C also condemned the action by the police.

Political parties, unions denounce use of violence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday condemned the violence in the area around Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) and said that no one should indulge in violence and that protests should remain peaceful.

He said he spoke to the Lieutenant-Governor and urged him to take steps to restore normalcy and peace. "Real miscreants who caused violence should be identified and punished," he said.

Leaders from other parties condemned the violence as well. Delhi Congress Chief Subhash Chopra said that the way in which the police entered JMI campus was illegal.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said the police action against JMI students was disproportionate and violent.

Showing solidarity with students of JMI, the JNU Students' Union said, "This has happened to students at JNU, JMI, DU and other universities. The country has lost all sense of responsibility if the forces are being allowed to use tear gas inside university campuses,"it said.

The JNU Teachers' Association also condemned the unauthorised entry of the police into the JMI campus. "The police have made it a practice to block legitimate democratic protests to create the conditions for unleashing brutal police action," it added.

A newly formed collective of students, All India forum of Save Education, has called for a students strike in Delhi on December 16.

IN BRIEF

Schools in south-east Delhi to be shut

NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has said that government and private schools in Okhla, New friends Colony and Madanpur Khadar will be closed on Monday in view of the violence.

Gates at metro stations shut

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

To prevent protests against police action on students at Jamia Millia Isamia, the Delhi Metro closed the gates of several stations late on Sunday .

The DMRC tweeted that entry and exit gates of GTB Nagar, Shivaji Stadium, Patel Chowk, Vishwavidyalaya, Vasant Vihar, Munirka, R.K. Puram metro stations had been closed on the advice of the police.

This was announced after the JNU Students' Union gave a call for a protest outside the Delhi Police Headquarters.

Students from other universities come out in solidarity, protest at PHQ

They criticise the Delhi Police for using excessive force

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

Shocked by the brutality of the Delhi Police towards Jamia Millia Islamia students on Sunday, hundreds of students from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University and Ambedkar university gathered at the gates of the Delhi Police Headquarters at ITO around 9 p.m. demanding action against the force.

The students were joined by teachers as well as members of civil society.

JNU Students' Union had called for a protest at the PHQ to demand the lifting of the "undeclared emergency in JMI". As the number of protesters swelled, the road leading towards Laxmi Nagar was blocked and traffic had to be diverted towards Delhi Gate.

At the protest site, CPI(M) Politburo member Brinda Karat said: "[Home Minister] Amit Shah is accountable. For the police to go into JMI campus without permission is totally unacceptable. This is police brutality at its worse."

Students demand action against the police force outside the Police Headquarters on Sunday. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Nandita Narain, former president of the Delhi University Teachers' Association, said: "This was reminiscent of Jallianwala Bagh massacre. We are seeing genocide happening today."

All India Students' Association's State Secretary Prasenjit Kumar said that the siege of JMI by the police should end immediately. "The Delhi Police should withdraw from Jamia campus," he said, adding that there should be an independent judicial enquiry regarding excessive use of force by the police.

A PhD scholar from DU, who came in solidarity with Jamia students, said: "Things have come to a point where the police themselves are breaking the law."

Akram Quadri, a social activist from Ghaziabad, said that people should stop defaming Jamia Millia as its students were holding a peaceful protest.

Police and protesters clash for three hours; over 200 tear gas shells used

Damaged vehicles and bloodstains cover Mathura Road

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Around 500 security personnel, including Delhi Police and paramilitary officers, were deployed in south-east Delhi on Sunday as protests against the Citizenship Act turned violent.

The clash between the police and the protesters continued for around three hours outside Jamia Millia Islamia metro station. Stones were pelted by both sides. The police also fired tear gas shells in an attempt to disperse the crowd, but to no avail.

The protesters were forced to retreat only after senior Delhi Police officers arrived at the spot with extra force. Over 200 tear gas shells were used to control stone-pelters and more than 50 canes were broken as the protesters were lathi-charged, said a senior police officer.

Shards of broken windshields of vehicles, gutted cars, scattered footwears and bloodstains covered Mathura Road all the way to Jamia Nagar. When the police chased the violent mob, the protesters rushed towards Jamia Nagar.

A charred two-wheeler at Mathura Road on Sunday. ▪ PTI

Loud bangs of tear gas shells resonated in the area. Markets and shops, including those in Batla House, Okhla Head and Shaheen Bagh, were closed and people stayed indoors.

"Everything was normal till I saw a huge mob being chased by the police... The protesters were rushing towards Jamia Nagar. Before I could understand what was happening, stone pelting started and gunshots were heard. I left my two-wheeler at the spot and rushed towards a safe location. I came back after four hours only to find that my vehicle had been damaged," said Javed Hussain, a local resident.

Residents said that protests had been take place since the past few days, but they did not expect that the level of violence would escalate to such an extent.

"The entire market closed down within five minutes after the stone pelting began. It seems that the protest was hijacked by outsiders who got mixed in the crowd of students," said Mohammed Imran, a local shopkeeper. Scores of damaged bikes were scatted in front of Jamia Millia Islamia campus. The movement of traffic on the roads in the affected became normal around 10 p.m.

Traffic woes at Kherki toll plaza on Day One of FASTag implementation

Non-readable tags, low balance and vehicles entering wrong lanes resulted in long queues

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Traffic at the Kherki Daula toll plaza, one of the busiest National Highways Authority of India toll plazas, remained unusually heavy on Sunday, the first day of implementation of the dedicated FASTag lanes, with vehicles queuing up on both sides during rush hours.

Though 19 lanes –11 on the Delhi-Jaipur carriageway and eight on the other – were designated as dedicated FASTag lanes, a substantial number of cash users entered these lanes and were not charged the double toll fee as a penalty.

Rajendra Singh Bhati, Project Head of Skylark, the company that operates the toll, said that asking for double toll fee led to heated arguments with the motorists causing further delays.

While many of the motorists entering the dedicated lanes had no clue about the FASTags being mandatory from December 15, some said they were not frequent visitors and hence not bought the tags. In many cases, the FASTags did not have enough amount or were not readable.

(Top) Vehicles pile up at Kherki Daula toll plaza on Sunday; a toll staff reading the FASTag with a handheld device.
▪ ASHOK KUMAR

Poor quality tags

"The poor quality tags is a big concern. The use of handheld machines to read such tags resulted in delays. Those not having enough balance also ended up paying in cash that led to increase in waiting time," said Mr. Bhati.

Marshals were deployed on both sides of the carriageway to filter the traffic as per the mode of payment.

Though the three hybrid lanes, accepting all modes of payments, on each side of the toll were overcrowded, the waiting time at the dedicated lanes too was 15-20 minutes during the rush hours. Many motorists with tags were forced to enter the hybrid lanes because of the chaos caused due to the diversion of the traffic by the marshals.

"It is a complete mess. Nobody knows where to go. I have a tag fitted to my vehicle. Still I ended up in a hybrid lane. It has already been more than 15 minutes in the queue and the booth is still far off," said 54-year-old Surender Pratap Sinha, returning from Jaipur.

Meanwhile, people continued to throng the point-of-sale at Kherki Daula toll office to buy FASTags. Many of them complained that the tags were not available at the designated banks. "I applied for a FASTag at SBI on November 29, but have not received it till date. So I decided to buy it from here," said Rahul, waiting for his turn at IDFC First Bank counter. The activation of the tags also takes 30-40 minutes causing long queues.

Challenging task

Mr. Bhati expressed apprehension that managing traffic would be a challenge on Monday, the first working day after the implementation of the FASTag.

Bridge to be built over Yamuna to connect Palwal with Aligarh, Khurja

It will be constructed at a cost of ₹110 crore: Haryana CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal on Sunday said that a bridge would be constructed at a cost of ₹110 crore over Yamuna river near Hasanpur in Palwal to connect with Uttar Pradesh.

While referring to his meeting with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday, the Chief Minister said that with the construction of this bridge, Hodal area of Palwal district would have better connectivity with Khurja and Aligarh of neighbouring Uttar Pradesh.

Mr. Khattar said this after he inaugurated the newly constructed building of Government College, Hodal.

Speaking on this occasion, he said that an amount of ₹22.17 crore was sanctioned for the construction of this building but, within two years, about ₹16 crore was spent on the construction of the five-storey building and other resources and ₹2 crore would be spent on other requirements of the complex. As a result of this, the saving was about ₹4 crore as compared to the sanctioned budget. This college has been constructed by the Haryana Police Housing Corporation,Mr. Khattar added.

While referring to the bridge to be constructed on the Yamuna near Hasanpur, the Chief Minister said that with the construction of this bridge, the devotees going around the Braj 84 Kos would also be benefited.

Stating that this bridge was a long-pending demand of the residents of the area, he said that link roads would also be built along this bridge.

He said that four bridges would be constructed on the river Yamuna, including Hasanpur, to strengthen connectivity between Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. While the construction of the bridge connecting Manjawali in Faridabad to Noida by the National Highways Authority of India has been almost completed, work is in progress on projects in Panipat and Yamunanagar, he added.

Plea in court challenging ban on traditional cotton 'manja'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A petition before the Delhi High Court has challenged the ban on manufacture, sale, purchase and storage of traditional cotton 'manja', a thread used in kite flying.

An association representing shopkeepers engaged in the trade of kite flying material, including 'manja', in its plea has contended that the Delhi government notification putting prohibiting on cotton 'manja' was contrary to the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) order based on which it was issued.

It has contended that the NGT had banned manufacture, sale, purchase and storage of nylon or synthetic 'manja' and not the traditional cotton variety that was made sharp by lacing it with glass, metal, adhesive or some other material.

The NGT, in its order of 2017, had not banned traditional cotton 'manja' and an appeal was moved by the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) in the Supreme Court for banning it, but even the apex court had declined to do so.

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	213	Gurugram	157
Ghaziabad	259	Faridabad	201
Noida	237	Greater Noida	236

Good 0-50 | Satisfactory 51-100 | Moderate 101-200 | Poor 201-300 | Very poor 301-400 | Severe >401

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

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Launch of the book History of Indian Philosophy, edited by Purushottama Bilimoria and Amy Rayner, followed by a panel discussion. Panelists: Prof. Purushottama Bilimoria, Fulbright-Nehru Visiting Professor, Ashoka University; Prof. Hari Shankar Prasad, Chair, Philosophy Department, University of Delhi; Prof. Arvind Sharma, Birks Professor in Comparative Religion, McGill University, Canada; Samiksha Goyal, Monash University, Australia; and Prof. Bindu Puri, Centre for Philosophy, JNU; and Dr. Devasia Murrupath Antony, Dept. of Philosophy, Hindu College, University of Delhi at Conference Room - II, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Music: Piano concert by Gloria Campaner from Italy. She will present compositions of Ottorino Respighi, Claude Debussy & Chopin at The Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Dance: Classical dancer Ananda Shankar Jayant will present Tales from the Bull and the Tiger, a dance choreography at Kamani Auditorium, Copernicus Marg, Mandi House, 7 p.m.

Exhibition: 'The earth is still going around the sun', thirteen curated exhibitions as part of the Curatorial Intensive South Asia 2019 programme which brought together fellows from Iran, India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka mentored by Leonhard Emmerling, Director, Programs South Asia, Goethe-Institut/ Max Mueller Bhavan; and Latika Gupta at Main Art Gallery, Kamaldevi Complex, India International Centre (IIC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

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

Working towards providing 24-hour tap water: Kejriwal

'Chalked out plan to clean the Yamuna'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal while addressing a public gathering at Delhi Cantonment constituency on Sunday said that his government was working on providing 24-hour tap water supply to the people of Delhi.

"When our government was formed, only 58% of Delhi had water pipeline connections and we have installed water connections in around 93% of Delhi. My second aim is to provide 24-hour water and I have been working on planning the provision of 24-hour non-polluted tap water supply to all the residents of Delhi," Mr. Kejriwal said. He added that his government had also worked out a plan to clean the Yamuna in the next five years.

Arvind Kejriwal

'Vote for work done'

Mr. Kejriwal said that in the last 70 years no other government has had the audacity to ask for votes on the basis of the work that they have done during their tenure. "AAP is the first party which is appealing for votes on the work that it has done in Delhi in the last five years. Instead of giving speeches, we ask the people of Delhi about our work and their positive responses assure us that our efforts have made them happy," Mr. Kejriwal said.

'Pro-people schemes'

Addressing those who criticise AAP for providing free power and water to the people, Mr. Kejriwal said: "People asked how Kejriwal had given everything for free, but they failed to understand that all this have been possible because I have been spending the money saved from being lost in corruption on pro-people schemes. I am spending money on providing quality life to the people and not on myself."

BJP holds public meetings in run-up to rally

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Sunday organised two public meetings in Mehrauli and Mundka Assembly constituencies in the run-up to the rally to be held on December 22 at Ramlila Maidan to "thank" Prime Minister Narender Modi for passing a Bill to confer ownership rights to more than 40 lakh people of 1,731 unauthorised colonies of Delhi.

Union Minister and Delhi Election Co-Incharge Hardeep Singh Puri, adressing a rally, said that the people of Delhi want to get rid of the "false claims and hollow promises" made by the Kejriwal government and that the time has come for all areas of Delhi to be developed.

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Making the city safer for women, one order at a time

With sustained intervention by the High Court since 2012, the authorities have undertaken several measures but there is much left to be done

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Following the gruesome December 16, 2012, gang-rape incident, the Delhi High Court had initiated a suo motu public interest litigation regarding steps to be taken to prevent such an occurrence in the future.

Over the span of seven years and 80 hearings, the HC passed numerous directions on the matter. *The Hindu* takes a look at the status of implementation of these directions

Bifurcation of police duties

In 2015, the Delhi High Court took note of a police report that showed a high acquittal rate in cases of crimes against women, children and elderly. It blamed "shoddy investigation" by the police for such acquittals.

The High Court had then stressed on the need for bifurcation of the Delhi Police into crime and investigation; and law and order. It also noted that such an action would go a long way in "better investigation of crimes resulting in the actual perpetrators being convicted finally by courts of law".

On January 13, 2019, the Delhi Police launched a pilot project in 30 police stations where investigation, and law and order, were separated. Later, the bifurcation was implemented in all the police stations. "In order to improve the quality of investigation, reduce pending cases in police stations and to improve conviction rate, the bifurcation was implemented. Further, to overcome manpower issues, we have assigned investigating powers to graduate constables," said a police officer.

In the dark: The High Court has pulled up Delhi's civic agencies for not installing street lights at dark spots "where women and children are soft targets". ▪ FILE PHOTO

The officer added that they keep organising workshops and training programmes for investigating officers to keep them updated on legal, forensic, scientific and technological aids. The timely disposal of cases with improved quality of investigation is resulting in improved conviction rate, he said further.

More policemen

Taking note of the staff shortage in the Delhi Police, the High Court has repeatedly asked the Centre to augment the force. In November last year, it asked the government to re-examine the issue "as there is evidently a dire need to create and thereafter fill-up vacancies expeditiously, in order to curb the crime in the city; and also give relief to the highly overburdened and overstretched police force".

CITY MATTERS

The HC Bench of Justices G.S. Sistani and Anup J. Bhambhani had said that a comprehensive survey should be conducted expeditiously on how requisite manpower in the police department can be ensured.

As reported by the Delhi Police, the present strength of police personnel in Delhi is 80,709, out of which 9.938 are women personnel – 12.31% of the total strength. "As per requirement, we sent a report on recruitment of manpower for approval... after it is sanctioned, recruitment is done. It is a continuous process," said a police officer.

CCTVs in police stations

After intervention of the High Court, almost all police stations in Delhi are now equipped with CCTVs. This also include 53 police posts in the Capital. On the direction of the court, CCTV footage from the police stations are saved for one month.

CCTVs in vulnerable areas

In 2013, a first-of-its-kind 'crime mapping' exercise was conducted in the city by the Delhi Police on the orders of the High Court. The exercise had revealed that instances of crimes against women have not dropped despite the various measures adopted by the force.

The report also red-flagged 44 vulnerable areas as being prone to crimes against women.

In July this year, the Delhi government had informed the High Court that 6,630 CCTVs have been installed in the 44 vulnerable areas.

The High Court has also ordered that more vulnerable areas should be identified and deployment of police personnel should be increased in the trouble spots.

Special cell

Advocate Meer Bhatia, the court-appointed amicus curiae in the case, had suggested that a Special Cell be created to monitor and investigate all cases relating to crimes against women and children.

However, the Delhi Police has said that due to the large number of cases, it would be practically difficult to create such a cell. "In fact, creating such a cell will not serve the parties for whose benefit such a request has been made," it had submitted.

The December 16 gang rape case has created huge awareness in the society and has led to more women coming forward to report sexual offences. This has led to a manifold increase in the registration of cases of sexual offences against women.

The Delhi Police has contended that it would be difficult for a single unit to investigate over 6,000 cases across the city. Such a unit would require massive infrastructure, as well as a large number of Investigating Officers (IOs) and Supervisory Officers (SOs). It also highlighted that the case:IO ratio in 2012 was 2.6:1; in 2017, this has shot up to 6.7:1.

Lighting up dark spots

The High Court has time and again stressed on identifying dark spots and stretches in Delhi "where women and children are soft targets". It had directed that a survey be conducted in all districts of Delhi to identify such dark stretches and to provide electrification in such areas.

"This exercise gains further importance in the winter, when the sun sets by 6 p.m., but the working hours for women and others remain unchanged," the High Court had remarked.

Expressing displeasure over the failure of authorities to complete the task despite its order two years ago, the High Court has given the civic bodies four weeks to identify the dark spots and begin the process to instal streetlights.

Utilisation of Nirbhaya Fund

On the last hearing, the High Court was informed that as on August 10, 2017, ₹3,100 crore has been collected in the Nirbhaya Fund, out of which roughly ₹2,209 crore was earmarked for various projects.

Of this, only ₹650 crore was disbursed for 22 projects while the rest remains unused.

The High Court has directed the Delhi Chief Secretary and the city government to examine how this fund can be utilised for the purposes of providing security to women and children in the Capital.

'Will consider my job done when Nirbhaya case convicts are hanged'

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

"I will achieve job satisfaction and consider my work done when the convicts in the Nirbhaya case are hanged," said Inspector Pratibha Sharma, investigating officer in the brutal December 16, 2012, gang-rape case.

Ms. Sharma, who is now posted in south Delhi, recalls how she worked tirelessly to give Nirbhaya justice.

'A demonic act'

"In my whole career, I have never seen such a demonic act done to any victim. The accused deserve to be hanged at the earliest. When the accused were being interrogated, they showed no signs of remorse," she said.

"I still remember the face of Nirbhaya's mother when the Supreme Court upheld the death penalty for all the accused. I was coming out of the court and she was at the door... she thanked me. I felt very satisfied that day," Ms. Sharma said. The inspector has investigated over 1,000 cases, a majority of them crimes against women.

'Need to educate children'

"Laws are already very strict in terms of crimes against women. We also need to educate our children to respect women and how to behave in society. Easy access to pornography is damaging an entire generation," she added.

Remembering her last interaction with two of the accused in Tihar jail, the officer said that they fell on her feet and pleaded to be forgiven.

When she was interrogating the juvenile involved in the case, the minor claimed he was eight when he left his house and came to Delhi.

"He worked at several dhabas, and during the period he was sexually assaulted. He held a grudge about this... when Nirbhaya was raped and assaulted, he enjoyed her pain," she said.

"When I was handing the case, I stayed in the police station for four days. My daughter used to call me every few days and ask about Nirbhaya's condition. The incident has had a severe impact on the lives of the officers who were part of the probe," said Ms. Sharma.

DCW chief hospitalised

She was on a hunger strike to demand capital punishment for rapists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) chief Swati Maliwal, who was on a hunger strike to demand capital punishment for rapists within six months of their conviction, was taken to a city hospital on Sunday after she fell unconscious.

When Ms. Maliwal's condition deteriorated on Saturday night, doctors had advised her to go to a hospital, but she had refused to budge. On Sunday morning, she was taken to the LNJP Hospital.

A DCW member said Ms. Maliwal was initially taken to the emergency ward of the hospital as she was brought in unconscious. Later, when she regained consciousness, she refused to allow doctors to put her on intravenous fluids.

Ms. Maliwal was shifted to a special ward where she was put on intravenous fluids, he said, adding that her condition is stated to be stable. Ms. Maliwal had been on a hunger strike for the last 10 days at Samta Sthal. On Saturday, she had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that the Disha Bill, which mandates disposal of cases of crimes against women within 21 days and handing out the death penalty, is implemented across the country.

Only 32% of rape cases ended in conviction in 2017

Witnesses turning hostile during trial affect conviction rate, says police officer

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Less than a third of rape cases heard by the courts ended in conviction in 2017, data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has revealed.

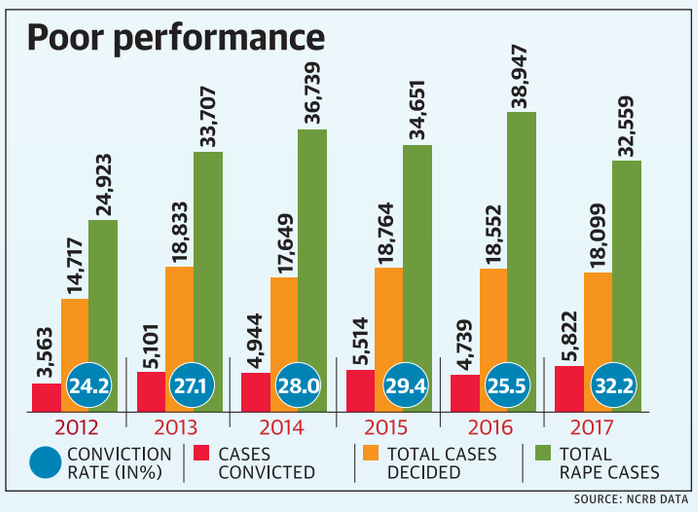
Out of a total of 18,099 rape cases decided by various courts in 2017, the State was able to secure conviction in only 5,822 cases.

67% chance of acquittal

This means that a rape accused has 67% chance of acquittal.

The same year, Delhi secured convictions in 690 rape cases, out of a total of 2,076 rape cases heard by the local courts 67% – a conviction rate similar to the national average at 32.2%.

When asked about the poor conviction rate in cases of crimes against women, a senior officer said the cases are dealt on priority and a chargesheet is filed within 60 days, but during the trial, either the witnesses turn hostile or lack of statement from eyewitness delays the process, thus affecting conviction rate.



Advocate Meera Bhatia, who is assisting the Delhi High Court as amicus curiae in a case initiated after the December 16, 2012, gang rape case to improve safety of women in the city, said that in many cases, the victim is from a poor background.

No support for victims

Lack of counselling facilities and support lead to witnesses turning hostile in many cases, she said, adding that delay in investigation and trial also result in fewer convictions as the victims do not want to pursue protracted litigation. A 2013 research paper published in the International Journal of Education and Psychological Research titled *An Analytical Study of Rape in Delhi* had said that 81% of the victims were from lower socio-economic background. It had said that these groups are less aware of their rights, and often they are in search of income.

Verdict in Unnao rape case today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court is scheduled to pronounce on Monday its judgment in the case of alleged kidnapping and rape of a woman by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Unnao in 2017.

During in-camera proceedings, District Judge Dharmesh Sharma had said he was likely to pronounce the verdict on December 16 after conclusion of hearing of final arguments by the CBI and the accused.

The judge heard the case on a day-to-day basis from August 5 after it was transferred to Delhi from a court in Lucknow on the Supreme Court's direction.

The woman was allegedly kidnapped and raped by Kuldeep in 2017 when she was a minor. The court has also framed charges against co-accused Shashi Singh.

Kuldeep, a four-time BJP MLA from U.P.'s Bangermau, was expelled from the party in August 2019.

On July 28 this year, the victim was severely injured in a road accident.

Protesters at Delhi University on Sunday. They are demanding absorption of ad hoc teachers. ▪ PTI

On Day 12, DU teachers shift dharna to V-C office

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi University teachers on Sunday gathered at the Vice-Chancellor's office on the 12th day of their dharna with "Value Teachers, Save DU" written on their umbrellas.

The teachers said that they used the umbrellas as a symbol of refuge and inclusivity. The DU Teachers' Association (DUTA) said: "Umbrellas enable individuals to come together and unite to protect themselves. The union and staff associations are umbrellas present for every teacher. On the other hand, the HRD Ministry and the DU administration are the umbrellas that have stopped working for the well being of teachers and education."

"The unresponsive government does not stay connected with teachers or the education system. The HRD Ministry lives in an echo chamber wherein it cannot imagine the excruciating pain and humiliation suffered by the nation's most educated sections who are being brazenly denied fair employment in the form of permanent jobs and professional opportunities through time-bound promotions," DUTA said in a statement.

The teachers have been on protest demanding ad hoc teachers be made permanent.

Congress protests against rising price of milk in city

Party blames Centre for 'another big blow to common man'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Sunday held a protest at Connaught Place against the rising prices of milk.

The party blamed the Narendra Modi government for raising the prices and "inflicting another big blow on the people" who are already burdened by the economic crash and rise in the prices of essential goods, including vegetables and onions".

Delhi Congress chief Subhash Chopra said that the price of Mother Dairy milk was raised by ₹3 late on Saturday which caught people by surprise. The protesters demanded an immediate roll back in the hike in price.

"The price of Mother Dairy milk has been increased for the second time in the last three months. The constant increase in the prices of milk and other essential commodities, including vegetables and onions, have inflicted a heavy burden on the common people, who are already weighed down by the terrible economic slump," Mr. Chopra said.

DPCC chief Subhash Chopra with other leaders protesting at Rajiv Chowk on Sunday. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

> **The direct benefit of the hike in the price of Mother Dairy milk will go to a few private companies. There should be an investigation**
>
> MUKESH SHARMA
> Congress spokesperson

He pointed out that Mother Dairy was established with the sole purpose of providing milk and milk products at reasonable rates to the common people and not to rob them.

Congress spokesperson Mukesh Sharma said that the Modi government was helping private firms by hiking the price of Mother Dairy milk. "The direct benefit of the hike in the price of Mother Dairy milk will go to a few private milk companies. There should be a probe. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal also needs to speak up and question as to why the price has been raised," Mr. Sharma said.

Man held with ₹1.02 crore in foreign currency at IGI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A Bangkok-bound passenger has been apprehended by CISF personnel at the international airport here for carrying foreign currency worth ₹1.02 crore, officials said on Sunday.

Passenger Anil Kumar was intercepted at the Indira Gandhi International Airport on Saturday after his activities were found to be suspicious by Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel.

A total of €80,450 and £33,150 was recovered from the false bottom of a bag that the passenger was carrying, the officials said.

The passenger was initially let off by the CISF personnel with a caution that he should declare the cash to Customs. When it was noticed that he skipped the mandatory procedure, the traveller was apprehended.

Green laws must for railway stations: NGT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Railway stations across India must obtain necessary environmental permits as several polluting activities take place there, the National Green Tribunal has said.

A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said there can be no dispute about the proposition that the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, also applies to major railway stations. It directed the Railways to take into account recommendations of the Central Pollution Control Board on implementing the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

It had earlier directed the Railways to identify and develop at least 36 stations as 'eco-smart stations'.

Timings
DELHI

MONDAY, DEC. 16		
RISE	07:07	SET 17:27
RISE	21:41	SET 10:39
TUESDAY, DEC. 17		
RISE	07:07	SET 17:27
RISE	22:45	SET 11:25
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 18		
RISE	07:08	SET 17:28
RISE	23:49	SET 12:06

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	20	10
Safdarjang	20	10
Palam	18	09

Delhi Palam Today
20°C Moderate fog in parts with cool morning . Day will be pleasant with partly cloudy sky. Pollution level likely to improve.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
19°C A cold morning with moderate fog. A mainly clear sky and comfortable day.

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IN BRIEF

Two killed in Rajasthan road accident

KOTA

A 28-year-old Army commando and his brother were killed after their motorcycle was hit by a speeding car in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district on Sunday, police said. PTI

Kushwaha flays Nitish over citizenship law

'JD(U) has become BJP's 'B' team by supporting legislation'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA

Rashtriya Lok Samata Party (RLSP) chief Upendra Kushwaha on Sunday criticised Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his party, the JD (U), for supporting the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both Houses of Parliament and paving the way for it to become a law.

Mr. Kushwaha, a former Union Minister, said the ruling JD(U) has become BJP's 'B' team by supporting the legislation.

"My elder brother Nitish Kumar is in quandary. He met the Assamese delegation on the issue. He went to Assam and opposed the CAB. But JD(U) has surrendered to BJP in Parliament on the issue and become 'B' team of the party," Mr. Kushwaha said while addressing a function organised here by RLSP's youth wing to commemorate the death anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

RLSP chief Upendra Kushwaha. ▪FILE PHOTO

Notwithstanding its alliance with BJP, the JD(U) had till recently opposed to the National Register for Citizens (NRC) and the CAB, holding that the moves discriminated against the Muslim population and could trigger massive unrest in the north-east.

JD(U) national vice president Prashant Kishor had expressed displeasure over his party supporting the contentious Bill in Parliament, saying that the legislation discriminates against people "on the basis of religion."

Referring to mr. Kishor's remark, the RLSP chief said, "I know (Nitish) Kumar. Kmr. ishor is giving good advice to the Chief Minister but he does not listen to him. Kmr. ishor is trapped in wrong place (party) and he should come out of it."

Speaking on the protests against the new citizenship law, Mr. Kushwaha said, "The controversy could have been avoided, had the Centre made it religion neutral."

Bihar bandh call

Meanwhile, RJD has called a Bihar bandh on December 21 to protest against the new citizenship law while the Left parties will hold a nationwide agitation on December 19 on the same issue.

Mr. Kushwaha said that the Left parties, the RJD and other Grand Alliance partners should combine their protest programmes.

Citizenship law promotes RSS-driven agenda, says MKSS

'Exclusion of Muslims an insult to intent of the Constitution'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan-based Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) has condemned the recent passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Parliament, while affirming that it compromises the integrity of democracy and promotes a "Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-driven pro-Hindutva agenda".

The MKSS said the exclusion of Muslims was an insult to the intent of the Constitution.

"The deliberate exclusion of the Muslim community and enabling the expedited citizenship for others is a politically motivated and ideologically biased decision that will also fuel the growing State-sanctioned anti-Muslim sentiment in the country," said the MKSS in a statement released here on Sunday. The Bill was a planned and blatant violation of equality of all religions, it added.

The voluntary group, which works among the peasants and labourers in the villages of central Rajasthan, said the legislation justified communal division of India, beginning with the granting of citizenship by naturalisation to all major non-Muslim groups on "humanitarian grounds".

The signatories to the statement were MKSS founder member and Magsaysay Award winner Aruna Roy and activists Shankar Singh and Nikhil Dey, who are also members of the group.

'Flawed logic'

The MKSS said the justification offered by the government that many persons of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities had faced persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh was a "flawed logic", as there were persecuted minority communities within the broad religious groups in every country.

"A refugee policy cannot be selective to either country or religious communities. The Indian State's treatment of Rohingya Muslims is a clear demonstration of the flaws of this policy as well as the hypocrisy of the government's claim," said the MKSS.

It asked on what basis could the Bharatiya Janata Party claim concern for persecuted refugees if it disallowed Rohingyas from seeking shelter and asylum in India. "The BJP's motivation is clearly rooted in its partisan vote bank politics. The consequences of destroying social harmony and constitutional principles seem to find no space within its concerns."

The "pernicious amendment" had created an obvious category of a persecuted and discriminated minority, with the sanction of the State for the first time in India's constitutional history, said the three activists. "This is a tragedy of immense proportions... the BJP is squarely to blame for initiating legalised discrimination and injustice," they said.

CRPF DIG among 2 killed in landslide

PRESS TRUAT OF INDIA
BANIHAL/JAMMU

A Deputy Inspector General of CRPF and his driver were killed while his personal security officer was critically injured when their vehicle was hit by a landslide along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban district on Sunday, officials said.

The landslide struck the vehicle near Khooni Nallah in the evening while the DIG, North Kashmir, Shalinder Kumar Singh was moving along with his escort towards the Valley, they said.

The highway was closed for traffic since Thursday evening following heavy snowfall in Jawahar Tunnel and adjoining areas. .

The road was cleared of the debris late in the afternoon and some vehicles, including that of the DIG, were allowed to pass on priority, the officials said.

While the officer's vehicle was crossing the slide-prone area, huge boulders rolled down from the hillock, crushing his vehicle.

Snow covers the landscape near Patnitop, 115 km from Jammu, on Sunday. ▪PTI

Severe cold grips J&K, Ladakh

Srinagar-Jammu highway remains closed for the fourth day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAMMU

Severe cold wave conditions gripped Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh after the recent snowfall which forced the closure of the Srinagar-Jammu national highway for the fourth successive day on Sunday, officials said.

The night temperature in most parts of the two Union Territories saw a dip, with Jammu city recording its coldest night of the season at 5.8 degrees Celsius – 3.4 notches below the normal, a Meteorological Department official said.

However, Drass in Ladakh was the coldest recorded place after the minimum temperature plummeted to minus 19.5 degrees Celsius, followed by nearby Leh at minus 13.5 degrees Celsius, he said, adding that Srinagar recorded a low of 0.5 degrees.

The 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway, which was closed on Thursday evening following heavy snowfall near the Jawahar Tunnel and adjoining areas, remained closed for the fourth consecutive day, a Traffic Department official said, adding that efforts are on to reopen the highway.

Commuters stranded

"The road was cleared of snow but landslides at several places between Panthiyal and Ramsu, including Monkey morh, Moumpassi and Battery cheshma delayed its reopening. The men and machines are on the job and we are hopeful of early restoration of the highway," the official said. He said the closure of the highway left thousands of commuters stranded at various places and priority would be given to them once the road is cleared.

Meteorological Department Director Sonum Lotus said barring light snowfall and rain at isolated places, no major precipitation occurred in the three regions – Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, overnight.

"Both Union Territories are under severe cold wave conditions," he said, adding the weather is most likely to remain mainly cold and dry till December 20.

The ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir was the coldest recorded place in the Valley with a low of minus 11.3 degrees Celsius. ,

'Maternity scheme exclusionary, need benefits for all'

Several clauses and lengthy documentation excludes single women and young brides, say activists

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Three years after a pan-India maternity benefit programme promising ₹6,000 to new mothers was first announced, the chorus on its many exclusions is growing louder leading to a demand for a scheme that is truly universal. The many clauses introduced into the long and tedious documentation work totalling 32 pages has led to single women and young brides being left out of its purview, say activists working at the grassroots level.

The Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a televised address to the nation on December 31, 2016. Five month's later when the Union Cabinet approved the scheme, it decided to give a benefit of ₹5,000 to pregnant and lactating mothers for the birth of the first child. This would be disbursed in three installments upon meeting several conditionalities – registration of pregnancy, at least one ante-natal check-up, registration of child birth and vaccinations. The remaining cash incentive of up to ₹1,000 is to be given under a separate scheme called the Janani Suraksha Yojana so that on an "average" women get a total sum of ₹6,000. The objective is to compensate women for wage loss due to child birth.

Activists say that registration for the scheme requires an applicant to provide her husband's Aadhaar details along with her own, affecting single women which include unwed mothers, deserted wives and widows. Moreover, a mother seeking benefits needs to provide proof of address of her marital home, which proves challenging for a newlywed expecting a child and often residing in her natal home during pregnancy. She is then forced to go from pillar to post to claim benefits.

Tedious documentation

HOW PMMVY EXCLUDES

1. Only for the first born
2. Provided after meeting several conditionalities -registration of pregnancy, at least one ante-natal check-up, registration of child birth and vaccinations
3. Proof of address of marital home
4. Husband's Aadhaar card
5. Minimum age of 19 years
6. Father and mother need to give separate undertaking that the child is the first living child for both of them

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

- Total 6 application forms to be filled, with total 30 of 32 pages to be filled by the beneficiary
- As many as 9 IDs to be produced: copy of Aadhaar card (or enrolment slip), copy of Identity proof, copy of Voter ID card (as age proof) for both husband and wife, copy of ration card (as proof of address of marital home), copy of passbook, Mother and Child Protection Card

Newlywed woman

"A mother is unable to get the compensation when she needs it the most, i.e. during the nine months of her pregnancy. While the scheme is solely for the first living child, it ironically leaves out those who are most likely to give birth to one – a newlywed woman," said Seema Shah of Right to Food Campaign, Gujarat Chapter, at a press conference on Friday.

She added that the requirement that the applicant has to be at least 19 years old also leaves out younger brides, who hesitate in getting their marriages registered as the legal age of marriage is 18 years. "30-35% first-time mothers are under the age of 18 years," said Annie Raja, CPI leader and General Secretary, National Federation of Indian Women.

The application form requires separate undertakings from the woman and her husband that the child for whom they are seeking the benefit will be "the first living child for both of them", further making it prohibitive.

Since the scheme came into effect on January 2017, it has benefited a total of 128 lakh women as per the government's reply in Parliament last week. This is 80% of the total target the government has set out for itself – 53 lakh women per year. Experts estimate that the government's target itself is 43% of the total 123 lakh first births in the country in a year as derived from the population size of 133.9 crore in 2017 and the birth rate of 20.2 per thousand.

"Is this scheme supportive or exclusionary and punitive. Eligible beneficiaries have to jump through several hoops to claim their entitlement. Moreover, this is a woman's right under the National Food Security Act, 2013, why then insist on the husband's identity proof," said Jashodhara Dasgupta, Feminist Policy Collective. She added that the documentation work is likely to result in many women living on the margins, such as sex workers, women in custody, migrant and those living in post-conflict situations unable to claim benefits even though they are most in need of monetary compensation.

'Hefty bribe'

Sunita Singh who works for the Uttar Pradesh Chapter of the Right to Food Campaign says women have to pay a hefty bribe during the application process. "In U.P. there is a fee for everything. In Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's district of Gorakhpur this is as high as ₹500, which women have to pay with each of the three forms."

The lengthy documentation work includes filling up six documents totaling 32 pages – an application form to be filled for each of the three installments, an application for linking the Aadhaar card with bank account, another one for linking the Aadhaar card with post office account and a feedback form. Applicants have to also submit at least nine other documents for verification – Aadhaar card (or enrolment slip when there is no card), an identity proof, voter ID card (as age proof) of the mother and her husband; ration card (for husband's address), copy of bank passbook and maternal and child protection (MCP) card.

'Formal representation'

In response to a query on the concerns highlighted above, an official of the Women and Child Development Ministry said that activists and grassroot workers must make a "formal representation" to the government highlighting their concerns so that corrective actions can be taken.

Activists urge for a need for reviewing the scheme and making it universal by removing restrictions on the number of children as well as including all women, whether they are in the formal or informal sector, engaged in paid or unpaid work. The sum promised should also be at least on par with minimum wages for women in self-employment, unpaid work, or working for less than minimum wages. In order to raise these demands, protest marches are planned across several States on December 31, the third anniversary of the scheme. Workers, part of the Right to Food Campaign's M.P. Chapter, have also started a signature campaign on the demands, which has so far been endorsed by 1,18,000 people.

10 blankets for shivering cows can secure you a gun licence

Gwalior District Collector issues order on new rule

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GWALIOR (M.P.)

Want to obtain a gun licence in Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh? Then donate ten blankets for cows in a 'gaushala' to protect them from the cold.

The orders on the new rule for securing a gun licence were issued on Saturday by Gwalior District Collector Anurag Choudhary, after visiting a civic-run 'gaushala' in the Gola Ka Mandir area where six cows died recently due to 'excessive cold'.

He also visited a cow shelter in the Lal Tipara area, also run by the Gwalior Municipal Corporation.

In June this year, Mr. Choudhary had ordered applicants seeking a licence for a gun to plant trees and shoot a selfie while submitting an application. The applicants were also directed to take care of the saplings for a month.

"After visiting the cow shelters, the Collector ordered that each seeker of a gun licence should donate ten blankets to (either of) the two gaushalas (cow shelters). Directives have been issued in this regard," said a Public Relation Department officer.

The decision was taken to protect cows from the cold, the officer quoted the District Collector as saying.

Earlier last week, activists of right wing Bajrang Dal had staged a protest after the death of six cows apparently due to cold in the Gola Ka Mandir shelter.

Gwalior, which falls under the Chambal region, has long history of holding firearms.

Officials threatened

In November, officials of the State-run power company in neighbouring Morena district had requested the district administration to cancel the gun licences of bill defaulters.

They said people holding gun licences threaten power officials when they are asked to pay up.

13 booked for burning stubble in U.P.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Thirteen farmers have been booked for burning crop residue at different places under the Thanabhawan and the Jhinjhana police station areas in Shamli district, officials said on Sunday.

Shamli District Magistrate Rakhilesh Singh said nine farmers in Jhinjhana police station area and four in Thanabhawan police station area were booked for burning stubble in their fields on Saturday.

In a drive against burning of stubble, at least 31 cases have been registered in the district from December 1-9, he said.

Six injured in U.P. cylinder explosion

Forensic team reaches site in Kannauj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KANNAUJ

At least six persons sustained injuries when a cooking gas cylinder exploded in a three-storey house in Chhibramau area of the district on Sunday, police said.

"The explosion took place in the three-storey house in which five members of the house sustained injuries, while another neighbour also got injured," District Magistrate Ravindra Kumar said.

'One cylinder exploded'

"Such explosions can take place only with explosives. Only a 5-kg cylinder was found to have exploded. Apart from it, there were three LPG cylinders weighing 14 kg which were not damaged. A forensic team has reached the spot and has started investigation," he said.

Ceiling damaged

Superintendent of Police A.P. Singh said the explosion took place on the ground floor and it damaged the ceiling as well.

Fire tenders were rushed to control the fire at the site of the accident and the injured have been referred to Lucknow for medical treatment, police said.

Two clerics killed in U.P. accident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Two people were killed and one was injured when a motorcycle they were riding was hit by a speeding truck on Dehradun-Delhi national highway near the Bagowali bypass, around 15 km from here, police said on Sunday.

Intazar (24) and his brother, Ishtakhar (22), were killed, while another person, identified as Mohammad, was injured in the accident that took place on Saturday evening, they said.

All of them were clerics at different mosques and were returning to Muzaffarnagar from Darululom Deoband, the police said.

THE HINDU
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AASU may launch political party in Assam

'The Citizenship Act will render culture, language and heritage of the indigenous people extinct'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GUWAHATI

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which has been protesting against the Citizenship Act, on Sunday hinted at launching a political party along with 'Silpi Samaj' (artists' forum) as an alternative to the ruling BJP and AGP as well as to the Opposition Congress.

AASU president Dipanka Nath, addressing a protest meet 'Concert for Peace and Harmony' here, supported popular actor-singer Zubeen Garg's proposal of launching a political party.

"We are in talks with Silpi Samaj and also discussing with people of Assam to think about an alternative. With your (people's) permission, we will not hesitate one bit to go in that direction (of launching a political party). The AASU will remain apolitical. But, in the interest of the people, along with Silpi Samaj we are ready to go in that direction," Mr. Nath said to loud cheers from thousands of people at the event. Mr. Nath alleged the Centre decided to implement the Citizenship Act to render the culture, language and heritage of the indigenous people "extinct".

Assamese actor-singer Zubeen Garg at a strike organised by the All Assam Students' Union in Guwahati. ▪ FILE PHOTO

'Fight peacefully'

"Our agitation against the Act will be long. Each one of us has to carry on our fight peacefully," he said.

Claiming that five persons have so far been killed in police firing, Mr. Nath accused the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government of using the State machinery to dominate the protesters.

"They have unleashed their oppressive machinery on people killing five minor students and injuring many others with bullets... this government will be brought down. No government can suppress our struggle with killings and force. We will intensify our democratic movement through non-violent means," he said.

The AASU president accused AGP of "betraying" the people of the State and said the Congress was also "equally bad".

AASU general secretary Lurin Jyoti Gogoi said Sarbananda Sonowal has lost the moral right to say 'Jai Aai Axom' (hail mother Assam).

"The Chief Minister, who was silent even after five persons were killed, is suddenly chanting 'Jai Aai Axom' instead of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai'," he said.

If agitating to demand the removal of the Act and loving mother Assam is a crime, then people of the State are ready to commit thousands of such crimes, Mr. Gogoi said. "No firing or lathi-charge can break our agitation. But, difficult times are ahead. We have to take the struggle forward in a non-violent manner as the government is conspiring to stop the people's movement," he said.

Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad general secretary Palash Changmai said if the State government is serious about protecting indigenous people of Assam, it should implement Inner Line Permit in the State.

3 Odisha students develop smart water dispenser

It will help combat future water crisis

Biswanath Patra with President Putin in Sochi, Russia. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

Three students of Odisha's Kendriya Vidyalaya, Berhampur, have developed a 'smart water dispenser' to ensure equal distribution of drinking water through pipelines in any urban or rural habitat to combat future water crisis.

After participating in 'Atal Tinkering Marathon 2018-19', this innovative project, in August 2019 was shortlisted as top 50 innovations under 'Atal Innovation Mission' of Niti Ayog. This 'smart water dispenser' has been developed by P. Biswanath Patra of Class XI, Sawambhu Mandal and Sritish Kumar Gouda of Class X with support of their physics teacher Santosh Kumar Padhi.

Mr. Patra was in the team of 25 students and five teachers of India selected to attend 'Deep Technology Program' at Sochi, Russia, from November 30 to December 6, which was conducted by the Russian government in collaboration with 'Atal Innovation Mission'.

On the last day of training, Mr. Patra briefed Russian President Vladimir Putin, who appreciated the approach of the student.

The Commissioner of Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) and the local executive engineer of Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) have already shown interest in practical use of the project.

"The BeMC Commissioner has requested for 15 units of our model for its trial," said Mr. Padhi.

'Smart water dispenser' is an electronic water flow controlling mechanism that can replace the water meter and provide control of amount of water supply to the authorities for equal distribution. Cost of the prototype was just ₹2,000. Its main components include an easily available microprocessor, a solenoid valve and a flow sensor.

As per Mr. Patra, water supply pipes to each house in an area can be fitted with these units. These units will be directly connected to a central server of the local governing body by GSM or Wi-Fi.

Farmers demand 100 mandis for procurement of produce

'The State government should adopt the Chhattisgarh model to allot funds in the next budget'

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

Till now Odisha does not have well organised mandis for procurement of paddy and other agricultural produce, allege peasants' organisation Rushikulya Rayat Mahasabha and Green Nobel Prize winner social activist Prafulla Samantara.

RRM secretary Simanchal Nahak and Mr. Samantara urged the Odisha government to take a lesson from adjoining Chhattisgarh and open at least 100 full-fledged well-equipped mandis in different parts of the State.

"The government should decide to adopt the Chhattisgarh model to allot funds for the purpose in the next budget," they added.

According to Mr. Samantara, except for Sambalpur and Bargarh districts, mandi system in Odisha is not yet properly managed and regulated. In comparison, in Chhattisgarh, the mandi system is streamlined through a network that operates from the panchayat level with proper regulatory measures to check exploitation of farmers.

According to Mr. Nahak and Mr. Samantara, mandis should also have facilities for storage of produce brought by farmers as well as facilities for their stay. "In Odisha, mandis should operate round the year as there are several other agricultural produce that are eligible to be procured by the government machinery."

They demanded at least ₹300 bonus per quintal paddy procured from farmers. They alleged that although paddy procurement was to begin from November 15, the mandis are not operational in several districts, including the Chief Minister's home district Ganjam.

They also demanded that officials of the Civil Supplies Department be made liable for irregularities during paddy procurement and action be initiated for errors that affect farmers.

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O.S.No.10/2019
Ponnuchamy ...Plaintiff
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...3rd Defendant
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- As per court Order -
A.Ilango, M.A.,B.L., Advocate for Plaintiff, Vijayapurai VEP Complex, Ettayapuram Curve Road, Kovilpatti-1.

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On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by DRM/Engg/ MGS for and on behalf of the President of India from experienced and financially as well as technically sound contractors including those enlisted with the Railway, CPWD, BSNL, MES, PWD and other public sector undertakings.
Tender No. 63-MGS-Sr. DEN-II-19-20 (i) Name of work with its location : Loading, unloading & handling various type P.Way materials in CTD & TD / Gaya under ADEN / Gaya. (ii) Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 48,26,368.69 (iii) Earnest Money : ₹ 96,500.00
Tender No. 64-MGS-Sr. DEN-II-19-20 (i) Name of work with its location : (i) TTR (FS + CS + CMSC) 60 Kg 1 in 8.5 = 02 Sets (ii) TTR 60 Kg Derailing switch = 05 Sets (iii) TTR (TWS/CS + CMSC) 1 in 12 = 44 Sets under Sr. DEN (II)/ MGS. (ii) Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 2,76,53,771.45 (iii) Earnest Money : ₹ 2,88,300.00
(iv) Date & time for submission of e-tender : 03.01.2020, Up to 12.00 hrs. (v) Website Particulars of e-tendering.: www.ireps.gov.in
Divisional Railway Manager, East Central Railway, Mughalsarai
PR/1860/MGS/ENGG/T/19-20/40

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
COPY OF E-TENDER NOTICE FOR DIFFERENT ELECTRICAL WORKS OPEN TENDER FOR ELECTRICAL (TRD)
DRM(Electrical)/TRD/ECR/ Dhanbad for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender for execution of the work indicated as under. E-Tender No. TRD/OT/24/PF/SZE/2019-20 Sl.No. 01. Name of work with location and Completion of work: (i) OHE modification work in connection with "Extension of R. L. PF at TNO-1, BDQ-1, JMX-1 & SZE-1 of 350M under AEN/2/DHN".(ii) OHE modification work in connection with "Extension of R. L. PF at SDBH-2, SNMY-1 & PEH-1 of 350 M length under AEN/2/DHN".(iii) OHE modification work in connection with "Provision of 3.0 M wide FOB & extension of PF No. 1 & 2 upto 350 metre at PLJE under AEN/2/DHN". (Completion period - 09 (Nine) months). Sl.No. 02. Approx. cost of the work: Rs. 92,10,340.29/-(Cost of e-tender form Rs. 5000/-) Sl.No. 03. Earnest money to be deposited: Rs. 1,84,200/- Sl.No. 04. Date & Time for submission of closing and opening of E-Tender: Closing of E-Tender - On 06.01.2020 at 11.00 hrs. Opening of E-Tender - On 06.01.2020 at 11.30 hrs. Sl.No. 05. Website particulars: Website : www.ireps.gov.in Manual tender offer not accepted under e-tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Elect.)/TRD East Central Railway/ Dhanbad
PR/1856/DHN/ELEC/T/19-20/48

Winter session a farce, says Fadnavis

Opposition demands disbursement of farmers' package; will announce at the right time: Thackeray

Taking a stand: (Left) Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray being welcomed by supporters on his arrival at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur on Sunday; and Devendra Fadanvis, Leader of Opposition, at a press conference at Ravi Bhavan in Nagpur. BJP State president Chandrakant Patil is also seen. ▪S. SUDARSHAN

ALOK DESHPANDE
NAGPUR

Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis called the winter session of Assembly beginning on Monday a farce as the government has not completed allocation of portfolios to its ministers.

Addressing a press conference in Nagpur on Sunday, he said the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by the Shiv Sena was spreading misinformation about Maharashtra's financial condition, which was better than other States in the country.

The former Bharatiya Janata Party chief minister also demanded that the State government disburse ₹23,000 crore to farmers for waiving their outstanding loans.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray was sworn in on November 28 along with six ministers – two each from the Sena, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Congress. Mr. Fadnavis said, "More than two weeks after the swearing in, no official portfolio allocation has been made so far. The current allocation of ministerial portfolios is temporary. Therefore, this winter session is nothing but a farce. It seems the Thackeray-led government is not serious about this session."

He further said, "There were some loans obtained outside the budget, but it has been shown as part of the budget and the amount of outstanding loan has been inflated. I think this information is being spread to postpone some critical decisions in future."

The government, he said, was juggling figures by clubbing budgetary and non-budgetary loans.

"Mr. Thackeray, and the NCP and Congress earlier demanded disbursement of ₹23,000 crore. Now it is time for them to implement it," Mr. Fadnavis said.

'Accountable to people'

Meanwhile, Mr. Thackeray at a press conference on the eve of session, said they were accountable to the people and would announce the scheme for farmers at the right time.

He further said his government has received complaints regarding irregularities in the tendering process of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue in the Arabian Sea, and "we will probe it to bring transparency".

"We have received complaints regarding irregularities in the tendering process. We have sought reports and will ensure action if anyone is found guilty," he said.

The CM said irrespective of irregularities, the government after solving the problems will ensure that the memorial is built.

Permission denied to Assamese community's anti-CAA agitation

Organisers allege last-minute refusal, police cite law and order

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Rising dissent: Muslims take out a rally against the Citizenship Amendment Act in Karad on Friday. ▪RAJU SANADI

A protest planned by the Assamese community against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) outside Fergusson College on Sunday evening was cancelled after the Deccan police denied permission on grounds that it could lead to a possible law and order situation.

Claiming that permission had been granted earlier, the organisers said the police informed them about a reversal of their decision on Saturday evening. "We had first approached the Pune City Police Commissioner's office. It directed us to Deccan police station which had assented to our protest. However, on Saturday, they called us and expressed their inability to grant approval," said Bidyut Saikia, one of the organisers, adding around 400 people were expected to turn up for the demonstration.

"To protest is our constitutional right and the event was to be peaceful...while the police may be under pressure to deny approval, we hope to get permission at a later date," Mr. Saikia said.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, police inspector Dipak Lagad of Deccan police station clarified that permission granted earlier to the organisers was merely a "conditional" one subject to further review.

"However, following discussions with our superiors, we thought it prudent not to grant permission as it may result in a potential law and order situation, which we are anxious to avoid at all costs," he said.

Expressing sentiments of the Assamese community in Pune, Mr. Saikia said the community strongly opposes the CAA which has been forcibly "imposed" by the Central government without considering the public sentiment of the multi-communal State of Assam.

"This Act directly endangers Assamese culture as the inclusion of immigrants under the CAA is bound to create havoc and misunderstanding among people, and threatens the existence of the indigenous Assamese culture and people, who are already a minority in their own State. The inclusion of immigrants who have little or no idea about our culture and heritage is a direct threat to our identity," he said.

Another organiser said the CAA also nullified the Assam Agitation of 1979-85, an honorary movement for the statehood of Assam in which more than 850 people sacrificed their lives in the hope of an 'infiltration-free Assam'.

"The agitation had culminated with the signing of the Assam Accords of 1985, through which the people of Assam were promised that illegal immigrants would be deported. But the CAA seems to be based on some vague political agenda of the government, by which it appears to be willing to shelter illegal immigrants, which is totally unacceptable to the people of Assam," he said.

Shivam Kashyap, another community member, said following the eleventh hour cancellation, the organisers had ensured that those unaware of the police's new directive were sent back from the protest venue.

Meanwhile, the Congress staged an agitation against the CAA , raising slogans against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the Centre and pledging to safeguard the Constitution.

Pune Congress general secretary Ramesh Iyer said the Centre's imposition of the CAA is a move to divert attention from the economic doldrums that the BJP has dragged the country into.

"The CAA and the NRC cannot go hand in hand. The Modi government has not applied its mind as to what they are going to do with the refugees in the event the NRC is implemented. Are these implementations even viable?" asked Mr. Iyer, adding crores of taxpayers' money was spent on steamrolling the anti-humanitarian legislation through Parliament instead of attempting to resuscitate the economy.

Father-son duo among three killed in mishap in Gujarat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AHMEDABAD

A man and two boys, including his son, were killed when a container truck hit their motorcycle at a village in Ahmedabad district on Sunday afternoon, the police said. The accident occurred at Juna Padar village on Viramgam-Bahucharaji Road in Viramgam taluka. The deceased were identified as Amrutlal Sadhu (41), his son Nilesh (15), and nephew Jaimin (12).

"The man, his son and nephew were on their way to Viramgam town from their Juna Padar village when the container hit their motorcycle from behind, killing all three on the spot," a Viramgam (rural) police station official said. The driver of the truck was detained following the incident, he said.

Fiery preparations

Talents galore: Personnel of Maratha Light Infantry showcase their mallakhamba skills during a rehearsal on the eve of Vijay Diwas, in Karad on Sunday. ▪RAJU SANADI

Country belongs to everyone: Bhatt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Mahesh Bhatt

Veteran filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt on Sunday joined a protest against the amended Citizenship Act, and said it is time people united to send across a message that the country belongs to everyone. The agitation was held at 'Rajgruha', the house of Dr. B R Ambedkar in Mumbai, where Mr. Bhatt was joined by Congress leader Sanjay Jha, among others.

Addressing a gathering, Mr. Bhatt said, "It is time for people to stand up and say this country belongs to each one of us, and it is the might and will of each one of us that has finally found an expression...." "That curve has come; India spoke this Sunday morning. All of you gathering here is an evidence that the core and soul of India is alive," he said.

"Today we dedicate ourselves to the core idea of India which has been spelt out by our predecessors in this sacred document which we all swear and live by," the filmmaker said. The Preamble to the Constitution was read out by those present at the protest.

Ensure justice delivery without delays in rape cases, Naidu tells judiciary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GANDHINAGAR

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu at a parade at State Police Academy in Gandhinagar district on Sunday. ▪VIJAY SONEJI

Underlining the need to curb the crime of rape with speedy investigation by the police, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said it's the duty of judiciary to ensure that justice is delivered without "constant delays" though there cannot be "instant justice". He also said the crime of rape should be curbed without any discrimination or giving it a political hue.

The Vice President's comments came on the eve of the 7th anniversary of the December 16, 2012, Nirbhaya gang-rape case that shook the nation, though he didn't mention the incident in his speech.

Recently, the Union Home Ministry had sent to President Ram Nath Kovind the recommendation of the Delhi government rejecting the mercy plea of one of the convicts in the gang-rape case.

Mr. Naidu was speaking at a ceremony where he awarded President's Colour and Standard, including special flag and emblem, to the Gujarat Police, at the State Police Academy in Karai village in Gandhinagar district.

The Gujarat Police became the seventh such police force to be conferred with the symbol of excellence and pride.

"The rise in the number of crimes against women and children, especially heinous crimes, troubles me deeply. We have been hearing incidents here and there across the country. I want political leadership of the country not to politicise this and give it a political colour," he said.

'Without discrimination'

He said rape is a crime against women which should be "curbed with all might without any discrimination". "The police should be people friendly and women friendly and deal with crimes against women with agility. They should register every complaint without any distinction, complete investigation at the earliest, and start prosecution."

Appealing to judiciary, Mr. Naidu said judicial enquiry should be concluded at the earliest and punishment be handed to culprits so as to "curb" such criminal tendency.

The country had witnessed an outrage with the recent incidents of rapes and murders in Hyderabad and Unnao.

He said while the police should do speedy investigation and file a charge sheet in such crimes, judiciary should ensure that there are no "constant delays". "There is a duty cast upon the judiciary as well. You cannot do instant justice, but you can't have constant delays. This has to be understood by one and all."

Pending dues: visitor centres at Ajanta, Ellora shut

Centres have replicas of some sculptures located inside the UNESCO heritage sites

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AURANGABAD

Historical marvel: The State government set up the two centres with facilities like audio-visual presentations and library, in 2013 for which ₹125 crore was spent in two phases. ▪FILE PHOTO

Two tourist visitor centres set up at Ajanta and Ellora caves by the Maharashtra government with funding from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have been shut due to their pending water and electricity dues worth ₹5 crore, an official said.

The centres, which were supposed to serve as a one-stop location for all information about history and importance of these world famous UNESCO heritage sites, have replicas of some sculptures located inside the caves.

The State set up the two centres, having facilities like audio-visual presentations and library, in 2013 for which ₹125 crore was spent in two phases, the official said. A big chunk of this fund came from JICA, he said, on condition of anonymity.

The facilities ran smoothly for sometime but have been closed since September last year as they do not have water and power supply. "The dues of these two centres are now running into ₹5 crore," he said.

"The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) demanded funds from the government five to six times to clear the dues. We got ₹5 crore last year, but it went in clearing old dues," he said.

The MTDC needs around ₹10 crore to clear all the dues and to make these centres operational, the official said, adding the government should sanction regular funds for these facilities.

"These centres have replicas of sculptures in Ajanta and Ellora caves. Using multimedia, these facilities make tourists understand the Jataka tales. This helps reduce the time spent by visitors in the caves, which will in turn help in the longevity of these monuments," he said.

"The Japanese government spent money on this project. If these centres remain closed for a long time, their whole purpose becomes meaningless. This will also affect the image of our country and the State," he said. The government should plan something concrete for the sustainability of such centres, he said.

Historian Dulari Qureshi said people like her had opposed the way the government finalised the project before 2013.

People travel thousands of miles to visit Ajanta and Ellora caves. They prefer to spend time in the caves rather than seeing their replicas (at the tourist visitor centres), she said.

"These centres surely help elderly tourists who cannot walk for long. But to make these facilities sustainable, the commercial angle also needs to be looked into. There should be additional facilities like a cafeteria, hotel, and a hub to showcase local items," Ms. Qureshi said.

Man gets rail concession on fake certificate, booked

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THANE

A 43-year-old man has been booked for allegedly availing of train travel concession by submitting a fake medical certificate in Thane district, the police said on Sunday. The Railways provides concessional tickets to persons with disabilities or suffering from certain health issues.

The accused, Krishna Mahale, booked a train ticket for December 9 from Kalyan to New Jalpaigudi in West Bengal by submitting a medical certificate, claiming he was a leprosy patient, a police spokesperson said. During verification, railway authorities found that the accused did not suffer from leprosy and that the medical certificate was issued by a quack, she said.

Based on the fake certificate, the accused availed of a concession of ₹735 in the train fare. Railway authorities lodged a police complaint on Saturday, following which a case was registered against Mr. Mahale under Indian Penal Code sections for forgery and cheating, she said, adding the accused is yet to be arrested.

IN BRIEF

Siddaramaiah discharged after angioplasty

BENGALURU

Former Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah was discharged from a hospital here on Sunday after an angioplasty. He thanked all those who wished him a speedy recovery. "I am totally fit now. I can continue to work like before," he said.

Three from T.N. arrested, 154 kg ganja seized

VISAKHAPATNAM

A Special Task Force team arrested three persons from Tamil Nadu while they were allegedly transporting 154 kg of ganja from the Agency areas in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. The arrested were identified as Murugan Nataraj, 47, Mathilingan, 27, and P. Rajapandyan, 24.

21 days not enough for probe into rape cases, says NCW chief

'States must adopt a realistic stance for concrete result and not fan sentiments'

P. SUJATHA VARMA
VIJAYAWADA

The timeframe of 21 days given to the police to complete investigation and the courts to convict the accused in rape cases under the new Disha Act promulgated by the Andhra Pradesh government is "too less", says National Commission for Women (NCW) Chairperson Rekha Sharma.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on the phone, Ms. Sharma said the governments should get realistic and not fan public sentiments. "I welcome the Andhra Pradesh government's move but I am apprehensive about the new Act's effective implementation."

Speaking about the fast track courts constituted by States in the past, she said they did not give the desired results and cited the example of Madhya Pradesh's "alarming rate of atrocities against women and very few or no convictions".

The women's panel chief also expressed fears that the situation might give rise to new problems.

Pointing out that the police not filing FIRs in many cases was an issue of concern, Ms. Sharma said the problem might become worse now since the department would have to complete the investigation within the stipulated time.

"There is a shortage of judges and how the State (A.P.) can implement the new law effectively in the given scenario is to be seen," she said. "Three months' time should be given for a concrete result. We don't want the governments to act in haste while dealing with a sensitive issue like rape."

Referring to the Disha case, she said it could have perhaps been averted had the police acted swiftly. "To save their skin, they encountered the accused. People who hurled abuse at the police initially, showered petals on them after the encounter," she said, adding that it was not a healthy sign.

'Final report' in Disha case soon

STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD

The Cyberabad police investigating the gang-rape and murder of Disha are likely to file the 'final report' (referred chargesheet) in the case before a court by the month-end. A senior officer, on condition of anonymity, told *The Hindu* that as all the four accused in the case were shot dead by the police, the court would be requested to close the case.

Singapore Minister S. Iswaran presenting the M.S. Subbulakshmi Award to Carnatic singer S. Sowmya at The Music Academy on Sunday. From left are mridhangam maestro Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman, Academy president N. Murali and Carnatic singer Sudha Raghunathan. ▪ R. RAGU

Indian art scene is thriving in Singapore, says Minister

93rd annual concerts of Music Academy inaugurated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Singapore's Minister for Communications and Information S. Iswaran on Sunday said there was a palpable desire among Indians around the world to stay rooted to their culture and, in Singapore, there was a thriving Indian classical arts scene, though Indians made up a small minority of the population.

Inaugurating the 93rd Annual Conference and Concerts of the Music Academy in Chennai, Mr. Iswaran, who is also in charge of Trade Relations, said there were increasing numbers of non-Indians learning instruments of the south Indian Carnatic music tradition.

He honoured S. Sowmya, the Sangita Kalanidhi awardee of this year, released the souvenir of the Academy, and the revised syllabus for the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society (SIFAS), prepared by the faculty of the Advanced School of Carnatic Music of the Academy.

Ms. Sowmya, who has been elected president of the conference, also received the M.S. Subbulakshmi Award and a cash prize instituted by *The Hindu*.

"I believe the Music Academy is in a unique position to propagate Carnatic music and dance traditions to the global Indian diaspora," he said while recalling the many decades-old partnership between the Music Academy and SIFAS.

'Digital platform'

Mr. Iswaran, whose parents were Carnatic music enthusiasts, proposed that the Music Academy collaborate with SIFAS on the creation of a digital platform for the appreciation, teaching and learning of Carnatic music.

"You can leverage the Academy's rich archives, which I understand have already been digitalised for this purpose. One could also envisage digital curriculum and classes, conducted in tandem with personal lessons with gurus and complemented by video-streamed master classes," he pointed out.

Mr. Iswaran said it would be a timely initiative to bring Carnatic traditions into the digital age in the lead-up to the Academy's 100th anniversary.

Iconic festival

The Music Academy's president N. Murali said the music festival had evolved over nine decades into something iconic, and as one of the largest classical music and dance festivals anywhere in the world.

"The festival is equally renowned for its quality, aesthetics and classical tradition. The Music Academy, a heritage institution of nine decades, has played a truly pioneering role in founding this great festival," he said.

Ms. Sowmya recalled the days when she attended concerts and discussions in the Academy.

Making a strong case for attending concerts without "agenda and pre-judgment", Ms. Sowmya said that if some concerts were not up to the expectations on a particular day, circumstances could have played a role.

Mridhangam maestro Umayalpuram Sivaraman and vocalist Sudha Raghunathan participated.

Long wait for justice for rape survivors in Kerala

5,314 cases pending in various courts

K.S. SUDHI
KOCHI

Justice appears to be a traumatising and long-drawn process for rape survivors in Kerala as many cases related to rape have been pending for long in the State's courts.

As many as 305 cases registered up to 2013 are pending, indicating the long wait of the victims for justice.

Till September, 5,314 rape cases were pending in the State, with Thiruvananthapuram accounting for the highest number of cases – 1,506.

There are 1,400 cases pending in the sessions courts and another 106 in the Magistrate courts of the district. While Palakkad has 578 pending cases, Thrissur reported 537 cases.

Many pending cases could be even older than six years. The list of pending cases is revised regularly for the trial courts to prioritise its trial. If not flagged, the trial would be further delayed as the courts tend to consider cases in chronological order, indicated judicial sources.

Justice delayed

District	Pendency of rape cases as on 30-09-2019	Pendency of cases filed upto 2013
Thiruvananthapuram	1506	149
Kollam	395	9
Pathanamthitta	243	3
Kottayam	394	3
Alappuzha	125	20
Thodupuzha	95	0
Ernakulam	320	5
Thrissur	537	85
Palakkad	578	15
Kozhikode	194	3
Manjeri	463	1
Kalpetta	61	0
Thalassery	204	11
Kasaragod	199	1
Total	5314	305

The delay in delivering justice to the victims of the heinous crimes attains significance in the wake of reports of fresh atrocities committed and the rising demand for speedy justice.

In rape cases, courts fast-track the cases in which the accused are in judicial custody, where the police file the chargesheet before the 90-days cut-off period. In such cases, the accused would remain in jail till the trial is over. In other cases, where the accused are released on bail, the trial could be delayed due to a host of factors, said a senior judicial officer.

Time lapse critical

Among the registered cases, there are a large number of cases where rape is alleged to have been committed by offering to marry the woman. As such cases surface a long time after the alleged incident, not much medical evidence would be left. Most often, such cases are not keenly contested by women, said a district judge.

In a few such cases, the alleged sexual act could have been committed by mutual consent. The court needs to discern whether the consent was a vitiated one or a genuine one, he said.

Exclusive courts

Setting up of new and exclusive courts for trying rape cases is the only solution. Designating the existing courts as special courts will not help as it will only add to the work load of the existing ones, said judicial sources.

The delay in obtaining scientific reports from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) is also a matter of concern, said judicial sources.

Idol smuggling racket unearthed

Priest, three others arrested in A.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
ONGOLE

The Prakasam police unearthed an antiquities smuggling racket with the arrest of four persons, including a priest, here in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday.

Two *panchaloha* idols, three processional deities and a temple car replica worth ₹45 lakh were seized when the accused tried to sell them near the Sanghamitra Ramesh Hospital Centre on the arterial Chennai-Kolkata highway.

Darsi Deputy Superintendent of Police K.Prakasa Rao said the 12th century Panchaloha idols of Annapurnadevi and Veerabhadraswamy were stolen from two Siva temples constructed in the medieval period in Prakasam district.

The accused, T. Mallikarujuna Rao, 45, S. Rajesh, 28, Md. Hidayutallah, 45, and K. Prasada Rao, 40 hatched a conspiracy to steal the idols from the historic temples of Kasi Visweswara and Chidambareswara in Prakasam as they fetch a lucrative price in the market, said Central Crime Station DSP A. Prasad Kumar.

They also tried to sell the processional deities as if they were antique pieces.

The idols recovered by the Prakasam police.

Film crew to boycott award function

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The crew of the national award-winning Malayalam movie *Sudani from Nigeria* has decided to boycott the National Film Awards function in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) .

The Soubin Shahir-starrer bagged the national award for the Best Malayalam film.

"Protesting against CAA and NRC, I, as the director of *Sudani from Nigeria*, along with scriptwriter Muhsin Parari and the producers of the film, will not attend the National Award ceremony," director Zakariya Mohammed posted on Facebook.

Sudani from Nigeria is a 2018 comedy-drama sports film about a Nigerian football player who joins a club in Malappuram.

Hail the auto

Run for a cause: A 'Rickshaw Run' undertaken by volunteers of Sewa UK, an NGO, for raising funds for a school for the visually challenged was flagged off from Hubballi in Karnataka on Sunday. ▪ KIRAN BAKALE

CPI(M) leader suspended over 'DJ party'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ALAPPUZHA

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala on Sunday suspended a local leader from Kanjikuzhi in the Alappuzha district after he allegedly organised a "DJ party" for his son's wedding reception.

CPI(M) Area Committee member Manoharan was suspended for six months for going against the party's declared ideology of not conducting extravagant weddings.

Though Manoharan claimed it was his son who had organised the reception on December 13, the Left party did not accept the explanation. "The party's decision was to organise simple wedding ceremonies. We heard that the reception was very pompous. That was not right," CPI(M) district secretary R. Naser told reporters.

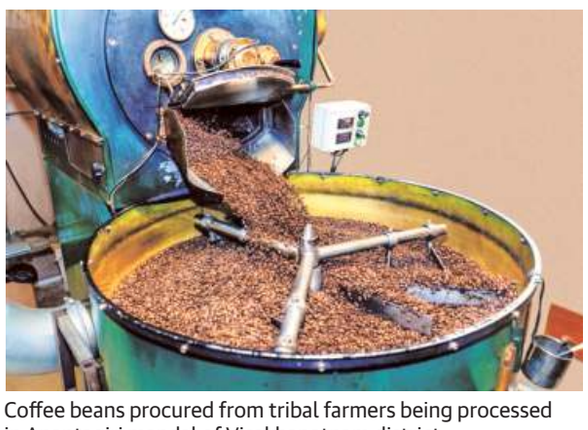
Araku's aroma all set to spread overseas

Start-up in Visakhapatnam is making a difference in the lives of tribal families of Beeshpuram

SANTOSH PATNAIK
VISAKHAPATNAM

A vacation in the Agency tracts of Visakhapatnam by Anusha Penumatcha, a first generation entrepreneur, has brought about a big difference in the lives of about 60 tribal families of Beeshpuram in Anantagiri mandal.

The interest shown by her in the lifestyle of tribal people and how they eke out a living by growing organic coffee in their area led to the birth of a start-up, Native Araku Coffee, along with co-founder and Ms. Penumatcha's life partner Ram Kumar Varma in July 2017. By engaging tribal people in the area for green coffee bean roasting and grinding, they are now offering the produce at ₹350 per kg, almost a quantum jump from ₹80 to ₹100 the growers were receiving from middlemen.



Coffee beans procured from tribal farmers being processed in Anantagiri mandal of Visakhapatnam district.

"We met a tribal farmer who was taking care of his sheep. Casually started talking to him about the story of Araku coffee and how it really became a brand. The story concluded after two hours when the farmer said that he has been living in the area since 1950 and seen the coffee industry growing, and yet he remains poor. According to the farmer, many middlemen purchase coffee at a lower price and don't give them the price they deserve," says Mr. Varma, a certified professional in coffee roasting and brewing.

Online orders

By sourcing coffee directly and keeping middlemen at bay, and supplying the produce straight to the consumers through online orders, the start-up has made it a point to pass on benefits to the tribal people.

Native Araku Coffee has plans to train tribal people on scientific methods, in collaboration with the Coffee Board, on how to enhance yield and produce better quality coffee.

The brand has become popular with online campaigning across India. "We have been delivering corporate gifts for many companies and are currently planning to expand our business overseas. To ensure that we support tribal people to grow more coffee, we are coming with up with coffee processing and the tribal training centres within a year by investing ₹4 crore at Narsipatnam on nine acres," said Ms. Penumatcha.

Sabarimala revenue touches ₹104 cr.; heavy rush continues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATHANAMTHITTA

The Travancore Devaswom Board has collected revenue worth ₹104 crore from Sabarimala as on Saturday, according to board president N. Vasu.

Mr. Vasu said this was in sharp contrast with the ₹64 crore revenue collected during the same period in the previous pilgrim season.

He said Aravana sales had fetched a revenue of ₹43.4 crore as on Saturday against the ₹23.8 crore earned during the same period last year.

The hundi collection of ₹35.5 crore as on Saturday too showed considerable increase, compared to the ₹25.6 crore collection received during the same period in 2018, he said. Mr. Vasu said the board was yet to count coins, worth not less than ₹5 crore, it received as offerings from devotees.

The holy hillock witnessed a heavy rush on Sunday too with the increase in the flow of pilgrims during the weekend.

Pilgrims had to wait seven to eight hours in the long-winding queue leading to the temple premises.

Long wait: Pilgrims waiting for darshan at the Ayyappa temple. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

IN BRIEF

Bomb hoax at Salman's house, U.P. boy booked

MUMBAI

A 16-year-old boy from Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh has been booked for allegedly sending a hoax email to Mumbai police, claiming that a bomb was set to go off at actor Salman Khan's residence in Bandra, the police said on Sunday. A non-cognisable offence has been registered against the minor. He was produced in juvenile court, which let him off, police said.

'Mandatory to link PAN-Aadhaar by Dec. 31'

NEW DELHI

It is mandatory to link your PAN with Aadhaar by the end of this year, the Income Tax Department said in a public message on Sunday. "Building a better tomorrow! To reap seamless benefits of income tax services, complete the vital link before 31st December, 2019," it said. It is mandatory to link your PAN with Aadhaar, according to the public message issued a fortnight before the deadline ends. PTI

20,000 litres of synthetic milk seized

BHOPAL

Police have seized 20,000 litres of synthetic milk on its way to the State-run plant in Bhopal and arrested three persons, an officer said on Sunday. The synthetic milk was seized when it was being mixed in a milk tanker on Saturday night. "The genuine milk was brought in the tanker from collection centres of Sanchi, the brand of the government-run milk federation, from Betul district," the officer said. PTI

Let me hang Nirbhaya's killers: shooter to Centre

LUCKNOW

Shooter Vartika Singh on Sunday wrote a letter in blood requesting the Centre to let her hang the rapists convicted in the Nirbhaya rape and murder case, a day before the victim's seventh death anniversary. Ms. Singh said, "I have written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah... with my blood. I have written that I should be allowed to execute the convicts in the Nirbhaya case. This will reinforce the concept that women are viewed as goddesses in India."

Chaos in toll plazas over FASTag rollout

Several booths hit by congestion; many vehicles had RFID stickers with insufficient balance

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Confusion reigned supreme at toll plazas after the government issued an order extending the deadline for FASTags to become mandatory by 30 days and requiring 25% of lanes at toll plazas to be kept open for cash transactions.

NHAI officials say they saw a 5% jump in FASTag transactions on Sunday, from when FASTags were to become compulsory until the government provided relief to commuters in a last-minute order issued on Saturday due to a shortage of RFID stickers in the market.

In Chennai, there was traffic congestion at toll plazas as cash lanes saw long queues.

Traffic in FASTag lanes was not seamless either, as many road users had insufficient balance in their RFID stickers. Many motorists said they had bought cards online but these were yet to be delivered to them. According to NHAI officials, only 37% of vehicles using toll plazas had FASTags.

This is despite NHAI deploying marshals to manage traffic and each toll plaza being supervised by its nodal officer as well as being monitored at regional & headquarter level Control and Command centres.

At a toll plaza at Walayar in Palakkad, truckers instead of car owners were seen to be using FASTags more.

Obstacle course: Toll personnel diverting vehicles to the FASTag lane in Bengaluru on Sunday. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

"I rarely use the highway. I don't think I need to get it. If at all I use, I'm willing to pay the double amount," said Mohammed Ashar, a local trader here.

But people in general were happy about the convenience offered by FASTag. "I find it simple and convenient. It saves your time in queue. It saves you from searching around in the pocket for small cash when being stopped at the plaza. And above all, it is a definite step towards digitisation," said Arun Kumar, a trainer in human resources who shuttles between Coimbatore and Kochi frequently.

At Bengaluru's Sadahalli toll plaza, the employees were seen announcing through microphones and directing vehicles with FASTag to use the reserved lanes and diverting other vehicles to the cash ones.

At the toll plaza towards Kempeogwda International Airport (KIA), five booths have been converted to FASTag lanes and cash was accepted in three lanes. There was a long pile-up of traffic, especially cabs operated to KIA.

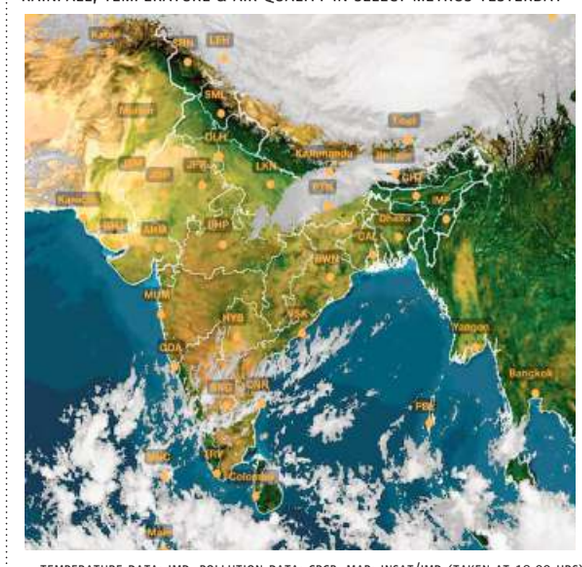
The lack of supply of FASTags near the toll plaza also caused a lot of inconvenience to the passengers. People were asked to visit again on Monday.

Seventeen toll plazas across Telangana switched to the FASTag mode in the early hours of Sunday. While it was a smooth and hassle-free passage for FASTag vehicles, non-tag vehicles had to enter the single lane for cash collection, leading to considerable delay in travel.

As the number of non-FASTag vehicle entering the toll plazas increased, NHAI authorities opened additional hybrid lanes to ensure free flow of traffic.

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 Monday: Dense fog in some pockets with very dense fog in isolated pockets very likely over Punjab and west Rajasthan and dense fog in isolated pockets over Bihar, east Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, south Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram in the morning hours.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	27.5	13.8
Ahmedabad	–	26.5	13.7
Aizawl	–	21.4	8.8
Allahabad	–	20.8	15.4
Bengaluru	–	25.5	17.6
Bhopal	–	22.8	14.4
Bhubaneswar	–	29.8	18.2
Chandigarh	–	18.5	9.6
Chennai	4.4	26.6	22.5
Coimbatore	2.0	24.6	20.2
Dehradun	–	18.9	9.8
Gangtok	4.0	12.4	5.5
Goa	–	33.6	22.5
Guwahati	–	27.2	14.8
Hubballi	–	29.0	19.0
Hyderabad	–	30.0	19.2
Imphal	–	22.3	5.5
Jaipur	–	19.6	9.4
Kochi	42.0	31.6	23.2
Kohima	–	24.4	6.5
Kolkata	–	27.9	18.5
Kozhikode	7.0	33.8	24.0
Kurnool	–	32.3	20.7
Lucknow	–	22.9	14.2
Madurai	3.5	26.8	22.2
Mangaluru	–	38.2	23.7
Mumbai	–	31.3	18.0
Mysuru	–	–	18.6
New Delhi	–	19.2	9.6
Patna	–	22.6	14.8
Port Blair	–	30.4	25.6
Puducherry	1.4	29.6	20.8
Pune	–	31.0	16.6
Raipur	–	29.2	18.8
Ranchi	16.0	22.0	15.6
Shillong	–	18.9	10.1
Shimla	–	7.3	0.9
Srinagar	–	5.8	0.5
Thiruvananthapuram	12.8	32.8	23.4
Tiruchi	28.0	26.7	21.6
Vijayawada	–	30.5	22.2
Visakhapatnam	–	29.5	22.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	33	.17	06	92	98	Good
Bengaluru	05	.17	45	–	94	Good
Chennai	14	.40	51	97	–	Good
Delhi	13	.39	65	310	198	Poor
Hyderabad	03	.64	34	107	–	Moderate
Kolkata	08	.78	32	277	.194	Poor
Lucknow	23	.06	41	196	–	Poor
Mumbai	09	.26	48	97	91	Good
Pune	85	.18	91	132	.101	Moderate
Visakhapatnam	09	.34	44	48	60	Good

In observation made at 6.00 p.m., Howrah, West Bengal recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 274 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Eloor, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

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

SO_2: 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_2: 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

Officials sceptical of making 45 Vande Bharat rakes in 2 years

'Will take two years to roll out the prototype for operation'

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

The Railway Ministry clearing the decks for the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) here to continue making Vande Bharat Express trains is seen as a welcome move though senior officials are sceptical of rolling out 45 rakes, 720 coaches, by 2021-22.

Even if tenders are floated immediately as per the revised specifications approved by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), it would take at least two years to roll out the first prototype for operation after the mandatory oscillation tests and safety approvals.

While it would take three months to open tenders for scrutiny, another two months would be needed to finalise and award work, a senior railway official told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

Considering that the manufacturing process is monitored on a day-to-day basis, the prototype electrics would be ready only by November 2021 and would take at least three months for the mandatory inspection and type test process.

The prototype electrics would be ready only by November 2021.

The complete manufacture of the train set along with oscillation assessment and certification for operation by the Commissioner of Railway Safety would be possible only by November 2022 and the first prototype can be put into service a month later. "It's a welcome announcement to restore the project to ICF... but making 45 rakes would not be possible in the next two years since the design specifications have been changed. In the event of Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala, and Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, joining the mission, then it would be possible to bring out a few rakes in two to three years," another official, who also preferred not to be quoted, said.

The decision to continue manufacture of Vande Bharat Express rakes at ICF was a boost to the morale of the employees, particularly the team that was part of Team18 project, All India Railwaymen Federation (AIRF) working president N. Kanniah said on Sunday.

He urged the Railway Board "to ensure that the 45 rakes are not only built in accordance with the Make in India initiative but manufactured indigenously by ICF in the same way the first two Train18 rakes were made."

Intoxication not a defence to a criminal charge: SC

'It is at the most a mitigating factor'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has rejected a man's defence that he was too drunk to intend to kill his wife.

In a judgment by a Bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and M.R. Shah on Friday, the court said intoxication was not a defence to a criminal charge.

The court said defence of drunkenness was at the most a mitigating factor. But for that, the level of inebriation should be such that it leaves the accused incapable of having a "particular intention" to commit the crime. Intoxication, as such, is not a defence to a criminal charge.

At times, it can be considered to be a mitigating circumstance if the accused is not a habitual drinker, otherwise, it has to be considered as an aggravating circumstance.

The onus of proving that he was drunk to the extent of insensibility lies on the accused alone.

"The evidence of drunkenness which renders the accused incapable of forming the specific intent essential to constitute the crime should be taken into account with the other facts proved to determine whether or not he had the intention," Justice Shah wrote in the judgment.

"Merely establishing that the accused's mind was affected by drink so that he more readily gave way to some violent passion, does not rebut the presumption that a man intends the natural consequences of his acts," the court said.

The judgment came on an appeal filed by Suraj Jagannath Jadhav from Maharashtra who set ablaze his pregnant wife and later claimed that he did so in a fit of drunkenness.

He said he had tried to pour water on her to douse the fire. But the court found that he tried to save her only after she cried out and attempted to run out of the room.

ED zeroes in on assets linked to Deepak Talwar in FCRA case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has identified properties as part of its probe into the alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) by a non-governmental organisation previously linked to lobbyist Deepak Talwar. The ED may open proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

Student gang-raped in Uttar Pradesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MAU

Six youths were booked in connection with an alleged gang-rape of a Class 10 student, officials said on Sunday.

According to Mau SP Anurag Arya, the prime accused, along with two others, have been detained for questioning. "The incident took place on Friday, when a student of Class 10 left her house around 9 a.m. Around 10 p.m., family members of the girl received a call that she was raped by six youths and that they fled," he said.

Man held for raping, setting ablaze woman

The woman sustained over 90% burns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BANDA

A man was arrested for allegedly raping and setting ablaze an 18-year-old woman in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur city, the police said on Sunday. According to doctors, the woman sustained over 90% burns and her condition was critical.

An FIR was registered on the basis of a complaint lodged by the woman's family and the accused was arrested for rape and attempt to murder, Fatehpur SP Prashant Verma said.

However, Sujeet Pandey, Additional DGP (Allahabad zone), said it was the woman who allegedly set herself ablaze when a 'panchayat' did not approve of her relationship with a distant relative.

When the matter of the relationship came to light, the panchayat was held in her village during which the woman and the man were made to take a pledge that they would live separately, the officer said. Upset over the decision, the woman allegedly set herself ablaze, he said. The police said they were probing this aspect.

10-year-old girl kills classmate after tiff over pen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR

A 10-year-old girl was sent to a juvenile home here on Sunday for allegedly killing her classmate after the two got into an argument over a pen, police said.

The girl's parents were also sent to jail for destroying evidence by dumping the body of the 12-year-old in an open ground, officials said. The incident happened on December 11 when the victim had gone to the girl's house to get her pen back but an argument led to a fight. The accused girl attacked the other with an iron rod in which the victim sustained critical injuries leading to her death, officials said.

Android vulnerable to cyberattack: MHA

A bug, 'StrandHogg', allows malware applications to pose as genuine applications

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

The Union Home Ministry has sent an alert to all States warning them about the vulnerability of the Android operating system to a bug called 'StrandHogg' that allows real-time malware applications to pose as genuine applications and access user data of all kind.

While all versions of Android, including Android 10, are vulnerable to this bug, it may not be apparent to the affected users that malware applications are already on board their device. These malware can then potentially listen to their conversations, access photo album, read/send messages, make calls, record conversations and get login credentials to various accounts.

All versions of Android are vulnerable to the bug.

This apart, things that such malware can access include private images, files, contact details, call logs, and location information.

The information was shared by the Threat Analytical Unit, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, Ministry of Home Affairs. "At least 500 popular apps are at risk because of this malware that hackers can deploy to attack mobile phone users. An alert has been sent to all senior police officials to sensitise them to the threat. Steps will be taken to create awareness among the public on the vulnerability of Android to 'StrandHogg'," a police official said.

Warning signs

Pop-ups asking for permission to send notifications, messages etc., are one of the main entry points for 'StrandHogg' to launch the attack. An app in which the user is already logged in asking him/her to login again is another anomaly pointing to the possibilities of a cyberattack. Once users approve such requests, the malware would instantly access the mobile phone or tablet for specific purposes. "It can activate the microphone, allowing a hacker in a remote location to listen to live conversations. The camera can also be switched on to capture visuals."

Links and buttons that become non-functional, apps asking for permissions that are not required are among the other warning signs.

The Ministry also sent a detailed list of the modus operandi of the hackers and latest trends in cyberattacks for appropriate action of the States.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission
Ministry of Micro, Small, & Medium Enterprises
Government of India
'Gramodaya' 3 Irla Road, Vile Parle (West), Mumbai-400 056
सूक्ष्म,लघु और मध्यम उद्यम मंत्रालय,भारत सरकार, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Government of India.
Tel.: 022-26207624, E-mail: khadi.kvic@gov.in Website: **www.kvic.org.in**

INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNER COMPETITION FOR KHADI

KVIC (Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India) proposed to conduct Khadi designer competition online for designers, who wish to associate and collaborate with Khadi and Village Industries Commission in taking a step towards benefit of the rural artisans and creating designer wear from Khadi Fabric. Interested designers are required to visit KVIC website www.kvic.org.in for further details and other terms and conditions.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicants should have at least Two years' experience in fashion industry.
- Applicants can earn higher scores during scrutiny if they demonstrate solid work experience at fashion houses/retail stores or in any creative capacity in the fashion industry
- Applicants worked in Khadi Industry will earn higher score.

1st Prize: INR 10 Lakh	2nd Prize: INR 5 Lakh	3rd Prize: INR 2 Lakh
Start Date of Application	16th December 2019	Director (Khadi)
Last date of Application	16th January 2020 (till 3.00 PM)	

Many mutinies

The Citizenship Amendment Act may have opened up old faultlines in the Northeast

After erupting in revolt against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Assam and other Northeastern States have substantially calmed. People will withdraw to their daily lives soon, but mistaking it for normalcy as the Centre characteristically does in such situations would be dangerous. The Northeast is inhabited by diverse populations, sharing borders with several neighbours. Assertive ethnic politics, including secessionism and resistance to migration into the region, has been a defining character of the area. Grievances of indigenous populations are genuine, but it is difficult, even counterproductive, to try to resolve them by privileging one group over another. Applying a religious test to such an exercise, as the CAA seeks to do, is mindless and dangerous. The Northeast's ethnic divergences have been delicately – and barely – managed with the collaboration of local power-brokers and grant of special property and cultural rights to communities. The BJP's inability in appreciating diversity has long ceased to surprise anyone, but its insistence on aggravating dormant faultlines and inflaming new passions is baffling. The CAA has wrecked the Assam Accord of 1985 and exhumed sleeping hostilities.

Prime Minister Modi's declaration of his government's commitment to cultural and linguistic rights of Northeast communities, once the region went up in flames, was welcome, though late. It takes meaningful gestures, not copious words, to hold together diverse populations in the pursuit of common goals. It is a pity that the BJP, despite its ambitions to make India a superpower, cannot comprehend the elementary truth that triggering numerous mutinies across the nation is an impossible route to that. After the subterfuge on Kashmir, which involved responsible government functionaries lying to the public, the trust deficit of this government among vulnerable communities has multiplied. The BJP has made inroads in the Northeast and is in power in all seven States. In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, it won a majority of the region's 25 seats. The party mistook its victories for an approval of its Hindutva politics, it now appears. Hindutva seeks to subordinate all identities to an overarching Hindu identity, but societies cannot be shoehorned into such narrow politics. The CAA seeks to provide a legal imprimatur to the BJP's blatant politics of turning the Northeast's ethnic faultlines into a religious one, by excluding Muslims alone. By pitting Bengali-speaking Hindus who have moved around in the region against their Muslim counterparts, the party hopes to reinforce itself in West Bengal also. The current tempest will soon pass, but this turmoil will not cease. To undo the misadventure of CAA, the Centre must show courage and hold back, and the leadership must demonstrate statesmanship. That will serve the nation well.

Probing the police

Judicial inquiry into the rape suspects' killing should not undermine the criminal probe

In ordering a judicial inquiry into the killing of the four suspects arrested for the rape and murder of a veterinarian near Hyderabad, the Supreme Court has paved the way for a probe that might command greater credibility than a routine police investigation. However, the necessity for such an inquiry has not been clearly established. The court notes a peculiar feature of the FIR registered by the Telangana police and taken up for investigation by a Special Investigation Team. The FIR contains IPC sections and Arms Act provisions that relate to the offences by the four accused in snatching weapons from the police and trying to kill them, while attempting to flee from custody. The court rightly questions how dead men could be investigated and prosecuted. Even though there is a claim that the SIT would investigate the cause of the deaths, it was possibly right on the court's part to doubt whether the police were genuine about establishing whether there really was an 'encounter'. Further, the order underscores that the suspects were in the legal custody of the police when the incident took place, implying that it was primarily a 'custodial death' and one that was yet to be established as an 'encounter' – the latter being a term that can be used only when the police or any other security force is unexpectedly faced with armed adversaries. To the extent that the court felt impelled to get to the bottom of the incident, its intervention is unexceptionable.

However, what is surprising is that the top court took up the matter when the Telangana High Court was seized of it. The High Court had done well to pass orders to preserve the bodies, and to video-graph the autopsy – the footage of which should be handed over to a district judge. There was nothing to suggest that the High Court would not have ensured an impartial police investigation, especially when it was going by the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court in 2014 in *PUCL vs. State of Maharashtra*. Yet, without any finding that the proceedings before the High Court were ineffective, the top court has ordered a probe by a three-member commission. It has also stayed the probe by the National Human Rights Commission, possibly because it wanted to avoid any parallel inquiry. If at all it felt the need for an independent probe, the Supreme Court could have monitored the police investigation or transferred it to another agency. Instead, it has chosen the Commission of Inquiry route, and given six months for the panel to come out with its findings. It would be unfortunate if this has the unintended consequence of the police waiting for the commission's findings and going slow on the criminal investigation. After all, regular investigation based on the criminal procedure is always better than *ad hoc* enquiries that are mere fact-finding exercises.

The distinct cry of an imperilled frontier

The rest of India must recognise the concerns of the Northeast in what it sees in the Citizenship Amendment Act

PRADIP PHANJOUBAM

The outburst against the Citizenship Amendment Bill, or CAB, (now an Act, or CAA) in the Northeast has left many outside the region confounded. Unlike the objections to the CAA everywhere else in the country – which is about the discriminatory and seeming Islam-phobia attributes of the new law – they are bewildered that in the Northeast, CAB is seen as a threat to survival. This inability of those outside the Northeast to see what the Northeast sees betrays to an extent an ignorance and an insensitivity to a stark reality small marginalised communities there face.

'Population anxiety'

The truth is, going by UNESCO's definition of endangered languages, all of the 200 and more languages spoken in the Northeast, with the exception of Assamese and Bengali, are in the vulnerable category. Even in the case of Assamese, though it is the language of the majority in the State with about 15 million speakers (Census 2011), they are still a tiny minority when the larger region of Bangladesh, Bengal and Assam is considered. Bengali speakers in Assam total about 9 million (Census 2011); however, neighbouring Bangladesh alone has 164 million speakers of the same language. The fear in Assam of being overwhelmed by an unceasing influx of people from Bangladesh therefore is nothing beyond legitimacy. This is a peculiar situation often described as "a majority with a minority complex"; its consequences have resurfaced in the region time and again, yet few take cognisance of it, perpetuating the phenomenon.

In Bhutan in the 1980s, when a lakh or so Nepali migrants were evicted from the country, and even in the current Rohingya crisis, it is this same and largely ignored "population anxiety" that lies at its roots.

Issue of marginalisation

Bertil Lintner, Swiss journalist and author who has been very closely associated with the region, has pointed out in a recent interview that the Rohingya crisis is nowhere near the popularly projected binary of Muslim versus Buddhist. The ethnic Rakhines, numbering about two million in the Rakhine state – shared with the Rohingya – were the ones feeling the pressure of a continuing population influx from Bangladesh, expanding the Rohingya population. That the Myanmar government favoured the Rakhines was always obvious but it may be noted that the crisis was precipitated when a previously unheard-of militant organisation, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, made a coordinated attack on 30 Myanmar police camps in August 2017. This major incident prompted the Myanmar government to begin its brutal ethnic cleansing campaign.

Even now, says Mr. Lintner, the presence of seven lakh Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh close to the Chittagong Hill Tract, is making small ethnic Buddhist communities such as the Chakmas and Marmas uneasy: they could become marginalised if the refugees were to be resettled among them. These are tragedies that are indeed multi-layered but often only one is made visible.

AFP

Language and survival

A closer look at the UNESCO classification of endangered languages will illuminate further the Northeast's reaction to the CAA. If a language is vulnerable because of the small size of the number of speakers, it becomes more so if the language is spoken only in certain domains – for instance at home, but not at schools and offices, etc. It becomes definitely endangered if parents speak the language and children only know the language but do not speak it as mother tongue. It becomes critically endangered if the grandparents' generation speak the language, parents know it but do not use it, and children do not know it any more.

Extinct languages are those languages which no longer have any speakers. In the UNESCO list, several languages in the Northeast have already become extinct; many more are critically endangered. As Ganesh N. Devy, cultural activist and the man behind the People's Linguistic Survey of India campaign, has said in an interview, when a language dies, a world view dies with it. Under the circumstances, the response of the Northeast to the CAA, is not merely tribal xenophobia as many have portrayed it to be with patronising condescension, but a desperate survival throe.

Nari Rustomji, a bureaucrat known for his love of the region and who served there during India's troubled decades of Partition, sensed this mood with empathy. In his book, *Imperilled Frontiers: India's North-eastern Borderlands*, he observed that migration at a pace the host communities can absorb without detriment to their own social organisms is unlikely to cause problems. Indeed, the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Northeast show that migrants and their integration have always been a part of the historical reality of the region. Large scale and rapid influxes, therefore, are the problem.

Provoked and compelled by the imperial ambition of Burmese Konbaung ruler, King Bagyidaw, whose army invaded and occupied Assam and Manipur starting 1819, the British intervened and took over Assam (which then was virtually the entire Northeast with the exception of Tripura and Manipur) and formally annexed it in 1826 after the signing of the Treaty of Yandabo to make it a part of its Bengal province. Manipur was left as a protectorate state. As Assam was at the time unfamiliar with British colonial administration and education, educated Hindu Bengalis from neighbouring Sylhet became the favoured agents to fill the colonial bureaucracy and carry forward the colonial project. It is from this position of power, that Hindu Bengalis dominated Assam's political as well as cultural spheres, at one point even having Bengali declared the official language of Assam on the plea the latter is a dialect of the former. This was predicted to ultimately provoke a reaction from the Assamese middle class as it came of age. There was also the Muslim Bengali peasantry which migrated to Assam, but those who arrived before politics in India began polarising on religious lines, found it much easier to assimilate and adopt the Assamese identity.

Bitter link with the past

When Assam was separated from Bengal and made a separate chief commissioner's province in 1874 and then in 1912 after Curzon's 1905 partition of Bengal was withdrawn, a reluctant Sylhet which felt it was better off as part of Bengal, came to be affiliated with the new province. At the time of Partition, the equation changed and Sylhet's chance of remaining with India was for it to be treated as a part of Assam. The then Assamese leadership refused this as Assam would then have become Bengali majority. Sylhet had to face a referendum separately and by a thin Muslim majority was awarded to Pakistan. The current migration issue is also a consequence of this bitter politics of antagonism of the past. Nobody is perfectly innocent or guilty in this sordid drama, and the way forward has to be on the path of truth and reconciliation that Nelson Mandela showed.

Pradip Phanjoubam is a senior journalist and author based in Imphal

Spot the difference between sign and symbol

The lotus and the palm are not just political marks just as the lion and the wheel are not just Buddhist representations

DEVDUTT PATTANAIK

The symbol of India in Indian passports and Indian currency notes has been a lion and a spoked-wheel or chakra, both from the Ashoka pillar. Now the government has introduced the lotus on the passport, as part of security measures, we are told, to be replaced by other national symbols in subsequent months. But many see this as a political move, yet another path of saffronisation, as the lotus is the political symbol of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the party which values the Hindutva ideology-based "Hindu Rashtra" over the more secular "Idea of India". This draws our attention to symbols, and how politicians have reduced it to signs.

Meaning and context

A sign has a singular meaning. A symbol has multiple meanings, shifting with context. For example, the red colour is a "stop" sign in traffic, but a "fertility" symbol in Hinduism, and in China, while being indicative of the "devil", "scarlet women" or "Santa Claus" in Christianity. Was the lion and the chakra chosen as a sign of India, or symbol? Does it have a specific meaning or a contextual one? One is constantly reminded it is not just any lion, or any chakra, it is that of Ashoka, which connects it with the first historical empire of India, the Mauryan, and to a king who found peace in Buddhism after years of violence. Did Ashoka see his symbols the same way as Indians did during the freedom struggle?

Ashoka's India was very different from India under the British Raj. He lived in times when Buddha's body was never shown in art, but was represented as a lion (Sakyasimha or lion of sakya clan), or even as a wheel (Dhammachakka, or wheel of doctrine). Was the image on Ashoka's pillar then that of the Buddha itself? Could the symbol then be construed as religious? Or was it imperial? Either way, why was it suitable for a secular republic?

Two hundred years ago, historians did not know anything about Ashoka or Buddha. Ashoka tales were found in folktales and legends. And Buddha was at best the ninth avatar of Vishnu as per some Hindu texts, but certainly not a popular sage or god – at least not to European imperialists and colonisers who were slowly dominating the world with their new technologies. It was the rise of the subjects such as archaeology and philology, that led a great interest in ancient history and the discovery of Ashoka's inscriptions and Buddhist manuscripts, that told the world of a revolutionary philosopher who lived five centuries before Jesus Christ and an emperor who lived shortly after Alexander the Great, who spoke of his subjects as his children, and expressed remorse over past violence.

AFP

Colonial context

This was when Edwin Arnold wrote the book *The Light of Asia* and *The Song Celestial* that introduced the world, and many Indians studying abroad, including Ambedkar, Gandhi and Nehru, to both Buddha and Krishna. The non-violent Buddha was found to be more appealing than the complex theology of Krishna that seemed to valorise war. This was the time when Indians were rediscovering India, and Hinduism, which appeared grand in its polytheism to 18th century Orientalists, but was seeming rather vile, barbaric and brutally hierarchical with its adherence to caste system to 19th century advocates of liberty and equality. Knowledge was being discovered, and framed, by European colonisers who were arguing the case for British colonialism as being the White Man's Burden of civilising.

It is important to see Ashoka's pillar in this light: indicative of a lost "good" India. Buddhism was glamorous in the mid-20th century. Nehru and Gandhi admired the Buddha. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism finding it more egalitarian, rational and revolutionary. Even Savarkar admired the Buddha, though he did feel that Buddhist pacifism caused the downfall of India, as it led to invasions and incursions, that could only partly be resisted by the rise of Rajputs. It is only now that academicians are pointing out to the deeply misogynist and homophobic nature of the Buddhist doctrine, and to its role in legitimising kingship, which played a key role in its rivalry with Brahmins.

No one 70 years ago saw the lion or the wheel as a symbol of imperial power, the lion being the alpha predator, and the wheel indicating the sun, with the king's power located in the centre and the king's authority stretching out like spokes of the wheel to the boundaries. Was that subliminal messaging to establish Delhi as the seat of power in the new Indian order? Is this excessive centralisation being taken to the next level by the Modi government, angering people in Kashmir, and Northeast India?

The lion is also a Jain symbol of Mahavira, a contemporary of Buddha, and last of 24 Tirthankaras of this era. The wheel is also a Jain symbol of time and space as well as kingship, found atop every Jain mandir. Ashoka's grandfather, Chandragupta Maurya, mentioned in Greek chronicles, converted to Jainism, as per Jain legends. Mauryan rock cut caves show great value placed on monks and naked ascetics, who could belong to numerous sects, including Ajivikas, not just Buddhist or Jain. These shramanas, or strivers in Sanskrit, known as sammana in Prakrit, travelled to south, which is why across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra and Odisha we find mountains and caves associated with Jain and Buddhist ideas, overshadowed by later Puranic and Vedantic themes. Despite so much value placed on monasticism in Mauryan times, great value was also placed on Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and her symbol lotus. Lakshmi is one of the earliest goddesses to be carved in India, first in Buddhist shrines, also appearing in dreams of Jain mothers and being invoked in Vedic mantras.

That makes the lotus not just a BJP symbol, just as the lion and the wheel are not just Buddhist symbols. The palm is also not just a Congress symbol; it is a gesture indicating protection (abhaya mudra) common to Buddhists, Jains and Hindus, and a common emoji indicating stop, or face-palm, i.e. a slap.

Devdutt Pattanaik writes and lectures on mythology in modern times

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.

To read more letters online, scan the QR code

Mistrust and confusion

Few pieces of legislation have caused as much unease, mistrust and confusion as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. It is not understood on what basis opponents of the Act are claiming that Indian Muslims are being victimised when it is about non-Muslim minorities of three neighbouring countries. It is well known that minorities in these countries are severely discriminated against. It is but natural for them to look upon to a democratic India for asylum. Are the opponents suggesting that even majority communities in these countries are subject to persecution? If so, by whom and whose responsibility is it to take care of them? Further, if the contention of the Centre that the rights and culture of the North-Eastern States are fully protected is true, what could be the possible reasons for the violent reaction of people belonging to all sections in those States. Doesn't it mean that the government has failed to allay their fears ("Protests turn violent in West Bengal, Assam situation eases," Dec. 15)?

B. HARISH,
Mavelikkara, Kerala

Assam's fears

The hard-earned peace of Assam sits on a knife's edge with the surge in the intensity of protests against the Act. The law has already resulted in loss of life and property and deterioration of law and order across the Northeast, but particularly in Assam. The apprehensions and fears of the people of Assam are genuine and, hence, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise was necessitated by the Supreme Court. Instead of pursuing the next phase of the NRC exercise, which is deletion and deportation of 'foreigners', the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government introduced a new step. Undoubtedly, the Centre is not sincere when it comes to resolving the 'foreigner problem' in Assam. Granting citizenship to immigrants of minority communities from Bangladesh will open up the floodgates for similar measures and overwhelm the indigenous population. This will also add more pressure to Assam's shrinking resources and invite conflicts between communities.

HIMANGKA KAUSHIK,
New Delhi

■ Assam went through the torture inflicted by the NRC and the exercise came to a conclusion and was accepted by all. Now, the government, by bringing the law, has moved the goalpost. Assurances by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister ring hollow. When special status has been granted to other States in the Northeast, why not give a similar status to Assam?

D.M. MOHUNTA,
Chennai

Not anti-secular

The Act was passed by both the houses. As a common man, my understanding is that it is applicable to intruders and illegal migrants who are posing a threat to our national security. Why, then, do Opposition parties assume this as a threat to India's secularism? Globally, no country extends a red carpet to all migrants. Any country that offers citizenship to migrants does so purely on its own terms.

M.R.G. MURTHY,
Mysuru

Getting Brexit done

It was a historic win for the Conservative party in U.K.'s general election. In fact, it is by far the strongest outright majority for any party in U.K.'s elections since Tony Blair left premiership. (Editorial, "The day of Boris," and "Britain votes for Brexit," Dec. 14). Significantly, Boris Johnson was the first leader to campaign on leaving the European Union (EU). Now, he is in a position to deliver on the central promise of his campaign. The country's resources will be tied up on Brexit for the foreseeable future. It will also be a fallacy to think that the U.K. will be free to do whatever it wants the moment the Withdrawal Bill passes. In fact, the U.K.'s freedom will depend on what kind of future relationship it wants with the EU and other partners.

R. SIVAKUMAR,
Chennai

Samson charged

It is shocking that the much-feted Leela Samson has been indicted for her complicity in not following certain mandatory procedures that resulted in financial irregularities ("CBI books Leela Samson over Kalakshetra auditorium revamp," Dec. 15). The three charges – corruption, criminal breach of trust and criminal conspiracy – are, by their very nature, serious. That Ms. Samson had not opted for the open tender process is likely to make the prosecution's case stronger. Her resignation after an inquiry was ordered into the expenditures places her in a precarious position. She needs to satisfactorily explain her stand. If she was innocent and upright, she must have been doubly cautious and strict in her supervision. Being a former director of the institution, she cannot feign ignorance.

V. LAKSHMANAN,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

In Britain, there's a lot to get done

Boris Johnson's Brexit slogan has won him a majority, but the road ahead is full of challenges

ANDREW WHITEHEAD

Brexit is the "irrefutable, irresistible, unarguable decision of the British people," declared Boris Johnson in the wake of his emphatic election victory. 'Get Brexit Done' was the campaign slogan of his Conservative Party – and it delivered.

Three and a half years after the referendum in which voters decided to leave the European Union, many were fed up with the delay, division and confusion which shrouded British politics. Mr. Johnson now has an 80-seat majority in Parliament – a very comfortable margin which means he will be able to deliver on his pledge to take Britain out of the EU at the end of January. The Conservatives have won on a scale last seen in the Thatcher era of the 1980s. On the other hand, the opposition Labour Party has endured a truly awful result – its worst election performance since the 1930s. In spite of the drift of the two main parties to what were once the margins of mainstream politics, the smaller parties, with the conspicuous exception of the Scottish nationalists, have made little impact. The election exposed, in the words of the leading historian Peter Hennessy, the "howling void" in the centre ground of British politics.

Moving from left to right

Drilling down into the detailed pattern of voting, the crucial seats which swung from Labour to Conservative were in the post-industrial north and midlands of England. These are sometimes described as 'left behind' areas, where many of the skilled blue-collar jobs have gone and the high streets are blighted by closed shops and empty business premises. Voters in these towns and cities tilted the outcome of the EU referendum towards 'leave' in 2016 and they have now once again made the political weather.

The Conservatives' share of the vote has increased only slightly since the last general election in 2017, which delivered a hung Parliament.

AP

The Labour vote, however, has fallen sharply; in many of their one-time heartlands, working class voters put their desire to get out of Europe ahead of their long-standing party loyalty. The shape of British politics has changed – and in England outside London, the Conservatives now have twice as many MPs as Labour.

For many voters, questions remain about Mr. Johnson's character and his leadership qualities. He is seen as a political chameleon, unscrupulous and with a messy personal life – but in his five months as prime minister he has also appeared confident and decisive. Against expectations, he managed to renegotiate the terms of Britain's departure from the EU to meet concerns of his party's Eurosceptic wing. That more or less ruled out the prospect of a chaotic 'no deal' break with the EU and so made Brexit more palatable to many who would rather Britain remains part of Europe.

By pledging to pump more money into the state-run National Health Service, Mr. Johnson underlined an end to the policy of austerity which has starved public services of funding. That also helped the Conservatives make gains in hitherto safe Labour seats.

Mistrust of Corbyn

Mr. Johnson's key advantage, however, was the widespread mistrust of Labour's hard left leader, Jeremy Corbyn. He was widely seen as an extremist who has failed to tackle pockets of anti-semitism within his own party, made profligate promises about increases in public spending and, the key point, failed to convince voters that he had the potential to be prime minister. Across the country, Labour candidates and campaigners encountered on the doorsteps former Labour voters who said: "I don't trust Corbyn and I don't want him leading this country".

Mr. Corbyn has expressed his deep disappointment at the result and said he will stand down as party leader – but not immediately. The blame game between centrists and leftists within the party has already erupted and the battle to succeed Corbyn is certain to be angry and divisive. The option of a progressive alliance bringing together Labour, Liberal Democrats, Greens and perhaps Scottish and Welsh nationalists has been much talked about – but appears as remote as ever.

This election has seen the Conservatives reshape into a more right-wing, populist, nationalist party, reflecting a global trend evident in the U.S., Brazil and India. There has also been a transformation of a very different kind within Labour. For the first time, there will be more women Labour MPs than men – remarkable for the only major British party which has never been led by a woman.

Mr. Johnson is not the only winner to emerge from Thursday's election. Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP), has also seen her position strengthened. The SNP, which is pro-independence and pro-EU, has confirmed its dominance of Scottish politics. And that means talk of another referendum will persist – a referendum not about Brexit but on Scottish independence.

Another sign of a potential break-up of the U.K. emerged in Northern Ireland which for the first time has elected more nationalist MPs, sympathetic to a united Ireland, than unionists who want the province to remain British. That's another headache for Mr. Johnson.

Challenges ahead

The prime minister's priority though will be to see through Britain's formal departure from the EU at the end of January. There will be a transition period until the end of 2020 when Britain will abide by EU rules and regulations but will not be part of the Union. During that time, Britain will aim to negotiate the details of an enduring trading relationship with its principal commercial partners in Europe. That will be a huge task and is likely to be marked by rows and recriminations. If voters think that Brexit is now behind them, they may be in for a rude surprise. The Conservatives will also seek bespoke trade deals with countries outside the EU, the most important being with the U.S. President Trump, who has with customary ebullience declared his staunch support for Brexit, may well prove to be a tough negotiator, as he has with the Chinese.

Economic forecasters believe that Brexit will impede economic growth, perhaps even triggering a brief recession. That would make it more difficult for the Conservative government to deliver on its promise of greater public spending.

There is another more intangible issue which Mr. Johnson will have to address. For the past few years, Brexit has polarised British politics, fractured relationships, and soured public debate. Britain is wounded. Its prime minister has in the past proved to be a divisive figure who has sought to fan the flames of populism and nationalism to gain political advantage. Can he now move away from his theatrical rhetoric and provide a healing balm for his bruised nation? Mr. Johnson said outside Downing Street on Friday that it's time to "let the healing begin". Let's hope so – unlikely as it seems.

Andrew Whitehead is a former BBC Political and India correspondent and is a visiting professor at the Asian College of Journalism in Chennai

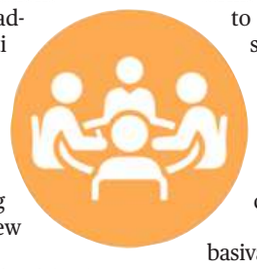
FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

A virtuous circle of learning

The idea of engagement journalism is neither a marketing tool nor a creation of a source pool for reporters to dip into

A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

In a reflective article, former editor of *The Guardian* and Chair of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, Alan Rusbridger, says political managers around the world would have learned some lessons from the outcome of the recent U.K. election – "how we struggled to negotiate the increasingly blurred lines between truth and falsehood; facts and propaganda; openness and stealth; accountability and impunity; clarity and confusion; news and opinion." Some of these issues trouble India too. His observations about pressures on public broadcasters apply to Prasar Bharati channels and Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV. "Old-fashioned press conferences should be kept to the minimum. A manifesto should say almost nothing," he wrote as if he is talking about what is happening in New Delhi.



There is a growing demand for false balance at the cost of truth and a desire for false equivalence at the cost of fact. I am acutely aware of the multiple forces that are undermining independent journalism. The idea of 'engagement journalism' is neither a marketing tool nor a creation of a source pool for reporters to dip into. It is a "virtuous circle of learning," a term coined by Tom Rosenstiel of the American Press Institute, to combat the vicious cycle of disinformation that is rupturing our social fabric.

Considering requests

The Hindu has implemented two of the readers' requests that were articulated in the Open House meetings as well as in the editorial meetings. The editor has not only asked for additional letters in the web edition but has also created a QR Code in the print edition to help readers reach the section effortlessly. In the last month, the quantum of letters has nearly doubled, and the readers reaching out to the letters section alone in the web edition has gone up to 63,000.

Many readers wanted an expansion of the explainer section. Earlier the explainer section titled FAQ was a full page in the Sunday edition. Following the request from the readers, a new section called 'Factwise' has been introduced in the oped section of the paper. "Congress and Partition" (December 11) explained how the idea of a religious basis for nations came from the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. "A law not based on religion" (December 12) debunked the claims of senior BJP leader Ram Madhav by pointing out that the 1950 immigrants expulsion law did not mention religion as the criterion while exempting refugees fleeing civil violence in Pakistan.

Autonomy of the Readers' Editor

There were some questions about the autonomy and independence of the Office of the Readers' Editor (RE). One of the regular writers to our office, S. Narayanan from Tambaram, felt that *The Hindu* was censoring the RE's contribution and has violated its own terms of reference. I am truly at a loss to understand from where he got such an idea. This is my eighth year as the RE and I have worked with five different editors in this period. None tried to even remotely influence the tone of my column, let alone censor it.

No one can accuse Devraj Sambasivan of Alleppey for being inconsistent in his views about this column. He relentlessly expresses his contrarian views. How I wish he attends one of our Open House meetings or editorial meetings rather than posing questions based on wrong assumptions. He wrote: "The RE talks of 15 guests, but only a couple of readers' views are out. What were the others up to? No dates for the future? Is it curtains for the idea?"

The column aims to give a glimpse into the interaction between the readers and the editorial team and not become a comprehensive minutes of proceedings. It was mentioned not once but thrice that the editorial meetings are open to readers every first Tuesday of the month. Mr. Sambasivan also asked if the RE can be independent, detached and assess complaints in a dispassionate and impartial manner if he uses the term "we" in his columns. The RE is an internal ombudsman whose work is protected not only from editorial interference but who is also committed "to strengthen bonds between the newspaper and its millions of print platform and online readers."

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

While my sarod gently weeps

Airlines and policymakers need to be more sensitive to the needs of travelling musicians

KUNAL RAY

In early November, sitar exponent Shubhendra Rao was in the news when his musical instrument reached New York badly damaged before a performance. Mr. Rao wrote a long Facebook post about the incident, which was then widely reported by the media. He finally performed with his disciple's sitar though it was "like walking on an artificial limb," he said. Losing an instrument is akin to the loss of a dear one. Few other than musicians would understand this sentiment.

Many instances

Mr. Rao is not the first Indian musician to have undergone this trauma. Apparently, Indian musicians are regularly subjected to such travel woes when they go overseas to perform. Perhaps vocalists, flautists and violinists don't have it as bad as sitar, sarod, sarangi, tabla, veena, and harmonium artists. Mr. Rao himself has been through three incidents of "vandalism," he said. In 1997, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's sarod was damaged; in 2014, it was misplaced by the airline and later found and returned to him. In 2012, Ustad Aashish Khan opened his sarod case after a flight and found that the skin of the instrument had ripped down the centre. Veena exponent Jayanthi Kumaresh said she spends anxious moments at airports awaiting the arrival of her instrument.

Some musicians prefer to reach overseas much before their performance having learnt their lessons from past travels. These are the experiences of well-regarded musicians, people with significant social and cultural capital and a fan following spanning across countries. But there are also musicians who are relatively unknown or perhaps not as well known and who face such tragedies. Many of their experiences go unreported. Do we even know how many instruments are lost every year in such ordeals?

According to popular folklore, Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar used to book an additional flight seat next to him for his instrument for safety reasons. Musician Saskia Rao de Haas would buy an extra seat for her cello for more than 10 years until she designed a smaller electro-acoustic instrument that she now carries as hand luggage. This has become a norm with many musicians – they regularly travel with smaller, custom-made instruments to avoid casualties.

Cultural ambassadors

Is the quality or sound of music compromised in the process? Of course it is. And neither do smaller instruments have the grandeur of the 'real' instrument. This could be considered a significant artistic loss, an extinction of an aesthetic of sound. Will instruments like surbahar and rudra veena soon fall off the performance map owing to their length and thus complexities of travel?

In any case, the smaller instrument don't end musicians' woes because security and airline staff often don't know their own rules. Further, airlines regularly require musicians to sign a limited release that absolves them of any damage of an instrument in transit. With such a rule, little can be done by way of remedy. Mr. Rao started a campaign on Change.org to have this rule abolished. More than 44,000 people have signed the petition but that's an insignificant number in a democracy to matter.

Can our airlines and policymakers be more sensitive to the needs of travelling musicians? What about a special travel policy for musicians travelling with their instruments? Can airlines staff be trained or oriented to handle these instruments better? Music may not be an election issue for anyone, but we often hear that musicians are our cultural ambassadors. If vehicles of music are regularly damaged, how will this cultural transmission happen? Our musicians ought to speak out more and not wait for personal tragedies to happen. In this regard, the complacency and insularity of some Indian classical musicians has not helped the cause of Indian classical music. Their silence, which has long prevailed, must end because this music must stay and also evolve with time as any social art form.

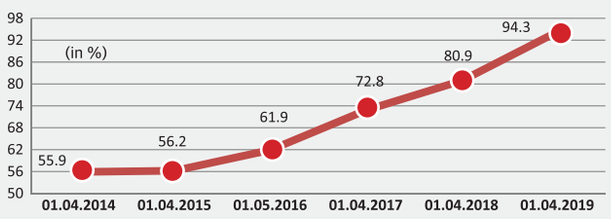
Kunal Ray teaches literary and cultural studies at FLAME University, Pune

DATA POINT

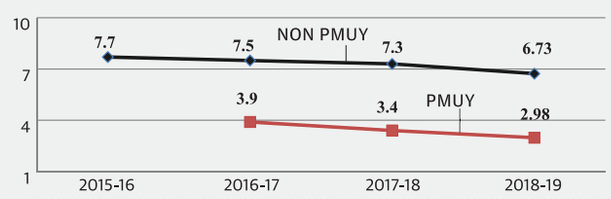
Running low on gas

Since the inception of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), LPG coverage grew at a quick pace and reached almost all households by April 2019. But a significant number of the scheme's BPL beneficiaries did not use the service beyond the initial refill, mostly due to economic reasons. As a result, a large number of dormant cylinders have been diverted for commercial use. By **Sumant Sen**

1. Coverage boost: Household LPG connections grew at a sedate pace before PMUY was introduced in May 2016. Following implementation of the scheme, overall household LPG coverage grew swiftly to reach 94.3% as on April 1, 2019



2. Falling consumption: Despite wide coverage, LPG refills ordered by consumers have been constantly declining in recent years. In 2018-19, refills consumed on an average reduced to 2.98 instances per year from 3.4 per year in 2017-18



LPG consumption by BPL families with existing connections was estimated to be 3-4 refills per year

3. Meagre refills: Of the 3.18 crore PMUY consumers who had an LPG connection for one year or more as on December 31, 2018, 17.4% never ordered a second refill, and 33.15% ordered 1-3 refills per year. This indicates that more than half the beneficaries consumed less than the national average of 3.21 refills

Refills	Consumers
Initial	55.44 lakh
1 to 3	1.05 crore
>4	1.57 crore

4. Towards commercial use: Even as half the beneficiaries ordered less than 4 refills a year, about 2.98 lakh customers with a single cylinder connection ordered 2 to 20 refills in a day

Daily refills	No.of consumers	No.of instances
2	2.61 lakh	3.02 lakh
3 to 6	31,115	35,048
>7	6,522	6,572

This level of consumption is impossible in a domestic connection

Back to the old ways: A survey of 1,662 beneficiaries, conducted between April 2016 and December 2018, showed that 35.44% reverted to traditional fuels mainly due to higher price of LPG refills and easy availability of traditional fuel, which is considered "unclean"

Pre-PMUY

Type	Users (%)
LPG	2.53
Traditional fuels	97.47

Post-PMUY

Type	Users (%)
LPG	40.43
Traditional fuels	35.44
LPG & Traditional fuels	24.13

Source: Report No. 14 of 2019 Performance Audit of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 16, 1969

Objection to 'hammer and sickle'

Congress Opposition and Jan Sangh members in the Rajya Sabha to-day objected to the Election Commission allotting the election symbol of 'hammer and sickle' – the State emblem of other countries – to Communist Parties in India. They said publicity given to this symbol in India was likely to result in the spread of foreign influence among Indian people. Mr. P. Govinda Menon, Law Minister, told Mr. Sundar Singh Bhandari (J.S.) and Mr. C.D. Pande (Cong.-O.) who raised this question, that under the law as it stood, allotment of symbol was the authority of the Election Commission. "If the Election Commission has decided to give a particular symbol to any party, government has no authority over these matters," he said.

Mr. C.D. Pande said some of the Communist Marxist Ministers and leaders, while going in their cars, fly their party flag – which is Chinese flag – on their cars. Mr. A.P. Chatterjee (Communist Marxist) objected to this and said members who made such references were "under American and British influence".

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 16, 1919

Indian Home Rule demonstration

The great Indian Home Rule demonstration held in the Albert Hall on the evening of the 25th was a triumph for the cause of India. Contrary to the expectation of some people, the magnificent hall was pretty full except in the upper stalls. The early stream of men and women seeking admission to the seats was an unmistakable proof of the eagerness with which the London democracy looked forward to be enlightened soon and to support by their presence India's demand for political self-determination. After the usual orchestral music, Mr. George Lansbury opened the proceedings with a short but a very pithy and convincing speech. He said a meeting like that for the cause of a dependency was unthinkable in former times. But now the people of England, it was quite evident, did not want to have any subject people, but only fellow-citizens, with equal rights in the Commonwealth. After referring to the drain upon India's wealth and the fact that food was exported from India, even while Indian people were dying of hunger in their own land, Mr. Lansbury said that it is all proved that the affairs of India were being mismanaged and that time had come for the Indian people themselves being allowed to organise them, as they assuredly could not do worse.

FROM PAGE ONE

Violence hits Delhi over citizenship law

They demanded withdrawal of the police from the Jamia area and an independent inquiry into their 'high-handedness.'

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation closed the entry and exit gates of 13 stations for several hours in view of the violent protests near New Friends' Colony.

"The university has already declared winter vacation and postponed semester examination. A large number of students staying in hostels have already left and Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar has appealed to the students to maintain peace," the statement read.

The Jamia Teachers' Association condemned the violence and appealed to students to keep away from "directionless protests led by local political leaders." Chief Minister Arvind Kerjiwal appealed for calm and said, "No one should indulge in violence. Any kind of violence is unacceptable. Protests should remain peaceful."

U.K. raised concerns over BJP's support

"They did meet with some people from the party but we conveyed our position that while there may have been some hurt feelings over Mr. Corbyn's position over the Indian government's actions on Jammu and Kashmir, that preference had not translated into any mobilisation for Mr. Johnson. We made it clear that we believe that elections in Britain are solely the prerogative of the British people," said the party official, who did not want to be named.

The MEA declined to make an official comment, but sources said the government's position had been conveyed to the U.K. government on the matter, that, "Election is an internal matter of U.K.. People who voted in the elections are all U.K. nationals. We do not wish to get involved as to which section of their population is supporting whom."

Centre files affidavit in RTI case in sealed cover

It asked them to submit a status report on the vacancies and a compliance report on the transparency orders issued by the court in February. As of Saturday, only Odisha and Karnataka had filed their affidavits, according to a Supreme Court office report.

The advocate for the Department of Personnel and Training – which is the nodal Central Ministry for RTI – submitted its status report and compliance report on December 13 in sealed covers, says the office report. "The same is being circulated at the residential offices of the Hon'ble Judges," it adds.

Petitioners in the case say they have not received any copy of the Centre's report, though they have received copies of the submitted State reports.

This seems to continue the recent trend of government agencies and departments using sealed covers to submit information to the judiciary.

Earlier this month, in its judgment allowing bail to former Union Minister P. Chidambaram in the INX Media case, the apex court pulled up the Delhi High Court for accepting sealed cover documents from investigating agencies and reproducing their contents as judicial findings. Sealed covers have also featured in the Rafale petition, the 2G scam trial and a case regarding the illegal detention of children in Jammu and Kashmir.

Retired judges have said sealed covers are typically used in matters of national security or with regard to ongoing investigations.

Petitioner and RTI activist Anjali Bhardwaj pointed out the irony of the government using sealed covers in a case regarding information and transparency.

Are Sri Lankan Tamils not Hindus, asks Stalin

'BJP using Citizenship law to deflect focus from pressing issues'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Alleging that the BJP government at the Centre had brought in the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to divert the people's attention from the economic slowdown and the unemployment crisis, DMK president M.K. Stalin on Sunday said the legislation discriminated against Muslims and divided the people on religious lines.

DMK president M.K. Stalin

Video message

In a video message posted on social media, Mr. Stalin said though India, being a secular country, cannot enact a law based on religion, the BJP government at the Centre was doing just that.

"The law paves the way for the entry of non-Muslims from countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to India. Why should the government single out Muslims? Why did the Bill exclude Sri Lankan Tamils from citizenship?" he asked.

By supporting the legislation, the ruling AIADMK had betrayed the Sri Lankan Tamils, who had been living in Tamil Nadu as refugees since they could not lead a peaceful life in Sri Lanka, the DMK leader said.

"The Centre does not have any concern for the Sri Lankan Tamils and is not ready to make arrangements to ensure an honourable life for them. The AIADMK government is not ready to question the stand of the BJP, and remain(s) spineless," he alleged.

Mr. Stalin wanted to know if Hindus from other countries could enter India, why the provision was denied to Sri Lankan Tamils. "My question is whether the BJP government [at the Centre] and the AIADMK regime [in the State] see the Sri Lankan Tamils as Hindus at all. Though they are Tamils, they follow Hinduism. Wouldn't their exclusion amount to rejecting Hindu Tamils?" the DMK leader asked.

J&K political prisoners will be freed soon, says Ram Madhav

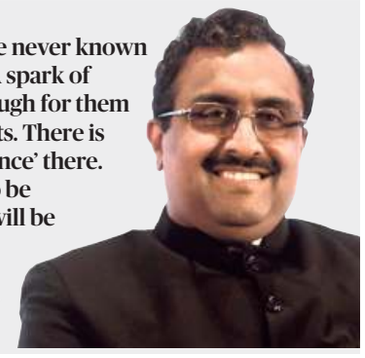
BJP general secretary says process is under way to keep political activity going

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Kashmiris lived with Article 370 for 70 years; now, they are looking forward to a life without it and they want to give the new turn of events a chance, BJP general secretary Ram Madhav said here on Sunday.

"Kashmiris are never known to be quiet. A spark of provocation is enough for them to take to the streets. There is no 'calm disobedience' there. Yes, they are wisely watching. Those who want to be disobedient, they will be disobedient. But by and large the people of Kashmir, I am sure, want to give this turn of events a chance," he said.

> Kashmiris are never known to be quiet. A spark of provocation is enough for them to take to the streets. There is no 'calm disobedience' there. Those who want to be disobedient, they will be disobedient.
>
> RAM MADHAV
> BJP GENERAL SECRETARY



Mr. Madhav was reacting to a remark by A.S. Dulat, former Director of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), who called the situation in Kashmir "calm disobedience". He was speaking at the Military Literature Festival here, and the topic was "Article 370 and the death knell of terrorism". Mr. Dulat moderated the session.

Mr. Madhav said Kashmiris were now experiencing life without Article 370. "It is a bold step taken by the government, and I am sure the new situation would ensure development and complete integration of the region with India." The dilution of Article 370 was done in the most democratic manner, he said, disclosing that political prisoners like the former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah would be freed soon. The process was under way to keep the political activity going.

"We would restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir," he said. During the discussion, Mr. Madhav said the BJP's alliance with the PDP was based on an agenda of development and security, agreed to by both parties. "After working with Ms. Mehbooba Mufti [the PDP leader] for a year and a half, we experienced some difficulties in furthering our agenda of security and decided to quit [the alliance] and impose President's rule on [the erstwhile State]," he said.

Congress MP Manish Tewari argued that the dilution of Article 370 had nothing to do with terrorism and had subverted the processes enshrined in the Constitution. With its mindless decision, he said, the Centre had alienated the mainstream leaders, too.

Goyal meets Kashmir traders' body chief

'Submit report on ₹15,000-crore loss'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

In a first outreach to the business community in Kashmir, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday met the president of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI), and asked him to submit their ₹15,000-crore loss report to Lieutenant-Governor Girish Chandra Murmu and the Centre for "further deliberations."

Piyush Goyal

KCCI president Sheikh Ashiq and several representatives of traders in Jammu met Mr. Goyal in the winter capital of Jammu. The first ever meeting between the traders and the BJP central leadership was initiated by the Union Territory administration of Jammu and Kashmir. It is first such move to look into the losses incurred on the businesses here after the revocation of autonomy on August 5. "I feel your [traders'] pain. There is no denial that losses must have happened. Any report on losses should be submitted to the State government.

The Centre will also look into it," Mr. Goyal told the traders. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Ashiq said the KCCI, which prepared a preliminary report showing ₹15,000 crore losses to the Valley trade, shared it with Mr. Goyal "who patiently listened and showed positive response."

Centre has left Delhi burning, says Cong.

'Union govt. failed to maintain peace'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Blaming the BJP-led Central government for the police action on the Jamia Millia Islamia campus, the Congress on Sunday accused it of having failed in its duty to maintain peace in the country and leaving even Delhi burning after Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya.

Even as the Congress attacked the BJP for police action in Jamia Millia varsity, senior party leader K.C. Venugopal appealed for "restraint," while condemning the "brutal crackdown" on Jamia students.

"From the Northeast to Assam, West Bengal and now in Delhi, the BJP government has failed in its duty to maintain peace in the nation. They must take responsibility and restore peace," the Congress said on its official Twitter handle.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala asked if it was justified that the police entered the Jamia campus library, beat up students and lobbed tear gas shells at them.

"Delhi is burning, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya are burning. Violence is spreading in Bengal, the Home Minister does not have the courage to go to the northeast, Japan PM's visit had to be cancelled, but Modiji is happy doing poll campaign in Jharkhand. Those who oppose it are dubbed as traitors and Jamia is the recent example of this," he said.

Sisodia's charge

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia accused the BJP of getting the police to set buses on fire during a protest in south Delhi as part of its "dirty politics." He also tweeted some photos from the protest site.

No rift over Rahul Gandhi's remarks, says Uddhav

Shiv Sena spineless, says former Chief Minister Fadnavis

ALOK DESHPANDE
NAGPUR

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday dismissed the possibility of any rift within the ruling coalition in the State over the recent remarks by former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Veer Savarkar.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnavis, however, said the Shiv Sena had "lost its spine" as it continued to ally with the Congress.

Demanding an apology from Mr. Gandhi at a press conference in Nagpur, Mr. Fadnavis said: "Only a person who does not understand the history of the freedom struggle will disrespect Savarkar."

Though the Sena is a firm supporter of Savarkar, it was issuing only half-hearted statements so that the alliance could remain in power. "We cannot sit alongside those who disrespect *Swatantryaveer* Savarkar," Mr. Fadnavis said.

Making a point: Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray at a rally in Nagpur on Sunday. • PTI

At a press conference later in the day, Mr. Thackeray said, "We are different as a party and have different ideologies. It has been so in the past and may even remain. But this government is formed on a common minimum programme (CMP) and we are united as a government. Our party has already reiterated the position on Savarkar and we stick to that," he said.

"The BJP should tell whether it follows Savarkar's ideology. It passed a Citizenship (Amendment) Act which is actually making minorities in neighbouring countries insecure. Would Savarkar have liked that," Mr. Thackeray asked.

Rajasthan police detain film actor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOTA

The Rajasthan Police on Sunday morning detained Bollywood actor Payal Rohatgi from her Ahmedabad residence for interrogation in a case relating to alleged objectionable content against the Nehru-Gandhi family on social media.

The actor was booked by the Bundi police under the IT Act on October 10 for the objectionable content against Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and other members of the family which she had posted on her social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on September 6 and 21. She was served a notice earlier this month and told to furnish a reply in this connection. She had applied for an anticipatory bail on Thursday and the hearing was scheduled for Monday.

INTERVIEW | RITESH PANDEY

'People still suffer caste discrimination'

First-time BSP MP says the differences may have reduced but they are still there

SOBHANA K. NAIR

First-time MP **Ritesh Pandey** *from the Bahujan Samaj Party speaks about caste-based parties versus religious polarisation, the burgeoning problem of stray cattle in Uttar Pradesh and the state of the economy. Excerpts:*

Against the backdrop of the 2017 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election and the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the BJP has managed to do away with caste-based binaries and consolidated the Hindu votes as one monolith. So are caste-based parties like the BSP on their way out?

■ I don't think so. The BSP will never cease to be irrelevant. My party represents the aspirations of Dalits in U.P. and elsewhere in the country. It has managed to get support from across the castes. In the current shift towards religious polarisation, you could call it a shift from caste politics to another kind of politics. But I think, in all eventuality, you can't take away the caste-based discrimination that people suffer. The differences are not going to go away, they may have reduced but they are still there. The Indian villages still suffer segregation. Yes, we have seen a little shift at least in U.P. among the most backward castes. They are floating voters who can be wooed by any party. Several parties may have done a good job in netting their support. But I believe that ultimately caste will save us from religious polarisation.

Was it a mistake to go along with the Samajwadi Party in the 2019 election?

■ I am not somebody that could comment on that. This is something that the party high command decides. Post-election, if the decision was called off, it has been called off looking at the party's mission and vision for the future. From what I understand, it was judged that the alliance didn't add much value.

The BSP has been curiously keeping its distance from the Opposition. Prior to the 2019 election, it was part of all Opposition meetings and now we see the party standing aloof.

■ From what I understand, the party does not want to follow, or be led by, other people. We have our own philosophy, we have our own ideology. And we necessarily don't have to, you know, follow sort of an Opposition which the Congress seems to lead. We are led by Ambedkarite ideas and our positions are formulated on that basis. Let's not forget that Baba Saheb Ambedkar was very much in favour of the Uniform Civil Code. And let us not forget that he would have staunchly opposed something as vicious as the Citizenship Bill which is why we opposed it tooth and nail.

Stray cattle have become a huge problem in Uttar Pradesh, more so after the BJP government led by Yogi Adityanath took over. Will this be a talking point in the next Assembly election for the BSP?

> My party represents the aspirations of Dalit in U.P. and elsewhere in the country

■ People who are most affected by this are the farmers. The cow vigilante groups have invoked fear against trading of cattle. For any economy, the most important thing is that the traders feel secure. When these animals become redundant, you're left with nothing else but to leave them on the road. The government recognises this as a problem, and it has set up *gau shalas* (cow shelters). But there isn't money or manpower to maintain them. The cows are dying there for want of food and care. It's really heartbreaking.

Coming on the heels of the Hyderabad rape and murder case is the Unnao incident where a young woman was burned to death for going to the courts against the persons who raped her. Could this be a turning point for the Yogi Adityanath government?

■ No other government can rival the BSP's record in maintaining law and order in the State. And it's for the people to see the difference. Under our government, *Behenji* [BSP leader Mayawati] had put pressure on the police for registration of cases of crime against women and their timely investigation. And most certainly, people can see that the Adityanath government has not been up to the mark.

Do you endorse the "encounter" killing of the Hyderabad rape and murder accused?

■ More than anything, it's a mindset change that is important. We can demand the death penalty, if that's what this country really wants. But I don't think that it's going to change the situation drastically. My party's view is that that kind of speedy justice should be granted. And that's the demand of the family of Unnao victims too. On a personal level, I feel justice has to be dealt the right way. Therefore, it's questionable whether the encounter by the Hyderabad police was justified. And I wouldn't say whether it was right or wrong but I certainly would ask questions. Did they follow the laid-out procedures? Tomorrow, anyone can be executed by the police or by a mob using any excuse without any investigation whether the person is guilty or not. We need to discourage this culture of taking the law into our own hands to deliver justice.

Delay in sending official notifications to Parliament

Reason not explained in 96% cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government is delaying the tabling of key notifications to Parliament, thereby withholding information that should be available to all members.

A study by a Parliamentary panel revealed that out of 233 statutory notifications containing rules and regulations from 14 Ministries, 125 notifications were presented to Parliament after a delay ranging from one to ten months.

As per the rules, the notifications are required to be laid on the Table of the House within 15 days of their publication in the Gazette if the House is in session, and if not, within 15 days of the commencement of the next session.

Serious view

The panel on Subordinate Legislation headed by Congress leader T. Subbirami Reddy has taken a serious view of the delay and recorded its displeasure over the lackadaisical approach that negates the principle of accountability of the Executive to the Parliament.

Futile exercise

"The accountability of the Ministries to the Parliament and the Constitutional mandate of the Parliament to monitor the functioning of the Executive would become a futile exercise and the Committee has every right to take this matter very seriously," the report notes.

In 96% of the cases, reasons for the delay were not explained. This data is only for the 248th Session of the Rajya Sabha, which was held from 31 January to 13 February this year.

APPEAL

5 years old Lakshanya is diagnosed with Relapsed Acute Myeloid Leukemia and urgently requires Rs. 12,00,000/- towards Allogenic Bone marrow Transplantation at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Please help her for a lasting change and a healthy life. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai **will be acknowledged.** The donations sent through Ch/D.D./ NEFT Transfer (Syndicate Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/c No.60182010063310, IFSC No. SYNB0006018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT. **(Please do not mention patient's name on the cheque).**

All correspondence is done through **WWS**, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006, Ph: 044-42137401/28235324 Email ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com** Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

IN BRIEF

Muslims need not fear, says minority panel chief

NEW DELHI

Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities Syed Ghayorul Hasan Rizvi has asserted that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act is not against minorities and Indian Muslims need not fear as they are neither intruders nor refugees. PTI

Protests staged in London against Citizenship Act

LONDON

People from different groups gathered in front of the Indian High Commission here on Saturday to protest against the Citizenship Act and the "failures" of the Narendra Modi government. Protesters from the British Assamese community waved placards that read: 'Save Democracy, Stop CAB'. PTI

Poll fever gives way to citizenship anxiety in Jharkhand villages

When somebody is hell-bent on ousting us, we have to be worried, say people of the Muslim community

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
RAJMAHAL

For Rustom Seikh, 70, of Yara Mommed Toli in the Udwha police station limits of this constituency in Jharkhand, the excitement of being in the middle of an Assembly election has turned into anxiety.

He has started scrambling for documents to prove his Indian citizenship.

Ever since the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and talk of compiling the National Register of Citizens afresh started dominating public discourse, voters, especially Muslims, in these remote pockets of the State say they have reasons to worry.

Abdul Satar of Babutola, adjacent to Mr. Seikh's village, exudes confidence of showing legal documents that can prove his Indian citizenship, but he is nervous.

"I do possess documents dating back to 1340 (Bengali year) and now we are in 1426. If asked, we can immediately produce the land receipt and other documents belonging to the erstwhile Jamindar estate of our region. We have kept it carefully after discovering from old boxes," Bengali-speaking Mr. Seikh says.

Mr. Satar, however, says production of documents will not entirely solve the problem.

Documents have to pass the scrutiny of government authorities, who are whimsical at times, Mr. Satar says.

"I can show documents of 1890, but it has to satisfy authorities. When somebody is hell-bent on ousting us, we have to be worried," he adds.

Palpable fear: Villagers carrying paddy near Shabganj town in Jharkhand. ▪ BISWARANJAN ROUT

Gorachand Parmanik and Binod Mandol, Hindu residents of Purbi Jamnagar village in the Rajmahal constituency, vehemently argue for the implementation of the NRC, saying those who had entered India illegally have no right to stay back. Though these villages do not share a border with Bangladesh, the distance, as the crow flies, is hardly 50 km.

Going by the accounts of the local people, many had moved to areas which share boundaries with Malda district of West Bengal, after the India-Pakistan War that led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

'Misguiding Muslims'

Pockets of Barhait, Litpara, Pakur, Jamtara, Maheshpur and Poreyahat are reportedly inhabited by Bangladeshi immigrants.

The BJP State unit has been regularly raising the issue of illegal immigration and its impact on land and other resources of Jharkhand.

Though the BJP was not able to win in several of these constituencies in the 2014 Assembly election, the saffron party is guarded in its reaction on the NRC and the Citizenship Act this time.

"People who had entered Jharkhand following religious persecution in countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh have heaved a sigh of relief after the enactment of citizenship Bill. Due to narrow political considerations, Opposition parties are misguiding our Muslim brothers and sisters. They are deliberately instilling fears in the Muslim community," said Sameer Oraon, BJP Rajya Sabha member from Jharkhand, at Barhait on Sunday.

Two public meetings which were to be addressed in the region by the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen leader, Asaduddin Owaisi, were cancelled due to bad weather.

Protesters identified by their clothes: PM

Modi says Congress, allies fuelling violence in the country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUMKA

Accusing the Congress and its allies of fuelling violence over the amended Citizenship Act, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the Opposition's actions proved that the decision to pass the Bill was "1,000% correct", and those indulging in arson "can be identified by their clothes".

"The Congress and its allies are stoking fire over the Citizenship Act, but people of northeast have rejected violence," he said at an election rally here. "The country is watching; people's faith has been cemented in Modi after the Bill was cleared by Parliament."

"People who are setting fire (to property) can be seen on TV... They can be identified by the clothes they are wearing," he said, without elaborating.

Condemning the overseas protests held by the Congress, he said, "For the first time, the Congress did what Pakistanis have been doing for long."

Floral welcome: PM Narendra Modi with Jharkhand CM Raghubar Das at an election rally in Dumka on Sunday. ▪ PTI

London protests

A large number of people had gathered outside the Indian High Commission in London on Saturday to protest against the amended Act and what they branded as the Modi government's "failures".

"People from Pakistan, those settled in London, had staged demonstrations outside our Embassy," he said.

"Did any Indian stage demonstration near the Embassy? If there is any issue, a person goes to the Embassy, meets the officials, who then send the documents to the Central government," Mr. Modi explained.

Efforts were being made to tarnish the country's image, he alleged.

Listing the achievements of the BJP governments at the Centre and Jharkhand, the PM said, "I am your sevak (servant). I have come here to give an account of the development work done by our party in the State."

Violence spreads in Bengal, Internet off in six districts

Train services affected, CM makes appeal for peace

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Violence continued in West Bengal on Sunday despite repeated appeals by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for peace. From parts of Howrah, Murshidabad and adjacent areas of Kolkata, the protest spread to Nadia, North 24 Paraganas and parts of Bardhaman. Internet services were stopped in six districts.

Officials said the violence was "largely sporadic", confined to setting fire to vehicles and damaging a few trains and shops.

Parties trade charges

BJP State unit president Dilip Ghosh blamed the Chief Minister "for protecting Bangladeshi extremist Muslims who instigated violence". Ruling Trinamool leaders said the BJP was organising "extremist Muslims".

Many hundreds of protesters burnt tyres and blocked roads at Raghunathganj in Murshidabad, Kamdevpur and Amdanga in North 24 Paraganas for long hours with no policemen in sight.

Rage on the streets: Protesters burning tyres on the road in Nadia on Sunday. ▪ PTI

At Manikgram station in Murshidabad, a railway police vehicle was set on fire. Many trains, particularly those connecting south India, were delayed or terminated.

Passengers were stranded at various stations, and they crowded the Kharagpur stationmaster's officer in protest. An Eastern Railway statement noted that the Agartala-Kanchenjunga Express was "cancelled due to on-going public obstruction on Malda Town-New Jalpaiguri Section of North East Frontier Railway."

By mid-day, Internet connectivity was off in Murshidabad, Malda, Howrah, North Dinajpur and South and North 24 Paraganas. Services were shut at Basirhat and Barasat subdivisions of North 24 Paraganas and parts of Baruipur and Canning subdivisions of South 24 Paraganas.

"Outsiders are conspiring to instigate communal violence in the State," a government statement said.

(With PTI inputs)

100 people arrested, 2,000 detained in Assam: govt.

Officials claim situation under control

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam government on Sunday said 100 people had been arrested and 2,000 detained in the State for arson and other acts of violence during the protest against the amended Citizenship Act that left at least six dead.

Curfew was relaxed in the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley and in Meghalaya's capital Shillong.

During the day, officials said the situation was under control. Curfew would continue from dusk to dawn as would the suspension of mobile Internet and data services till Monday evening.

"We have so far arrested 100 people and detained 2,000 more for involvement in violence [during December 12 and 13]. Videos are being analysed to get to the others," Director-General of Police, Assam, Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, said.

AGP to challenge Act

One person died of bullet wounds at the Guwahati Medical College Hospital. Three others have died in police firing and baton-charge in Guwahati and Dibrugarh. During the protests, one person each was burnt alive by mobs in Tinsukia and Darrang districts.

The day saw the Asom Gana Parishad, the ruling partner of the BJP, undergoing a "change of mind" after supporting the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. "We have, after studying the Act and the situation in Assam, decided to challenge the Act in court," party leader Ramendra Narayan Kalita said.

Trinamool ad offensive, says Governor

Mamata Banerjee had said that CAA, NRC would not be implemented in the State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The advertisement, in which Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee states that NRC and the citizenship law would not be implemented in West Bengal, was offensive and a head of government can't use public money for such campaigns, Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Sunday.

The Trinamool Congress had released a television commercial in which Ms. Banerjee can be heard saying that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) would not be implemented in the State. "We will not implement any citizenship law, from CAA to NRC (National Registration of Citizens). If Central government passes an Act, it is not mandatory for the State to implement it," she says in the commercial.

Ms. Banerjee appealed to the public to not take law into their hands. "Please do not block roads, it creates huge problem for the ordinary people," she said.

Mr. Dhankhar questioned the Chief Minister for using public money "to lead an agitation." "The Chief Minister must withdraw the advertisement, (it is) a sickening concept. How can an elected head of a government use government money to give advertisement on television and newspapers (saying) that there will be no NRC, there will be no CAA; this is offensive," he said.

The Governor summoned the Chief Secretary and the Director-General of Police to brief him on the situation in the State. The two officials have been called to Raj Bhavan on Monday morning, he wrote on Twitter. He said the situation in Bengal was seriously compromising the values of the Constitution.

(With PTI inputs)

Pleas in SC speak of past judgments

Religious classification should be based on intelligible differentia, they say

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The dozen or so petitions filed against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, trace a series of Supreme Court judgments in which the court stood up for the dignity of the individual against the "tyranny of the majority".

These Constitution Bench judgments, which range from the decriminalisation of homosexuality to striking down triple talaq, hold that the State cannot discriminate on the basis of an intrinsic and core identity of an individual. Being Muslim is part of a person's core identity and dignity. It cannot be the basis for discrimination for granting citizenship, they argue.

The Constitution Bench judgment in the petition filed by the Delhi government – State (NCT of Delhi) v. Union of India – said the court should follow its constitutional morality to check State power and the "tyranny of the majority".

> Being Muslim is part of a person's core identity and dignity. It cannot be the basis for discrimination for granting citizenship

Identity with dignity

Another Constitution Bench in the Navtej Singh Johar case (decriminalisation of homosexuality) upheld the concept of "identity with dignity".

"Destruction of individual identity would tantamount to crushing of intrinsic dignity that cumulatively encapsulates the values of privacy, choice, freedom of speech and other expressions," the Constitution Bench held. It reminded that religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth were intrinsic and core elements of an individual's identity under Article 15.

If at all the state ventures to classify people on the basis of religion, it should be reasonable, based on intelligible differentia and have a rational basis with the objective sought to be achieved by the law, the petitions argued, quoting the Anwar Ali Sarkar verdict reported in 1952.

They contend that the amendments classify illegal migrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh as those who are Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian on one side, and those who are Muslim on the other. The amendments provide benefits to illegal migrants who practise any of the six faiths and excludes Muslims.

The Constitution Bench in the S.R. Bommai judgment lays down that the State cannot favour any particular religion. It is the government's duty to accord equal treatment to members of all faiths. A Constitution Bench in its Shayara Bano (triple talaq case) held that a legislation which is manifestly arbitrary, capricious, irrational, excessive or disproportionate should be struck down.

KERALA STATE COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Kerala Undertaking),
Chalachithra Kalabhavan Building, 1st Floor,Vazhuthacaud,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Ph: 0471 - 2321520, Fax: 2323363
E-Mail: kscadc@gmail.com, Website: www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
KSCADC

No. 1928/C/KSCADC/2019 DATED 11/12/2019

Sl. No.	Name of works tendered	Total Estimate PAC (Rs)	Cost of tender form (Rs)	EMD (Rs)
1	KIIFB-Shore Protection Works and providing Beach Landing Facility at Poonthura in Thiruvananthapuram	16,96,22,554/-	16540 + 1985 (GST @12%) = 18525/-	5,00,000/-

Last date of receipt of tender : UP TO 6.00 PM ON 10/01/2020
Class of Contractor : A class
Date of opening : AT 11.00 AM ON 15/01/2020
For more details Ref. web site www.etenders.kerala.gov.in

Thiruvananthapuram Sd/- Chief Engineer, KSCADC

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY

The following e-tenders are published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to **www.ireps.gov.in** and quote against these tenders. Manual quotations will not be entertained for these tenders. Closing and opening time for all tenders are **14:30 hrs.** and **15.00 hrs.** respectively.

Sl. No.	Open Tender No.	Short Description of work	Approx. value ₹	Date of Tender	
				Closing	Opening
1	EW/1049	Service contract for Maintenance of Integrated Waste Management System in ICF colonies"- 2 years.	808.52 lakhs	06.01.2020	06.01.2020
2	EW/1050	(A) Provision of 200 KLD Sewage treatment plant (B) Reconstruction of Toilet (C) Reconstruction of storm water drain	224.13 lakhs	06.01.2020	06.01.2020

GREEN ICF ! CLEAN ICF !

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(Government of Karnataka Autonomous Institute)
Byrasandra, Jayanagar East, Bengaluru - 560 011 Ph: 080-26564516, 26562500 Grams: SITO Fax: 26565222 E-mail: sitodirector@gmail.com
No. SGITO/e-Tender/ME/others/124/2019-20 Date: 13.12.2019

TENDER NOTIFICATION (e- Procurement)

Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma & Orthopaedics, Byrasandra, Jayanagar East, Bangalore - 11 invites tender from the eligible tenderers through the e-procurement portal of GOK for the following **Medical Equipments / others.**

(1) Imported C-Arm - 2 Nos **(2)** Imported Bone Holding Forceps - Large, Medium, Small, Extra Large - 2 Set each **(3)** Imported Homan's Bone levers - Large, Medium, Small - 2 Set each **(4)** Surgical Instruments for Plastic Surgery - 1 Set **(5)** Skin Graft Mesher - 1 No **(6)** Shaver Hand piece - 2 Nos **(7)** Projector - 4 Nos **(8)** Annual maintenance contract of 150 KLD Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP)

(1) The Tenderers can download the documents from: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** for Sl. No. (1) to (8) on or after **16.12.2019** and the last date for submission of completed tenders through e-portal is **16.01.2020** upto **4.00** PM.
(2) The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to accept / reject or cancel tender without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPR/1913/2019-20 Sd/- Chief Administrative Officer, Tender Inviting Authority

MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GLOBAL TENDER ENQUIRY

Procurement & Consultancy Services Division of **HLL INFRA TECH SERVICES LTD.** (A Govt. of India Enterprise) for and on behalf of MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE – GOVT. OF INDIA invites e-tenders from eligible and qualified bidders for Supply of medical equipments as brought below:

Sl. No.	NIT reference	Item/Dept.	Pre-bid Meeting Date & time	Last Date and Time for online submission
1	HITES/PCD/PMSSY-IV/09/CSSD/19-20 dated 16-12-2019	Procurement of CSSD	26-12-2019, 11:00 AM	17-01-2020, 01:00 PM
2	HITES/PCD/PMSSY-IV/07/RAD/19-20 dated 16-12-2019	Procurement of Medical Equipment (Radiology)	27-12-2019, 11:00 AM	17-01-2020, 01:00 PM

- Interested bidders are advised to download the complete Tender Enquiry document from the websites **https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/**, **http://hllhites.com/tenders** or **http://www.lifecarehll.com/tender** for complete details.
- Prospective bidders are advised to browse the above websites regularly before submission of their bids as any further amendments will be published in these websites only.

CEO (HITES)

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
REGION NCR ALWAR E-mail-acealwar@gmail.com
No./TA/NIT/3810 Dated: 10-12-2019

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NIT No/ACE/NCR/2019-2020/01

Online bids are invited on behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan for the following works from enlisted contractors as per PWF&AR Part II Appendix 16 dated 1-07-19 and amendment issued by concerned department upto date. Tender documents can be downloaded from website: **http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** from 16-12-2019 to 6-1-2020 upto 5.00 p.m. Duly filed tenders shall be submitted electronically on **http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** upto 6-1-2020 upto 5.00 p.m. The tenders shall be opened on 11.30 a.m. on 7-1-2020 in presence of tenderers or their Authorized representatives present.

Sr. No.	Item	NIT No/ACE/NCR/2019-2020/01
1.	Work description	Annual rate contract for Work of constructioin of 150 mm diameter tube well in District Alwar
2.	Estimated Cost	Rs. **224.73 Lacs**
3.	Completion Period	**ANNUAL RATE CONTRACT (Twelve months)**
4.	Type of contract	Schedule contract on SPR Basis
5.	Availability of Bid document on websites	From 16-12-2019 at 10.00 hrs. to 6-1-2020 (upto 17.00 hours)
6.	UBN NO On http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in	PHE1920WSRC06811

NIB CODE PHE1920A3881

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(Bhagwan Sahay Meena)
ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
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ELSEWHERE

Strong earthquake in Philippines kills one

DAVAO

A powerful earthquake hit the southern Philippine island of Mindanao on Sunday, killing a child, injuring dozens and damaging buildings in an area still recovering from a string of deadly quakes in October. Police said a rescue operation had been launched at a heavily damaged market building in Padada near the 6.8 magnitude quake's epicentre, which is about 90 km south of Davao. AFP

French New Wave icon Anna Karina is dead at 79

PARIS

Danish-French actress Anna Karina, muse of New Wave director Jean-Luc Godard, has died of cancer at the age of 79. Ms. Karina starred in seven films made by her ex-husband Godard, including *Pierrot Le Fou*. She also had some success as a singer, recording the hit *Sous Le Soleil Exactement* with Serge Gainsbourg in 1967. "Today, French cinema has been orphaned. It has lost one of its legends," Culture Minister Franck Riester tweeted.

Protests flare in Hong Kong malls with leader in Beijing to meet Xi

Monday's talks could yield fresh directives, including a possible Cabinet reshuffle

REUTERS
HONG KONG

Small groups of protesters gathered in shopping malls across Hong Kong on Sunday amid brief scuffles with riot police as attention turned to an upcoming meeting between Hong Kong's leader and China's President.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam is scheduled to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing on Monday and some observers say the visit could yield fresh directives including a possible Cabinet reshuffle.

Ms. Lam, however, appeared to play that down before she left, saying the first task was tio curb violence and restore order.

On Sunday, in the peak shopping season ahead of Christmas, groups of masked protesters, clad in black, marched through several malls chanting slogans including "Fight for freedom" and "Return justice to us".

Riot police used pepper spray on crowds in one Kowloon mall, local media reported.

Control measures: A police officer detaining a protester inside a mall in Hong Kong on Sunday. REUTERS

In Shatin, Reuters witnessed police firing a tear gas canister outside the New Town Plaza mall, and several people were taken away after entrances and walkways were blocked, glass panels smashed, and graffiti sprayed.

Police said in a statement that some shops had been damaged and that a smoke bomb had been set off. Many shops closed early.

In the evening, several hundred protesters held a vigil for a protester, who fell to his death outside a luxury mall exactly six months ago after holding up a banner. Some laid white flowers, as others softly hummed 'Sing Hallelujah' to commemorate Leung Ling-kit, known as "raincoat man" for what he wore at the time.

In memory of first victim

"He is the first person to die because of this revolution," said Tina, 18. "I came tonight because I want to always remember that we cant give up and we have to keep fighting for freedom."

Several hundred people, many social workers, gathered earlier to reiterate demands that include full democracy and an independent inquiry into allegations of police brutality. Some called for more mass strikes, while others sat at tables to write Christmas cards to those who have been jailed.

Pro-govt. rally

Separately, a pro-government rally drew over a thousand people, with participants denouncing the use of violence during protests.

Hong Kong has been embroiled in its worst political crisis in decades since June with anti-government protests posing a populist challenge to Mr. Xi and complicating ties between China and the U.S. at a time of heightened tensions.

Johnson eyes key vote on Brexit ahead of Christmas

U.K. PM's other top domestic goal is shoring up health service

REUTERS
LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will "get Brexit done" by January 31 and then agree a new trade deal with the European Union by the end of 2020, Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove said on Sunday, vowing to deliver on the government's top priority.

Mr. Johnson and his team were triumphant last week when he won a commanding majority of 80 at an early election. Winning over many traditionally Labour voters in northern and central England, Mr. Johnson has proclaimed he will lead a "people's government".

First, the Conservative leader must make good on his often-repeated promise to "get Brexit done" and then turn to realising another priority: to increase funding into Britain's much loved but struggling public health service. "I can absolutely confirm that we will have an opportunity to vote on the

Boris Johnson

Withdrawal Agreement Bill in relatively short order and then we will make sure that it passes before January 31st," Mr. Gove said.

On a new trade accord with the EU, Mr. Gove said: "It will be concluded next year. We will be in a position to leave the EU before the 31st of January next year and then we will have concluded our conversations with the EU about the new framework of free trade and friendly cooperation that we will have with them by the end of next year."

The EU's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, has cast doubt over whether the trade talks will be so swiftly concluded, warning Britain the bloc "will not tolerate unfair competitive advantage".

Rishi Sunak, a Deputy Finance Minister, said the government aimed to re-submit the Withdrawal Agreement Bill to Parliament for ratification before Christmas to allow Ministers to start work on other priorities such as "levelling up" the country.

Corbyn to step down

Mr. Corbyn, who apologised to Labour supporters in two newspapers on Sunday, has said he will step down as soon as a new leader has been elected by the party membership.

"I will make no bones about it. The result was a body blow for everyone who so desperately needs real change in our country... I'm sorry that we came up short and I take my responsibility for it," he wrote.

Rebels kill 22 in Congo in latest massacre

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DR CONGO

Islamist rebels hacked to death at least 22 civilians, including 13 women, in an overnight raid in the DR Congo's troubled Beni region bordering Uganda, local officials said on Sunday.

Members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Islamist militia that originated in Uganda, were armed with machetes, Beni region administrator Donat Kibwana said. "Teams have been mobilised to recover the bodies and bring them back for dignified funerals".

The victims were farmers including 13 women, said Noella Katsongerwaki, Beni's civil society president.

More than 100 people have died in assaults blamed on the ADF since November 5. The latest incident came a day after six civilians were killed in an attack in the regional capital Beni.

U.S. secretly expelled 2 Chinese diplomats

They trespassed into a Virginia base that is home to special operations forces

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

The U.S. quietly expelled two Chinese embassy officials in September after they drove onto a sensitive military base in Virginia, *The New York Times* reported on Sunday.

The newspaper, which cited multiple people with knowledge of the episode, said it appeared to be the first time in more than 30 years that the U.S. has expelled Chinese diplomats on suspicion of espionage.

At least one of the diplomats was believed to be an intelligence officer operating under cover, the *Times* said.

The incident comes as the U.S. and China, the world's two biggest economies, wrangle over trade. The two sides announced a mini-deal on Friday to reduce some tariffs.

The Times said the diplomats, accompanied by their wives, drove up to the checkpoint at the entrance to a sensitive installation near Norfolk, Virginia that includes special operations forces.

Warnings ignored

The guard saw that they didn't have permission to enter and directed them to go through the gates, turn around and exit.

The Chinese officials continued onto the base, evading military personnel pursuing them until they were forced to stop by fire trucks blocking their path, according to the Times.

The Chinese officials said they had not understood the instructions they were given, but U.S. personnel were unconvinced by their explanation.

14 pilgrims killed in Nepal bus crash

Four of the dead were children

Rescue workers standing near the wreckage of a bus following an accident in Sindhupalchowk on Sunday. AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KATHMANDU

At least 14 people died after a bus carrying pilgrims veered off a highway and rolled down a steep slope in central Nepal on Sunday, officials said, the latest deadly traffic accident in the Himalayan nation.

Police said the bus carrying 32 passengers plunged 70 m onto a lower stretch of the winding road in Sindhupalchowk district, around 80 km north-east of the capital Kathmandu.

"We have recovered the bodies of 12 passengers from the accident," police officer Prajwal Maharjan told AFP, adding that two others had died in hospital.

Four of the dead were children, traffic police added.

Some 18 passengers who were injured were taken to hospital, with officials unclear if the bus driver was among them or had fled the scene of the crash.

The passengers were returning from a pilgrimage to Kalinchowk Bhagawati, a popular Hindu temple located at a heigh of almost 4,000 m in the hills of Dolakha district, around 140 km east of Kathmandu.

The cause of the accident was not yet known, but police said reckless driving down the steep and winding road could have been a key factor.

Deadly traffic accidents are relatively common in the impoverished Himalayan nation because of poor roads, badly maintained vehicles and reckless driving.

At least 18 passengers were killed when a bus plunged into a gorge in central Nepal last month.

Jamaica's Toni-Ann Singh bags Miss World title

France's Ophely first runner-up, followed by India's Suman Rao

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

Jamaica's Toni-Ann Singh has bagged the Miss World 2019 crown at an annual beauty pageant held here, with India's Suman Rao becoming second runners-up.

The 23-year-old was declared the winner at a televised event held at ExCeL London here on Saturday.

Born to Indo-Caribbean father Bradshaw Singh and African-Caribbean mother Jahrine Bailey, Ms. Singh is a student of women's studies and psychology at Florida State University and she aspires to be a medical doctor.

Toni-Ann Singh

Suman Rao

During the competition, she earned a resounding applause from audiences for singing Whitney Houston's hit *I Have Nothing*.

Ms. Singh was closely followed by France's Ophely Mezino, who was adjudged first runner-up, while India's Suman Rao was declared second runner-up.

Turkey to sign off on military pledge to Libya

Egypt warns against interference in Tripoli

REUTERS
ISTANBUL

Turkey moved closer to military support for Libya's internationally recognised government late on Saturday when a bilateral deal that provides for a quick reaction force if requested by Tripoli was sent to Parliament.

Ankara's latest move raises tensions in the Mediterranean region and risks confrontation with forces led by Khalifa Haftar based in eastern Libya, where rival political factions have been based since 2014.

Late last month, Ankara and Tripoli signed an expanded security and military accord and, separately, a memorandum on maritime boundaries that Greece said violates international law.

While the maritime accord has been sent to the United Nations for approval, the military deal has been presented to Turkey's Parliament. "Parliament will enter it into force after approval," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Sunday.

Egypt, which has condemned the maritime deal as "illegal", urged other countries on Sunday to stop intervening in Libya to enable the country to restore its own security and stability, in an apparent rebuke to Turkey.

10 killed in Bangladesh factory fire

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

At least 10 people died in a factory fire outside the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka, officials said on Sunday, the second deadly industrial blaze in four days.

The flames engulfed a small fan factory in the Gazipur industrial district on Sunday evening, with firefighters extinguishing the blaze after a two-and-a-half hour battle.

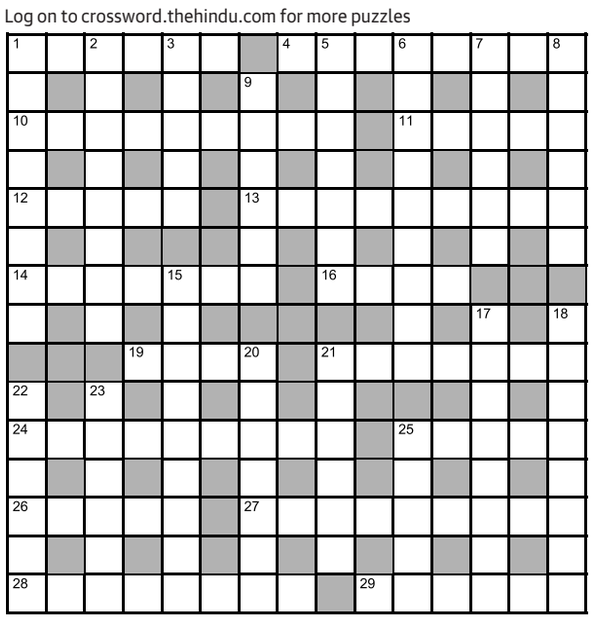
They found 10 bodies in the charred structure and were searching for more possible casualties, fire service spokesman Zillur Rahman said.

Officials do not yet know how many people were in the factory.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12807

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles

(set by Sunnet)



ACROSS

1 First two letters dispatched is missing (6)

4 A little fair on a spot (4,1,3)

10 Somehow my boss is inspiring one to create a mutually beneficial relationship (9)

11 Fluid leak on queen's vessel (5)

12 Tax measures (5)

13 Concerning since graders rebelled (2,7)

14 Control, direction provided by director (7)

16 Witticism on eastern city (4)

19 Roll some dirt to create an embankment (4)

21 Goes to capture leaderless pack of lizards (7)

24 Set of printed questions in old morning daily (4,5)

25 Killing obese criminal (5)

26 Group of stars taking part in mushy drama (5)

27 Very soon, in between the tarpaulin, a mom entered (2,1,6)

28 Sane deed done when required (2,6)

29 Wrote and enclosed (6)

DOWN

1 Theoretical take away (8)

2 Old thing is upset when held by a few (8)

3 Traps? No worries (5)

5 Release of one small retrospective segment (7)

6 Note stage maybe nice and suitable for TV (9)

7 Break-dancing at the end of university's patisserie (6)

8 Bull avoids husband's whack (6)

9 One's region surrounded by water (6)

15 Slide uncontrollably on water jet (9)

17 Small amount supported by the sailors below the equator (8)

18 Cut off from world standards body sustained by old democrat (8)

20 Rob record found in motor (7)

21 Roger managed to smuggle a native (6)

22 Unevenly preps the weak prime minister (6)

23 Plot of paper back found near study (6)

25 Set direction to follow French wizard's place (5)

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

SUDOKU

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

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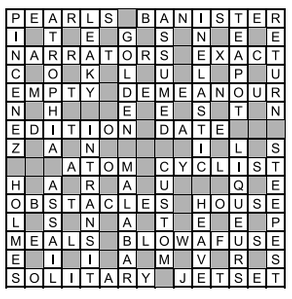
DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12806



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

True knowledge

Parikshit, who is on the threshold of death, wishes to know what he should do. "What is the duty of a man who faces imminent death? What should such a person hear about, repeat, do, remember and worship? What are the acts to be avoided?" Being a true jnani, Suka is impressed by the import of these questions. He is most willing to teach a disciple who seeks jnana from life rather than material benefits, pointed out Sri R. Krishnamurthy Sastrigal in a discourse.

In the same way when Adi Sankara meets a young 13-year-old boy who does not speak but who seems to reflect jnana, he is very much impressed. The acharya merely asks him who he was. The boy who had not spoken all these years responds with Sanskrit verses that reflect the essence of truth and atma tatva in the most lucid terms like a gooseberry in one's palm. So, the boy gets the name Hastamalaka. Adi Sankara realises that the boy is not suited for the life of a householder and accepts him as his disciple. In addition, Adi Sankara takes great delight to write a commentary on the verses of this disciple. He shows by example that true jnana is not bound by the formalities of guru sishya roles. Suka too is most happy to instruct Parikshit whose questions are applicable to all.

The entire posterity stands to benefit when wrong notions and perceptions about life are clarified. It is sad that though people have eyesight and see the inevitable, fleeting nature of life, they get cheated by it and fail to perceive and identify what is permanent. As Tiruvalluvar puts is rightly, the quest for true knowledge should lead one to perceive only the true and everlasting quality in the innumerable things and objects in this universe, regardless of whatever may be its outward appearance and nature or quality.

ASK US

AARATI KRISHNAN

Q. I am 24 years old and earn ₹10 lakh a year. I spend ₹1.5 lakh towards personal expenses and invest ₹1.5 lakh in PPF. I still have ₹7 lakh to invest. I'm ready to take extreme risks. I have already invested in shares and MFs. Can you guide me on other investment options that can yield high returns?

NAREN BABU

A. Double check if the ₹1.5 lakh that you mention as spending towards personal expenses covers all your expenses for a year. To answer your question, it is not a good idea to invest all of your surpluses in equities and MFs (presumably equity funds). It would be best to divide your investments between equities, debt and other safe options, through an asset allocation plan.

Before deciding upon where to invest the money, we suggest you list the goals towards which you are investing. Once you do this, you will have a clear idea of your less than 3-year, 3-to-5 year and 5-year-plus goals. While equities and equity funds are good options for 5-year-plus goals, for shorter term goals you need safer instruments which could be a combination of bank deposits, corporate deposits and debt mutual funds.

You also need to buy insurance products that protect you or your dependants from unexpected events. If you have dependants or plan to marry, do get a pure term insurance plan that will pay a lump sum to your nominees in the event of your death. Sign up for a medical insurance policy that can cover you for hospitalisation expenses. It would also be prudent to create an 'emergency fund,' equal to half of your annual salary (₹5 lakh), in deposits with a leading bank to draw on in the case of illness, job changes or interrupted income.

Q. I am 33 years old. Considering both its extended 80C tax benefit and lock-in period, do you think NPS is a good investment option?

RAMANATHAN N.

A. Given increasing longevity, the size of retirement corpus that all of us will need to see us through our post-retirement years, is very large. Getting to that corpus will be very difficult without including equities in our retirement portfolio, as only such investments convincingly beat inflation rates in the long run. Therefore, if you are accumulating a corpus towards retirement, taking on market risks is inevitable.

Once you accept that equity investments must form a major part of your retirement portfolio, you have multiple investment avenues to choose from that can channel your money into stock markets — active mutual funds, index funds, ULIPs and the National Pension System (NPS).

So, what are the pros and cons of NPS compared to the other options? On the plus side, NPS is quite a flexible scheme. It allows you to invest through lump sums or monthly instalments. You can split your investment in any proportion of your choice, between equities, corporate bonds and government securities. You can also choose between seven fund managers based on their performance.

You are allowed to change your allocation as well as fund managers at any time. Compared to active funds or ULIPs, NPS manages your money for a very low fee.

Your investments in the NPS, apart from qualifying for section 80C benefits of up to ₹1.5 lakh a year, also entitle you to section 80CCD benefits for another ₹50,000. Taking stock of returns over the last five years, equity funds under NPS have delivered 6-8.5% returns (as the market has been volatile), the corporate bond plans have delivered 9-10% and government security plans 9-10.5%. The last two beat most competing debt options.

On the minus side, NPS requires you to lock in your money until retirement. While early withdrawal of up to 25% of your contribution is allowed, it is subject to many conditions.

These rules can be inconvenient if you find the NPS schemes underperforming. The scheme also does not allow you to withdraw your entire accumulated corpus and use it as you please, even after retirement. Under NPS rules, 40% of your maturity amount must be handed over to annuity providers who will pay you a monthly pension. NPS also does not enjoy EEE status at the time of your final withdrawal and you may suffer taxes at higher rates than most other retirement options. It may, therefore, make sense to mix and match NPS with other retirement avenues.

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

Financial mistakes WOMEN MAKE

Avoiding common issues early in the career will help create better financial future

MEERA SIVA

To err is human. But to understand the problems and then take corrective steps, would mean a richer woman. Various studies conducted globally shed light on some common mistakes that women make, and how it negatively affects their financial well-being. Knowing these pitfalls and taking steps to rectify them can be a simple way for you to get ahead financially.

Product knowledge

Reading about new financial products in the market is not the most fun activity for anyone. And women, for various reasons, are loathe to spend time on this. As a result, they cozy up to a few asset classes and avoid many others. For example, equities would be an asset that can potentially offer better long-term return – a requirement to meet financial goals; but this may not be in your comfort zone and is skipped.

Not just limited choice but not understanding a product may lead to inadvertently investing in unsuitable ones. For instance, often products touted as 'safe' may carry high risks, listed in fine print. And even if it works out as promised, there may be commission and transaction costs – possibly the reasons why these products are being pushed – that may lower your return.

It is therefore important that you get basic financial product knowledge.

You can get it online and by talking with advisers who can answer specific questions on the pros and cons of the product. Your financial adviser can be a great source of information and you must select one whom you can trust and are comfortable discussing with.

Risk aversion

Possibly due to perceived lack of investment information, women tend to be risk-averse and prefer 'safe' products. For example, studies show that they tend to hold a lot of cash rather than invest it for higher returns. While cash seems safe and preserves capital, your real risk is if you don't get inflation-beating returns on your investments, it erodes wealth and makes your poorer.

For instance, say ₹500 gets you an appointment with an expert doctor now. When invested, it must be able to pay for the same in the future. If medical costs jump by double digits annually while your investments give 6%, you risk falling short on affordability. And comfort zone products – gold, real estate, fixed deposits or insurance schemes – do not often give you inflation-beating returns.

Risk is about uncertainty and it has two parts. One, that can be somewhat controlled, stems from not comprehending information and process.

The other part is due to the unknowns in the system; you must assess the likelihood of these playing out and judge if the return compensates for this. You must take an objective view through facts about the product and hence, reduce the risk taken while widening the universe of choices.

Delaying investment

Another common issue with young women (and men, too) is that they postpone their savings. As women tend to have a more unsteady career compared to men, it pays to start investing from your very first pay cheque. Women also earn less than men for the same work and take up careers that don't pay high. They may also take breaks for the family such as caring for children or elders.

And relocation for their husband often leads to disruption of a woman's career.

Given the uncertainties in income, you must have a clear goal to start investing in a portfolio that helps to maximise savings. Even if it is a very small amount, it is imperative to start early and find ways to sustain the systematic investments. Say, you are not comfortable with mutual funds, invest in products you know well, but still make a small investment.

This way, you will start understanding it more, and not fall into the trap of thinking that you will learn first before you invest.

Earning focus

Another avoidable problem is not realising the value of human capital. For instance, a person starting out with a salary of ₹20,000 a month with an annual increase of 6% over a career of 30 years is worth nearly ₹2 crore. Any steps taken to increase the salary, ups the human capital potential.

It helps to focus on how to earn more – through the field of work you choose, qualifications, negotiating salary, taking up positions – so, there is more money to invest for the future.

Even if some options require you to spend now – getting domestic help, more comfortable commute choices – these expenses may be worth it as they could provide returns over the long-term.

(The author is a Chartered Financial Analyst and an independent consultant)

COVER NOTE: LIFE INSURANCE POLICY

Holding out hope for the future

There are many types of policies that protect a person's future earning potential

K. NITYA KALYANI

When life ends prematurely, hope has another name. Life insurance.

The real benefit of life insurance has been clouded by less important objectives like investment returns and tax benefits, especially in India. At its core, life insurance protects against the risk of dying too soon.

What is insured is the future earning potential of the person whose life is insured, which would have sustained life, living style and plans for the future of loved ones.

In India, life insurance companies duly registered with Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) can sell life insurance.

There are 24 of them now, government-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India and others promoted by various private business houses, both Indian and foreign.

The policies they offer are vetted and regulated by IRDAI and have to follow norms of cost to the policyholder and of investment of the premium monies with a view to maximise safety.

Here are various types of life insurance policies:

A term policy offers coverage on death during a specified term. It has no maturity value if the insured survives at the end of the policy period. It is the most cost-efficient form of life insurance as the premium is charged only for the risk of death.

Life insurance can sustain the future of loved ones of the policyholder even after his/her death. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

An endowment policy combines life cover and offers an investment return, usually a fixed return that can be pre-fixed or announced from time to time.

There are various formats for this policy, including money-back, participating or non-participating policy (refers to participating in the investment profit for this category of policies with the insurer), joint life policy for spouses, policies with maturity pegged to a certain event or expense, such as higher education or wedding, to create funds for it and so on.

A whole life policy insures a person for their entire life. This policy too can be participating or non-participating and can also be for a limited premium paying term.

A unit-linked policy is the most investment-oriented of life insurance policies. It has a life cover component and an investment component, with the return from the latter being from capital market investments with all its attendant returns and risks.

A pension or annuity policy covers the risk of living too long, the converse of a life insurance policy which covers the risk of dying too soon.

Add-on covers

Almost all policies can have add-on covers, called riders, which come at an extra premium. Accidental death can be covered by a rider and there are riders for various purposes. Riders are an option you can exercise only while buying the policy.

What is common to all life policies is that they cover a life and death-related risk and, in India, they offer a tax break. To buy a policy you have to fulfil certain requirements. You have to have an income and that will be the basis for the insurer to offer you a sum assured – the value of the coverage. It also establishes your ability to pay your premiums going forward.

Insurable interest

You can take a life insurance policy on your own life and certain others also. In the latter case, you have to have an insurable interest on that person's life.

Put simply, you should stand to lose financially if that person dies. So, a spouse can be said to have an insurable interest on a person's life and an employee on his employer and vice versa.

So, which policy should you buy? That depends on the reason you are buying a life policy in the first place.

Various interesting factors converge when you decide to buy a life policy.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

BLACKBOARD: NET ASSET VALUE

Ascertaining the value of your mutual fund holdings

MFs must disclose the NAV on their websites

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR

What is net asset value (NAV)?

■ Simply put, NAV is the value or the price of each unit of a mutual fund (MF) of a particular scheme. It is a function of the total value of all the underlying securities and the number of MF units that the scheme has. For instance, if a particular scheme has issued 10 lakh units and the total value of its holdings is ₹100 crore, the NAV would be ₹1,000. Just like the value of each share is reflected by the share price, the value of the MF unit is the NAV.

Why does the NAV change?

■ The NAV depends on the value of all the underlying securities that the scheme owns. Typically, share price tends to change everyday and hence, the NAV also changes to reflect the change in the price of its holdings. Also, NAV of debt schemes do not typically change as much as those of equity schemes on a daily basis since value of debt securities do not fluctuate much unless there is a major trigger.

Do MFs disclose NAVs daily?

■ It's mandatory for MF houses to disclose the NAV on a daily basis. However, unlike stocks whose prices are updated on a real-time basis, MFs declare the NAV at the end of the trading session everyday. Every MF house has to update and disclose the NAV on its website and also on the website of the Association of Mutual Funds in India by 9 p.m. everyday though certain categories of funds are given more time to declare their NAVs.

How is NAV ascertained when an investor buys or sells MF units?

■ Funds have a "cut-off time" that is typically 3 p.m. – for liquid funds it is generally 2 p.m. – and the NAV at which the transaction would be executed depends on the time of the transaction. If, for instance, an investor wants to purchase or redeem MF units and puts an order at 1 p.m., then the units would be allotted/sold at the NAV that would be declared that day. Any order later than 2 p.m. would be executed at the NAV that would be declared the next day.

While fund houses do accept redemption or purchase applications post the cut-off time, the NAV that will be taken into consideration would be that of the next day.

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH

"Keep this calculator somewhere safe for two weeks. I can do the household accounts with just my fingers now!"

PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	Processing fee
Citi Bank	10.5-18.99	10,747-12,968	2,149-2,594	Upto 3% of loan amount
State Bank of India	10.5-14.9	10,747-11,869	2,149-2,374	Upto 1% of loan amount
HDFC Bank	10.75- 21.3	10,809-13,611	2,162-2,722	Upto 2.5% of loan amount
Axis Bank	12-24	11,122-14,384	2,224-2,877	Upto 2% of loan amount
Indian Bank	10.35-14.8	10,710-11,843	2,142-2,369	Upto 0.512% of loan amount
Bank of Baroda	11.4-16.4	10,971-12,266	2,194-2,453	2% of loan amount
ICICI Bank	11.25-22	10,934-13,809	2,187-2,762	Upto 2.25% of loan amount
Union Bank of India	10.1-14.2	10,648-11,686	2,130-2,337	Upto 0.5% of loan amount
Canara Bank	11.35-15.05	10,959-11,908	2,192-2,382	Upto 0.5% of loan amount
Punjab & Sind Bank	12.45-13.7	11,236-11,557	2,247-2,311	1% of loan amount
Federal Bank	11.49 onwards	10,994 onwards	2,199 onwards	Upto 3% of loan amount
Punjab National Bank	10.75-14.5	10,809-11,764	2,162-2,353	Upto 1.8% of loan amount
UCO Bank	10.95-11.35	10,859-10,959	2,172-2,192	Upto 1% of loan amount

Source: Paisabazaar.com

NEW CAR LOAN- RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Bank	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount-5 lakh Tenure-5 years	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
Oriental Bank of Commerce	7.95-8.50	10,126-10,258	Rs 2,500-7,500
State Bank of India	8.65-12.10*	10,294-11,148	NIL till 31.12.2019
Axis Bank	9.05-11.30	10,391-10,946	Rs 3,500-5,500
HDFC Bank	9.50-10.25	10,501-10,685	Rs 3,000-10,000
RBL Bank	12.00-14.00	11,122-11,634	Up to 2.00%
Indian Bank	8.85-9.20	10,343-10,428	upto Rs 10,236
Union Bank of India	8.20-8.70	10,186-10,307	up to 15,000
Punjab National Bank	8.55-9.00	10,270-10,379	Upto Rs 1,500
Bank of India	8.60-9.20	10,282-10,428	NIL till 31.12.2019
South Indian Bank	9.00-9.75	10,379-10,562	Upto Rs 10,000
Canara Bank	8.45-11.05	10,246-10,884	Rs 1,000-5,000
Bank of Baroda	8.65-10.40	10,294-10,722	Rs 500 till 31.12.2019
Indian Overseas Bank	8.70	10,307	Rs 500-10,000
Federal Bank	9.25	10,440	Rs 1,500-2.500
Corporation Bank	8.50-9.00	10,258-10,379	1.00%
IDBI Bank	8.85-9.45	10,343-10,489	Rs 1000
Allahabad Bank	8.30-9.75	10,210-10,562	Upto Rs 8696

**Additional concession of 0.25% on application via YONO. Further concession of 0.20% on purchase of EV.*

Rates and charges as on 12th December 2019

Source: Paisabazaar.com

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Forging connections

Tapping into an institute's alumni network smartly can help students gain meaningful contacts and skills that add to their employability

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

SHANTANU ROOJ

Michele Jennae, the award winning author of *The Connectworker*, made an interesting quip, "Networking is not about just connecting people. It is about connecting people with people, people with ideas, and people with opportunities." Institutions generally have a vast untapped potential network of alumni, that, if harnessed to its potential can bring in unimaginable benefits to the institution and its students.

Several colleges and universities have their alumni networks and associations that offer a range of benefits, perks, and opportunities to the current students. However, these associations are a two-way street; students must also view their alumni networks as a potential pool of empathetic people and make persistent dogged efforts to improve their bonds so as to benefit from it. There are several ways existing students can leverage their alumni networks.

Potential benefits

Build a professional capital even before passing out: Networking is one of the most practical ways to build ones' professional capital. It is also one of the ideal ways to strategically position oneself for future success. Alumni associations can provide an immense network of professional contacts who are bound by a common thread – the Alma mater. Several institutions organise events wherein existing students get to rub shoulders with the alumni and expand their networks or professional connections. Most former graduates are keen to help students who are studying in their Alma mater, and thereby raise the profile of the institute; hence, joining the association is a good way to get a foot in the door. It will offer students access to mentoring opportunities, introductions, exposure to informal interviews, and feedback about organisations.

Gain expert advice: Most alumni want students from their Alma matter to succeed, of course, with the expectation that once successful, they shall help fellow alumni, the current students, and the institution. Talented alumni will have a wealth of experience and skills, which, in most cases, they will be open to share with students.

Several successful alumni sit on panel discussions in the institution to share their experience and advice, that can inspire current and prospective students. By being a part of the alumni network, students can have access to this knowledge.

Assistance in employability: These networks can be immensely helpful when one is thinking of launching one's career, career change, or positioning oneself for the next promotion, or looking to hire a new bunch of team members for their own organisation. Apart from providing a platform to network, most alumni associations offer various career services such as job fairs, resume workshops, job postings, webinars, resume reviews and career coaching, and so on. These initiatives can be great tools to build one's career and maximise their potential.

> **While it is imperative for students to be a part of the alumni network, receiving the desired outcome from these platforms will also depend on colleges and universities.**

Mentorships and scholarships: Many students, even after graduation, continue to feel connected to their university and associate a part of their identity with the institution. They come forward to help current students through scholarship donations, activity support or awards.

Asset management

While it is imperative for students to be a part of the alumni network, receiving the desired outcome from these platforms will also depend on colleges and universities. Hence, institutions must also play an active role in fostering this relationship. They need to re-frame and re-energise the mission of the alumni in a way that makes them useful and valuable as opposed to treating them like piggy banks for donations and sponsorships.

University Grants Commission, of late, has constituted a task force to formulate a policy document on 'student career progression and alumni network', and intends to bring a guiding document for colleges and universities for creating and managing their alumni network.

The alumni network is a valuable asset; if used innovatively and intelligently, it can help the current tranche of despondents, who are often directionless, become more employable.

The writer is the Founder of Schoolguru Eduserve.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Synthesis of Biomimetic Materials - PhD Scholarship

University of Queensland, Australia, has offered this scholarship award for the new and currently enrolled students of the University for Higher Degree by research programmes. This scholarship aims to give an excellent platform to the PhD candidates in the research domain of biomimetic materials and offers financial awards.

ELIGIBILITY: Newly or currently enrolled international students into PhD programmes at the University of Queensland, who hold a first-class Honours degree or equivalent master's degree.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: AUD 28,092 per annum for a maximum of three years, with a possibility of two six-month extensions which will be given to selected scholars.

APPLICATION MODE: Online

DEADLINE: December 31

http://www.b4s.in/edge/SBM5

George Brown College Funded EAP Scholarships

George Brown College, Canada, has announced this scholarship for students who wish to pursue higher studies in English for academics.

ELIGIBILITY: Registered full-time international students pursuing English for academic purposes programme; have completed at least one level of English for academic purposes programme with a grade A average can apply.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: CAD 1,000.

APPLICATION MODE: Online

DEADLINE: December 20

http://www.b4s.in/edge/GBCE1

Albert Einstein International Scholarship Test

All India Council for Technical Skill Development, Government of India, has announced this scholarship for school and college students, and working professionals, with the aim of promoting and creating leaders among international research scholars.

ELIGIBILITY: Students from class IV to XII, college students and any professionals, after completing college education, who are not more than 28 years of age, from all over India, can apply.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: The first, second and third winner will get cash prizes of ₹96,000, ₹25,000 and ₹10,000 respectively, with certificates, training, and various other benefits.

APPLICATION MODE: Online

DEADLINE: December 31

http://www.b4s.in/edge/AEI1

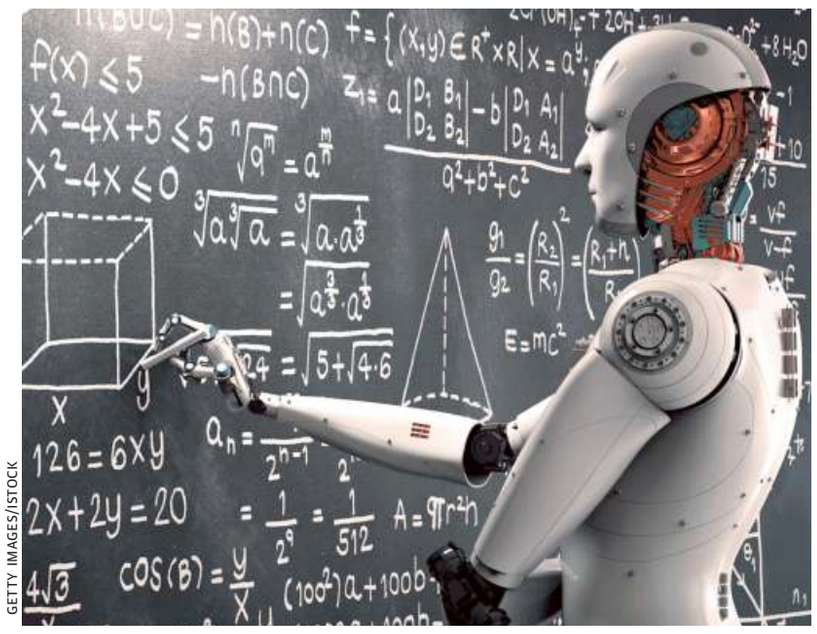
Courtesy: buddy4study.com

TECH TALK

Towards AI-augmented learning

With advantages including safer campuses, an unbiased grading system and hassle-free administration, Artificial Intelligence is the need of the hour for imparting quality education

MADHUVANTI S. KRISHNAN


GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Imagine walking into a classroom, only to find that your 'teacher' is a bot – one who does not penalise you for your occasional tardiness, and instead continues to impart the lessons of the day. The chalk-and-blackboard method of teaching seems a fuzzy memory, and preparing for your board exams, mentored by your teacher bots, have become a routine. This vision of the future is not implausible, especially in the era of smart education, where artificial intelligence (AI) has gained prominence.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) recently introduced AI in its school curriculum, in collaboration with Microsoft, to build capacity building programmes for high school teachers, and to integrate cloud-powered technology in teaching. However, according to Rohini Srivathsa, National Technology Officer, Microsoft India, and Larry Nelson, Regional general manager, Education, Microsoft Asia, Indian schools have a long way to go in utilising AI to improve the quality of education.

Nelson, who was in the country, a few months ago, for the Sixth Asian Summit on Education and Skills where a study on AI learning in educational institutions was launched, believes, "AI is going to help instructors deliver content and learn better, besides running classrooms more efficiently. It can help the institution itself in running a safer campus and not merely support student learning."

While three out of four education leaders from the study agreed that AI would be able to drive competitiveness in the next three years, Nelson said that only 32% of the education institutions in the Asia Pacific have embarked on the AI journey. "From introducing an unbiased grading system, bridging the student-teacher gap, to providing hassle-free administration, AI can go a long way in aiding teachers to get better insights into student needs," he affirmed.

He explained how AI could help in sentiment analysis, where teachers can get a better sense of how students are responding to course content. "It can help in facial recognition where teachers can comprehend their students' needs. At a lower level, it can function as a tracking system to track student attendance, leaving teachers with more time to focus on the important aspects of school and devote more time to quality teaching."

> **We intentionally chose to proceed that way as we wanted to get the message across that AI is for everyone, not just for the elite.**

Srivathsa elaborated on how, in a situation where teachers are digitally connecting with students, if a student is non-participative or not engaged, one may not have an idea as to what challenges are being faced by the student. However, AI can give data signals to convey that the student is asking questions at a different level of sophistication, and it can give signals which could mean that the student needs teacher intervention though he/she may not be participating. "In short, AI could augment how teachers figure out the sentiments running deep in the class and spend more time addressing potential problem areas," she said.

College vs. school

According to Srivathsa, with respect to the institutions they have partnered with, labs are being set up to train teachers and get the infrastructure going. "The most amount of interesting work we have done, especially in terms of building the programme, is with the Indian School of Business (ISB). Not only have those involved there thought of the lab as a learning environment, but also as a research platform."

How did Microsoft get started with introducing AI to K-12 schools? Srivathsa is quick to answer, "The partnership with CBSE is for classes IX to XII. We had entered the segment primarily to ensure that at that stage, students had basic science skills, gained an understanding of analytical tools and were opting for AI as an elective with the right background in place. The programme is just starting out by getting the content together."

Nelson adds how, out of the schools they are working with, not all of them are top-tier schools – some are state schools, yet others are BITS Pilani-level schools, and some that aren't too mainstream. "We intentionally chose to proceed that way as we wanted to get the message across that AI is for everyone, not just the elite. It is going to become a pressing need for schools across tiers. We are still working on training teachers, helping educators understand the importance of learning, the tools to experiment, and so on. We have started the journey and we have a long way to go," he says, signing off.

The writer was in Bengaluru at the invitation of Microsoft.

FOOTNOTES

Online speech training

Internshala Training, online learning platform, has announced the inception of a speech recognition feature as part of its newly launched online French language training that aims to teach French language to Indian students. The feature works on all devices that have an inbuilt speaker. This feature is said to address the problem of online language learning, since the engine would recognise the pronunciation when a student records it and further provide feedback. For more details, https://trainings.internshala.com/french-training?utm_source=media

HITSEEE 2020

The Hindustan Institute of Technology and Sciences has announced the dates for HITSEEE 2020, the online engineering entrance exam for the academic year 2020-21. The exams for B.Tech, B.Arch and BDes will be conducted from the April, 25 2020 to April 30, 2020. It will be conducted in 50 centres across the country. Applications are open. More details can be found at: https://www.hindustanuniv.ac.in/

MoU signed

The O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with seven top universities from Australia. Their partnership will catalyse cutting edge research, knowledge sharing among faculty and will boost international student mobility. More specifically, the partnership will promote faculty and student exchanges, dual degree programmes, joint teaching, joint research, joint conferences and joint publications, besides pathways into the PhD programmes in the Australian universities.

PERSPECTIVE

D. RADHAKRISHNAN

Encourage faculty research

Research-oriented teachers will increasingly motivate youngsters to carry out research in their respective fields

ALEXANDER JESUDASAN

Though vital discoveries were made during the past three centuries, unparalleled excitement through innovations has been witnessed and experienced in the past couple of decades, in almost all fields, particularly the sciences. The role played by research institutions and universities in accomplishing these tasks cannot be overemphasised. Joining them are the R&D of corporate sectors who have translated discoveries to application-oriented products.

Under these circumstances, can we restrict the area of research to just these sectors, or can we initiate them more intently and vigorously in colleges and at the senior secondary school levels? It is therefore considered that research in colleges, if not in schools, must be enhanced taking into account the benefits that would accrue due to it.

Faculty with research degrees: A high level of quality is ensured in recruitment of faculty in colleges today. This is assessed based on a teacher's score in National and State Eligibility Tests (NET/SET) and research degree, which include post-doctoral experiences combined with relevant publications. While they are recruited to teach in colleges, they should be adequately motivated to take up research in the initial stages itself. Such research-oriented teachers are often able to handle classes in an interesting manner, thus making subjects relevant to students. The young faculty should aim at good publications and at eventually getting research projects sanctioned by funding agencies, which would sustain the research fervour of an individual.

Motivation to students: When a faculty of such calibre handles classes, the same would be highly interesting to students. Today's students are well informed, and are also exposed to various developments. These developments ignite their inquisitive minds. Faculty can periodically, during their classes, educate students on their current research endeavours, challenges and opportunities, thus encouraging them to keep alive their creative ideas. Overseas universities have captured this approach in their curriculum, leading to innovations while still in college.

Student research projects: It is gratifying to note that both the Central and State governments, as well as universities, are encouraging young faculty and students to submit small research projects, and fund them. This gives students an opportunity to handle different aspects of the project – from conceiving an idea, planning and execution of work, analysis of results, to preparation of project report. In addition to having a reasonable knowledge on budget and expenditure, this will help them in the long run. Internships are provided to students during vacation in both government and private sectors, which greatly benefit them.

Future careers: With research exposure at the college level, students are poised for a brighter future. If this strategy is adopted by most arts and science colleges in India, it will create a pool of research-oriented men and women who will be ready to make contributions in their chosen fields.

The writer is Principal and Secretary, Madras Christian College, Chennai.

WIDE ANGLE

ALBERT P'RAYAN

Are we obsessed with exams?

We need to start exploring better ways of testing students' knowledge and skills

S. SIVA SARAVANAN

Recently, the Tamil Nadu Minister for School Education K.A. Sengottaiyan announced the state government's decision to hold public examinations for students in classes V and VIII from this academic year. The news came as a shock to education reformers. A few months ago, when the proposal of introducing public examinations for classes V and VIII, in line with the recommendations of the draft National Education Policy, was mooted by the state government, it received mixed reactions from education reformers, teachers, parents, mental health experts, activists and politicians following heated debates on the issue.

The new policy decision makes me raise these questions. Have we forgotten the purposes of education? Why are we obsessed with exams at a time when some countries have abolished exams at the primary and secondary levels? What negative impact will exams have on students? Aren't there better ways of testing students' knowledge and skills?

Purpose

Looked at it holistically, the primary purposes of school education are to teach values to students, develop their thinking skills and learning abilities, equip them with knowledge and necessary skills in order to help them move to the next stage of education, and prepare them to face challenges in life. What it implies is that subjecting students to unhealthy competitions, celebrating a few students' success in exams and making other students feel dejected are not the purposes of school education.

It is very sad that many schools in India bombard students with exams. Students are preoccupied with exams and teachers are preoccupied with marking scripts. Yes, the Indian education system is obsessed with exams. It is high time we realised that it does more harm than good.

Examination is a threatening term. It causes mental stress to the students. Fear of exams makes many students in rural areas lose their interest in going to school or discontinue their studies resulting in increase in dropouts. Exams kill the spirit of learning. That is the reason why some countries have abolished exams in schools at the primary/secondary level. They do not focus on marks and grades but on the overall development of the students. For example, in Finland, which is said to have the best education system in the world, students do not have any formal examination until they are sixteen. The Finnish education system promotes creativity and learner autonomy and does not encourage unhealthy completion among students.

If there is too much focus on exams and not on formative assessment, it will have a negative impact on students and society. Rote-learning will be legitimised. Students will be forced to go to coaching centres. More focus will be on coaching rather than on learning. Students will be ranked based on the marks they score in exams and this will result in causing mental stress to the students. Such education systems will kill students' curiosity and creativity, giving rise to unproductive citizens in the future.

Alternative assessments

There are differences between Alternative Assessments (AA) and Traditional Examinations (TE). AA is a process whereas TE is a product (result). AAs measure students' competencies in a non-threatening environment throughout the course. It is "the process of documenting knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs, usually in measurable terms". Holistic in nature, the goal of AA is to suggest improvements and help students build their confidence and develop their learning ability. AAs in different forms such as self- report, observation, discussions, quiz, homework, portfolio, practical work, demonstration, class activities and oral presentation can be conducted to assess what students can and cannot do. Such activities help students develop their thinking skills and creativity. TEs test only students' memory skills and not their thinking skills. They are associated with labels such as 'failure', 'grades', 'ranks' and 'poor performance' which terrify young students and have a negative impact on them.

Priorities

Schools shouldn't become exam factories which produce marks and create unhealthy competitions among children. Educational institutions should create an environment conducive for learning. When learning is fun, students enjoy going to school. When assessments are non-threatening there won't be unhealthy competitions and a mad race for ranks. How wonderful it will be if our students have happy schooling and joyful learning.

Instead of focusing on exams and introducing counterproductive policy decisions, the government should have these priorities: improving the quality of teachers by creating opportunities for their professional development, focusing on teacher training so that they know what alternative assessments are and apply their knowledge to gauge students' capabilities in a non-threatening environment, promoting joy in learning among students and preparing them for life.

The writer is an academic, columnist and freelance trainer.
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KNOWLEDGE

Q1 In the first week of December 2019, the massive demand for the new 20-franc silver coin crashed the Switzerland Mint's official website.

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

For the first time, the currency features a living person. In a press release, the Swiss Mint said, "There is no other Swiss person in the world as well known as ____. One could almost lose count of his [...] records."

Name this individual.

Q2 In 1966, a student nurse named Lupe Hernandez in Bakersfield, the U.S., understood the benefits of alcohol when delivered in the form of a gel, in maintaining hygiene in the absence of water. Thus identifying the commercial potential, she then patented her idea.

Apart from their aesthetic, convenience and appeal, her invention is highly popular among travellers in airports and subways.

What ubiquitous product are we talking about?

Q3 Mercaptan or CH_4S is a chemical substance found in the bodies of human beings, animals and plants.

It is harmless but has a pungent smell, similar to rotten cabbages. It helps in the detection of a certain safety hazard in kitchens.

What are we talking about?

COURTESY: WALNUT KNOWLEDGE SOLUTIONS

Answers

A1. Roger Federer
A2. Hand sanitiser
A3. Gas leaks

Be a self-effacing leader

It is not easy putting the interests of others ahead of one's own; it takes courage, confidence, calm, and vision

FREEPIK

Ps & Qs

ANUPAMA RAJU

I started this year discussing the difference between success and significance. When success is guided by a sense of purpose, it becomes significance. Now, as the year comes to a close, let us discuss a concept that takes us all towards significance – servant leadership.

Many of you may have heard of this concept as it is not new. I am not keen on explaining its origins to you as it is just a Google click away. Instead, let me tell you why being a servant leader is a meaningful step towards fulfilment and healthy self-development. This apparently paradoxical term, 'servant leadership', is anchored in principles of kindness and compassion – qualities that are becoming rarer by the day in today's world. The servant leader is primarily driven by the welfare and well-being of the people she/he leads. Her/his success is measured by the success of her/his associates. And she/he puts their interests ahead of her/his own.

Motivation matters

The will to serve others motivates such a leader, effacing her/his own ego and hunger for power and authority. A servant leader is, therefore, humble, allowing for the growth of those working with her/him. I would like to think of her/him as this huge tree that moderates and moves its branches around to let the saplings below grow and tower over it; to allow the sun and rain to reach them adequately.

It is not easy to be self-effacing and put the interests of others ahead of one's own. It takes courage, confidence, calm and vision to do that. It is quite human to feel threatened, but the good news is we can all aspire to overcome that feeling. It is a quality I aspire to have, and I have started my journey towards it. I hope, in a few years, I would have reached this goal.

The servant leader is primarily driven by the welfare and well-being of the people she/he leads. Her/his success is measured by the success of her/his associates. And she/he puts their interests ahead of her/his own.

It is said that employees feel more motivated to work productively and contribute meaningfully when they have a servant leader beside them. And an organisation that promotes such a leadership style is a more empathetic and successful one too. Even from a business perspective, any company that promotes a compassionate environment will have happier, healthier and more productive employees.

Consistent and constant communication, demonstrating interest in the passions of the teams, showing them means to succeed, creating ways for them to receive appreciation, and showing them ways to take care of themselves – are some possible examples of how we can become servant leaders in our day-to-day life. Such an approach can also guide us in our personal environments where we can aspire to serve our family and friends.

I had heard of this concept before, but learnt more about it in the organisation I work in. And I am happy to say that many of my colleagues are taking to it, like bees to honey. After all, when there is merit in an idea, people will take to it, won't they?

The writer is a literary journalist. She also heads Corporate Communications at UST Global. Twitter: @anupamaraju

Don't get singed!

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

S. UPENDRAN

What is the meaning and origin of 'steal a march on someone'?

This is an expression which is frequently heard in everyday context. Sometimes, in order to stay ahead of the competition, we do things in secret; we do things before our rivals realise what we are up to. When you 'steal a march on someone', you secretly plan and carry out something before the other person does – you are, therefore, at an advantage.

They stole a march on us by getting Kohli to be their spokesperson.

Our company plans to steal a march on the competitors by launching the product much before anyone else.

The expression comes from the world of medieval warfare. In the past, the word 'march' was mostly used to refer to the distance that an army covered in a day. When you 'steal a march', you are covering a certain distance without the enemy being in the know. As a surprise tactic, Generals ordered their troops to march through the night – thus catching their enemy off guard in the morning.

How is the word 'singe' pronounced? (L Deepa, Chennai)

The word consists of only one syllable. The 's..i..n' is pronounced like the word 'sin', and the following 'ge' sounds like the 'j' in 'jam' and 'juice'. The word is pronounced 'SINJ', and it comes from the Old English 'sengan' meaning 'to burn lightly'. Nowadays, it is mostly used to mean to burn 'superficially' or 'slightly'. Singe is a very tiny burn; it is only the surface that gets burnt. For example, when you pass your hands over a candle, sometimes, the hair on your arm gets singed – in other words, it gets burnt, without the hair actually catching fire.

Mayank got too close to the campfire, it singed his eyebrows.

The new rug was singed by a piece of coal that fell out of the fireplace.

What is the difference between 'steal' and 'pilfer'? (Naresh Kumar, Pune)

In both cases, you are taking something that does not belong to you. One can steal money, objects and even ideas. When you steal money, for example, it could be a small amount (ten rupees), or it could be a big one (several crores). When you 'pilfer' money from an organisation, for example, what you are doing is stealing a small amount of money. One can pilfer repeatedly and make a vast amount. Some experts suggest that the word is used to refer to things that you steal from your place of work.

Jai has the habit of stealing towels from hotels.

Mala was caught pilfering biscuits from the stall.

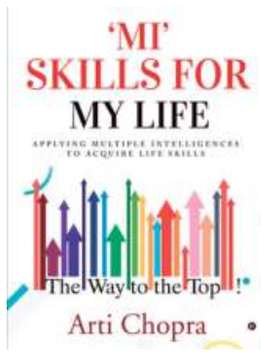
****

Politicians don't lie, they misspeak. And they don't steal, they mispocket. Robert Breault

The writer teaches at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.
upendrankye@gmail.com

ON THE SHELF

JENNY VARGHESE



'MI' Skills For My Life: Applying multiple intelligences to acquire life skills

AUTHOR: Arti Chopra

PRICE: ₹960

No education is complete without skills. Respecting differences among children, which is a concern of equity in education, is as important as equality, in terms of opportunities. The book provides scope for personality development, inculcating leadership and capacity for independent moral decisions, while incorporating all eight multiple intelligences – logical, linguistics, natural, musical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and spatial. It addresses each of these through a series of stories and exercises that children can relate to.

It is designed for students who are 10 years and above, with assessments which enhance student engagement and motivation, particularly when it incorporates interaction with teachers, other students and a range of resources; in a bid to acquire life skills.

ETCETERA

Jainti Dass Saggar Memorial Scholarship for Excellence

INSTITUTION: The University of Dundee, Scotland

ELIGIBILITY: The applicants must be Indian-domiciled and studying an undergraduation programme in any of the University of Dundee's Academic Schools.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: The student will receive a sum of £10,000 in scholarship.

DEADLINE: April 30

https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/scholarships/2020-21/jainti-dass-saggar/ or contactus@dundee.ac.uk

Engineering Excellence Scholarships

INSTITUTION: University of Sheffield, the U.K.

Scholarship: Upto £3000 for overseas students, applying to pursue undergraduation degree in the following Engineering departments: Aerospace, Automatic Control and Systems, Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil and Structural Engineering, Electronic and Electrical Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and General Engineering.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants must be overseas students, applying to study full time undergraduation course in any relevant departments and have the University of Sheffield, as the first choice.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: The scholarship amount will depend on the academic excellence which will range from £1,000 to £3,000.

For more details- https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/faculty/engineering/study/scholarships

Zero-in on options

OFF THE EDGE

NANDINI RAMAN

I am a 36-year-old BE Telecom graduate, and have worked in telecom, service, product, and finance industries. I have always wanted to become a chocolatier. I am now considering opting for a course in professional chocolate making from an institute outside India, work for a while under a reputed chocolatier, and finally open my own store. Can you please let me know the best way to go about this profession? – Vinay Gokula

Dear Vinay,

Dreams are made up of this. I am assuming you have saved enough for a rainy day to be able to make this career shift. I think chocolate making isn't that completely different from learning to bake cookies or cakes. If you need to study from one of the culinary experts, you have to visit a culinary arts school and get admission for chocolate making courses. Switzerland, Belgium, France, Spain, and Dubai are among the best places to learn from.

http://iccadubai.ae is the link to the International Centre of Culinary Arts, Dubai.

www.icif.com/en/professional-courses/chocolaterie-course/ – in Italy offers master's and short courses in chocolate making.

www.culinaryartsswitzerland.com/en offers short courses in pastry and chocolate making in Switzerland.

I am a second year B.Com student. I don't want to pursue an accounting career after B.Com. I want to do a master's degree in social work. Will this course be lucrative? – Mathew Varghese

Dear Mathew,

Yes, you can apply for MSW after completing B.Com in accountancy. I however suggest that you shortlist the college/university that you want to apply to and check their admission criteria.

What is the kind of social work that you want to do? You could become a juvenile court liaison officer (who facilitates the legal processes between the court system and minors), or get involved in the community outreach programme and help organise drives and sensitisation programmes, or become a health educator, a social responsibility manager or a human resources coordinator. There are many lucrative opportunities that are fulfilling, but first, identify what resonates with you, so that it is a career choice and not merely a job.

Disclaimer: This column is not a substitute for long-term therapy. It is merely a guiding voice. Some issues may need medical intervention.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. She will answer questions sent to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com. The subject line should be: 'Off the edge'

EAR SHOT

ASHOK RAJAGOPALAN

The year of HAPPINESS

Schools and universities have decided to teach it as a subject, to help grow mental and emotional health

SUNALINI MATHEW

Can happiness be taught? It is being included as part of social-emotional curriculum for students up to Class IX ▪ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Happiness is different things to different people, says the song by Ray Conniff from 1966. Over the last year though, our post-meditation, post-mindfulness world has been captivated by the pursuit of happiness, as if it is a goal to chase.

Happiness is...

We've written papers about it, such as 'The concept of measuring happiness and how India can go the Nordic Way'. We've constructed reports around it, like the *World Happiness Report*, in its seventh year now (India's at 140, if you're curious). We've marketed it as something we can capture: *The Art of Making Memories: How to Create and Remember Happy Moments* is a book by Meik Wiking, CEO of The Happiness Research Institute based in Denmark. We've built programmes around it: Madhya Pradesh's Rajya Anand Sansthan, a government department centred around happiness, brought out an Anand Calendar, where each month was dedicated to a different aspect that feeds into happiness. And we've consumed it, through Marie Kondo's joy-giving things, and also through cheese, chocolate, make-up, and clothes.

Now, we're investing in learning about happiness through courses. "Isn't it ironic?" I ask psychologist Prashant Bhimani, echoing Alanis Morissette. He says it's a need. "We live in a country where every third person suffers from stress, anxiety and depression. Our quantity and quality of sleep is poor, we're not communicating very well with each other, technology is changing our lives, materialism is growing, and everywhere you go people talk of how hectic life has become," he says. Bhimani teaches a part of Gujarat University's Happiness Counselling certificate course. Begun recently, it covers subjects as diverse as yoga, meditation, nutrition, as well as the psychology, philosophy and literature behind it.

Teaching joy

Can you teach someone to be happy though? Not at all, he says. "But you can understand the science behind it and change your lifestyle. You can show people a path." And you can learn behaviours that could lead to happiness, which is why topics like gratefulness and forgiveness are a part of the course.

Bhimani says the stress on happiness over the last year and a half has seen all kinds of activity. The movement has been led by psychologists who are increasingly looking at positive psychology (a relatively new branch in the field) as a way to prevent the terrible consequences of mental ill-health like suicide. "Happiness and well-being are often used interchangeably," he says.

Motivational speakers and authors who have some influence over people have also taken it up as a subject. For instance, the book *Everything is F*cked* talks of redefining the concept of happiness, while *The Book of Kindness* gives advice on "How to make others happy and be happy yourself". *Professor Chandra Follows His Bliss* by Rajeev Balasubramanyam, who claims to be "an expert in meditation and mindfulness", is fiction around the subject. Bhimani, however, points out that it is important to make a difference between happiness that he calls a state of mind and the act of being present in the moment, pleasure that's temporary, and bliss that's a spiritual awakening.

Starting in schools

RoundGlass is a company that looks at health, happiness and purpose as an umbrella to all the programmes they construct for organisations. Prashant Agarwal, an engagement manager with the company, says they have built over the last year, what is called a social-emotional curriculum for students from Classes III to IX. "It's based on the core principles of being self-aware, being aware of others and their needs, and being able to understand that our actions have a consequence," he says. While happiness is addressed as a subject in Class IV, he says the overall idea is to have "happy classrooms", where teachers, parents, and students all participate in the course.

"Teachers have to deliver it, so they engage and think about it before they do so (through lessons on an app)." Sometimes, he says, through a writing exercise, children may realise they've been unnecessarily rude to a parent. "The teacher may suggest that they share what they've written with the parent, if the child wants," he says. It's aspects like communication and empathy that feed into the whole happiness eco-system.

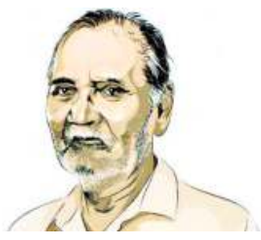
Rishabh Sharma, a DiSC-certified behavioural trainer (DiSC is a personal assessment tool) in Sidhwan Khurd, Punjab's CT University that runs a Centre of Happiness and Wellbeing, says the chief complaints from students and faculty is peer pressure, undue comparisons, and pressure. He says the lab, that began activity in January this year, is full of visual 'happiness stimuli' – bright colours, positive quotes and pleasant music. "The aim is to help people witness their own thought process and then try and change any recurring negative thoughts," he says.

As Founder-CEO of the School of Inspired Leadership and the one who instituted the Happy Places to Work Survey, Anil Sachdev talks of happiness in organisations through his five-layer programme. This involves communication well-being, physical well-being, emotional well-being, intellectual well-being, and inner happiness. Over the last year, his organisation has been formulating a Masters programme in Business Design that will include liberal arts courses. Happiness will be a part of the curriculum. Perhaps we will then have business leaders who take the subject seriously.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

A change in Agra's name?

Historians say there's no past account of it being Agravan



R.V. SMITH

It was Akbarabad no doubt for the nobles and literati at Akbar's court, but some 56 years earlier, when Sikandar Lodi made it his capital, he confirmed its name as Agra - the area that was *agar* or ahead of the swirling Jamuna. Now history has been turned on its head with the demand to change the name to Agravan.

But the move, initiated by the late MLA Jagan Garg of Uttar Pradesh, has met a roadblock with Prof Sugam Anand, Head of the Department of History at the local Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University reporting that there is no historically based evidence of Agra having had another popular name in the past. He had been entrusted by the U.P. Government with the task of investigating Agra's antecedents and proof of the city being known by any other name in antiquity. Prof Anand says that none of the 25 e-mails he had received in response to his invitation to the public to send information backed by historical evidence on the issue, threw up any.

"Only views had been expressed and no book or record or even any historian had been mentioned in support." Now a team from the department will work on the topic, and try to unravel evidence about Agravan or any other official name that had been used for Agra in days gone by.

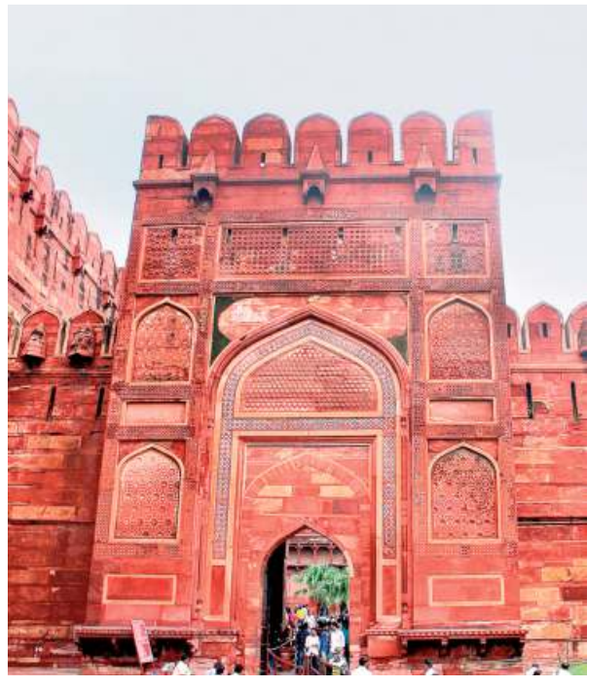
Meanwhile, the 82-year-old former Head of the Department of History at the local St John's College, Dr Ramesh Chandra Sharma says that Agra never went by any other name, and that there was no evidence to suggest that Agravana or Angira or Angalpura was used. In an interview, the historian, who has guided research on subjects related to Agra and its historical monuments, said he had discussed the matter in his paper published in the *Journal of Historical Research* of Ranchi University as far back as 1970.

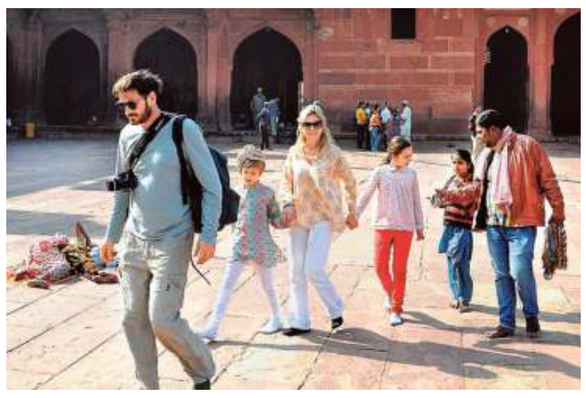
According to him, there was a belief that the Agra region was the place of meditation and penance of Rishi Angira, which prompted some to say that Angira was the original name. The other name Agravana, mentioned in the Mahabharata was not that of a city but a place meaning 'forward area' or borderland of a forest. Some people used the name Agravana for a city, which was not correct, "while a Jain author gave the name Angalpura in his autobiography".

He says both the names Angira or Angalpura were not widely used, though they are mentioned in some literary works of the 16th century. Also the names do not refer to a flourishing city. Maintaining that the present name was the correct and most suitable one, he emphasized that Agra was mentioned as such in the Diwan of the Persian poet Masud-bin-Sad-bin-Salman in the court of Mahmud Jr., grandson of Mahmud of Ghazni, who conquered the city and fort of Agra between AD 1076 and 1080 from its ruler Jaipal after a fierce battle. The court poet also wrote a panegyric in praise of the city even then called Agra.

Dr Sharma says that the name Agra must have been used even before 1076, because it has been mentioned by the Latin writer Quintas Curtius as per the ASI Report for 1871-72 vol. IV on Delhi and Agra. The city, he explains, enjoyed a prime position being the imperial capital of the Mughals for long periods and now has three World Heritage monuments, the Taj Mahal, the Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri.

He adds that the name had never been challenged over the centuries and had existed from pre-Muslim times. So there was no question of giving it communal overtones. "Perhaps the matter should end there, with no one it seems to bell the cat," concludes historiographer Dr Neville Reginald, former Head of the Dept of English, B. R. College, who has written extensively on Agra. His late father Thomas Smith, author of *Agra Rambles and Recollections*, was awarded by the U.P. Government headed by Kalyan Singh for his life-long work on the city and its twin, Delhi. Never did he use any other name but Agra.





What's in a name? The Amar Singh Gate in the Agra Fort; (below) tourists at the fort premises ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Oud with it

Chopard's new *haute parfumerie* collection celebrates oud, a seven-generation legacy and their commitment to sustainable luxury

VASUDHA RAI

The fragrance industry has always been a silent but powerful backbone of the luxury world. Not everyone may buy an expensive accessory but almost everybody loves a luxe perfume – it is the simplest way to wear a designer label, head to toe. And not many can rival the easy elegance of Chopard, especially today when the brand combines its experience in luxury with sustainability. They may not yet offer refillable perfume schemes (like Lancôme, Mugler or Guerlain), but their newest haute parfumerie collection, The Garden of The Kings, with four masculine fragrances, is proof of changing times.

Green state of mind

For Chopard, the 'Journey' to sustainable luxury began in 2013 at the Cannes Film Festival, with the launch of the first Green Carpet Collection, where the jewellery and watches were crafted with 100% fairmined gold.

Since then, they have focussed on responsible sourcing of raw materials. For their new fragrance collection – with oud assafi, the most precious variant of the fragrant resinous wood used in perfumes – the team travelled to the Sylhet region in Bangladesh to visit the Jalali Agarwood family "that has been in the business of producing oud for seven generations," explains Patrizio Stella, CEO of Chopard Parfums.

"If we say that we take care of the full chain of production, then we have to go there to see what is happening," he adds.

Not only does the Jalali family have a legacy of producing the best-quality oud, but they also preserve the ecosystem. They use an environmentally-responsible approach to extract the essence and have acquired many forests that grow Aquilaria Agallocha (oud) trees, to fight against deforestation (they plant five trees to replace one infected tree that is cut down).

The family is also partnered with Swiss fragrance company Firmenich's 'Naturals Together' programme, from which Chopard sources their ingredients. "Firmenich has identified 20 sites all over the world with outstanding quality of natural ingredients produced in a sustainable manner, such as cardamom in Guatemala or vetiver in Haiti," says Stella.

The inspiration

In terms of fragrance, the real story of The Garden of The Kings is about oud and "its relevance in different cultures and times" – an olfactive journey across India, the Far East, the Middle East and South America. Keeping that in mind, there are four variants: the Agar Royal, a tribute to the maharajahs (a heady blend of oud with jasmine sambac, tuberose, sandalwood and nagarmotha); the airy Aigle Impérial, an ode to the imperial gardens of the Far East (with notes such as mandarin, lemon, citron, green tea, ginger and patchouli); the Nuit Des Rois, inspired by the magnificence of Arabia (a perfect evening perfume with oud, Bulgarian rose, saffron, honey and Orris root); and Or De Calambac, reflecting the colours and energy of Latin America. Here master perfumer Alberto Morillas has combined rich oud with the playfulness of gourmet notes such as cocoa, vanilla and tonka beans, with vetiver and gaiac wood.

"We want to recreate a maison de parfums – people with true expertise in the fragrance industry," says Stella. "In order to do that we wanted to be identified as masters of oud and rose, the two ingredients of modern perfumery."

They began developing an expertise in rose with 2018's Garden of Paradise collection, and now with oud. But do perfumes need a gender? "When the quality is high, gender doesn't matter; there are many women intrigued by the strength of this new collection," he says. "The job of fragrances is to give you joy and to remind you of beautiful memories. And joy is neither male nor female."

(Clockwise from above) The production of oud; the Aigle Impérial perfume; and Patrizio Stella

Not only are sustainable choices the right way to go, but it also resonates with Chopard's younger generation of customers who are more conscious of their purchasing choices. As Stella shared with news channel, CNA, "They are the ones who understand what is happening in the world... and ask what is going to happen tomorrow. Because of this, they are careful to understand how what they use will preserve the world for the future."

Mind the glass

Chopard also focusses on the more obvious aspects of sustainability, such as the glass and paper they use. "The flacon not only looks luxurious but we insist on a lean design, so that it minimises wastage during production," says Stella. Most of their paper is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified and they ensure all their suppliers are compliant with sustainability. "In our next collection, we will use GMO-free alcohol and biodegradable cellophane," he adds.

Let's rewind

Google claims we were obsessed with AQI levels. Body image issues are so 2018, says Twitter. What does our social media activity tell us about cultural shifts in the health and wellness space?

SWETA AKUNDI

Google

You can hide your search history from your mother, but you can't hide it from big daddy Google. The Year in Search is out, and in 2019, the average Indian was really into... Dance! In a list of 'Near me' queries, 'dance classes near me' was on the top. Also turns out that we checked the AQI near us, like one checks the clock when on a deadline — far too often. Naturally, it was in November that our collective panic about air pollution peaked, with maximum searches coming in from — you guessed it — Delhi. Given the year we have had then, we also really dug into self-care: with 'salons near me', and 'spa near me' coming in at the second and tenth position respectively. In September this year, the Indian government banned e-cigarettes, specifically its sale, storage and manufacture. Leading to many nudging Google in the side, and whispering, 'What is e-cigarette?' (The query was fifth on 'What is...' list, right after 'What is howdy Modi?') Speaking of addictions, the game that bowled Gen Z over, and had Indian parents complaining to PM Modi in public meetings — 'How to play PUBG', found the seventh spot in Google's 'How to' list. Right ahead of it, however, was 'How to remove Holi colour from hair' proving that some things never change.

Instagram

It's 2.30 am, and you're on Instagram, scrolling past a picture of an aesthetically plated toast with 1257 likes. This prompts you to check your latest picture with your five friends, which has a measly 14 likes (of which five are by said friends). You refresh the notifications page, waiting for that dopamine hit you get with every red heart. This year, Instagram has taken cognisance of the massive FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) that the social network sparks, and is globally testing making like counts private. This means that you will not be able to see how many people have liked any given post unless it is your own. CEO Adam Mosseri has told media that "the idea is to try to depressurise Instagram, make it less of a competition, and give people more space to focus on connecting with the people they love and things that inspire them." The company hopes this will reduce anxiety and social comparison.

Taking a stand against online bullying has been a big deal for Instagram this year. The other major feature rolled out was the 'Restrict' option. If you have restricted a certain account, their comments on your posts will be invisible to others and their messages won't appear on your Direct. While it is a great tool to fight hate messages, we wonder whether it will create a convenient echo chamber, where chances of healthy debates go out the window.

LinkedIn

Looking to make a career in health? You may want to shift to Miami, Orlando, San Francisco Bay Area, or Seattle. LinkedIn's report on emerging jobs in India is predictably filled with engineers. However, the US report mentions 'Behavioural Health Technician' as one of the top 15 upcoming careers. "Increased health insurance coverage for mental health and substance abuse treatment has likely created this increased demand for Behavioural Health Technicians, many of whom specialise in working with patients who have autism or behavioural disorders and are working with children in school environments," says the report.

Twitter

Maybe the era of body-neutrality has truly arrived, as recent Twitter data has revealed that body image, diet, and physical appearance no longer dominate the conversation. The company sampled tweets from 2016 to 2019 to find that conversation around mind and mental health has gone up by 122%.

The top hashtag in health? #SelfCareSundays — your neigbours in the twitterverse offering you advice on how to best prepare for the coming week. After all, you need that "glow up."

Meanwhile, talk of physical fitness has gone down by 75%. But when we do talk about it, it is very much data-driven. Turns out, we are heavily reliant on our apps and devices to optimise our health. We have evolved beyond fitness trackers: it's less about counting steps and heart rate (down by 85%) and more about DNA testing, managing sleep, and monitoring bodily rhythms. For example, we, especially women, are talking about hormone-tracking apps 13% more than previous years.

Dieting, detox and pharmaceutical solutions to beauty? Please, that's so 2018. The coming decade is all about going traditional, and improving holistic health. Awareness on gut health and CBD oil is seeing a massive jump. But nothing compares to the leap in tweets on intermittent fasting — an astonishing 4497%.

TikTok

If there's one social network eager to change its image regarding mental health, it is TikTok. From skirting bans in April owing to inappropriate content, it has gone on to launch campaigns with Suicide Prevention India Foundation. Its #YourLifeMatters, with 998 million views, encouraged people to prioritise self-care, practise self-compassion, and debunk stigmas attached to mental health issues.

Given the app revolves around entertainment, fitness rules the space of health and wellbeing. The top hashtag, #FitnessFreak, with 2 billion views, saw a whole bunch of people lifting weights, performing acrobatic feats, and contorting themselves in yoga postures, to Punjabi and hip hop music.

Interestingly, content creators on TikTok have flipped traditional gender roles. The top creator in the fitness space is Gunjan Shouts, who advises her 2.8 million followers on the best ways to lift weights, and maintain a protein-rich diet. On the other hand, the top two creators in the beauty space are men. Paras Tomar, with 2 million followers and Mridul Madhok, with 6.6 million followers, share tips on mixing face and hair packs at home.

IMAGES: GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

POOCH CAFE

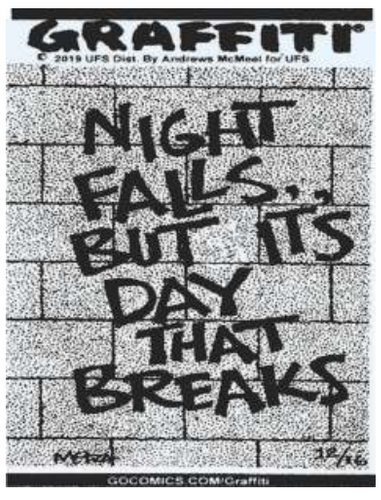
PEANUTS

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

CALVIN AND HOBBES

TIGER

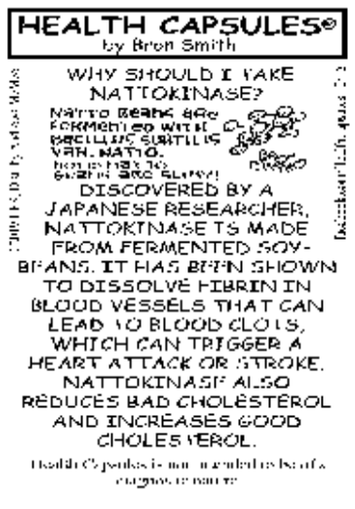
GRAFFITI



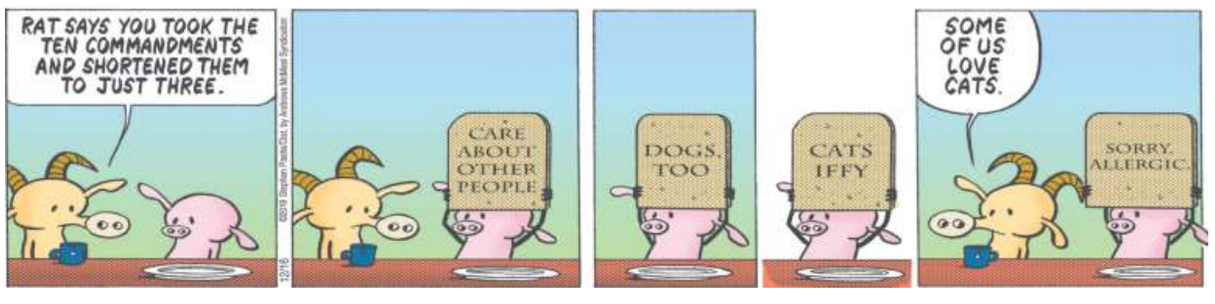
WUMO

HEALTH CAPSULES

by Bron Smith



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



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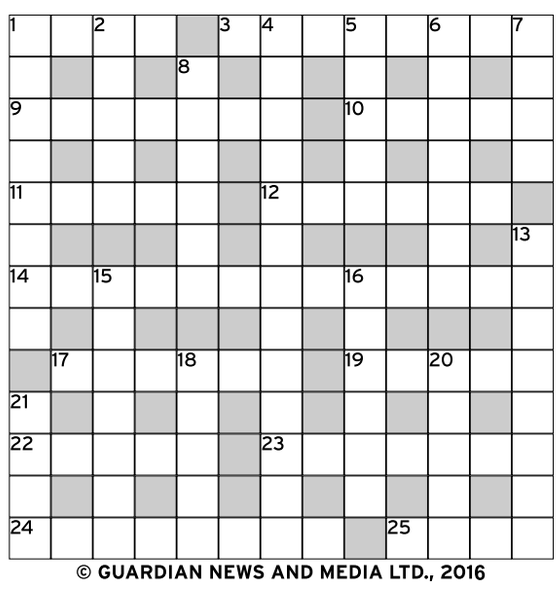

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Across
1 Provoke (4)
3 Mixture of styles and/or materials — it's cheap (anag) (8)
9 Spray container (7)
10 Abrupt (5)
11 Philanthropist (5)
12 Small wooden barrel (6)
14 On the face of it (2,5,6)
17 Long-handled tool for cutting grass or grain (6)
19 Noble gas, Ar (5)
22 Evidence that the accused could not have been guilty (5)
23 Whiskey — biscuit (7)
24 Obstructed (8)
25 Sediment from wine and beer production (4)

Down
1 Protector (8)
2 Pinny (5)
4 Extremely agitated and shaking (3,2,1,7)
5 Teacher (often private) (5)
6 Dead and rotting flesh (7)
7 Fencing sword (4)
8 Loan shark (6)
13 The 'backbone of England' (8)
15 Invented story (7)
16 Association for a common purpose (6)
18 Hackneyed (5)
20 American film star, d. 1960 (5)
21 Strip of cloth worn round the waist (4)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated December 17, 2019.

Solution No. 13250

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Hetmyer, Hope pummel Indian attack as WI draws first blood

The two hammer centuries and share a 218-run partnership as the visitors make light of a tall chase; Shreyas and Pant's knocks go in vain for the Men in Blue

WI IN INDIA

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

The pleasant weather of the last few days gave way to the familiar hot and humid conditions, but that did not stop Shimron Hetmyer and Shai Hope from scoring contrasting hundreds to help West Indies script an eight-wicket win against India in the first ODI at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium here on Sunday.

Chasing a target of 288, Hetmyer and Hope put on a massive 218-run partnership off just 208 balls for the second wicket.

While Hetmyer, who battled cramps during his innings, was the aggressor, slamming 139 off just 106 balls (11x4, 7x6), Hope played the perfect foil, striking at just over 50 for the most part of his innings and remaining unbeaten on 102 (151b, 7x4, 1x6).

Hetmyer started off shakily, edging Mohammed Shami twice to the boundary. However, he looked serene as he hit the Indian bowlers all over the park with disdain.

At the end of the Power-Play, West Indies had only 37 on board, but off the next five overs, no less than 42 runs came thick and fast.

Cutting loose

In the 14th over, Hetmyer showed that he was in complete control, cutting Kedar Jadhav for two fours before pulling Kuldeep Yadav for a six over midwicket and quickly reaching his fifty.

Hetmyer then turned his attention to Ravindra Jadeja, smashing the left-arm spinner for two sixes over long-on and mid-wicket in the 22nd over. He cut Jadeja again in the next over before depositing Shami over long-on to move into the 90s as the Caribbeans needed just 139 in the last 24 overs at an asking rate of less than six.

Hetmyer suffered cramps at this stage and for the next eight overs, Hope and he played sensibly, nudging the ball around and not doing anything silly. Hetmyer reached his century just 85 balls before Shreyas dropped him on 106. The left-hander made the Indians pay for that lapse, rattling up 33 more runs in quick time.

The duo took advantage of India's fifth bowler problem, going after Shivam Dube in particular.

Hope, who had curtailed the big shots, hit Deepak Chahar for a six and four in the 47th over, getting to his hundred in style before sealing the issue in West Indies' favour.

Earlier, Shreyas Iyer (70) and Rishabh Pant (71) helped India recover from a poor start and post a competitive score of 287 after being asked to bat on a sluggish Chepauk wicket.

West Indies' opening bowlers Sheldon Cottrell and Jason Holder, quickly assessing the slow nature of the pitch, provided no pace and frustrated the openers K.L. Rahul and Rohit Sharma.

Cottrell strikes

Cottrell struck in the seventh over of the innings, removing Rahul and Virat Kohli in the same over, the slowness of the wicket causing both the dismissals. While Rahul tried to work the ball to the leg-side and top-edged, Kohli played on while trying to dab the ball to third man after Pollard had removed the slip and put in a short mid-off.

Shreyas had two crucial partnerships: a 55-run stand with Rohit for the third wicket and 114 with Pant.

The Indian wicketkeeper displayed great application when going for the boundary shots, be it with shot selection or placement, executing with conviction and minimum risk.

As Pant found his groove, Shreyas was happy to play second fiddle with the duo adding 50-run in 66 balls. However, once they got to their fifties, the next 50 runs in their stand came off just 33 balls.

West Indies fought back removing both the batsmen, but Kedar Jadhav (40 off 35 balls) and Ravindra Jadeja (21) chipped in with valuable cameos adding 59 runs off just 47 balls to ensure the hosts had a competitive total on board.

Shimron's day out: Hetmyer's brilliant knock contained 11 boundaries and seven sixes, including one to the roof of the MAC Stadium. ▪ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Oozing class: Shai Hope guided West Indies home with a composed innings. ▪ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Pollard b Joseph 36 *(56b, 6x4)*, K.L. Rahul c Hetmyer b Cottrell 6 *(15b, 1x4)*, Virat Kohli b Cottrell 4 *(4b, 1x4)*, Shreyas Iyer c Pollard b Joseph 70 *(88b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant c Hetmyer b Pollard 71 *(69b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Kedar Jadhav c Pollard b Paul 40 *(35b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja run out 21 *(21b, 2x4)*, Shivam Dube c Holder b Paul 9 *(6b, 1x4)*, Deepak Chahar (not out) 6 *(8b)*, Mohammed Shami (not out) 0 *(1b)*; Extras (b-5, lb-5, w-11, nb-3): 24; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs): 287.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-21 (Rahul, 6.2 overs), 2-25 (Kohli, 6.6), 3-80 (Rohit, 18.1), 4-194 (Shreyas, 36.4), 5-210 (Pant, 39.4), 6-269 (Jadhav, 47.3), 7-269 (Jadeja, 47.4), 8-282 (Dube, 49.3).

WEST INDIES BOWLING

Cottrell 10-3-46-2, Holder 8-0-45-0, Walsh 5-0-31-0, Paul 7-0-40-2, Joseph 9-1-45-2, Chase 7-0-42-0, Pollard 4-0-28-1.

WEST INDIES

Shai Hope (not out) 102 *(151b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Sunil Ambris lbw b Chahar 9 *(8b, 2x4)*, Shimron Hetmyer c Shreyas b Shami 139 *(106b, 11x4, 7x6)*, Nicholas Pooran (not out) 29 *(23b, 4x4)*; Extras (lb-4, w-7, nb-1): 12; Total (for two wkts. in 47.5 overs): 291.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-11 (Ambris, 4.1), 2-229 (Hetmyer, 38.4).

INDIA BOWLING

Chahar 10-1-48-1, Shami 9-1-57-1, Kuldeep 10-0-45-0, Dube 7.5-0-68-0, Jadhav 1-0-11-0, Jadeja 10-0-58-0.

Toss: WI. **MoM:** Hetmyer.

West Indies won by eight wickets with 13 balls to spare and took a 1-0 lead in three-match series.

Second ODI: *December 18, Visakhapatnam.*

DRS incident leaves Kohli fuming

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

India skipper Virat Kohli expressed disappointment with the way Ravindra Jadeja's run out was handled by the umpires on Sunday.

In the 48th over, Jadeja set off for a run after tapping the ball to the off-side. Roston Chase produced a direct hit at the non-striker's end, catching a lethargic Jadeja short of the crease.

However, umpire Shaun George did not refer it to the TV umpire even after the fielder made an enquiry. West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard, after looking at the replay on the ground and realising that the batsman hadn't made his ground, intervened. Umpire George then went to the third umpire who ruled Jadeja out.

Kohli was furious with the decision and explained his reaction after the match. "The thought is simple... the fielder asked and the umpire said not out. The dismissal ends there. People sitting on the TV outside cannot tell the fielders to tell the umpire to review it again," said the Indian captain.

STATOSPHERE

3 *This is the third highest target chased down by West Indies against India in ODIs*

291	289	288
Vadodara, 2002	Visakhapatnam, 2013	Chennai, 2019

Highest targets successfully chased at Chennai in ODIs

288	287	269
WI vs India, 2019	Aus vs NZ, 1996	WI vs India, 2007

3 Number of consecutive century partnerships for the fourth wicket by India in ODIs

125	120	114
Shreyas-Kohli vs WI, Port of Spain	Shreyas-Kohli vs WI, Port of Spain	Shreyas-Pant vs WI, Chennai

The last time India had three 100-plus stands on the trot for the same wicket was in the VB series in Australia in 2004 (involving Laxman, Yuvraj & Dravid)

SHREYAS

4/6 Hope has scored four ODI centuries in his last six innings in Asia, aggregating 585 runs (four hundreds) with just one dismissal

6 West Indies has ended its six-match winless streak against India in ODIs

CLOSE RACE

Top-3 run-getters in ODIs this year

Kohli **1292 runs,** 5 100s, 6 50s
Rohit **1268 runs,** 6 100s, 5 50s
Hope **1225 runs,** 4 100s, 7 50s

Turning it around: Rishabh Pant put his head down and bided his time before playing some of his trademark shots. ▪ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Chasing was the best option

SPORTS REPORTER
CHENNAI

Once the contest was over, both teams agreed on one thing: batting second was easier, with the dew helping the ball come on to the bat nicely more than it did during the first innings when India batted.

In the post-match interview to the host broadcaster, India captain Virat Kohli said, "We thought six bowling options will be good enough, especially with the pitch being slow and Kedar an option. But it played differently under lights. I think the ball wasn't holding enough for the fast bowlers."

Hetmyer concurred. "For me, there wasn't much slowness. There was dew as well, which is always a factor batting second in India. The ball didn't stop as much, it just stuck in the pitch a little bit when the seamers bowled cutters."

> **I was looking to improve every day but I was not getting there**
> RISHABH PANT

Keeping it simple

About his partnership with Shai Hope and their different approach, Hetmyer said, "We keep it simple. We know each other's games and most of the time I am the aggressor while he sticks around.

"He puts away the boundary ball and makes sure I am on strike as much as possible. That makes it easy."

Rishabh Pant, who finally managed to find form with the bat, said he was pleased with his knock and be among the runs.

"When Iyer and I got together, we wanted to get a partnership going till the 40th over as we had lost three early wickets. We knew if we were able to do that, we would be able to capitalise on that," said Pant.

While appreciating the crowd support he received, the 22-year-old said: "It (crowd support) is very important. I was looking to improve every day but I was not getting there.

"I want to do whatever I can to get a good score on the board."

Lakshya wins Bangladesh Challenger

Lakshya Sen. ▪ FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAKA

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen notched up his fifth title of the season, claiming the men's singles crown at the Bangladesh International Challenger with a 22-20, 21-18 win over Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in the final on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the women's doubles pair of K. Maneesha and Rutaparna Panda lost 22-20, 21-19 to top-seeded Malaysian pair of Tan Pearly Koong Le and Thinaah Muralitharan to end runner-up.

U-19 WC only part of larger picture: Mhambrey

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
BENGALURU

The India U-19 side is leaving nothing to chance ahead of next month's ICC U-19 World Cup in South Africa.

The team is departing almost a full month in advance, and will first play a three-match one-day series against the host before taking part in a quadrangular tournament also featuring New Zealand and Zimbabwe. India's colts arrived in the city here eight days ago, and have combined training at the National Cricket Academy and the KSCA's Alur facility with a short team-bonding trip to the jungle in Nagarhole.

"It's good that we are getting at least ten games prior to the World Cup," said head coach Paras Mhambrey at the team's pre-departure press conference at the NCA here on Sunday. "They give us an opportunity to experiment and also arrive at the right combination. This is a very balanced side, with seaming all-rounders, spinning all-rounders, quality fast bowlers and batsmen as well. We have got the right balance going into the tournament."

During the nets sessions in Alur, the team trained on bowler-friendly pitches to recreate South African conditions. That had helped, felt Mhambrey, as had the little excursion to the forests. "That bonding camp was like an ice-breaker," he said.

Priyam Garg, India's captain, is already a fairly experienced cricketer, having played 12 First Class games in which he averages over 66. But leading a nation that is used to dominating at U-19 level, having won the World Cup four times already, could be a whole different challenge.

"There is no pressure on us," said Garg. "I see it more like a good opportunity to lead my country in such a big tournament. We have played many tournaments together. So that's an advantage. At the World Cup, I will work on taking the team all the way to the finish."

Planning and process

Had he spoken to Virat Kohli or Prithvi Shaw, two former India U-19 captains, Garg was asked. "I haven't spoken to Virat sir but I have spoken to Prithvi Shaw on their planning and their process when they played the World Cup," the Uttar Pradesh batsman said.

"He told me that team-bonding matters a lot and it's important to know the strengths of your players. He spoke of how to keep the team together and get the best out of each player."

Mhambrey was part of the coaching staff when India won the previous edition of the World Cup, in 2018. The process, he stated, was what mattered. "You can't judge a tournament just by [the result]," he said.

"Yes, it is good to win, but you have to look at the larger picture, the development of the player. This is a stepping stone, one of the tournaments the player will play going ahead in his career. There is First Class cricket after that, then comes representing India at the highest level. In that process, this is a step forward."

Leaving nothing to chance: India colts will depart almost a full month ahead of the tournament in South Africa, with practice games and a team-bonding trip planned. ▪ K. MURALI KUMAR

2020 Sportstar ACES Awards

Readers will have a chance to pick their favourites for the 10 Popular Choice Awards. The top two contenders from each category, based on popular vote, will be sent to a jury, which will decide the winner

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THE NOMINEES

SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR (TRACK AND FIELD)

P. U. CHITRA
The quality of middle-distance running may have come down in a big way in Asia, but Chitra made the most of a smart strategy to win the 1,500m gold at the Asian Championships in Doha in April. She retained the title won in 2017 at Bhubaneswar, giving her an automatic ticket to the Doha World Championships. After Gomathi Marimuthu lost her Asian 800m gold for failing a dope test, Chitra became India's lone Asian champion this year.

DUTEE CHAND
Dutee became the first Indian sprinter to win a gold medal – in the 100m with a timing of 11.32s – at the World University Games where the quality of competition, especially in the sprints, is often much higher than the Asian standard. She ended the season with a National record, bringing it down to 11.22s at the National open in Ranchi.

ANNU RANI
Asian Championships silver medallist javelin thrower Annu has been very consistent this year, producing a series of 60m-plus throws. The 27-year-old became India's first female javelin thrower to qualify for the final of the World Championships, rewriting her own National record in the qualification round in Doha with an effort of 62.43m. She finished eighth in the final.

To vote, log on to https://sportstar.thehindu.com/aces-awards

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 7 a.m.
Vijay Merchant Trophy: Final, Star Sports 3, 9 a.m.
Big Bout League: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF

Siakam shines as Raptors down Nets

LOS ANGELES

Pascal Siakam scored 30 points, 10 rebounds and five assists, as Toronto Raptors defeated the visiting Brooklyn Nets 110-102 in the NBA on Saturday.

The results: Houston Rockets 107 lost to Detroit Pistons 115; Dallas Mavericks 118 lost to Miami Heat 122; Milwaukee Bucks 125 bt Cleveland Cavaliers 108; Toronto Raptors 110 bt Brooklyn Nets 102; Denver Nuggets 110 bt Oklahoma City Thunder 102; Chicago Bulls 109 bt LA Clippers 106; Memphis Grizzlies 128 bt Washington Wizards 111; Phoenix SAuns 119 lost to San Antonio Spurs 121. AFP

Tokyo unveils main Olympics stadium

TOKYO

Tokyo formally unveiled its 60,000-seater main Olympic Stadium on Sunday, more than seven months before the 2020 opening ceremony — with a host of special features to beat the feared heat. Built on the site of the stadium used for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, it has five floors above ground and two below, with greenery on the decks to provide shade from the scorching sun. The eaves around the outer perimeter will help channel breeze into the stadium. AFP

Momota and Chen reign at BWF World Tour Finals

SHANGHAI

World No. 1 Kento Momota (in pic) fought back from a game down to win his 11th badminton title of the year on Sunday at the BWF World Tour Finals. The Japanese beat Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting 17-21, 21-17, 21-14 in 87 high-quality minutes. The 23-year-old Ginting has now tasted defeat in all five of his finals this year. In the women's final China's Chen Yufei also roared back from a game down to defeat Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying 12-21, 21-12, 21-17. AFP

Mithun Perera clinches title

An even-par show helps the Sri Lankan to an one-stroke win

RCGC GOLF

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Overnight joint leader Mithun Perera's even-par showing enabled register a one-stroke win in the inaugural ₹40 lakh ICC RCGC Open at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club course here on Sunday,

Sanjeev Kumar, who resumed from third spot, carded a 71 to take the second place.

Perera turned around a disappointing start, including three bogeys on front nine, to perform amazingly on back nine. The never-say-die Sri Lankan, who had dropped four shots by the 11th hole, raised his game towards the close and birdied four of the last five holes, barring 17th.

As Sanjeev was in the lead, Perera played with grit. On 18th, his second shot travelled more than 200 yards to lie within three feet from the pin.

The 32-year-old maintained his composure to sink a birdie and celebrate his first professional victory in the city.

"I dedicate this win to my father and one of Sri Lanka's all-time great golfers, Nandasena Perera, who passed away earlier this year," said Perera, who recently became a father himself.

Perera, the only golfer in the field not to shoot over-par, claimed the winner's purse of ₹ 6,46,600 for his seventh win and his first since March 2018.

Kapil Kumar, who was in the lead for the first three days, finished tied-fifth.

The scores: 280: Mithun Perera (71, 70, 67, 72); **281:** Sanjeev Kumar (75, 68, 67, 71); **284:** Anil Mane (69, 68, 76, 71), Shamim Khan (74, 73, 66, 71).

285: Yuvraj Singh Sandhu (69, 76, 71, 69), Ankur Chadha (68, 73, 74, 70), Kapil Kumar (68, 68, 72, 77) and Manu Gandas (76, 70, 74, 65); **286:** Chiragh Kumar (74, 68, 73, 71); **287:** Yashas Chandra (75, 73, 71, 68), Sunit Chowrasia (70, 72, 70, 75) and Abhinav Lohan (75, 70, 67, 75).

Getting it right: Mithun Perera raised his game towards the close to triumph. ▪ RAJEEV BHATT

Barsoton, Shone win in record time

Srinu Bugatha and Kiranjeet are the fastest Indians

KOLKATA 25K

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Kenyan Leonard Barsoton and Ethiopian Guteni Shone won the elite men and women's titles with new event records on an altered course in the $100,000 Tata Steel Kolkata 25K here on Sunday.

Barsoton, who confirmed participation only two weeks ago, left the others behind with 4km to go and crossed the line in 1:13:05s.

"Am excited to have broken the record (1:13:48) of the great Kenenisa Bekele on first attempt," said Barsoton, who returned a superb 59:09 at the Valencia half-marathon earlier this year.

Ethiopians Betesfa Getahun (1:13:33) and Bayelign Yegsaw (1:13:36) came second and third respectively.

Shone also produced a sensational performance of 1:22:09s to better Degetu Azimeraw's record of 1:26:01 by almost an unprecedented four minutes. She was followed by the Bahrain pair of Desi Jisa (1:23:32) and Tejity Daba (1:24:32).

The new course, with fewer bends, helped five women and four men run under the event record.

Srinu Bugatha clocked 1:18:31 to beat Tirtha Pun by eight seconds and emerge as the best Indian male runner.

The women's race witnessed a dramatic turnaround in fortunes as Bengal girl Shyamali Singh, who led for a considerable period, took a break after a bout of vomiting.

It allowed Kiranjeet Kaur, who spent almost 21 hours in transit from Delhi to Kolkata due to a flight delay by Air India, to win in 1:38:56s. Shyamali fought till the end but came in second in 1:39:02.

The elite winners received $7,500 each, while the Indians got ₹2.75 lakh.

The results: Elite: Men: 1. Leonard Barsoton (Ken) 1:13:05; 2. Betesfa Getahun (Eth) 1:13:33; 3. Bayelign Yegsaw (Eth) 1:13:36. **Women:** 1. Guteni Shone (Eth) 1:22:09; 2. Desi Jisa (Bah) 1:23:32; 3. Tejitu Daba (Bah) 1:24:32. **Indian: Men:** 1. Srinu Bugatha 1:18:31; 2. Tirtha Pun 1:18:39; 3. Harshad Mhatre 1:20:03. **Women:** 1. Kiranjeet Kaur 1:38:56; 2. Shyamali Singh 1:39:02; 3. Arati Patil 1:39:40.

Leonard Barsoton. ▪ RAJEEV BHATT

Guteni Shone. ▪ RAJEEV BHATT

Proud Indians: Srinu Bugatha and Kiranjeet Kaur with their gold medals. ▪ RAJEEV BHATT

Anuj Uppal takes honours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Anuj Uppal won the Delhi State 15-red snooker title here.

In the final, Uppal defeated Jaison Malhotra 65-38, 60-25, 66-43, 15-58, 70-17, 56-61, 38-65, 43-66, 65-13.

Uppal and Malhotra will represent Delhi in the National championship.

Bagan eyeing full points against Kerala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

On a high after thrashing TRAU FC, Mohun Bagan will look to bag full points against Gokulam Kerala in its I-League fixture at Kalyani Stadium on Monday.

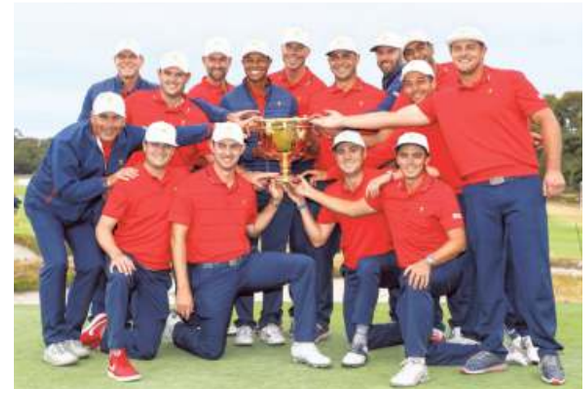
The match will be the Mariners penultimate fixture before the high-voltage derby against East Bengal.

Gokulam has an all-win record from two games so far and look well-organised while Bagan redeemed itself with a 4-0 victory over debutants TRAU FC in its previous game, after failing to register a win in its first two.

Spanish coach Fernando Varela, however, refused to read much into Gokulam's recent form and success against its opponent it had beaten in its only previous encounter this season, in the Durand Cup.

Mohun Bagan gaffer Kibu Vicuna brushed aside his side's previous result against Gokulam.

"It is a different game tomorrow. That match was very even and we didn't take advantage of the chances we had at the end of the match. We know that we have a hard game to play but we are prepared to face it."



Champions, indeed! The victorious USA team. ▪ GETTY IMAGES

USA triumphs

Internationals succumb on final day

PRESIDENTS CUP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MELBOURNE

Tiger Woods' United States produced a stunning turnaround to deny Internationals a first Presidents Cup in 21 years on Sunday, dominating the singles on a tense final day that went to the wire.

Veteran Matt Kuchar was the hero, with his winning putt on the 17th in the penultimate match enough to ensure victory, sparking wild celebrations from playing-captain Woods, who set the tone by getting the first point on the board.

Crushing loss

It was a crushing loss for Ernie Els' young Internationals, who led for the first three days of the biennial matchplay event but failed to deliver the killer blow against a more experienced and accomplished US team.

It was the United States' 11th victory in 13 editions of the event.

The results: Internationals 14 lost to USA 16 [Abraham Ancer lost to Tiger Woods 3 & 2; Hideki Matsuyama tied with Tony Finau; CT Pan lost to Patrick Reed 4 & 2; Li Haotong lost to Dustin Johnson 4 & 3; Adam Hadwin tied with Bryson DeChambeau; Im Sung-jae bt Gary Woodland 4 & 3; Joaquin Niemann lost to Patrick Cantlay 3 & 2; Adam Scott lost to Xander Schauffele 2 & 1; An Byeong-hun lost to Webb Simpson 2 & 1; Cameron Smith bt Justin Thomas 2 & 1; Louis Oosthuizen tied with Matt Kuchar; Marc Leishman tied with Rickie Fowler].

Gold for Tasnim; Tara takes silver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SURABAYA (INDONESIA)

Tasnim Mir clinched her maiden under-15 women's title at the U-17 & U-15 Asia junior badminton championships outshining compatriot Tara Shah in the final here on Sunday.

The young shuttlers fought hard before top-seeded Tasnim claimed a 17-21, 21-11, 21-19 win. Both girls bettered their performances from the last edition when they had reached the quarterfinals in Myanmar.

In Saturday's semifinals, Tasnim thrashed Sora Ishioka of Japan 21-16, 21-11, while Tara beat Kazune Iwato, also of Japan, 21-18, 21-14.

Humpy second in Monaco GP

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

Grandmaster Koneru Humpy's comeback journey continued in the women's FIDE Grand Prix in Monaco on Saturday night, finishing runner-up and retaining the World No. 3 (Elo 2580) position.

Crucial loss

Humpy told *The Hindu* on Sunday, a ninth-round loss to German Elisabeth Pahtz had affected the final analysis.

Russian Aleksandra Goryachkina went into the last round with a full-point advantage over Humpy and Alexandra Kosteniuk (eventual champion). The Indian would have won the title if Kosteniuk had lost to Pahtz.

But, the former World Champion won convincingly and emerged winner thanks to a better tie-break.

Humpy will not play the third of the Grand Prix series in Lausanne (March 1 to 14, 2020) as the result there would not affect her standing. She would, instead, like to devote the time to improving her game, she said.

She would next play the women's World rapid and blitz championship from December 25 though it "is not my cup of tea being a classical player".

Koneru Humpy. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Consigliori primed for Golconda 2000 Guineas

HYDERABAD: Consigliori, who is in great heart, appeals most in the Golconda 2000 Guineas (1,600m), the second Classic of the season to be held here on Monday (Dec. 16).

1 **PALAMPET PLATE** (1,400m), maiden 2-y-o only (Cat. II), (Terms), 12-40 p.m.: 1. Detonator (4) R. Ajinkya 55, 2. Just Incredible (5) B.R. Kumar 55, 3. Lightning Power (2) Akshay Kumar 55, 4. Mark My Day (9) Nakhat Singh 55, 5. Turf Monarch (6) Ajit Singh 55, 6. Coastal Cruise (7) P. Trevor 53.5, 7. Lady Of War (3) G. Naresh 53.5, 8. Sweet Melody (8) Koushik 53.5 and 9. Turf Winner (1) Ashhad Asbar 53.5.

1. LIGHTNING POWER, 2. COASTAL CRUISE, 3. TURF WINNER

2 **R.W.I.T.C PLATE** (1,400m), 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), (no whip), 1-10: 1. City Of Blossom (4) Rohit Kumar 60, 2. Green Turf (6) Akshay Kumar 59.5, 3. Red Snaper (2) Jitendra Singh 57.5, 4. N R I Flame (1) Khurshad Alam 53.5, 5. Royal Girl (7) Gaurav Singh 51.5, 6. Symbol Of Star's (8) Rafique Sk. 51.5, 7. Whiskery (5) Surya Prakash 51, 8. Jo Malone (9) Abhay Singh 50.5 and 9. Secret Command (3) N. Rawal 50.5.

1. ROYAL GIRL, 2. GREEN TURF, 3. CITY OF BLOSSOM

3 **SILKY BABY PLATE (DIV. I)**, (1,100m), 3-y-o & over (not won a race since July 1, 2019), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) 1-40: 1. Blue Empress (8) Ashhad Asbar 60, 2. Monte Rei (7) A. Imran 59, 3. Silver Set (6) Surya Prakash 57.5, 4. Troubadour (2) Dashrath Singh 57, 5. Air Salute (10) Jitendra Singh 55.5, 6. Incredulous (9) Akshay Kumar 55.5, 7. Flying Queen (5) Afroz Khan 54.5, 8. Rare (3) Rafique Sk. 54, 9. Bedazzled (12) Kuldeep Singh 53, 10. Acadian Angel (1) N. Rawal 51.5, 11. Snow Castle (4) Khurshad Alam 51.5 and 12. Ashwa Yudh Vijeta (11) Santosh Raj 51.

1. INCREDULOUS, 2. MONTE REI, 3. TROUBADOUR

4 **POCHARAM PLATE** (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2-10: 1. Freedom Fire (9) Rohit Kumar 60, 2. Human Touch (8) Srinath 59.5, 3. Golden Hope (6) Akshay Kumar 58.5, 4. Limousine (11) B.R. Kumar 56, 5. Semira (1) Aneel 56, 6. Composure (2) Nakhat Singh 55, 7. Tammana (7) Dashrath Singh 54, 8. Vijay's Empress (12) Ajit Singh 53.5, 9. Halo's Princess (5) Gaddam 53, 10. Khan Sahib (3) Ajeeth Kumar 53, 11. Withrosemakeup (10) Gaurav Singh 53 and 12. Patron Saint (4) Jitendra Singh 52.

1. HUMAN TOUCH, 2. TAMMANA, 3. PATRON SAINT

5 **TARAMATI CUP** (1,600m), 4-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 2-45: 1. Destined Dynamite (11) A. Imran 60, 2. Guiding Force (4) Akshay Kumar 59, 3. Egyptian Prince (10) Ajeeth Kumar 56, 4. Actually (8) Surya Prakash 54.5, 5. Lockhart (6) Ashhad Asbar 54.5, 6. Heaven Can Wait (5) Gaddam 52, 7. N R I Heights (9) Abhay Singh 52, 8. Raajneeti (7) Kuldeep Singh 52, 9. Mahira (1) Dashrath Singh 51.5, 10. Delphina (3) P. Trevor 51 and 11. Vijay's Empire (2) Afroz Khan 50.5.

1. N R I HEIGHTS, 2. GUIDING FORCE, 3. DESTINED DYNAMITE

6 **BAKRANANGAL PLATE** (1,600m), 4-y-o &over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3-15: 1. George Cross (13) Gaurav Singh 60, 2. Shiloh (1) Deepak Singh 60, 3. Tiger Of The Sea (6) Surya Prakash 60, 4. Batur (8) Aneel 57, 5. Barnabas (2) Rohit Kumar 56.5, 6. Alexanderthegreat (5) Ajeeth Kumar 55.5, 7. Alta Vita (12) Rafique Sk. 55.5, 8. Vashishta (14) B.R. Kumar 55, 9. Solo Winner (3) Nakhat Singh 54, 10. Diesis Dream (7) Ashhad Asbar 53.5, 11. Super Act (4) Akshay Kumar 53.5, 12. Royal Avenger (9) Ajit Singh 53, 13. Vega Cassandra (11) Kuldeep Singh 53 and 14. Stormy (10) Afroz Khan 52.5.

1. TIGER OF THE SEA, 2. ALEXANDERTHEGREAT, 3. SUPER ACT

7 **GOLCONDA 2000 GUINEAS** (1,600m), 3-y-o only (Terms), 3-45: 1. Consigliori (4) P. Trevor 57, 2. Majestic Warrior (6) Dashrath Singh 57, 3. My Journey (2) Suraj Narredu 57, 4. Premier Action (1) Akshay Kumar 57, 5. Victory Parade (3) A. Imran 57 and 6. Vijays Singham (5) Srinath 57.

1. CONSIGLIORI, 2. MY JOURNEY

8 **TELANGANA AND ANDHRA SUB AREA CUP** (1,100m), 3-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4-15: 1. Palace On Wheels (10) Gopal Singh 60, 2. La Mer (9) R. Ajinkya 57.5, 3. Shandaar (5) Gaurav Singh 57.5, 4. Giethorn (14) A. Imran 57, 5. Her Legacy (8) P. Trevor 57, 6. Happy Together (12) Nakhat Singh 56, 7. Kionia (13) Jitendra Singh 55.5, 8. Your Grace (3) B.R. Kumar 55.5, 9. Linewiler (2) Ajit Singh 54.5, 10. Platinum Claasz (15) Rafique Sk. 54.5, 11. Strategist (4) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 12. Yours Forever (6) Surya Prakash 54.5, 13. Kingswood (7) Aniket K 54, 14. Celeritas (11) Afroz Khan 52 and 15. Marvel Princess (1) N. Rawal 52.

1. STRATEGIST, 2. GIETHORN, 3. HER LEGACY

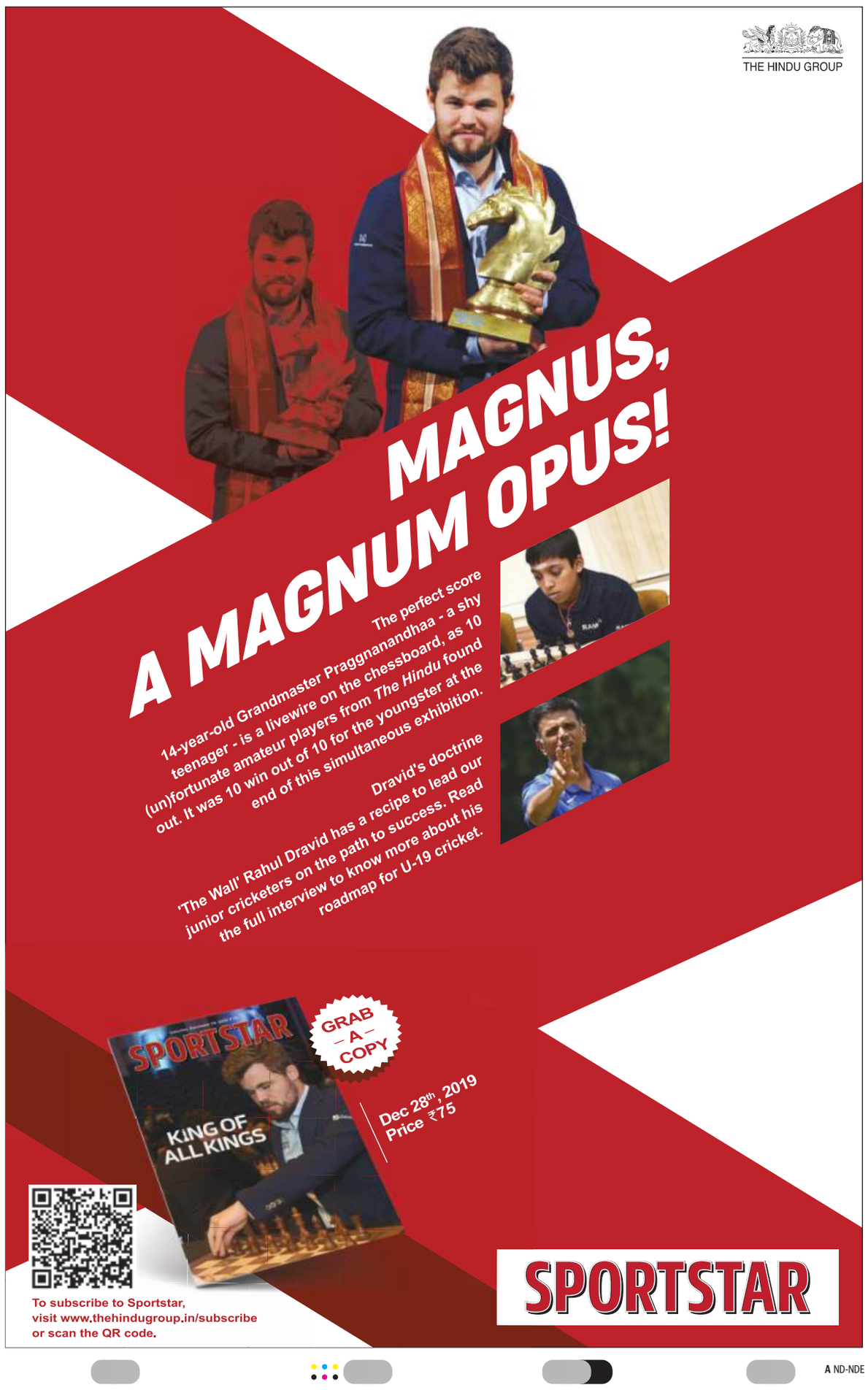
9 **SILKY BABY PLATE (DIV. II)**, (1,100m), 3-y-o & over (not won a race since July 1, 2019), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 4-45: 1. Buzz Light Year (3) Gaurav Singh 60, 2. Sea Castle (5) Aneel 59.5, 3. Satin Symphony (11) Santosh Raj 58, 4. Star Racer (2) Rohit Kumar 57, 5. Aristocrats Charm (8) Surya Prakash 56.5, 6. Mystery (10) P. Trevor 56.5, 7. Cover Girl (9) R. Ajinkya 55, 8. Bar Et Law (7) Akshay Kumar 54, 9. Secretary (4) Abhay Singh 54, 10. Friday Fury (1) Jitendra Singh 52 and 11. Mr. Bruss (6) Gaddam 50.5.

1. MYSTERY, 2. BAR ET LAW, 3. SECRETARY

Day's best: **CONSIGLIORI**

Double: **HUMAN TOUCH — TIGER OF THE SEA**

Jkt (i): 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5; (ii): 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9; Mini Jkt: 2, 3, 4 & 5; Tr (i): 1, 2 & 3; (ii): 4, 5 & 6; (iii): 7, 8 & 9; Tla: all races.



'Decision on Dhoni can be made during IPL'

West Indies legend Brian Lara says that India is one of the best sides in the world

EXCLUSIVE

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Few cricketers made runs like Brian Lara. The left-hander carried forward the great legacy of West Indies cricket with style, substance and some scores that seem hard to beat.

But there is far more to Lara, 50, than just his cricketing skills and record-setting abilities. The diminutive batsman, best remembered for the highest Test score of unbeaten 400 against England in 2004 and first-class high of 501 not out for Warwickshire against Durham in 1994, is no less prolific when it comes to holding his audience's attention.

Lara is not well known for his oratory skills but whoever has heard him once, returns for more. An avid golfer, Lara played a round at the Delhi Golf Club with Usha International's Siddharth Shriram and former Test captain Kapil Dev.

Tête-à-tête: Brian Lara fielding questions from young golfers at the Delhi Golf Club on Sunday. ▪SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ready to help

He spoke of his commitment to endorse Usha's 'Play' ethos that supports develop a sports culture at the grassroots to the international level. "I'm particularly keen to see if I can help the underprivileged through this initiative." he said.

Later, Lara fulfilled his media obligations without ever looking in a hurry. Once that was over, a select-band of thrilled, budding golfers fired questions at an equally excited Lara.

What future does he see for Mahendra Singh Dhoni? "India's got some young (wicket-keeping) talent like Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson. But I really feel that somewhere is a tournament, like the IPL, maybe a decision can be made whether Dhoni should continue or he has the ability to continue.

"He is a great player and he does not want to be a liability to the squad. So, it's hard for me to say, you know, or have an opinion on it. But he is a legend of the game. And at some point in time, he would know that even he's got to make way for the younger ones," said Lara.

On Indian cricket, Lara said, "You have one of the best sides in the world. So everybody's sort of lining you up at some point in time. India needs to appreciate that and know when to turn it on at the right time.

"You felt that there's always that opportunity to beat India if [Virat] Kohli or Rohit [Sharma] doesn't score; that was always the sort of the weaklings...you felt that you get these two guys and you're into them. And if they solidify that and get all 11 players moving in one direction and understanding their rules, every single stage, I think India could win many, many World Cups.

Charm of T20 cricket

Was T20 cricket taking away the charm of Test cricket? "Yes, Do I want it to? No. But this is the way how it goes. People want sport that they can go on an afternoon and watch with their kids.

"It's not going to take five days. I'm not talking badly about Test cricket but that's what the present crop wants. You've got to give them what they want because we all entertainers. For people coming in through the turnstiles and people sponsoring, we are entertainers and that's where the game is going."

Lara goes with Rahul

Says he is a treat to watch

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

"K.L. Rahul. I think he's got tremendous style. And he is, maybe, the prettiest batsman to watch in the world at the moment. The way he plays and his technique is unbelievable. And I just love watching him play cricket."

These words coming from Brian Lara should be music to Rahul's ears. The 50-year-old revealed his choice when answering questions from budding golfers at the Delhi Golf Club on Sunday.

"Virat Kohli, of course, is a machine and he scores a lot of runs. And he's, may be, the greatest batsman in the world and maybe, one of the greatest batsman that ever lived. But when it comes to style, I just love lying in my bed and just watch K. L. Rahul bat all day!"

And who was Lara's favourite Indian bowler from the present team? Lara was quick to say, "My favourite bowler in the Indian cricket team, that I would like to face, is Virat Kohli. I think, I could smack him around!

K.L. Rahul. ▪AFP

Even before the laughter settled down, Lara said, "But I think Jasprit Bumrah is someone, may be, he is best in the world when he is fit. And he's a little awkward because of his action and coming from very short run up. So he would be my one, that I least want to face. And Kohli could be the one that I can (target). At my age, I can still play some shots off his bowling."

Guruprasad bowled over by Tendulkar

PON VASANTH B.A
CHENNAI

Forty-five-year-old S. Guruprasad, leading a simple life here, never imagined in his wildest dreams that an incident that he had almost forgotten would bring him into the limelight.

On Friday evening, he received a call from his nephew in France saying that Sachin Tendulkar had tweeted that he would like to meet the staffer at the Taj Coromandel hotel who had given a wise suggestion about his elbow guard.

"I am not on Twitter. My nephew, who saw the tweet, immediately knew it was me as I had shared the incident with him when it happened," Guruprasad told *The Hindu*.

S. Guruprasad. ▪K. PICHUMANI

However, his recollection of the event is slightly different from how the Master Blaster remembered it. According to Guruprasad, the year was 2001 and he was not a waiter, but a security guard engaged by the hotel.

"I saw Sachin when he was about to take the lift. I wanted his autograph but did not have a paper. I got it in my security beat notebook," he said. The notebook is now a prized possession.

As Tendulkar was giving his autograph, Guruprasad asked if he could have a minute to discuss cricket. "He seemed friendly. So, I wasn't hesitant to ask. I told him that his elbow guard was affecting his wrist movement and the swinging of the bat," he said.

Surprised

Tendulkar, in an interview, said that he was surprised that a fan had noticed his discomfort with the elbow guard keenly. He redesigned his elbow guard later.

Guruprasad, a die-hard cricket fan, said that it was the time when Tendulkar was the pillar of India's batting line-up. "If he got out, the batting line-up would mostly fall like a pack of cards," he said, adding that he was always heartbroken to see Tendulkar getting out.

Guruprasad said that the recollection and acknowledgement of the incident only showed Tendulkar's greatness.

Now that the legend has expressed an interest to catch up, he does have an appeal. "There are a lot of children in our neighbourhood, which is predominantly low income. If Sachin visits us, it will be the best thing to happen to us. We would be honoured if he gives us an opportunity to show him Tamil Nadu's hospitality with a meal at our home," he added.

Abid creates history in Pakistan's drawn Test

He is the first batsman to score hundreds on both Test and ODI debuts

LANKA IN PAKISTAN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RAWALPINDI

Opener Abid Ali became the first batsman to score hundreds on both Test and one-day debuts as Pakistan's first home match in the long form of the game since the 2009 attack on the visiting Sri Lanka team ended in a tame draw against the same opponents Sunday.

On 95, the 32-year-old hit paceman Vishwa Fernando for a boundary and then drove him through cover for two to complete his hundred, raising his hands in jubilation before kneeling on the ground to offer a prayer of gratitude.

His hundred came in 267 minutes, laced with 11 boundaries, and was the highlight of a Test badly affected by bad weather.

Pakistan finished at 252/2, with stylish batsman Babar Azam knocking his third Test century with a boundary off spinner Dilruwan Perera.

Azam ended with 102 not out, which came in 151 minutes of punishing batting spiced by 14 crisp boundaries.

But the day belonged to Abid, one of 15 batsmen to score a hundred on their one-day international debut – against Australia in Dubai in March his year – since the inception of limited over cricket in January 1971.

None of the others also scored a century on their debut in Test cricket, which started in 1876.

Abid is the 11th Pakistani batsmen to score a century on Test debut.

Only 91.5 overs were possible on the first four days as rain, bad light and overcast conditions affected play. The fourth day was abandoned without a ball being bowled.

But there was bright sunshine on Sunday as Sri Lanka batted for 20 minutes to declare its first innings at 308/6 with middle-order batsman Dhananjaya de Silva scoring an unbeaten 102. With gates opened to the crowd for free, about 12,000 fans were kept entertained by Dhananjaya and then Abid.

SCOREBOARD

Sri Lanka — 1st innings: Dimuth Karunaratne lbw b Shaheen 59, Oshada Fernando c Sohail b Naseem 40, Kusal Mendis c Rizwan b Shinwari 10, Angelo Mathews c Shafiq b Naseem 31, Dinesh Chandimal b Abbas 2, Dhananjaya de Silva not out 102, Niroshan Dickwella c Azam b Shaheen 33, Dilruwan Perera not out 16; Extras (b-5, lb-7, nb-3): 15; Total (for six wkts decl. in 97 overs): 308.

Fall of wickets: 1-96, 2-109, 3-120, 4-127, 5-189, 6-256.

Pakistan bowling: Abbas 27-9-72-1, Shaheen 22-7-58-2, Shinwari 15-4-54-1, Naseem 27-5-92-2, Sohail 3-0-12-0, Masood 1-1-0-0, Shafiq 2-0-8-0.

Pakistan — 1st innings: Shan Masood c Chandimal b Rajitha 0, Abid Ali (batting) 109, Azhar Ali c Karunaratne b Kumara 36, Babar Azam (batting) 102; Extras (b-2, nb-2, w-1): 5; Total (for two wkts. in 70 overs): 252.

Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-90.

Sri Lanka bowling: Rajitha 6-2-5-1, Fernando 13-1-49-0, Kumara 14-4-46-1, Perera 24-0-85-0, De Silva 11-0-48-0, Oshada 1-0-3-0, Mendis 1-0-14-0.

Australia posts a humongous win

Starc & Co. use the pink ball to good effect under lights

NZ IN AUSTRALIA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PERTH

Australia recorded one of its biggest wins over New Zealand on the fourth day of the first Test here on Sunday.

Having trailed by 250 runs on the first innings, the Kiwis were set a record 468 to win on a deteriorating pitch after Australia declared at 217 for nine in its second innings.

The visitors were never in contention after losing their first wicket with just six runs on the board and were unable to push the match into a fifth day after Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins cleaned up the Kiwi tail under lights in Perth's first ever D/N Test.

New Zealand was dismissed for 171 and was beaten by 296 runs, the last five wickets falling for just 17 runs. It was just one run shy of its biggest losing margin (by runs) to Australia in a match where both teams batted twice. Man-of-the-match Starc (four for 45), who claimed nine wickets for the match, and Cummins (two for 31), used the pink ball to good effect under lights to bring the match to a quick conclusion after none of the recognised Kiwi batsmen offered significant resistance.

...and that wraps it! Steve Smith pouches Tim Southee to end New Zealand's resistance. ▪AP

Tom Latham showed application to face 68 balls for his 18, while B-J. Watling attemp ted to stem the tide with a gritty 40.

Southee scalps five

Earlier, Australia's second innings fell away dramatically after being 131 for one at one stage on the third day. The home team lost seven wickets for 58 runs, with Tim Southee again impressing with five for 69.

"It was a pretty solid performance considering we were a bowler down for two innings and not having an all-rounder in our side," said Australia captain Tim Paine. "Really rapt with that performance particularly from our bowlers. "

"There are some parts to the pink ball test that are unique, especially the night time part," said New Zealand Kane Williamson. "Australia was outstanding throughout this game. Their pink ball tactics were right on point."

SCOREBOARD

Australia — 1st innings: 416.

New Zealand — 1st innings: 166.

Australia — 2nd innings: D. Warner c sub b Southee 19, J. Burns c Nicholls b Southee 53, M. Labuschagne c Santner b Wagner 50, S. Smith c Raval b Wagner 16, M. Wade c Raval b de Grandhomme 17, T. Head c de Grandhomme b Southee 5, T. Paine b Southee 0, P. Cummins c Watling b Wagner 13, M. Starc c Taylor b Southee 23, N. Lyon (not out) 0; Extras (lb-7, nb-6, w-8): 21; Total (for 9 wkts. decl. in 69.1 overs): 217.

Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-131, 3-148, 4-154, 5-160, 6-160, 7-180, 8-189, 9-217.

New Zealand bowling: Southee 21.1-6-69-5, de Grandhomme 17-2-47-1, Wagner 23-4-59-3, Santner 8-0-35-0.

New Zealand —2nd innings: J. Raval c Lyon b Starc 1, T. Latham lbw Lyon 18, K. Williamson c Wade b Lyon 14, R. Taylor c Paine b Starc 22, H. Nicholls c Head b Lyon 21, B-J. Watling c Paine b Starc 40, C. de Grandhomme c Smith b Cummins 33, M. Santner c Head b Cummins 0, T. Southee c Smith by Lyon 4, N. Wagner c Paine b Starc 8, L. Ferguson (not out) 1; Extras (lb-6, nb-1, w-2): 9; Total (in 65.3 overs): 171.

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-21, 3-57, 4-57, 5-98, 6-154, 7-154, 8-154, 9-163.

Australia bowling: Starc 14-5-45-4, Cummins 19-6-31-2, Lyon 22.3-3-63-4, Head 5-1-13-0, Labuschagne 5-0-13-0.

Man-of-the-match: Mitchell Starc.

Australia won by 296 runs to lead the three-Test series 1-0.

Vertonghen seals late winner for Spurs

Greenwood to United's rescue

EURO LEAGUES

REUTERS
LONDON

Tottenham Hotspur winger Lucas Moura's brilliant solo strike and defender Jan Vertonghen's late header sealed a 2-1 victory over Wolverhampton Wanderers in an entertaining Premier League game at the Molineux Stadium on Sunday.

It was Tottenham's fourth league victory in five games under Jose Mourinho since the Portuguese took over last month and the result also snapped Wolves' impressive 11-game unbeaten run in the competition.

Youngster Mason Greenwood continued his good run of form as he struck a late equaliser for Manchester United in its 1-1 home draw with Everton on Sunday after a Victor Lindelof own-goal had put the visitor ahead.

Finally in the day's late game, Arsenal woes continued as Kevin de Bruyne scripted a 3-0 win for Manchester City. All three goals came in the first half, with Raheem Sterling also getting on the scoresheet.

The results: Premier League: Manchester United (Greenwood 77) drew with Everton (Lindelof 36-og); Wolves 1 (Traore 67) lost to Tottenham 2 (Moura 8, Vertonghen 90+1); Arsenal 0 lost to Man City 3 (de Bruyne 2, 40, Sterling 15).

La Liga: Getafe 2 (Cucurella 36, Angel 82) bt Real Valladolid 0; Celta Vigo 2 (Rafinha 20, Aspas 50-pen) drew with Mallorca 2 (Salva Sevilla 33-pen, Budimir 83); Espanyol 2 (Darder 19, Bernardo 41) drew with Real Betis 2 (Iglesias 4, Bartra 67).

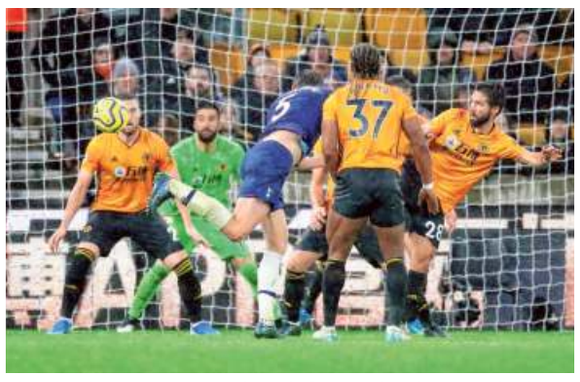
Serie A: Juventus 3 (Ronaldo 9, 37, Bonucci 45) bt Udinese 1 (Pussetto 90+4); AC Milan 0 drew with Sassuolo 0.

Bundesliga: Wolfsburg 2 (Schlager 13, Arnold 90) bt Borussia Monchengladbach 1 (Embolo 15).

Saturday: La Liga: Athletic Bilbao 0 drew with Eibar 0; Atletico Madrid 2 (Morata 67, Niguez 75) bt Osasuna 0.

Serie A: Napoli 1 (Milik 64) lost to Parma 2 (Kulusevski 4, Gervinho 90+3).

Bundesliga: Fortuna Dusseldorf 0 lost to RB Leipzig 3 (Schick 2, Werner 58-pen, Mukiele 75).



The clincher: Jan Vertonghen, left completely unmarked, heads in Tottenham's winner. ▪REUTERS

Borges' goal breaks BFC hearts

Reverse ends Bengaluru's 13-match unbeaten run at home

ISL

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

Mumbai City FC ended Bengaluru FC's 13-match unbeaten home run, stretching back to the 2017-18 final against Chennaiyin FC, with a gallant 3-2 win at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium on Sunday.

The winner came in stoppage time when Rowllin Borges turned in the ball from point-blank range after defender Subhasish Bose had headed a corner goalwards. A minute or two before that, the away side had nearly seen all hopes of a win evaporate as Sunil Chhetri converted from the penalty spot following Sarthak Goloui's handball.

But Jorge Costa's men secured a much-needed first win in seven matches to ensure that they wouldn't be left ruing a missed first-half penalty by Mohamed Larbi and an own goal by Mato Grgic.

Mumbai had come with a clear plan: to allow BFC have the ball and hit on the counter. Borges and fellow midfielder Paulo Machado were at the heart of the strategy. The pace upfront was provided by Modou Sougou.

On 12 minutes, Borges initiated one such move that resulted in a corner which eventually led to the opener. Larbi swung in a superb cross from the left flank which Subhashish, formerly of BFC, met unmarked at the far post and headed in off Gurpreet Sandhu's face. Left-back Nishu Kumar had such a torrid time that he was duly replaced at half-time.

The finisher: Rowllin Borges, left, nets the match-winner for Mumbai FC. ▪K. MURALI KUMAR

BFC's only chance came when Erik Paartalu sent a fine chip into the path of Udanta Singh, but Subhashish did well to cover. If not for Gurpreet, the home side would have been staring down the barrel at half-time.

Gurpreet's save

Juanan was adjudged to have pushed forward Amine Chermiti inside the area but Gurpreet saved the resultant penalty by throwing himself to his right to parry away a fierce Larbi shot.

BFC equalised in the 58th minute after the ball went in off Mumbai defender Grgic's shoulder. But on 77 minutes, substitutes Diego Carlos and Raynier Fernandes thought they had secured Mumbai the win, with the former heading in a cross from the left wing. The evening almost turned sour with Chhetri's goal before Borges ensured a joyous ending.

The result: Bengaluru FC 2 (Grgic-og 58, Chhetri 89) lost to Mumbai City FC 3 (Subhasish 12, Diego 77, Borges 90).

Racism allegation

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Mumbai City FC coach Jorge Costa levelled serious charges of racism against a match official following the 3-2 win over Bengaluru FC on Sunday.

The Portuguese coach started his post-match address with a "statement" and went on to say that "monkey gestures" were made against Mumbai midfielder Kevyn Serge Aboue, a player from Gabon.

"ISL needs foreigners. We are here to work and to try to make this league better," Costa said.

"[I'm now] speaking not about the quality of the referee but about the respect he didn't have with one player, Serge Kevyn. He made some gestures calling him a monkey. These are things I cannot close my eyes [against]."