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Highway ban disrupts life in J&K

SRINAGAR

The first day of closure of the 271-km Baramulla-Udhampur national highway for convoy movement disrupted distribution of essentials on Sunday and halted all passenger services.

NATION ▸ PAGE 7

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U.P. alliance says it will provide a PM

Mayawati, Akhilesh Yadav and Ajit Singh target Congress and BJP on governance

ANUJ KUMAR
DEOBAND

In a display of unity and strength, 'mahagathbandhan' leaders Mayawati, Akhilesh Yadav and Ajit Singh said at a massive rally here on Sunday that their alliance would put forward a Prime Minister, while targeting both the BJP and the Congress for their poor record of governance.

Criticising the BJP and the Congress for their 'Manuwadi' (anti-Dalit) policies, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati hit out at the Congress for putting up candidates who would cut into the votes of the alliance.

Display of unity: Akhilesh Yadav greeting Mayawati at a rally in Deoband, Uttar Pradesh, on Sunday. ▪ AFP

Appeal to Muslims

She appealed to the Muslims, in particular, not to allow their votes to be divided, pointing to the fact that the Congress had fielded firebrand local leader Imran Masood against the BSP's Fazlur Rahman in Saharanpur.

Ms. Mayawati came down heavily on the minimum income scheme promised by the Congress and said she would ensure jobs for the poor in the government and private sectors. She criticised the BJP for not being able to fulfil its electoral promises. "*Acche din* remained a *jumla*, an electoral promise. The BSP believes in getting things done, rather than making tall promises."

She felt the Prime Minister and his "small and big chowkidars" would not be able to save the BJP's fort.

'Mirror images'

Mr. Yadav, president of the Samajwadi Party, described the Congress and the BJP as "mirror images of each other." Reminding the people of the success of the alliance candidates in the Kairana and Gorakhpur Lok Sabha byelections, he said the 'mahagathbandhan' would decide the new Prime Minister. "It is an election that will decide India's future. It is an election to bury our differences for a common goal."

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

It's 'Modi once more' versus 'Justice for all'

BJP, Congress unveil campaign themes ahead of first phase

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Four days before the first phase of voting for the 2019 Lok Sabha election gets under way, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress on Sunday unveiled their campaign slogans.

The BJP pitch sought a second term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi with its main slogan '*Phir ek baar, Modi sarkar*' (the Modi government once again), while the Congress promised justice to all with its tagline '*Ab hoga nyay*' (Now, there will be justice).

Unveiling the BJP campaign theme, just hours after the Congress launch, Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley revealed the focus areas of the party's campaign.

Larger theme

"The first theme of our campaign will be '*Kaam karne waali sarkaar*' (A government that works). Our second theme will be '*imaandar sarkaar*' (Honest government). Our third theme will be '*Bade faisle lene waali sarkaar*' (A decisive government that takes big decisions)," he said and added all these themes would serve the larger theme of 'Modi once more'.

So far, in election speeches and public rallies, the BJP's top leadership has been focussing on issues such as national security and the Modi government's record in tackling terrorism, in an oblique reference to the Balakot air strikes.

The party is keen to project the "strong and decisive leadership" of Mr. Modi and contrast it with "too many leaders in the Opposition camp."

"We want a government with one captain and not a team of 11 members with 40 captains," Mr. Jaitley said, a reference to the Opposition alliances against the BJP in crucial States.

The Congress played on the concept of '*nyay*' (justice in Hindi) that also effectively pitched the party's proposed minimum income guarantee scheme, Nyuntam Aay Yojana (NYAY).

His leader's tune: A BJP supporter presenting a musical instrument to PM Modi in Cooch Behar on Sunday. ▪ PTI

Congress defends lyrics in theme song

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress has demanded to know from the Election Commission what was 'objectionable' in a song released as part of its election campaign.

In a tweet, Congress spokesman Salman Anees Soz said on Sunday, "Dear ECI: What is objectionable about this? This is Modi & BJP.

Tum jhooti chaalein chal ke, sheheron ke naam badal ke, noton ko kachra kar ke, aur har nirdhan ko chhal ke, nafrat ka dhuaan phailaake, bhai se bhai ladaake, kehte ho hum ko chun lo, ab tum bhi humaari sun lo

(You tread on the path of untruth, change the name of cities, turn bank notes into waste, hurt every poor person, spread the smoke of hatred, make brother fight brother, say you elect us; now it's our turn to be heard).

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10
MAMATA LOSING GROUND, SAYS PM ▸ PAGE 10
TAX OFFICIALS SEARCH KAMAL NATH'S ASSOCIATES ▸ PAGE 10

President Ibrahim Solih's MDP heads for a landslide in Maldives

Early results give party 60 seats in 87-member Majlis

MEERA SRINIVASAN
MALE

Reinforcing the trust they reposed in President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in September 2018, Maldivians gave his party a significant majority in the legislature in Saturday's election.

Provisional results on Sunday evening pointed to the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) heading for a big win, securing some 60 of the 87 seats in the people's Majlis or Parliament.

Complete results are yet to be declared by the Election Commission.

Ibrahim Mohamed Solih

The likely two-thirds majority may help the MDP – which fought last year's presidential election as part of a coalition – consolidate power in the legislature and push through key bills and laws that partners in the ruling alliance have resisted.

Speaking at a late-night rally on the sea front in the capital Male on Saturday, Mr. Solih said the work "starts now" to strengthen democratic institutions, deliver basic services, bring the corrupt to book and end impunity.

Challenges ahead

Even as he reminded the huge crowd of supporters gathered there of the "immense challenges" ahead, he dispelled murmurs about possible splits within the coalition that backed him for Presidency.

NASHEED MAKES TRIUMPHANT RETURN ▸ PAGE 12

No disrespect for seniors in party, says Rajnath

'Govt. not politicising security issues'

NISTULA HEBBAR
JAMUI

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said it was, in fact, his idea – proposed during his second term as BJP president – to put a 75 year age cap on party candidates.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said it was the correct way forward for the party, and respect for senior leaders should not be reduced to the question of nomination. "Whether it is Advaniji or Joshiji, their contributions cannot be undermined by anyone. To be honest, it was under my presidentship of the party (the second term between 2012 and 2014) that I mooted the idea that those aged above 75 should not be given ticket. Issuing ticket to fight an election cannot be the only yardstick for conveying respect to senior leaders. We respect them and shall do so in the future too," he said.

Mr. Singh also dismissed suggestions that the government was politicising national security issues. "The Congress has attempted to do this, along with other opposition parties. We have only appreciated the valour of our armed forces," he said.

INTERVIEW ON ▸ PAGE 11

'Vote sambhal ke' campaign focuses on idea of India

Filmmaker Bordoloi's series features prominent names from the film world

NAMRATA JOSHI
MUMBAI

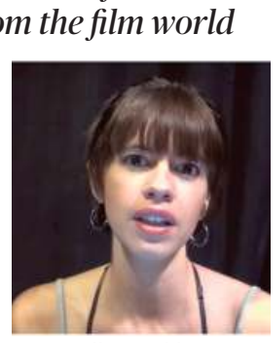
After appeals by filmmakers, authors, scientists and theatre artistes, it's the turn of celebrities, mainly members of the Hindi film fraternity, to take to short videos urging people to vote with care and concern for the country and its citizens. *Vote Sambhal Ke* (vote with care) is the implicit advice.

The two-three minute videos, up on YouTube, have been directed and edited by former journalist-turned-scriptwriter-filmmaker Satyen K. Bordoloi.

The series kicked off with actor Kalki Koechlin asking people to think before voting. "Vote right, or vote left, but vote with deliberation and purpose," she says, before going on to recite the last few lines of the poem, *"Man, You Should Explode"* by Marathi poet, writer and Dalit activist Namdeo Dhasal.

In the second video, writer, director and actor Tigmanshu Dhulia talks about how there can be no bigger religion than the nation, so one must vote for someone who wouldn't destroy India's social fabric.

More videos are likely in the next few days, including from filmmaker Vikramaditya Motwane, writer Anjum Rajabali, filmmaker Saeed Mirza and actor Swara Bhaskar, ahead of the first phase of polling on April 11.



Actor Kalki Koechlin making an appeal to people to think before voting. ▪ YOUTUBE VIDEO

Mr. Bordoloi said he decided to deconstruct the oft-heard litany that the film fraternity is not political enough.

The videos are streaming under the umbrella Truth Deserves You Production on Bordoloi's YouTube channel. Even as the video began streaming on Sunday, several Bollywood notables waded into political debates on social media. Filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt put up links to two sections of Anand Patwardhan's *Vivek* (Reason), an eight-part documentary on the increasing radicalisation of India. The two sections talk of the work of rationalist Narendra Dhabholkar and communist leader Govind Pansare, and raise questions about their murders.

SHUBHRA RANJAN
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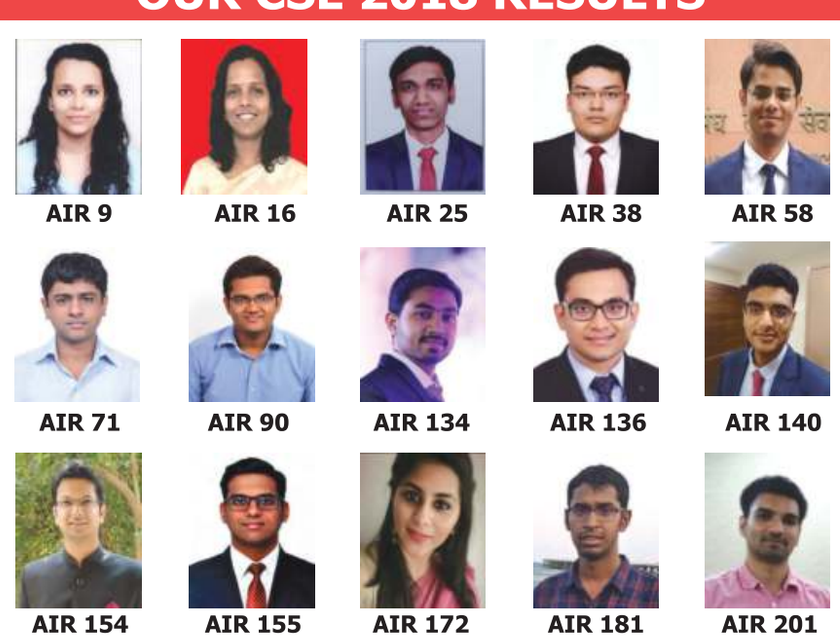

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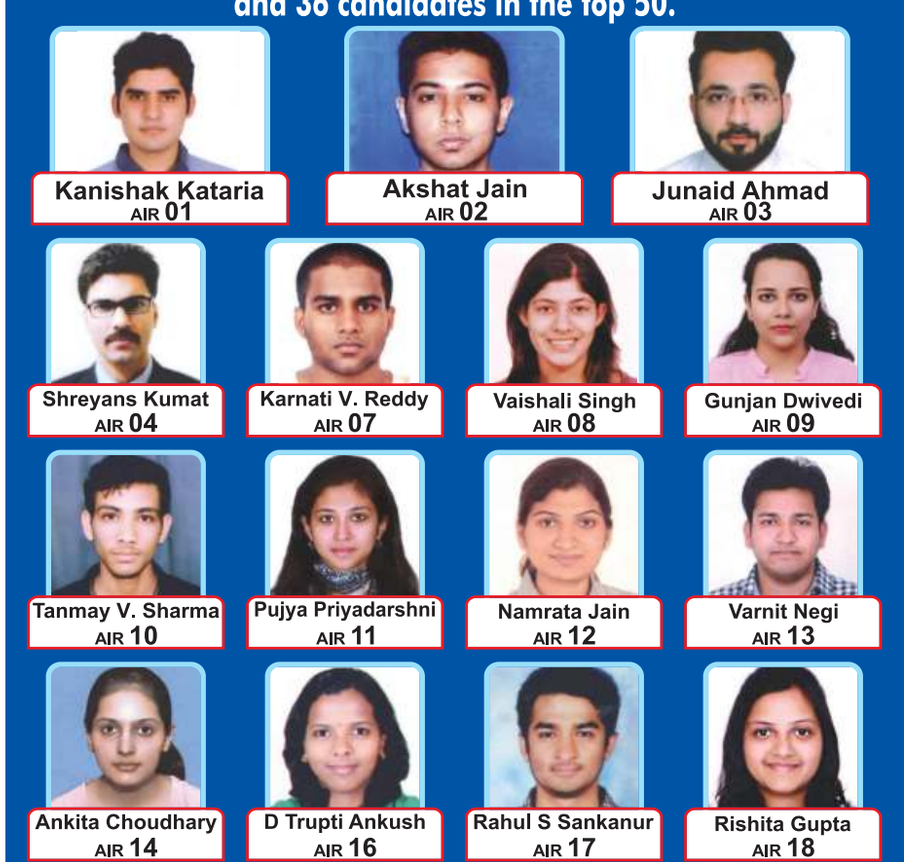

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Safdarjang	36	26
Palam	37	25

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35°C A warm and humid day with partly cloudy sky is likely. There are chances of duststorm and thundershower.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
39°C Rise in day temperatures is likely. Dry and hot weather with partly cloudy sky will continue.

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Choose party or son, H.P. CM tells Minister

Anil Sharma's son is the Cong. candidate for Mandi LS seat

ELECTION 2019

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAHAN

Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Sunday asked his Cabinet colleague Anil Sharma to clarify whether he would quit the government to campaign for his son and Congress candidate for the Mandi Lok Sabha seat or support the BJP candidate there.

Mr. Thakur took the tough stand and sought ab explanation from Mr. Sharma, the State Power Minister, days after his father and former Union Telecom Minister Sukh Ram joined the Congress along with his grandson Aashray Sharma, who has been given a Congress ticket from Mandi.

The Chief Minister sought Mr. Sharma's explanation while talking to reporters at Paonta on his way to electioneering in Uttarakhand.

Mr. Thakur said his Cabinet colleague must clear the "political cloud" hovering over him on who would he campaign for – his son or BJP candidate Ram Swaroop Sharma – in Mandi.

Mr. Sharma must decide at the earliest whether he would join the Congress to help his son in the upcoming election or campaign for the BJP candidate in Mandi, said the Chief Minister.

He made it clear that if Mr. Sharma campaigns for his son, he will have to lose his Cabinet post and membership of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly.

Nobody should have any doubt on this point, he added.

The Chief Minister also refuted speculation over difference of opinion in the BJP on the issue of Mr. Sharma.

Power Minister Anil Sharma with his father Sukh Ram, who recently joined the Cong. along with his grandson. • FILE PHOTO

'No second opinion'

He said there was no second opinion on this issue in the party and what he was saying was the unanimous view of the party.

Mr. Thakur also expressed confidence that the BJP will retain all the four parliamentary seats in Himachal Pradesh, increasing the BJP's victory margin over them, including the Mandi seat, which is seen as his home turf.

Dust storm hits Rajasthan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR

Some parts of Rajasthan witnessed a dust storm and light rain on Sunday, a weather department official said.

The storm hit Pilani, Sikar, Jhunjhunu, Churu, Bikaner and Jaipur, while light rain occurred in Churu and Sri Ganganagar districts, the official said.

In Sikar, power supply was disrupted for an hour.

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7. The bidder whose bid is accepted shall have to deposit with the undersigned (Court Commissioner) vide pay order drawn in favour of **Registrar General, Delhi High Court, New Delhi** a sum of Rs. 25% (including earnest money) of the bid amount by pay order/demand draft within seven days from the date of acceptance of bid failing which the entire earnest money shall stand forfeited. The balance of bid amount shall be paid within 60 days from the date of acceptance of the bid failing which the entire money deposited by bidders shall stand forfeited.
8. The Hon'ble Delhi High Court reserves that right to withdraw the sale and decline to accept any offer including the highest offer without assigning any reason thereof. The sale will be confirmed by the Hon'ble Court only after the entire sale consideration has been deposited by the successful bidder.
9. The purchaser will thereafter submit draft SALE DEED and other necessary documents to the undersigned (Court Commissioner) for settlement. The sale deed will be registered by the undersigned (Court Commissioner).
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12. After the submission of the tender, the bidder will not be permitted to withdraw the offer until the sale is finalized. In case of withdraw from the sale, the entire earnest money shall stand forfeited.
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14. In case the successful bidder makes any default in depositing the sale amount with the undersigned (Court Commissioner), the 2nd highest bidder may be offered by the Court Commissioner to deposit the amount of his offer. If he fails to deposit the amount within the time, as may be allowed, his earnest money shall also be forfeited.

Mohit Gupta
Advocate / Court Commissioner

Ex-MP blames CM for denial of ticket to her

Sitting MLA picked for Hoshiarpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PHAGWARA

Former Union Minister Santosh Chaudhary on Sunday blamed Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh after she was denied a Congress ticket to contest the coming general election from Hoshiarpur.

The Congress has given the ticket to its sitting MLA Raj Kumar Chabbewal.

Addressing the media here, Ms. Chaudhary, a three-time MP, alleged that Mr. Singh was responsible for denial of a ticket to her. She asked the party high command to explain to her why she was "punished for no reason" and why electorates were "insulted" by fielding a turncoat.

"A man who is MLA for just two years was preferred to the Chaudhary family having 80 years standing in Congress through its three generations," she said.

'Bias against a Dalit'

"The party has discriminated against a Dalit woman leader whom the public liked and preferred a moneyed man and a turncoat who was facing opposition in his own Assembly constituency," she said.

She further alleged that the party had "ignored" its own stand of giving 33% representation to women.

She even went on to allege that a section of party appeared to be in league with the BJP as a former BJP man was preferred to a time-tested and clean-imaged Chaudhary family.

Punjab CM Amarinder Singh

"Even in the last Lok Sabha polls, I was denied ticket, only to facilitate BJP win from Hoshiarpur," she alleged further.

'Won't remain silent'

Maintaining that she had remained silent earlier, she declared that she would not remain silent now and would chalk out the next course of action after discussing the issue with her supporters.

Asking party high command to either review its decision about the Hoshiarpur seat or be "ready to face stringent step" from her and her supporters, she declared that she would take the fight to its logical conclusion.

However, she did not spell out the nature of stringent step.

Cong. supporters clash over biryani in U.P.

Code violation case filed, nine held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Several persons were injured in clashes among supporters of Congress's Bijnor candidate Nasimuddin Siddiqui over biryani, which officials said was being served at an election meeting without permission, prompting authorities to lodge a police case and arrest nine.

The election meeting was organised at the residence of former MLA Maulana Jameel, who recently switched over to the Congress, at Tadheda village under Kakroli police station on Saturday.

Biryani was to be served for lunch after the meeting, but clashes erupted as those present there scrambled for the first serving, officials said.

Police rushed to the spot and dispersed the violent mob.

A case has been lodged against 34 persons including Mr. Jameel and his son Naeem Ahmad under various sections of the IPC and for violation of the model code of conduct, Circle Officer Ram Mohan Sharma said, adding that nine persons have been arrested so far in connection with the incident.

Security tightened

He said security has been tightened in the village and additional forces have been deployed to check any further violence.

Mr. Jameel switched over to the Congress from BSP last week. He was elected from the Meerapur Assembly constituency in 2012.

Bijnor will vote in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections on April 11.

https://t.me/TodaysTomorrow

Where 'tribes' of an ailing tea industry hold the key

They constitute 35-45% of the voters in Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Tezpur, Kaliabor

ELECTION 2019

RAHUL KARMAKAR
DIBRUGARH/JORHAT

Dev Kanta Barooah, the Congress president during the Emergency, had no qualms about saying that the party depended on Ali-Coolie-Bangali for votes.

Ali stood for migrant Muslims, Coolie - a British pejorative - for tea plantation workers and Bangali for migrant Bengali Hindus. Together, they are more than 60% of Assam's 21,760,604 voters.

The Congress received its first jolt in 1985 when the Asom Gana Parishad, riding on sentiments generated by the Assam agitation, secured votes of the indigenous communities, while the migrant Hindus and Muslims chose the now-defunct United Minorities Front.

Plantation workers, casually referred to as "tea tribes", brought from central India's Chhotanagpur Plateau remained loyal to the Congress until most of them shifted allegiance to the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2014. That year, the BJP bagged four of the five Lok Sabha seats - Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Tezpur and Kaliabor - where the votes of the tea plantation workers matter.

Tea leaves being loaded onto a truck. • RAHUL KARMAKAR

Tea plantation workers constitute 35-45% of the voters in these five seats where elections would be held in the first phase on April 11.

A majority of the 800 tea estates and 65,000 small tea gardens are in the districts covered by the Dibrugarh and Jorhat parliamentary seats.

"The liquor tragedy a month ago, the failure of the BJP government in granting Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to plantation workers, and non-revision of wages of tea workers will bring them back to the Congress," Rupesh Gowala, general secretary of the Congress-affiliated Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha, said.

Illegal brewers

"The Congress had tried to control drinking among tea workers but the pro-industrialists BJP relaxed norms for running liquor shops and became lenient toward illegal brewers. We intend to make Assam's tea belts dry areas," Pawan Singh Ghatowar, five-time MP from Dibrugarh, seeking to regain the seat from BJP's Rameswar Teli, said.

"The government was quick in taking action against illegal brewers. The Congress is making this an issue because they have nothing else to tell the people in the tea gardens since the people are happy with beneficiary schemes and cash incentives," Mr. Teli, the BJP candidate, said.

Both Mr. Ghatowar and Mr. Teli belong to the tea community.

The top contenders for the Jorhat seat are State Minister Topon Kumar Gogoi of the BJP and Sushanta Borgohain of the Congress. The latter hopes to cash in on the perceived resentment among tea workers against the BJP for replacing incumbent Kamakhya Prasad Tassa, a tea community leader, with Mr Gogoi.

Battle of wits, oratory skills in Puri LS seat

Verbal duels take centre stage as BJD, Cong., BJP field their key spokespersons

SATYSUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

It's a battle of wits and oratory skills in Puri, a prestigious Lok Sabha constituency in Odisha.

Verbal duels have taken centre stage in the poll campaign as three mainstream political parties – Biju Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party and Congress – have fielded their key spokespersons – Pinaki Mishra, Sambit Patra and Satya Prakash Nayak respectively – from this coastal constituency.

All three spokespersons have not lost a single chance to throw verbal volleys at each other. Two debutants, Mr. Patra (BJP) and Mr. Nayak (Congress), are pitted against three-time Lok Sabha member Pinaki Mishra. As the campaign picks up, the communication proficiency of the candidates, which has so far been visible in TV studios, is increasingly being put to test on the ground.

"It's a battle for who can really work for the people of Odisha. I am not just a spokesperson of the BJP, but also a spokesperson of the poor and downtrodden," Mr. Patra said.

'Symbol of Odia pride'

"The people here are very happy with us. They see me as a symbol of Odia pride who fights for Odisha across the globe and talks about Odia culture," said the BJP spokesperson.

Mr. Nayak, the chief spokesperson of the State Congress, attacked the sitting MP, BJD's Pinaki Mishra, for not doing anything for the constituency. "Despite being a three-time MP from Puri, Pinaki Mishra has not done anything visible for Puri. He is like a migratory bird seen only during elections," he said.

Mr. Mishra, meanwhile, ruled out any threat from Mr. Patra and Mr. Nayak in the elections. "The track record of Mr. Patra is that he has so far debated only in 'godi channels' (lap channels) where anchors don't pose any serious questions. Let him debate with me, I will show him his place and tell him about my performance in Parliament," he said.

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Amit Shah cancels poll rallies in Naxal-hit districts in last minute

Mungantiwar cites technical glitches; we were ready for any threat: security forces

SHARAD VYAS
GADCHIROLI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Amit Shah called off the twin rallies, scheduled in the Naxal-affected districts of Gadchiroli and Chandrapur, at the eleventh hour on Sunday citing 'technical' reasons even as the heavy contingent of anti-Naxal forces deployed at the venue played down security concerns.

The BJP chief's chopper was scheduled to land at ITI ground, Gadchiroli, at 4 p.m., and Chanda Club ground, Chandrapur, at 6 p.m.. Around 5,000 people gathered at Gadchiroli, bracing hot and humid conditions, had to return disappointed. "I had come all the way from my village, which is 40 km away. I wanted to hear Mr. Shah speak and see how he looks, but my two hours of travel is now wasted," said Gunaji Sontake, a farmer from Wakdi Village in Gadchiroli district.

Senior BJP leader and State Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar said Mr. Shah's visits were called off due to technical glitches. "Amit Shahji has informed me the reasons for cancelling the public rallies at the last minute. These are technical reasons and hindrances, which cannot be disclosed at this point," he told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Mungantiwar addressed the rally on behalf of Mr. Shah, and said the party chief has promised all assurances to make Gadchiroli a model district if voted back to power at the Centre.

The BJP chief was scheduled to speak to voters in the sensitive Gadchiroli-Chimur and Chandrapur constituencies. In Gadchiroli, near 220 of the 930 polling booths have been declared sensitive or hypersensitive owing to left wing extremism. Gadchiroli-Chimur and Chandrapur go to polls on April 11. While Gadchiroli is represented by MP Ashok Nete of the BJP, Chandrapur's sitting MP is Union Minister of State Hansraj Ahir.

Anti-Naxal security personnel on the ground said they were adequately prepared to ward off any threat. Not only were a large number of troops deployed along with seven units of the Deep Search Metal Detector squads, but also the stage was adequately tested for stability and security, and officials of the Food and the Drug Administration (FDA) were posted to check any poisoning of the eatables available on the stage.

Taking no chances: A member of the Deep Search Metal Detector squad scanning the road near the venue of Amit Shah's rally at Gadchiroli on Sunday. • S. SUDARSHAN

FDA team on hand

"'We don't know the reasons for the cancellation but are keeping the deployment on standby for now. We had even kept a team from the FDA to secure and test his (Mr. Shah's) food samples, and were prepared for all eventualities," Mahendra Pandit, additional SP, Gadchiroli, said.

The district administration said it believed the two rallies were hastily planned and packed into a tight schedule before the polling day. "'This could have easily been a single rally to cover the two districts within a 100 km distance of each other. We are wondering why they were planned in the first place in this rushed manner," a senior official said.

Tawde lashes out at Raj over his support to Rahul Gandhi

MNS chief should first consult Sharad Pawar, says minister

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday criticised Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray after he endorsed Congress president Rahul Gandhi for the Prime Minister's post, asking him whether his 'script writer' in Baramati would approve of this.

"He should first consult Sharad Pawar as to whether he approves of Mr. Gandhi's endorsement for the PM's post. If he fails to do so, all the scripts coming from Baramati for the next rallies will be cut off," State Education Minister Vinod Tawde said. The minister was hinting at recent news reports, which had put Mr. Pawar in the race for PM in case an alliance government comes at the Centre. Mr. Tawde taunted the MNS saying it has come to the point where it will campaign for a person like Sanjay Nirupam who had abused Mr. Thackeray. "I pity the MNS workers as they will now have to work for Mr. Nirupam, who once had abused Mr. Thackeray. This is nothing but atrocious," the minister said.

MNS president Raj Thackeray addresses his supporters at the Gudi Padwa rally in Mumbai on Saturday. • FILE PHOTO

Mr. Nirupam is contesting the general election from Mumbai North West. He never enjoyed a cordial relationship with the MNS due to the party's anti-migrant stand in Mumbai. It was Mr. Nirupam who vehemently opposed inclusion of Mr. Thackeray in the Opposition front.

Mr. Thackeray at his Gudi Padwa rally in Shivaji Park, Dadar, on Saturday evening, indirectly supported Mr. Gandhi as the next Prime Minister. "We tried out Mr. Modi in 2014 and he turned out to be a big disaster. Our country now finds itself at the bottom of a pit. We have Mr. Gandhi; we can try him and see. If it is going to happen, then it will be good for the country or not," Mr. Thackeray had said.

Slamming the MNS chief over his presentations of Mr. Modi's policies and his critique over it, Mr. Tawde said had Mr. Thackeray worked hard for his own party, then he would not have been campaigning for others. "His engine is closed, and he is now trying to connect it to someone else to make it work," the minister said.

Pro-Maratha party joins BJP-Sena fold

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

A recently formed pro-Maratha political party, Maharashtra Kranti Sena (MKS), on Sunday joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-Shiv Sena alliance in Maharashtra, saying the support is unconditional.

Suresh Patil, founder-president of the MKS, was one of the leaders who spearheaded the agitation seeking reservation for the Maratha community in government jobs and education. The party had also announced 15 candidates for the Lok Sabha polls. Now all of those will be withdrawn.

"The welfare and development of the Maratha community is my priority. The Congress and the NCP betrayed the Marathas. The current State government led by Devendra Fadnavis works hard for the welfare of the community," Mr. Patil said. He had filed his nomination from western Maharashtra's Hatkanangle, and will be withdrawing his candidature.

In politics, refrain from personal attacks: Pawar

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his Wardha rally address, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar on Sunday said leaders ought to desist from launching personal attacks on each other in politics.

"It was Mr. Modi who said I had held his hand during his [the Prime Minister's] early days in Gujarat politics. Yet, at Wardha, which is 650-700 km from Baramati, the PM censured me and my family by commenting that there was a rift brewing within the Pawar clan. How was it possible for Mr. Modi to know what was going on in the Pawar family?" Mr. Pawar asked.

The NCP chief said all members of the Pawar clan were engaged in different vocations and that there was perfect amity between them and there was no question of any internecine quarrels in the family. "I will tell him [about my family] when I meet him again in Delhi. While my house is full, no one really knows who is in Mr. Modi's family," Mr. Pawar said.

Mr. Pawar held a number of meetings of NCP workers in Daund, which forms part of the Baramati Lok Sabha constituency – the bastion of the Pawar family.

"Elections will come and go, but what about the populace reeling under the onslaught of drought? It is the first task of the government to provide relief in the drought-hit areas," he said.

The NCP chief said the BJP-Shiv Sena government has not fulfilled the promise of granting a quota to the Dhangar (shepherd) community made at the time of the 2014 general elections.

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IN BRIEF

Suresh Gopi breached model code: Collector

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Actor and BJP candidate from Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency Suresh Gopi appeared to have found himself in a spot on Sunday. Thrissur Collector T.V. Anupama, who is the returning officer, has submitted a report to Chief Electoral Officer Teeka Ram Meena that she has found Mr. Gopi prima facie guilty of having violated the model of conduct by allegedly using religious motifs to garner votes. Mr. Gopi has denied the accusation, and his party slammed Ms. Anupama's action as partisan.

Modi to address seven rallies in Karnataka

BENGALURU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address seven rallies in Karnataka starting from Tuesday. The rallies will be in Chitradurga, Mysuru, Koppal, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Bagalkot, and Chikkodi. Of these, the Bagalkot and Chikkodi rallies are scheduled for April 18 — the polling day in south Karnataka.

Final trial in Kevin case to begin on April 24

KOTTAYAM

The final trial in the abduction and murder of Kevin P. Joseph, a youth from Kottayam, is slated to begin at the Principal Sessions Court here in Kerala on April 24. Sessions Judge C. Jayachandran will hear the case continuously from April 24 to June 6. An additional sessions court had ordered that the proceedings be completed in six months. As per the prosecution case, a gang led by Syanu Chacko, brother of Neenu, abducted Kevin on May 28, 2018, and chased him to a stream with an intention to kill him.

A vote for TRS is a vote for MIM, says Yogi Adityanath

U.P. Chief Minister says TRS and Congress are supporting anti-nationals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PEDDAPALLI/SRIKALAHASTI

A vote for the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) is a vote for the Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (MIM) and supporting the Congress is showing support to terrorists, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Sunday.

At a election meeting in Peddapalli town, he said the TRS, during its five-year regime in Telangana, had brought back "the Nizam rule" and was "turning people into slaves with its autocratic rule." Alleging that the TRS and the Congress were supporting anti-nationals, he flayed the former for supporting the MIM's statements, which were "against the interests of national integrity."

Greeting the gathering in Telugu and conveying Ugadi wishes, Mr. Adityanath criticised the Congress, saying it had "served biriyani to terrorists" while the Narendra Modi government had treated them with bullets and carried out surgical strikes on terrorist camps.

Blistering attack: Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath at a poll meeting in Peddapalli on Sunday. ▪SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Calling upon people to vote the Modi government to power again for maintaining national security, he urged the people to elect BJP candidates from all Parliamentary constituencies. Reservation was provided to socially backward communities in the country, he said and flayed the TRS government for encouraging religion-based reservation by extending 12% quota to Muslims. He reminded the gathering that the Modi government had announced 10% reservation for economically poor sections among the upper castes.

The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister claimed that the BJP government had revived the sick Fertilizer Corporation of India as the Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited at a cost of ₹5,500 crore to provide employment to the people.

Telangana BJP president K. Laxman said Nizamabad's farmers had protested against the State government, and added that the educated masses had given a fitting reply to the TRS in the recent MLC election.

Responding to Nizamabad MP K. Kavitha's statements that the BJP was the "Bharatiya Joota Party", he called the TRS the "Telangana Rakshasa Samithi".

'BJP serves people'

In Andhra Pradesh's Srikalahasti, Mr. Adityanath, while campaigning for party candidate Kola Anand, flayed political parties for giving importance to muscle, money and caste power, instead of taking the average worker to the top.

"The BJP is the only political entity that serves the interests of the common people, unlike the other parties that consider politics as a family affair."

"Sonia wants to pass on the legacy to her son Rahul Gandhi. Chandrababu Naidu wants to make his son Lokesh the next Chief Minister. It is only in the BJP that you don't see hereditary politics," he said.

Audio clip of Cong. leader seeking money leaked

It was for election expenses, says Made Gowda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANDYA/UDUPI

Amid the political heat in Mandya thanks to a high-profile poll battle featuring Independent candidate Sumalatha and coalition nominee Nikhil K., an audio clip kicked up a row on Sunday.

The clip contained a conversation in which veteran Congress leader and Gandhian G. Made Gowda sought money from JD(S) Minister C.S. Puttaraju for the election expenses of Mr. Nikhil.

The one-minute-55-second clip, said to be of a telephonic conversation between the two leaders, was leaked to the media on Sunday.

In it, Mr. Gowda, who spearheads the Cauvery agitations whenever the water crisis arises, is purportedly heard asking the Minister to arrange money for his workers. Mr. Gowda also says that his son (Madhu G. Made Gowda, a former MLC) would collect the money. Mr. Puttaraju is heard replying that he would arrange it.

G. Made Gowda

Hours after the audio clip was leaked, Mr. Gowda admitted that he had asked for money. But he clarified that it was not for bribing voters, but to take care of the electioneering expenses.

"The boys ask me for money to arrange coffee, breakfast and liquor. It is common nowadays and so, I asked for the money," he said.

Nothing wrong: CM

Election officials said they would look into the matter.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy maintained that there was nothing wrong in Mr. Gowda seeking money.

Seeking support: A.P. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu at a rally at Nandigama in Krishna district on Sunday.

'KCR backing YSRCP to settle scores with me'

Naidu alleges conspiracy by TRS chief

STAFF REPORTER
KAKINADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday alleged that Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao was funding the Opposition YSR Congress Party so as to interfere in the State's administration.

"To settle scores with me, Mr. Rao is funding the YSRCP and hatching a conspiracy to buy votes for the Opposition by distributing money to the voters at the rate of ₹1,000 to ₹2,000 per vote," Mr. Naidu said at Samalkot.

Along with the TDP's Lok Sabha candidate Chalamalasetti Sunil and Peddapuram Assembly candidate N. Chinarajappa, Mr. Naidu took part in a roadshow and urged the voters not to fall prey to the conspiracies hatched by Mr. Rao.

"The YSRCP, along with the TRS and the BJP, is trying to defeat the TDP. All the three parties are working against the interests of Andhra Pradesh. Since I am questioning them, they are using the Income Tax department to threaten me," he said.

Accusing the BJP of rendering injustice to the State in the last five years, Mr. Naidu alleged that the Centre failed to fulfil its promise of adjusting the ₹16,000-crore budget deficit. "They haven't even paid the enhanced pension amounts and the funds spent towards the farm loan waiver. Do we need to support the BJP and its sympathiser Mr. Reddy now?" he asked.

Insurance cover

Assuring the women that the 'Pasupu Kumkuma' benefit would be an annual affair, Mr. Naidu said the insurance cover under 'Chandranna Bheema' would be increased to ₹10 lakh and the cap on health care would be raised to ₹5 lakh once the TDP was voted back to power in the State.

He assured that unemployment benefit would be extended to those who had passed intermediate and housing would be provided to all those eligible in the next five years.

Taking pot-shots at MP Thota Narasimham for crossing over to the YSRCP, Mr. Naidu said that keeping in view Mr. Narasimham's health condition, an MLC seat had been offered to the family.

TDP, YSRCP go on digital offensive

THARUN BODA
VIJAYAWADA

Internet users in Andhra Pradesh are of late being bombarded with advertisements of either the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) or the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) every time they browse a web page, or watch a video on YouTube.

As election day fast approaches, both parties are vying with each other to take over the digital ad space offered by Google Ads, a Google platform that runs ads on all platforms.

As a result, the two parties have turned Andhra Pradesh into the top digital political ad spender. According to the latest Google Political Advertising Transparency Report, 831 political ads worth ₹3.76 crore are being run on its platforms since February 19. The report's "ad spend per geography" section reveals that parties in Andhra Pradesh have spent ₹1.73 crore over this period.

BJP lags

The second highest spending is less than half of this amount, at ₹72.78 lakh, in Telangana.

The TDP surpassed the BJP, which is running a similar campaign across the country.

Though the list of top advertisers shows that the BJP is on the top with ₹1.2 crore spent on 557 ads, two companies – Pramanya Strategy Consulting Pvt. Ltd. and Digitant Consulting Pvt. Ltd. – working for the TDP, spent ₹85.25 lakh and ₹63.43 lakh respectively, making the TDP surpass the BJP with ₹1.48 crore spending on ads. The YSRCP spent ₹1.04 crore on 89 ads. The two parties together spent ₹2.53 crore, the report reveals.

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IN BRIEF

BJP not allowing me to meet father: Tejashwi

PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav alleged that he was not being allowed by the "autocratic" BJP government in Jharkhand to meet his father Lalu Prasad, who is undergoing treatment at RIMS hospital there. "I have been waiting since Saturday evening...," Tejashwi Yadav tweeted. PTI

Three killed as truck rams bus in Chittorgarh

JAIPUR

Three persons were killed and 13 others injured on Sunday when a speeding container truck rammed a bus in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh district, police said. The bus was on it way to Nimbahera from Chittorgarh when the accident occurred near the Araniya Panth bridge. The bus and container truck drivers fled after the accident. PTI

Two killed as mini-truck crashes into bike

KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Two motorbike-borne youths died on Sunday when a speeding, loaded mini-truck had a head-on collision with their vehicle on NH-52 under the Modak police station here, officials said. The deceased were identified as Ashok Kumar, 45, and Javed alias Banna, 32, residents of Mandana town, police said. PTI

Leopard found dead in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

LAKHIMPUR KHERI (U.P.)

A leopard was found dead in the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district on Sunday, an official said. The leopard bore canine injuries on the head and tufts of another leopard's hair in its claws. The presence of pug marks of different leopards indicated that the death could have been due to infighting, said the reserve's Field Director. PTI

Sweet success

A farmer crushes sugarcane with the help of bullocks to make jaggery in his agricultural field on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar on Sunday. ▪ BISWARANJAN ROUT

Parties make tall promises in Odisha

Will free farmers from debt, says BJP; a job for every family, reads Cong. manifesto

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

The two major Opposition political parties – the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress – on Sunday unveiled their manifestos here, making tall promises.

"We promise to free farmers and sharecroppers from the clutches of moneylenders and from their debt burden by providing interest-free crop loans to all sharecroppers, small and marginal farmers of Odisha," says the BJP manifesto released by party president Amit Shah.

Taking a cue from the Congress' efforts of getting unused land back from the industries in Chhattisgarh, the BJP said, "We promise to return the land to the farmers if the project for which the government acquired the land does not commence even after five years."

₹1 lakh cr. for irrigation

The party has also promised to expand the irrigation network in the State through a dedicated fund of ₹1 lakh crore in the State over the next five years.

As far as tribal development was concerned, the BJP promised to take up with the Central government all the pending demands for designation under the Scheduled Tribe status in a time-bound manner.

"We shall ensure that the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, is notified and implemented within three months of the party coming to power. We shall ensure that all records of rights claims of tribal settlers would be settled within the next five years," the manifesto said.

On the other hand, the Odisha Congress appeared more generous in promising handouts. Apart from guaranteed income of ₹6,000 per month for the 20% poorest under the Nyuntam Aay Yojana, the Congress's manifesto assures a job in every family and an allowance of ₹3,000 per month for the jobless.

"We will regularise all contractual workers, give land to every landless family, ensure shelter for every homeless by 2024, provide special assistance of ₹10,000 per year to farmers for three years and pay an allowance of ₹2,000 per month to widows," said OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik.

Cases against tribals

On the issue of tribal development, Mr. Patnaik said all forest offence cases against the tribals would be dropped while implementation of the PESA Act, 1996, would be ensured.

4 women held for putting up Cong. posters on buildings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Four women have been arrested in Uttar Pradesh's Miranpur town for putting up pamphlets and posters on public buildings in support of Congress' Bijnor candidate Nasimuddin Siddiqui, officials said on Sunday.

The police registered a case against Radha, Maya Devi, Savita and Rubi for violating the model code of conduct and arrested them, Station House Officer Pankaj Tyagi said.

Bijnor will vote in the first phase of the Lok Sabha poll on April 11.

Yellow weather warning for Himachal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SHIMLA

The Meteorological Department on Sunday issued a yellow weather warning for rain in Himachal Pradesh, an official said.

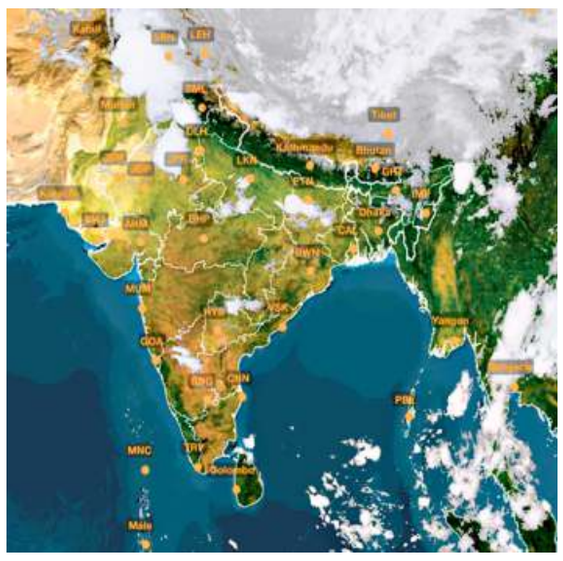
The weather department has forecast thunderstorm with hail in isolated places of mid hills, including Shimla, Mandi, Kullu, Chamba, Solan and Sirmaur, Shimla centre director Manmohan Singh said.

The weather office issues colour-coded warnings to alert people ahead of severe or hazardous weather which has the potential to cause "damage, widespread disruption or danger to life". Yellow is the least dangerous of the weather warnings.

Meanwhile, rain occurred at isolated places in the State during the last 24 hours and minimum temperatures decreased, he said.

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: Heavy rain likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura; heat wave conditions likely over parts of Rajasthan; thunderstorm accompanied by 60-70 kmph winds likely at isolated places over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim and Odisha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	12.8	29.5	19.6
Ahmedabad	–	42.6	24.0
Aizawl	1	29.8	15.4
Allahabad	–	39.4	24.0
Bengaluru	–	36.4	24.0
Bhopal	1	40.2	23.4
Bhubaneswar	0.3	34.4	22.8
Chandigarh	–	34.9	20.2
Chennai	–	–	26.7
Coimbatore	–	–	25.0
Dehradun	–	32.7	17.0
Gangtok	8.6	17.2	11.7
Goa	–	33.6	24.6
Guwahati	0.4	23.5	20.8
Hubballi	–	36.0	24.0
Hyderabad	7.7	39.4	23.1
Imphal	–	24.6	15.6
Jaipur	–	39.8	27.8
Kochi	–	34.2	26.8
Kohima	1.4	21.2	11.5
Kolkata	25.1	32.5	20.1
Kozhikode	–	36.2	26.6
Kurnool	3.3	41.5	26.3
Lucknow	1	33.3	20.8
Madurai	–	–	24.9
Mangaluru	–	35.1	25.9
Mumbai	–	33.0	23.0
Mysuru	–	37.0	20.2
New Delhi	–	36.0	25.6
Patna	6.8	31.5	19.4
Port Blair	–	33.2	23.8
Puducherry	–	–	25.8
Pune	–	38.6	20.4
Raipur	–	40.0	26.4
Ranchi	5	32.6	17.0
Shillong	53.8	17.4	10.8
Shimla	–	23.0	13.7
Srinagar	–	23.7	6.8
Trivandrum	–	37.6	26.8
Tiruchi	–	–	26.4
Vijayawada	–	36.9	24.0
Visakhapatnam	–	32.8	27.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	17	.78	26	.218	.–.	
Bengaluru	.2	.22	70	.140	.–.	
Chennai	.6	.12	47	.141	.–.	
Delhi	35	112	36	.312	.398	
Hyderabad	.2	.57	20	.85	.78	
Kolkata	.6	.55	18	.60	.68	
Lucknow	17	.32	98	.335	.–.	
Mumbai	29	.29	91	.32	.72	
Pune	30	.14	31	.68	.87	
Visakhapatnam	16	.69	24	.51	.103	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Loni Dehat, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 385 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Rupnagar, Punjab recorded a healthy AQI score of 58

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

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

Rajam Guruswamy, 95
wife of late MWO (IAF)
N. Guruswamy
passed away peacefully and cheerfully on Sunday 7 April 2019 at 12.20 pm at Brick House, Kurian Road, Cherad, Akathetara PO, Palakkad 678008 Kerala.
Mother of Lalitha Sreenivasan, Padma Sastri and G. Krishnan.
9496233441.
krishnan.guruswamy@gmail.com

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IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

DR. A. SUNDARAMURTHY, Ph.D
07/03/1956 - 08/04/2016
"Now that my ladder's gone, I must lie down where all ladders start; in the rag and bone shop of my heart."
Fondly remembered by Kanchana, Durgaprasad, friends, family, and colleagues.

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*as on 07th April 2019

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Let's commit and pledge ourselves for an impartial and fair election

https://t.me/TowadsTomorrow

NEARBY

Five killed in van-bus collision near Theni

THENI

Five persons, including a 10-year-old girl, were killed when a van and a bus collided near Theethathotti on Sunday. Of the 14 injured, three were said to be in a serious condition. Police said the relatives and friends of S. Vetriarasan, 53, of Allinagaram were returning from Bodi when the accident occurred.

SBI invites bidders for ailing Jet Airways

MUMBAI

State Bank of India (SBI) and SBI Capital Markets Ltd (SBI CAPs), on behalf of Jet Airways' lenders, formally invited Expression of Interest (EoI) to effect change in the control and management of Jet Airways (India) Ltd. Interested parties can submit bids from April 8, 2019 till 6p.m. of April 10,2019 as per an advertisement released by SBI CAPs. Earlier, SBI had said that bids would be accepted from April 7 to April 9, 2019.

Tourist, pilot dead in paragliding crash

SHIMLA

A Kerala tourist and a pilot died in a paragliding crash in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district on Sunday, police said. The tourist, Altho Bachu, died instantly whereas paragliding pilot Naresh Kumar succumbed to his injuries in a hospital, a police official said. A probe has been initiated into the deaths. PTI

Cattle smugglers arrested in J&K

JAMMU

Two smugglers were arrested in separate incidents on Sunday as police foiled three attempts to smuggle cattle in Kathua and Rajouri districts of J&K, an official said. Police intercepted two trucks on the Jammu-Pathankot highway in Kathua and rescued 14 animals. Another truck was intercepted in Rajouri district and nine animals were rescued. PTI

About 85% of Ujjwala beneficiaries in 4 States still use earthen stoves

Study recommends that the scheme should move beyond benefits for women alone to change household behaviour

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

The hidden truth of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY), being touted in the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) election campaigning as one of the big successes of the incumbent government, is that most rural households with LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections still use *chulhas* with firewood or dung cakes, to the detriment of rural health.

Financial reasons

A new study from the Research Institute for Compassionate Economics (r.i.c.e) shows that 85% of Ujjwala beneficiaries in rural Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh still use solid fuels for cooking, due to financial reasons as well as gender inequalities. The resultant indoor air pollution can lead to infant deaths and harm child development, as well as contribute to heart and lung disease among adults, especially the women, cooking on these *chulhas*.

The survey, conducted in late 2018, covered a random sample of 1,550 households in 11 districts of the four States, which collectively have two-fifths of the country's rural population.

The Ujjwala Yojna, launched in 2016, subsidises LPG connections for rural households by providing a free gas cylinder, regulator and pipe. Central government data shows that more than six crore households have received a connection through the scheme. The r.i.c.e study shows that in the four States surveyed, there has indeed been a substantial increase in LPG ownership due to the scheme, with 76% of households now owning an LPG connection.

However, more than 98% of these households also own a *chulha*. Surveyors asked if food items – *roti*, rice, *sabzi*, *dal*, *chai* and milk – had been cooked on the *chulha* or the gas stove on the previous day. They found that only 27% of households exclusively used the gas stove. Another 37% reported using both the *chulha* and the gas stove, while 36% made everything on the *chulha*.

The trend is more acute among those who received an LPG connection from the government; almost 53% exclusively used the chulha, while 32% used both. "Ujjwala beneficiaries are poorer, on average, than households who got LPG on their own. Refilling the cylinder is a greater fraction of their monthly consumption, and they may be less likely to get a refill immediately after a cylinder becomes empty," says the report, suggesting that higher refill subsidies and monitoring may help to change behaviour.

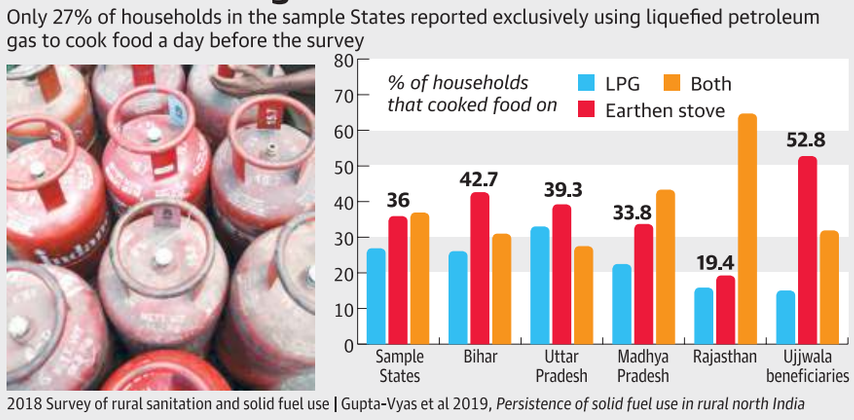
Gender inequalities also play a role. Surveyors found that almost 70% of households do not spend anything on solid fuels, meaning that the relative cost of an LPG cylinder refill, even if subsidised, is far higher. Women are more likely to make dung cakes, and while men are more likely to cut wood, women are often the ones collecting and carrying it. The study argues that these women, who do the unpaid labour needed for "free" solid fuels, are not typically economic decision-makers in the household, hindering a shift to LPG usage.

Most of the survey respondents agreed that it was easier to cook on a gas stove, but felt that food cooked on the *chulha* – especially rotis – was tastier. The survey found that while 70% of respondents thought the gas stove was better for the health of the cook (typically a woman), more than 86% felt that cooking on the *chulha* was better for the health of those eating, reflecting ignorance of the fact that ambient air pollution is harmful even to those who are not cooking the food.

A common belief was that "eating food cooked on gas causes gas [in the stomach]," said the report, suggesting that awareness campaigns for the Ujjwala Yojna need to move beyond benefits for women in order to change household behaviour.

Awareness falling short

Only 27% of households in the sample States reported exclusively using liquefied petroleum gas to cook food a day before the survey



2018 Survey of rural sanitation and solid fuel use | Gupta-Vyas et al 2019, *Persistence of solid fuel use in rural north India*

'One more official in each booth will cut VVPAT delay'

Opposition parties file rejoinder to EC in Supreme Court

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Deployment of one more official and an extra worktable in each polling booth will 'substantially reduce' the 5.2-day delay a proposed 50% VVPAT verification will cause in vote-counting in the Lok Sabha election, Opposition parties countered the Election Commission of India (ECI) in the Supreme Court.

EC's counter

The ECI had objected to the Opposition's idea of 50% random physical verification of VVPAT slips in each Assembly segment of a Parliamentary constituency or Assembly constituency in order to ensure free and fair General Elections in 2019, the first phase of which commences on April 11.

The poll body had told the court that such an increase would create an "insurmountable difficulty" in the election process. It would lead to exactly 5.2 days of delay in vote-counting.

The Opposition's rejoinder presented a counter-calculation under-cutting the poll body's math.

"If the delay of 5.2 days is to be balanced with the integrity of electoral process, the balance will certainly tilt towards the latter... the delay of 5.2 days will occur only if the ECI chooses not to increase its present workforce at all, not even by one person."

"The delay will be substantially reduced if workforce is increased by even one person," the Opposition submitted in its rejoinder.

Putting one more person on the job of verifying VVPAT slips in each of the 50% polling booths in a constituency would reduce the period of vote-counting from 5.2 days to 2.6 days.

The rejoinder is accompanied by a sworn affidavit from Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and all the other leaders.

Highway ban disrupts life in J&K

NC, PDP hold protests after supply of essentials and services are hit in Valley

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The first day of closure of the 271-km Baramulla-Udhampur national highway for convoy movement disrupted distribution of essentials on Sunday and halted all passenger services. The National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) held street demonstrations to defy the ban.

The highway closure was enforced around 4 a.m. in accordance with the State Home Department's directions, leaving many stretches deserted till 5 p.m. Additional troops and mobile bunkers were used to seal the connecting roads. Many stretches were dug up to disallow any civilian traffic. Concertina wires were used to plug the streets leading to the highway.

Unhappy voices: Peoples Democratic Party supporters protesting against the ban in Srinagar. ▪ NISSAR AHMAD

Essentials like milk and vegetables from south Kashmir to capital Srinagar, and the movement of newspaper hawkers from the capital to south and north Kashmir, was badly hit. "My vehicle was stopped at Pathachowk. I failed to distributed newspapers," said Aslam Khan, a hawker.

The blockade also resulted in the closure of markets and shops on the flanks of the highway. Locals were seen walking deserted streets to reach hospitals and see relatives. "My daughter is admitted in a maternity hospital. I walked on many stretches to reach Srinagar," said Nazima Jan, a resident of Pulwama's Tral.

Meanwhile, the NC, the PDP and the People's Conference made separate bids to defy the civilian traffic restrictions, which have been imposed in the wake of the Pulwama suicide attack that left 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans dead on February 14. The closure will be enforced on Sundays and Wednesdays till May 31.

NC president Farooq Abdullah, also a Lok Sabha candidate from Srinagar constituency, held a protest at Athwajan on the highway.

"The diktat should be revoked to ensure people don't suffer. We are not a colony, therefore we are defying the diktat. The train affords a better option for the transit of military. They can carry out the movement of military convoy during nights," said Dr. Abdullah.

Jolt for BJP as man dies in detention camp

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The death of a 70-year-old Bengali man in a detention camp for foreigners has queered the pitch for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), ahead of the three-phase Lok Sabha election in Assam.

Amrit Das, a resident of Barpeta Road town in Barpeta district, died in the Goalpara detention camp on Saturday night. He had been languishing in the camp within a jail since 2017, after a Foreigners' Tribunal declared him a foreigner on May 20 that year, despite figuring in voters' lists from 1961 onward.

The jail authorities said Mr. Das was taken to a hospital after he complained of unease. But members of his family said he died without treatment after developing asthma due to sleeping on the cold floor of the jail.

Several Bengali organisations have blamed Mr. Das' death on the BJP-led government in the State and demanded compensation for his above-poverty-line family.

Relatives of Amrit Das, who died in a detention camp for foreigners on Saturday.

Bengali Hindus are believed to be a major vote base for the BJP.

"Governments in Assam have been victimising Bengali Hindus by marking them D (doubtful) voters and foreigners and torturing them in jail.

"The State government must take the responsibility for the poor man's death," Shantanu Mukherjee, the Bharatiya Gana Parishad (BGP) candidate for the Barpeta Lok Sabha constituency, said.

Parties seek credit for enclave exchange

But citizens say their plight is far from improved

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
COOCH BEHAR

There is hardly any enthusiasm among voters in the enclave settlement camp in Dinhata in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district. Fifty-eight families of erstwhile Indian enclave dwellers in Bangladesh, who came to India after the swap of enclaves on the border between the two countries, have been staying at this camp since August 2015.

Abu Taher, a resident, is disinterested in the elections. He said that some women from the Trinamool Congress had visited the camp on Wednesday evening and shown the residents their party symbol, but people remained indifferent to them. "We have been here for three years but we have not been given what we were promised. When we left Bangladesh, we thought we would get land and jobs here in India. I used to teach Arabic in Bangladesh. Nobody knows me here; so I am sitting idle," the 29-year-old said.

No man's land: A section of the enclave settlement camp in Dinhata in West Bengal's Cooch Behar. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After the exchange, in which 51 Bangladeshi enclaves became a part of India and 111 Indian enclaves merged with Bangladesh's territory, 922 people living in the erstwhile Indian enclaves came to India. They are residing in three settlement camps in Dinhata, Haldibari and Mekhliganj.

Poll plank

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who began her election campaign in West Bengal on April 3, has raised the issue of enclaves, and is demanding votes seeking credit for the historic swap between India and Bangladesh in 2015.

"We gave land for the enclaves (Chitmahal) and took the initiative to solve the problem. No other party cared before us. The Prime Minister had no role in this. It was done entirely by us," Ms. Banerjee said in two back-to-back rallies in Cooch Behar on April 3 and April 4.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was quick to oppose her claims and insisted that the Prime Minister alone deserved the entire credit for the enclave exchange.

Malati Rava, the Cooch Behar district BJP president, said that it was only on the intervention of PM Modi that the seven-decades-old issue of enclave exchange was sorted out.

As with the Dinhata settlement camp, the situation at the Haldibari settlement camp, which has 300 voters and falls in the neighbouring Jalpaiguri constituency, looks no different. There is hardly any election campaign material to be seen.

"We had voted for the Assembly polls in 2016, and although we will be voting for the first time in the Parliamentary elections, we are not excited."

Poor state

"The families here have no jobs and are surviving on doles given out by the State government. This is not easy survival for us; we had come to India with a lot of hope," said Jayprakash Roy, one of the prominent residents of the Haldibari camp.

BPEA will invest ₹2,600 cr. in NIIT

Prepares to pick up 30% stake

PIYUSH PANDEY
MUMBAI

Baring Private Equity Asia (BPEA), has signed definitive agreements to buy a 30% stake in NIIT Technologies Limited shares from NIIT Limited and other promoter entities at a price of ₹1,394 per share, aggregating to ₹2,627 crore, and make an open offer thereafter to increase its stake up to 56% for a total consideration ₹4,890 crore.

Commenting on the deal, Rajendra Pawar, chairman, NIIT Technologies Limited, said, "NIIT Technologies Limited, which became an independently listed company after demerger from NIIT Limited in 2004, has grown into one of the most innovative and trusted IT services company in India. The involvement of Baring Private Equity Asia will provide a further impetus to the management team, led by CEO Sudhir Singh, to take the company to the next level of growth."

A NIIT centre in Delhi's South Extension.

Vijay Thadani, vice-chairman & managing director, NIIT Limited, said, "BPEA's association will support the existing management team in capturing the opportunities in an increasingly digital world."

NIIT Technologies also announced the signing of an agreement to acquire big data firm WHISHWORKS IT Consulting.

NIIT will initially acquire a 53% stake, with the remaining equity to be acquired over the next two years.

No end to discolouration of river Periyar in Kerala

Pollution Control Board not paying enough attention, alleges resident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

Discolouration of water continued in the Periyar in Kochi on Sunday.

It was near the Pathalam regulator cum bridge that the change of colour was visible. While water turned pitch black in one stream, it was milky near the regulator, said Adamkutty, a resident of Pathalam.

The change in colour, which was first noticed in the morning, continued till 2 p.m. Despite being alerted, officials of the Pollution Control Board (PCB) did not pay much attention to the matter, he complained.

The discolouration of the river system, which provides drinking water to Kochi city and adjoining areas, has been a cause for worry for residents. Moreover, environmental activists have been protesting against the pollution and demanding steps for protection of the river.

The colour change seen in the Periyar near the Pathalam regulator cum bridge on Sunday. ▪

The pollution of the river system had earlier led to violent protests in the region.

Meanwhile, P.B. Sreelakshmi, environmental engineer of the PCB's Environment Surveillance Centre at Eloor, said the discolouration was due to the poor quality of water as a result of eutrophication.

When excessive nutrients reach the waterbody, it would lead to algal bloom. A few days later, algae would die and decay, resulting in a foul smell and discolouration of water.

Water in some reaches of the river system had been stagnant. Reduced water flow in the system had added to the deteriorating water quality, she added.

According to her, huge quantities of organic load in the form of sewage from nearby townships are regularly reaching the river system. On residents' charge that the discharge of untreated effluents into the river by industrial units was causing discolouration of water, Ms. Sreelakshmi said the areas near industrial units were being regularly monitored, and that any change in water quality parameters could be detected immediately.

Incidentally, there were no industrial units near the Muttar area where discolouration was reported. Same was the case last month. The eutrophication due to dumping of sewage should be blamed for that, she added.

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No.: SPAB/RGO/Advt./2019-20/01 Date : 08.04.2019

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Sl. No.	Name of the Equipment
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2.	Precision sample cutter for TEM sample preparation
3.	HR-LCMS
4.	X-ray diffractometer with accessories
5.	Atomic force microscope with accessories
6.	Fourier Transform Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (FT-NMR) spectrometer
7.	Proton Transfer Reaction time of flight mass spectrometer

Further details may be downloaded from the Institute website or CPPP.

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

https://t.me/CowadsTomorrow

Capital high

To retain the confidence of foreign investors, macroeconomic management is key

Foreign investors appear to have rediscovered India. The inflow of foreign capital into India's stock market in the month of March hit a high of $4.89 billion, the biggest foreign inflow into Indian stocks since February 2012. As a result, the stock market rose a solid 8% in March. Foreign investment in Indian equities stood at $2.42 billion in February, as against a net outflow of $4.4 billion during the same month a year earlier, and is expected to be strong in April as well. Both cyclical and structural factors are behind this sudden uptick in foreign investment that has helped the rupee make an impressive comeback. The rupee has appreciated by about 7% since early October, when it was reeling at around 74 against the dollar. Last year, India received more foreign direct investment than China for the first time in two decades. While the Chinese economy has been slowing down considerably in the last one year, India has emerged as the fastest-growing major economy. Doubts over the robustness of the GDP calculation method notwithstanding, it is clear that investors expect India to be a major source of global growth in the coming years. Other short-term reasons may also be behind some of the recent inflow of capital into the country. For one, there is a sense among a section of investors that their fears of political instability are misplaced. More important, there are clear signs that western central banks have turned dovish. Both the Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank, for instance, have promised to keep interest rates low for longer. This has caused investors to turn towards relatively high-yielding emerging market debt. Indian mid-cap stocks, which suffered a deep rout last year, are now too attractive to ignore for many foreign investors.

The return of foreign capital is obviously a good sign for the Indian economy. But policymakers need to be careful not to take foreign investors for granted. Other emerging Asian economies will be competing hard to attract foreign capital, which is extremely nimble. Any mistake by policymakers will affect India's image as an investment destination. To retain investor confidence, whichever government comes to power after the general election this summer will need to increase the pace of structural reforms and also ensure proper macroeconomic management with the help of the Reserve Bank of India. Long-pending reforms to the labour and land markets are the most pressing structural changes that will affect India's long-term growth trajectory. The high fiscal deficit of both the Centre and the State governments and the disruptive outflow of foreign capital are the other macroeconomic challenges. These are some issues that need to be solved sooner rather than later.

The heat is on

Local administrations must draw up plans to address heat stress and possible water scarcity

A forecast of a below average monsoon in 2019, after last year's erratic rainfall that flooded Kerala and crippled agriculture in eastern and western States, is a cause for worry. If the assessment from one agency, Skymet, is any indication, there is a prospect of an El Niño, often associated with drought conditions, taking hold. This must, of course, be considered along with other factors that seem to weaken the El Niño link, such as a dipole weather phenomenon in the Indian Ocean. Should the monsoon, which normally sets in between June 1 and July 15 across the country, turn out to be deficient, it will add to the pressures on rural employment and the economy as a whole. Things may become clearer when the India Meteorological Department also issues its forecast, although error margins and the erratic nature of rainfall in different regions render the exercise fraught with uncertainty. Last year, for instance, the realisation of rainfall was 91% of the long-term average, while the prediction was for 97%. More immediately, India will go to the polls in the peak of summer after an intensive campaign. It is the responsibility of State administrations to prepare for the likelihood of a heat spike, particularly during April and May, to prevent loss of life and extreme distress to communities. Official agencies and NGOs should start adopting the drill on this, using the template drawn up by the National Disaster Management Authority.

The key elements of protection in a heat wave are avoiding exposure during the hottest part of the day around noon, especially in the case of senior citizens, staying adequately hydrated, wearing suitable clothing including headgear, and creating shade in public places. These messages and weather alerts can be disseminated through television, mobile phone messaging and social media platforms. Urban local bodies in particular have a responsibility to care for the large number of vulnerable city dwellers. Yet, few cities have drawn up proper heat action plans to respond to extreme weather or made them public. During the current year, there is apprehension that the focus of administrators will mainly be on the conduct of the elections, relegating the public health risk of heat waves to the backburner. With the availability of advance weather alerts, there is no reason why local bodies cannot institute remedial measures. Mitigating the effect of heat waves is vital to ensuring a high turnout in the elections by making it safe for voters. India is looking at another uncertain monsoon, bringing into sharp relief the neglected potential of decentralised water-harvesting. It is more than a decade since the National Commission on Farmers suggested the wider adoption of both rainwater harvesting and aquifer recharge, in order to provide irrigation for small farmers. It is time to take measures that will help communities achieve resilience.

The governance dashboard

The current regime has failed to deliver on its promises of development and clean government

VAMSI VAKULABHARANAM & SRIPAD MOTIRAM

Towards the end of the second term of the United Progressive Alliance government (UPA-II), from 2009 to 2014, the corporate sector (captains of industry) had become thoroughly disappointed with the slow rate of "progress" being made. The reputation of UPA-II had been tarnished by several high-profile corruption scandals. Significant sections of the Indian elite, both urban and rural, were also upset about the government's modest welfare schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) and also rights and entitlements such as the Right to Information, Right to Education and the Land Acquisition Act, 2013.

The elites and upper middle-income groups were ready to strike back and found in Narendra Modi an able politician who could spearhead their agenda. He was the vikas purush who would restore high profitability for the corporate sector and provide a clean government. There was also a populist appeal of "development for all".

However, the true meaning and significance of Mr. Modi's ascent to power was not lost on those who had deep knowledge of India. Writing shortly after the 2014 general election, eminent economist and historian Amiya Kumar Bagchi remarked: "The corporate sector has now secured undisputed control of the commanding heights of the Indian economy and has succeeded in installing a prime minister, of whom they had been vocal supporters." We are now at the cusp of another national election, so it is pertinent to ask what Mr. Modi has been able to achieve in the last five years.

It has become common now in some circles to describe the world that we live in as "post-truth". Populism and the rise to prominence of leaders such as Donald Trump (U.S.), Jair Bolsonaro (Brazil), and Viktor Orbán (Hungary) have exposed us to a radically new vocabulary consisting of terms like "alternative facts" and "fake news". It seems like evidence is far less relevant in influencing opinion than factors like sentiments, emotions or beliefs.

Backdrop of scarce data

While we understand the limits of claims made on behalf of "objectivity", it is very difficult to imagine how a reasoned debate can occur without adequate evidence. Since Independence, India has carefully built an enviable reputation in terms of the integrity of its statistical organisations and the quality of its economic data. It is perhaps the most remarkable "achievement" of the present government that it has virtually destroyed this reputation by meddling in the work of statistical organisations, changing the methodology of computation of key figures (such as GDP), and by suppressing important data.

Given this, it is a major challenge to evaluate the performance of the present government. Of the various attempts that have been made to put together scarce evidence, a notable one is the very well-researched edited volume, *A Quantum Leap in the Wrong Direction?* It was Nobel laureate Amartya Sen who used the term "quantum leap" to critically describe the current regime, and the volume does justice to this loaded metaphor. It examines important dimensions of the present National Democratic Alliance government (NDA-II) and the past two regimes, UPA-I and -II, grouping them broadly under the subjects 'Economy', 'Socioeconomic Indicators' and 'Governance'.

GETTY IMAGES

Key parameters

Two issues that are important in evaluating any regime are economic growth and distribution. India, of course, has been celebrated along with China as the growth engine of the world in recent decades. Has the economy under NDA-II outperformed in comparison to previous governments? Recent changes in methodology by the Central Statistics Office have rendered such comparisons very difficult. From the data in this volume, it is clear that NDA-II has underperformed in comparison with UPA-I and is broadly comparable to UPA-II. Average annual growth rates of GDP under NDA-II are estimated at 7.4% (the corresponding figures for UPA-I and UPA-II are 8.4% and 7.2%, respectively).

In terms of distribution, our own research (for the period 1991-2011) indicates that the Indian economy, after economic liberalisation, was largely driven by inequality-heightening rapid urban growth. Farmers and informal workers in the urban areas have faced acute distress and witnessed losses in their income shares. What has happened to inequality under the Narendra Modi government? This question cannot be easily answered because the latest survey data have not been released. Given this, the volume draws upon other sources of data such as income taxes and the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Database to make a persuasive case that Indian inequality has continued to rise.

The share of the top 10% of income-tax payers has increased at the expense of the bottom half. The wealthiest group (top 1%) owns more than half the nation's wealth today and has consolidated itself during 2014-2018. What happened to the economic status of the most marginalised social groups, i.e. Muslims, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes? Unfortunately, relevant survey data have not been released. However, one gets a harrowing picture from the volume from other data. Crimes against Scheduled Castes have increased during the period 2014-16. What is noteworthy is that both overall crimes and crimes registered under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act have increased in the Bharatiya Janata Party-governed States such as Gujarat, and Haryana. The media is rife with accounts of cow-vigilantism; but to give a statistical picture, Muslims comprised 84% of those killed during 2010-17 across the country. Almost all such attacks (97%) occurred under the present government.

Impact of signature policies

The two major signature policies that the government undertook – demonetisation (ostensibly to root out corruption) and the goods and services tax (GST) – have proved to be colossal disasters for the economy and the vast majority of Indians. Any doubts about the adverse impact of these policies is dispelled by the analysis in the volume. Comparing the periods before and after demonetisation, while the world economy witnessed improved growth (2.6% to 3.1%), the Indian economy suffered a growth decline from 7.8% to 6.8%. We believe that these two policies were launched to serve the long-term interests of the corporate sector at the expense of the vast majority of Indians who reside in cash-dependent informal and agrarian economies. It is unsurprising to read in news reports that the Indian unemployment rate is at a 45-year high (2017-18).

While it is amply clear that the current regime has failed to deliver on its promises of development and clean government, its true objective has always been to usher in a different kind of an economy and polity than the one that the UPA espoused – one that is more corporate and rural elite-friendly. The welfare orientation of the UPA-I (although it did not go far enough in our view) was quite unpalatable to the Indian elites.

A correction and reversal were asked for, and duly executed. It was also widely expected that the Modi regime would use a majoritarian nationalist mobilisation strategy (especially if economic gains were not forthcoming for the masses). This is exactly what has been delivered during the Modi years – a combination of elite-oriented growth and a majoritarian nationalism/Hindutva. Perhaps, in this sense, Mr. Modi's government has succeeded exactly in what it set out to do.

Several people who voted for Mr. Modi inspired by his promise of development and a corruption-free India must now see the failure of his regime clearly on these fronts. As Rabindranath Tagore reflected, if the choice is between a nation that is fundamentally exclusionary, and a society that stands for basic human values and espouses tolerance among a multiplicity of cultures and identities, the path forward is clear.

Vamsi Vakulabharanam and Sripad Motiram teach Economics at the University of Massachusetts, in Amherst and Boston, U.S., respectively

When a new era dawns, what's in a name?

As Japan's Emperor Akihito prepares to abdicate, the country gears up for the Reiwa era

PALLAVI AIYAR

On April 30, Japanese Emperor Akihito will abdicate, literally ending an era. For in Japan the years are counted not just using the internationally standard, Gregorian calendar, but by *gengo*, or 'era name', that counts up from the coronation of a new emperor until his death, or as in the current circumstance, abdication.

The Heisei era

Akihito's coronation in January 1989 had marked the beginning of what is known as the Heisei era, and the end of the 'Showa' period of his predecessor, Emperor Hirohito. This year, 2019, will be split between Heisei 31, the 31st year of Akihito's reign until the end of April, after which it will become Reiwa 1, the first year of the Emperor elect, Naruhito's rule.

But *gengo* are not just ways of counting years. They also encapsulate a national mood, the zeitgeist. A new era name stops the clock for the nation psychologically, allowing an opportunity for taking stock and recalibrating.

The Meiji era (literally: enlightened rule), January 1868-July 1912, is best remembered as a period of Western-inspired modernisation, while the Showa *gengo* (literally: enlightened harmony), December 1926-January 1989, is associated with both Japan's rapid post-war economic development, but also the militarism of the Second World War.

It is Heisei, however, that is on the nation's mind currently. In the dying days of the era, there is an ongoing attempt to grapple with how best to define the essence of the last three decades. Heisei is composed of two *kanji* (Chinese characters used in the Japanese language) that taken together mean 'achieving peace'.

On the surface, the *gengo* would appear apposite. Through the Heisei decades Japan has eschewed war and continued to be among the world's more pacifist nations. Emperor Akihito himself worked hard to confront Japan's past military expansionism, including several expressions of remorse and apology for his country's wartime actions.

And yet, Heisei has also been characterised by unfulfilled potential and a spate of natural disasters. In 1989, when the era began, Japan was at the pinnacle of its economic might. That same year,

AFP

Sony acquired Hollywood's Columbia Pictures and Mitsubishi Estate bought New York's iconic Rockefeller Center. Japan appeared poised for global domination.

Instead, the 'bubble economy' collapsed, leading to 'lost decades' of economic stagnation and deflation. And while the meteoric rise of China dwarfed Japan's regional and international heft, earthquakes and tsunamis ravaged the archipelago. For many, Heisei conjures up the horrors of the 1995 Hanshin earthquake that destroyed Kobe city, and the 2011 East Japan earthquake and tsunami that killed over 20,000 people and triggered one of the world's worst nuclear disasters.

Consequently, the commencement of the new era, recently announced after months of deliberation as Reiwa, is widely seen as a chance to put some of these traumas behind and to define new hopes for a new epoch.

Reiwa can be interpreted to mean 'auspicious' (*rei*) 'harmony' (*wa*). But, given that *kanji* can often be understood in multiple ways, it is also possible to read rei as 'orderly' and wa as 'Japanese'. The latter reading has some Japanese uncomfortable with its authoritative nuance, particularly within the context of the current, right-wing government's emphasis on nationalism as a cornerstone of policy.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was open in disclosing the fact that the choice of era name was made to reflect pride in Japan's ostensible uniqueness. For the first time in history the two *kanji* comprising the *gengo* were taken from Japanese classical literature, rather than Chinese classics, the traditional source for era names.

The new *gengo* is derived from an ancient collection of Japanese poetry called *Man'yoshu* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves) that feature poems composed between 600 CE and 759 CE. Commentators have been quick to draw a link between this decision to distance the *gengo* from Chinese literature and Japan's contemporary rivalry with China.

Name notwithstanding, Emperor-elect Naruhito's Reiwa era will face a formidable set of challenges. The country's rapidly ageing society and declining population mean that economic growth will require either a huge increase in the number of immigrants or a major technological breakthrough. Japan will also need to innovate to ensure it is not left out of the high-tech race for leadership at a time when artificial intelligence and robotics are reshaping the manufacturing ecosystem. Moreover, China's dominance in both the economic and strategic realms, coupled with the growing unpredictability of the U.S.'s commitment to Japan's defence will test Tokyo's strategic thinking, forcing it to seek out new allies and accommodations.

Logistical challenges

But first, the dawn of Reiwa will necessitate a series of more immediate, logistical changes. Government documents, stamps, newspapers, driving licences, and calendars will all need to switch to the new *gengo* from the Heisei system that's been in use for the last three decades. Computer systems across the archipelago are hurriedly being updated for the May 1 handover in what some fear might prove to be Japan's Y2K moment.

In his play *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare famously asked, "What's in a Name?" In Japan at least, the answer would appear to be: A Lot.

Pallavi Aiyar is an author and journalist based in Tokyo

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.

Voter holds the key

In a sort of farewell blog, BJP veteran L.K. Advani has said, "those who disagree with us are not our enemies". For the BJP, strident denigration of opponents and self-praise populism are two sides of the same coin that it put in circulation ever since it began facing flak for its failures on the socio-economic front. The party, led by the Prime Minister, mounts severe and personal attacks on rival leaders even as the Opposition (for example, the Congress's leader) says it has quarrels with policies and not persons. The BJP built up a narrative on a "corrupt Opposition" that has since been undone by Rafale as the game of perception can be played by others too. It is strange that the BJP, having come to power solely on the development plank, should now rely largely on rabble-rousing, and the Congress on an inclusive manifesto. In 2019, the Indian voter must yet rely on his instincts to seek his destiny.

R. NARAYANAN,
Navi Mumbai

Claims and the truth

A U.S.-based magazine has cited American personnel as having counted the number of F-16 fighter aircraft with the Pakistan Air Force and found none to be missing ("Imran accuses BJP of whipping up war hysteria", April 7). This report has confused many of us who were led to believe that India shot down an F-16. India, meanwhile, has stuck to its stand saying it has conclusive evidence that the aircraft was shot down. We need to know the truth. Is it so difficult to verify?

K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH,
Hassan, Karnataka

A page in history

Many historical events lose their sheen over a period of time except when marked by occasional references by academicians of history ('Magazine' section, "The many meanings of Jallianwala Bagh", April 7). But Jallianwala Bagh will go down in the annals of history as one of the darkest chapters in Indian colonial history. It sowed the seeds for the ultimate expulsion of the British. But India paid a heavy price. Unfortunately, Britain never showed any signs of remorse, with successive Prime Ministers not even inclined to offer an apology, the least one could have expected from the British. Hundred years is no doubt a very long period to harp on an issue any further when political equations have changed diametrically in the international arena. It is better to leave bygones as bygones and instead dedicate the occasion to living life in a more harmonious, civilised and tolerant way cutting across borders. That is the best tribute one can offer to the hundreds who lost their lives.

V. SUBRAMANIAN
Chennai

■ That the British government has been dilly-dallying to apologise for its many errors speaks volumes about the impact of colonialism. I am reminded of several instances of such internal colonialism in India, an example being the Telangana movement in the 1960s. The message is simple and clear: one should learn from the past.

A. VISHWESHWARA SHARMA,
Sangareddy, Telangana

Odd question

Not all public service commission examinations have serious questions. A few of them are quite funny. For example, an objective-type question paper set for assistant professors in the Kerala Health Department had this: "Who were the first women to have entered the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple as per the Supreme Court ruling?" Is this what future assistant professors of psychiatry need to know?

K A SOLAMAN,
S.L. Puram, Alappuzha, Kerala

MORE LETTERS ONLINE:
www.hindu.com/opinion/letters/

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In his response to a question on rating the performance of the BJP-led government at the Centre (Interview, "Is the Army a tool for fighting an election, asks Navjot Singh Sidhu" (April 7, 2019) the Congress party's campaigner was reported to have said that the "unemployment in the country is at the lowest level in 45 years, as per the NSSO figures." It should have been the highest level.

In the story titled "At the international border, a 'Modi wave' flies above BJP flags" (April 7, 2019), the names of the BJP and Congress candidates had been wrongly given as Raman Bhalla and Jugal Kishore Sharma respectively. Actually, Raman Bhalla is the Congress candidate and Jugal Kishore Sharma is the BJP candidate.

In the Ground Zero page story "Encroachers on their own lands" (April 6, 2019), the name of the Gond Adivasi had been misspelt as "Kureti" instead of "Kumeti".

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https://t.me/Towards_Civil_Dw

If Gandhi were alive today

Considering his view of politics, he would have privileged civic virtue in elections

RAMIN JAHANBEGLOO

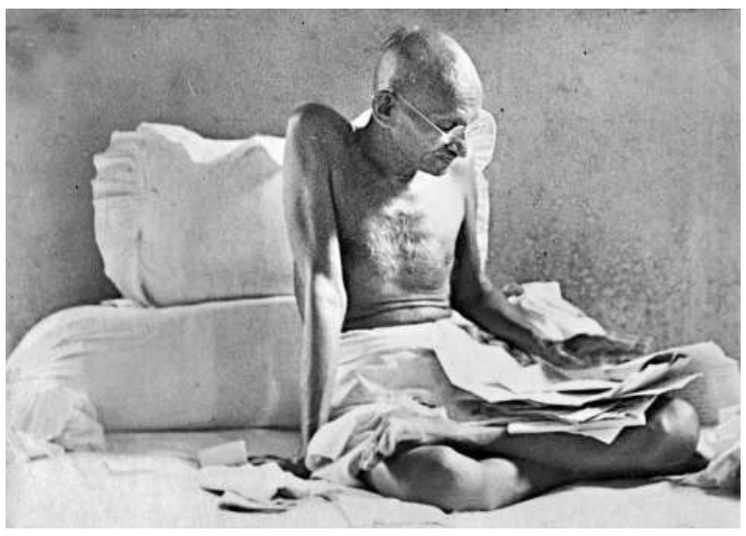
With the election season getting all the attention, I wonder whether Mahatma Gandhi would have participated in the election had he been alive. One thing is evident today: while Gandhi is hailed as the founding father of the Indian republic and one of the architects of democratic politics in modern India, it is not recognised equally well today that we can draw valuable lessons of political action and democracy from him. However, it goes without saying that Gandhi is perhaps more relevant now than ever before for our understanding of elections, at a time when India finds itself at a crossroads between a hope for civic republicanism and a practice of demagogic populism.

The need for moral leaders

It is no secret to anyone who lives in India and shares time and passion with Indians from different walks of life that the small cast of politicians and their supporters are not engaged in what Gandhi called "an experiment with Truth". This is perhaps because politics in contemporary India, as everywhere else in the world, finds itself prisoner of the administrative system and the corporate mindset, both of which suffer from a severe absence of self-examination. Indeed, what India needs most at this time of elections is not mass mobilisers but moral leaders.

Considering the profound spiritual nature of Gandhi's personality and his deep ethical view of politics, we could say that if he was among us today, he would have certainly boycotted the elections. He would have been troubled by the Machiavellian essence of Indian politics and its populist and demagogic end results. Assuredly, it is important to grasp Gandhi's character above all as a man who remained all through his life as a person truthful to the ethical.

In a sense, then, Gandhi's view of politics starts where party politics ends. What Gandhi understands by politics is the art of organising society, not the technique of power making and party organising. That is why Gandhian politics is at the same time anti-populist and anti-elitist.



"Gandhi is perhaps more relevant now than ever before for our understanding of elections." File photo of Gandhi at Mani Bhavan, Bombay. ▪ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Democracy and mobocracy

Gandhi has always been considered as a charismatic leader, but his unmediated appeal to the citizens was based neither on a Manichaean friend-enemy distinction, nor on the supreme will of the masses. As the history of modern India shows us, while political parties have been subservient to the masses and the masses have followed party leaders without questioning, some political figures like Gandhi or Ambedkar had the courage to turn against mobs. Gandhi considered democracy and mobocracy as opposite forms of conducting politics and organising Indian society. Gandhi affirmed: "Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led by them, if we want to avoid mob law and desire ordered progress for the country. I believe that mere protestation of one's opinion and surrender to the mass opinion is not only not enough, but in matters of vital importance, leaders must act contrary to the mass opinion if it does not commend itself to their reason."

In other words, Gandhi considered contempt for civic virtue as a betrayal of the spirit of democracy. For him, democratic governance, unlike party politics, which always tends towards unexamined and obedient masses, was based on the maturity of citizens. Gandhi's sharp reaction against the Chauri Chaura incident was an expression of his rejection of mobocracy. After this incident, Gandhi revoked his plans for launching mass civil disobedience at Bardoli on the ground that the masses were not morally prepared for a non-violent struggle against the British. But it is also worth mentioning that Gandhi considered masses guilty of what politicians became. As he put it: "We the people make the rulers what they are." Moreover, Gandhi insisted on the twin concepts of self-transformation and civic maturity. As a matter of fact, he underlined: "If we reform ourselves, the rulers will automatically do so."

Gandhi, therefore, approached pragmatic politics as a form of character-building and not necessarily organising a political party and winning seats in Parliament. He called it "a capacity to regulate national life". However, inspired by the American Transcendentalist, Henry David Thoreau, he underlined, "If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. In the ideal state therefore, there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that the government is best which governs the least."

Undoubtedly, Gandhi, the moral leader, was not a pure idealist. He was a pragmatic practitioner, who wanted to apply ethical values and civilisational criteria to the political organisation of Indian society and beyond. Strangely, the Gandhian common sense is considered as an irrelevant and insignificant matter to the eyes of those who are ruling India and the world today. Unfortunately, in today's world, political circumstances and temperaments do not allow politicians to concentrate any more on the education and duty of citizens. That is why, while uncritical and utilitarian minds are shaped and formed in universities in India and around the world, originality and exemplarity of future Mahatma Gandhis are killed in the embryo.

But what if Gandhi were alive? He would have certainly tried to create awareness in the minds of the younger generation. Let us also agree that he would have had a strong intervention (example, fasting unto death) in relation with the cases of corruption, sexual harassment and populist demagogy in everyday politics.

When power politics took over

However, this would have been too much for those who are involved today in politics. Frankly, despite the symbolic devotion which is shown to Gandhi by political leaders, there is a feeling of comfort that a stubborn and critical veteran of democratic action like him is no more around.

In a more sinister manner, we even find strong reasons of rejecting a national figure like Gandhi in Nathuram Godse's analysis of his assassination: "I foresaw that I shall be totally ruined and the only thing that I could expect from the people would be nothing but hatred and that I shall have lost all my honour, even more valuable than my life, if I were to kill Gandhiji. But at the same time I felt that Indian politics in the absence of Gandhiji would be more practical, able to retaliate, and would be powerful with armed forces." Godse was right. Once Gandhi was eliminated, power politics could take over. India has been independent for 71 years based on electoral liberalism in the name of Gandhi. But for more than 71 years, politicians have distanced themselves from Gandhi's legacy. Unsurprisingly, once again Indians will go to the polls without having the Mahatma on their minds.

Ramin Jahanbegloo is Professor, Vice Dean and Director, Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Peace Studies, Jindal Global Law School, Jindal Global University

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Retaining the ability to question

If journalism has to survive, it should maintain critical distance from official propaganda

A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

It may sound unreal. But how do I explain receiving two contradictory mails within a span of 20 minutes on the role of journalism? One reader wanted to know the Indian parallel to the exclusive investigation by *The New York Times* into Rupert Murdoch, the founder of a global media empire that includes Fox News, and its disturbing hold on political outcomes. Each of the media outlets in that empire has destabilised democracy in North America, Europe and Australia. The reader wanted to know whether the broadcast of NaMo TV shows India as moving in the same worrying direction.

Claims and counter-claims

At the same time, I got a mail from a reader from Uttarakhand, who questioned this newspaper's reportage on the U.S.'s count of Pakistan's F-16 fighter jets. *Foreign Policy* reported a few days ago that it spoke to two senior U.S. defence officials, who told the magazine that U.S. personnel recently counted Pakistan's F-16s and found none missing. The reader from Uttarakhand was certain that since the report in the magazine was not issued by an official channel, it was unverified and aimed at hurting the electoral prospects of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This reader refuses to see the overt politicisation of security measures and the use of the armed forces for political ends.

How did *The Hindu* report this story? Headlined "U.S. count of Pakistan's F-16 fighter jets found none missing, claims American magazine", the report from Washington, DC by the newspaper's U.S. correspondent quotes the magazine as meticulously listing out the contradictions in the claims made by the Indian security establishment since the aerial engagement between India and Pakistan in February this year.

Various Indian agencies suggested that Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman had downed an F-16, based on his debriefing. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also repeated the claim that an F-16 was downed. *The Hindu* report documents the fact that India had asked the U.S. to investigate whether Pakistan had breached the terms of its F-16 deal with the Americans. The count had now been completed and the U.S. said that "all aircraft were present and accounted for".

How can a report based on information in a respectable magazine be seen as an attempt to play politics? In its response, the Indian Air Force reiterated that the aircraft shot down in a dogfight by a MiG-21 in Nowshera sector on February 27 was an F-16. It rejected the claim in the *Foreign Policy* report that none of the Pakistan Air Force's U.S.-supplied jets was found missing after a recent count. It is crucial to note that authorities tend to hide behind anonymity. The Indian Air Force's version was circulated through the news agency IANS.

The U.S. magazine report, in the opinion of the foreign policy writer of this newspaper, Stanly Johny, confirmed that India lost a jet and a chopper, that an Indian pilot was captured by Pakistan and paraded before camera, and that there was no evidence that India's strike in Balakot had hit the actual target and killed terrorists. In a sense, the facts negate the narrative that has been flowing from the political establishment. A close reading of the facts raises many questions.

Serving the public good

Elections do generate pressure on journalists to deviate from the core values of journalism. War has the potential to generate passion that sways both the electorate and the media. It becomes a deadly combination when war machines and the electoral processes are permitted to intertwine. If journalism has to survive and serve the public good, it should maintain its critical distance from official propaganda. It needs to retain its ability to pose questions. *The New York Times* story has come up with some crucial takeaways in its investigation into Mr. Murdoch's media industry and the central lesson is that his family sits at the centre of global upheaval.

What *The Hindu* did in reporting about the F-16 numbering is a part of the essential elements of journalism. George Orwell once said, "In a time of deceit telling the truth is a revolutionary act." Taking about the military and its claims in a dispassionate manner is central to democracy. It is an attempt to retain journalism within the spirit of public inquiry and not reduce it to a force multiplier for electoral gains.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

SINGLE FILE

Cleaning up the mess

India needs a waste management policy that stresses the need for decentralised garbage disposal practices

MADHURIKA SANKAR

ENRICO FABIAN

Hyperconsumption is a curse of our modern times. Humans generate monumental amounts of waste, a sizeable portion of which is disposed in landfills and through waste-to-energy incinerators. However, billions of tonnes of garbage, including microplastics, never make it to landfills or incinerators and end up in the oceans. This garbage chokes marine life and disturbs zooplankton, which are vital to the elimination of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Landfills are seedbeds of methane and other greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming. These toxic chemicals poison the soil and their leached run-off makes its way into the oceans. And while they do generate energy, waste incinerators cause health issues such as cancer. In India, nearly 60% of the household waste is wet organic waste, with low calorific value. This makes options such as waste-to-energy incinerators inefficient. We need to design incinerators that are suited to Indian conditions.

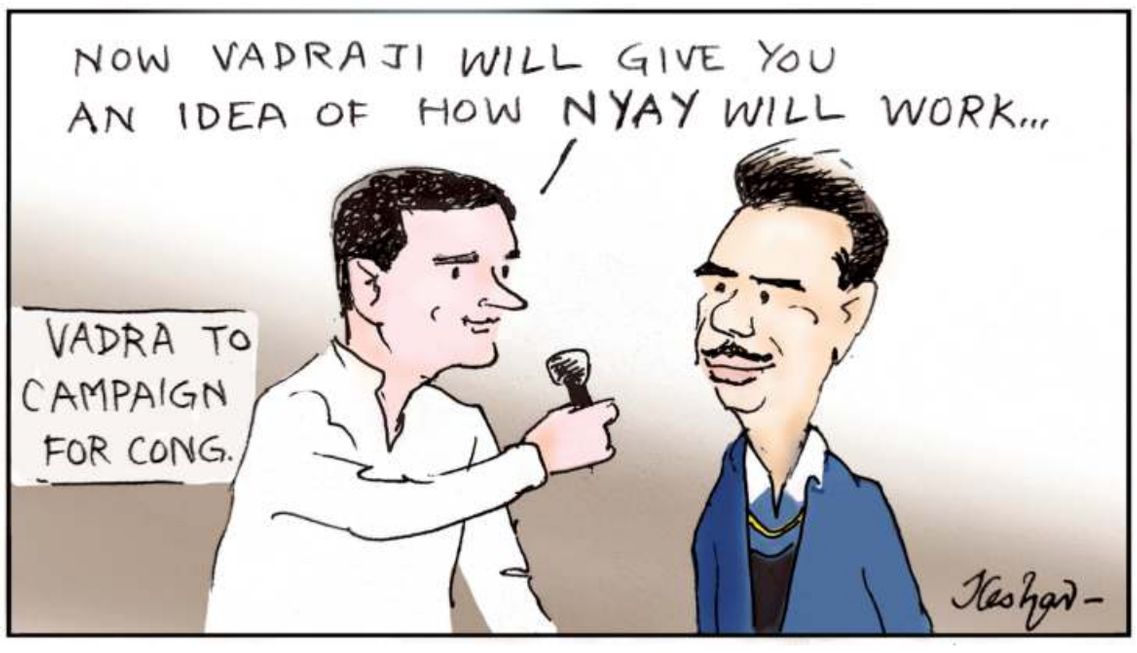
It does seem overwhelming, but there are solutions to the garbage pandemic through the crucial processes of material recycling and composting. Efficient composting is possible through an optimal combination of microbes and temperature to produce a nutrient-dense soil conditioner.

Mathangi Swaminathan, in her article in *Economic and Political Weekly*, sheds light on India's broken waste management system. In India, less than 60% of waste is collected from households and only 15% of urban waste is processed.

There are several problems in India in how waste is treated. First, segregation of waste into organic, recyclable and hazardous categories is not enforced at source. As a result, mixed waste lands up in the landfills, where waste-pickers, in hazardous conditions, try to salvage the recyclables, which are of poor quality and quantity by then. Second, ideally, waste management should not be offered free of cost to residents. Only if residents pay will they realise the importance of segregation and recycling. Third, there is the issue of logistical contractors who are motivated to dump more garbage in landfills as their compensation is proportional to the tonnage of waste. They are also prone to illegally dump waste at unauthorised sites to reduce transportation costs. Fourth, and importantly, organic farming and composting are not economically attractive to the Indian farmer, as chemical pesticides are heavily subsidised, and the compost is not efficiently marketed.

We need a comprehensive waste management policy that stresses the need for decentralised garbage disposal practices, This will incentivise private players to participate. Unless these concerns are addressed, what will we tell our children who inherit this planet? That our greatest existential challenge, climate change, was also facilitated by garbage?

The writer is based in Chennai



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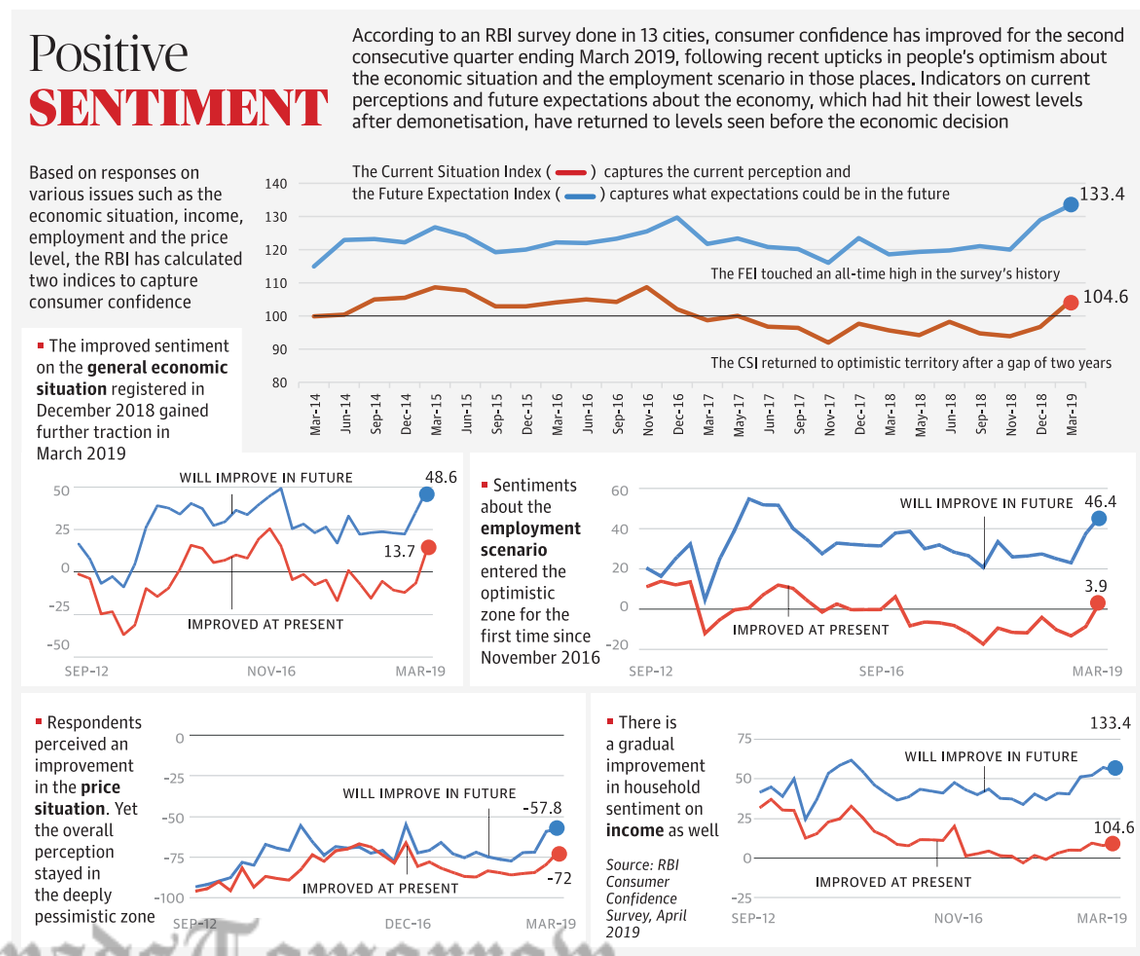


FROM The Hindu ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 8, 1969

Talks to be held with Kenya on Indians' assets

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Surendra Pal Singh, disclosed in the Lok Sabha to-day [April 7, New Delhi] that India proposed to hold talks with the Kenya Government on the question of repatriation of assets of Indian citizens and Indians holding British passports. He said that the talks were contemplated to see that these people did not suffer untold difficulties. Mr. Singh was intervening in the debate on the budget demands of the Ministry of External Affairs. The debate was inconclusive. The need for filling the "power vacuum" in the Indian Ocean that would arise from the withdrawal of Britain was one of the points raised.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 8, 1919.

Civil disobedience. Mr. Gandhi Leads.

The Satyagraha Committee advised [in Bombay] that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and registration of newspapers may civilly disobeyed. Accordingly, a number of copies of Hind Swarajya, the Sarvodaya or Universal Dawn, the Story of a Satyagrahi, all by Mr. M.K. Gandhi, and life and addresses of Mustafa Kamel Pasha, were publicly offered for sale this evening [April 7] and found some ready buyers. The hawkers were all prominent Satyagrahis among whom were Mr. Gandhi, Mrs. Naidu, Mr. Sobani, Mr. Lakhimdas Tairsee and others. All books sold contained the signature of the Hawkers. A number of unregistered newspapers, mostly resembling ordinary posters and leaflets both in Print and Handwriting in Guzerathi were also sold.

POLL CALL

Bicameral legislature

Bicameralism is the practice of having two Houses of Parliament. At the State level, the equivalent of the Lok Sabha is the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly), and that of the Rajya Sabha is the Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council). A so-called Upper House is considered important in the parliamentary system, as only a third of the seats are filled every two years and it therefore acts as a check against potential impetuousness of electoral majorities in the Lower House. With members mostly indirectly elected, the Upper House also ensures that individuals who might not be cut out for the rough-and-tumble of direct elections too are able to contribute to the legislative process. Under Article 169, Parliament may by law create or abolish the second chamber in a State if the Legislative Assembly of that State passes a resolution to that effect by a special majority. At present, seven Indian States have bicameral legislatures. Some argue that unlike the Rajya Sabha, the Vidhan Parishad does not serve must purpose and poses a strain on States' finances.

MORE ON THE WEB

Watch | Making a sherbet is a performance in this Coimbatore shop

http://bit.ly/SherbetCoimbatore

https://t.me/TowadsTomorrow

FROM PAGE ONE

BJP pitches for 'Modi once more'

"We are seeking justice or nyay against the injustices committed in the past four years. Those who promised acche din only delivered anyay (injustice)," said Anand Sharma, chairman of the Congress Publicity Committee.

The campaign also focussed on Congress' experience in leadership and governance with the tagline *jan jan se naata hain, sarkar chalana aata hain* (We have a relationship with the people, we know how to run a government) and highlighted manifesto promises like transferring ₹72,000 annually to five crore households, increasing rural employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, job creation, and simplifying goods and services tax among others.

"Our campaign doesn't focus on income guarantee alone. It is about ensuring *nyay* (justice) to farmers, nyay to women, *nyay* to students, *nyay* to youth and *nyay* to entrepreneurs," Mr. Sharma said. Other leaders present at the press meet included Moti Lal Vohra, Randeep Surjewala, and Rajeev Shukla.

The official unveiling of the campaign also saw the two parties launching their respective theme songs.

The BJP did not reveal who created the campaign song – *Phir se Modi sarkar banate hai/Phir se kamal khilate hai* (Let's elect Modi government again, let's help lotus bloom again) – but a party source claimed it to be an in-house exercise.

The main theme song of the Congress has been made by film-maker Nikkhil Advani and the lyrics have been written by Javed Akhtar.

U.P. alliance says it will provide a PM

Invoking Bhim Rao Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia in the same sentence, Mr. Yadav took on the BJP government for not paying the dues of the sugarcane farmers.

"The BJP is using the policy of divide and rule by misleading the youth in the name of nationalism."

Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) president Ajit Singh lampooned the BJP for its anti-farmer policies and said Narendra Modi could not become the Prime Minister of the nation. "He remained the PM of the BJP."

A sea of humanity descended on the Jamia Tibbia College grounds, as the triumvirate of SP-BSP-RLD gathbandhan, turned up in the historic town for the first in a series of 11 rallies planned across U.P.

The choice of Deoband assumes importance for it is easily accessible from Muzaffarnagar, Kairana and Saharanpur, constituencies that are still recovering from the wounds of Hindu-Muslim and Thakur-Dalit riots of 2013 and 2017 respectively.

At the rally, members of the Bhim Army were seen displaying posters of its chief Chandrashekhar Azad. Ms. Mayawati has spoken against Mr. Azad while Mr. Masood has said that he had the Bhim Army's support.

Rajesh Kumar of Navnauta village said a lot could change during the campaign. "The Dalits want to teach the Yogi government a lesson for its apathy towards the Scheduled Castes during the 2017 riots. Muslims and Dalits are united against the BJP," he claimed.

Young Faizi Usmani said, "If Imran Masood is in our hearts, the mahagathbandhan appeals to the mind because it has Dalit votes. Muslims have a tough choice to make and many of them are still undecided."

"The Congress should have kept this reality in mind before declaring their candidate. As of now SP and the BSP are trying to make one plus one eleven," said SP spokesperson Naved Siddiqui.

Mamata losing ground, says PM

PM using government machinery to intimidate Opposition: West Bengal CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA /AGARTALA/IMPHAL

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was fast losing ground in the State.

At an election meeting in Cooch Behar, his sixth in the State since February 2019 and third after the announcement of polls, Mr. Modi charged Ms. Banerjee with denting the image of West Bengal and not allowing Central funds to come into the State.

"The speed-breaker *Didi* of Bengal is unable to sleep, she is venting all her anger on her officials and the Election Commission. If someone wants to understand what shifting of political grounds feels like they can understand from her anger and frustration," he said.

Hitting back, Ms. Banerjee said the BJP was scared of losing and using the government machinery to intimidate the Opposition.

"By removing two police officers, do you think you can win elections... Who does this kind of politics? Those who are scared," she said, referring to the transfer of senior police officers by the Election Commission.

In a departure from previous meetings in Bengal, Mr. Modi's attacked only the Trinamool, sparing the Congress.

He accused the Trinamool of being involved in the Saradha and Rose Valley chit fund scams, not utilising the Centre's funds and not checking human trafficking and illegal infiltration in the State.

In response, Ms. Banerjee said: "You have said in Cooch Behar that you will seek answers for Saradha-Narada scams... It's your leader [Mukul Roy] who is accused in these and not the Trinamool."

Addressing a rally in Udaipur, 55 km south of Agartala, Mr. Modi again targeted the Trinamool. "People here are more matured. They have waited for a long time for the BJP, but they never gave space to the Trinamool as an alternative to the Left," he said.

At the rally, he slammed the Congress and Left parties on issues of development, corruption, internal security and cross-border terrorism.

He said Opposition parties had now come together to oppose "the *chowkidar* who is working day and night for the country, its progress and strength." He criticised Congress head Rahul Gandhi for forging "a clandestine nexus with Left parties, which had been exposed by his decision to contest from Kerala." During his brief election address in Imphal, the Prime Minister said the Congress, which had been in power for three consecutive terms, had done nothing for the people. The State's talented sportspersons, including pugilist Mary Kom and archer Bombayla Devi Laishram, had done the country proud, but the Congress government had done nothing for them.

Mr. Modi said, "We have given loans to 1,00,000 youths in the State and 4,000 of them are women." He claimed that after the formation of the BJP-led coalition government in Manipur, "blockades of all sorts have become a thing of the past and violence is on the decline."

Raising the pitch: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being garlanded at a campaign rally at the Rash Mela Ground in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal on Sunday. ▪ PTI

BJP more transparent about funding: Jaitley

'Other parties don't disclose donations'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Parties such as the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Samajwadi Party, and the Telugu Desam Party do not declare the full extent of the donations they receive because the bulk are in cash, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said in a blog on Sunday. He said that this was why the donations received by the Bharatiya Janata Party seem larger, because the party prefers transparent means of funding.

"All parties need, on a pro-rata basis, the same amount of money depending on the number of seats they are contesting," Mr. Jaitley wrote. "The only question is 'what is their fund collection culture?' Do they still prefer the old obsolete style of only black money being collected or do they prefer to collect it by legitimate methods like crowd sourcing, cheque and electoral bonds?"

"Obviously, the BJP prefers the latter," Mr. Jaitley added. "It declares larger income and gullible friends in the NGOs believe that they get more. Do they honestly believe the balance sheets of the BSP and the SP, the TDP or several other parties? They obviously don't disclose the income that they get because most of these donations are in cash. This has significantly reduced the credibility of the reports of these NGOs."

BJP declares larger income and gullible friends in the NGOs believe that they get more

He said some NGOs in the country had released two reports, one saying that since the BJP declares a much larger income than other parties, it should be assumed that it gets more donations than other parties. The second report, he said, was on how the BJP gets the majority share of electoral bond donations.

"In 2017, based on the principle of masking the identity link between the party and the donor, the NDA created the instrument of electoral bonds," Mr. Jaitley said. "This instrument provides for a complete white money donation."

Tax officials search Kamal Nath's associates

Congress terms it political vendetta; BJP says thieves are now complaining against the 'watchman'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI/BHOPAL

The Income Tax Department on Sunday searched at least 50 locations here and in Madhya Pradesh against people linked to State Chief Minister Kamal Nath on charges of alleged tax evasion, officials said.

A team of about 200 tax and police officers began the searches around 3 a.m. and some undisclosed cash was recovered, they said.

For the searches, the department had roped in Central Reserve Police Force personnel to keep a vigil.

The searches are linked to suspected movement of hawala money during the election season and tax evasion, they said. Locations in Indore, Bhopal and Delhi (Green Park) were being raided and those being searched included Mr. Nath's former Officer on Special Duty (OSD) Pravin Kakkad, former adviser Rajendra Miglani and executives linked to his brother-in-law's firm Moser Baer and his nephew Ratul Puri's company, the officials said.

Both Mr. Kakkad and Mr. Miglani quit their posts just before the Lok Sabha election was declared.

Mr. Kakkad's family is associated with a number of businesses, including hospitality.

In Indore, a team from Delhi searched Mr. Kakkad's residence at Vijay Nagar and other places associated with him, sources in the department said.

Searches were also conducted at Mr. Kakkad's house in Bhopal's Nadir Colony and a couple of other places in the State capital.

A Congress leader in Madhya Pradesh accused the BJP-led Centre of targeting Opposition leaders for "political vendetta".

However, the BJP said thieves were now having a complaint against the 'watchman'.

Officials entering the residential premises of Rajendra Miglani, former adviser to Kamal Nath, in New Delhi on Sunday. ▪ PTI

CM defends Dy. Speaker in Pollachi case

STAFF REPORTER
COIMBATORE

AIADMK leader and Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Sunday strongly defended Assembly Deputy Speaker Pollachi V. Jayaraman in the sexual abuse and blackmail case, saying the latter had given strength to the complainant, a college girl, to approach the police, which led to the arrest of the accused.

Mr. Palaniswami, for the first time, openly backed Mr. Jayaraman, whose son was sought to be linked to the case by some sections of the Opposition. "Mr. Stalin is politicising the Pollachi incident... But it was Mr. Jayaraman who assured protection to the complainant under the law and guided her to file the complaint," said Mr. Palaniswami.

INTERVIEW | BHAICHUNG BHUTIA

'Our effort is to bring in clean politics'

Ex-captain of Indian football team hopes to end Sikkim Democratic Front's rule

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

Former Indian national football team captain **Bhaichung Bhutia** *has jumped into the electoral fray in his home State of Sikkim by founding the Hamro Sikkim Party. He spoke about the political scenario in the State and the electoral prospects for his party. Excerpts*:

Why did you start your own party and decide to contest the election in Sikkim?

▪ In Sikkim, one political party has been in power for a really long time, 25 years. If you look at the Opposition, you will feel that they are two faces of the same coin. We keep talking about politics, how dirty and how bad it is, but people maintain a distance from politics. Our attempt is also to inspire the youth to join politics, even if they do not join politics they should be aware of it. We have given lot of ticket to the youth. We set up the party in May 2018 and within a year we are contesting both Assembly polls and Lok Sabha polls in Sikkim. We want to give a credible option to the people of Sikkim.

You contested elections on Trinamool Congress ticket in West Bengal, earlier in 2014 and 2016. How has the experience been of leading a party?

▪ Setting up the party has been quite a learning experience for me. On this occasion, we had to select candidates, file nomination papers, reach out to people without any support from outside. We started slowly and now we are building our organisation. Earlier experience was only about fighting elections. It was like only coming to contest polls at the last moment and the whole star thing or a star candidate contesting.

What do you think of the Sikkim Democratic Front government's performance?

▪ While there are claims of development made by the ruling party, people of Sikkim are struggling with their basic necessities. Basic development has not been happening in the past 25 years. The State has a power surplus with so many hydel power projects but there are power cuts. There are no good roads in interior areas of Sikkim. The State has one of the highest levels of unemployment. One in every six youths of the State is into drugs. The suicide rate of the State is one of the highest in the country. These are issues concerning Sikkim that does not come out and are not talked about. Many people across the country are not aware about these issues in the State.

The SDF government claims that it has made Sikkim, the first plastic free and fully organic State in the country...

▪ About 20 lakh tourists visit Sikkim every year. They are allowed to bring plastic bottles. How can the State be plastic-free then? Similarly, for the claims of fully organic State, how can you claim so if you have to buy vegetables from Siliguri.

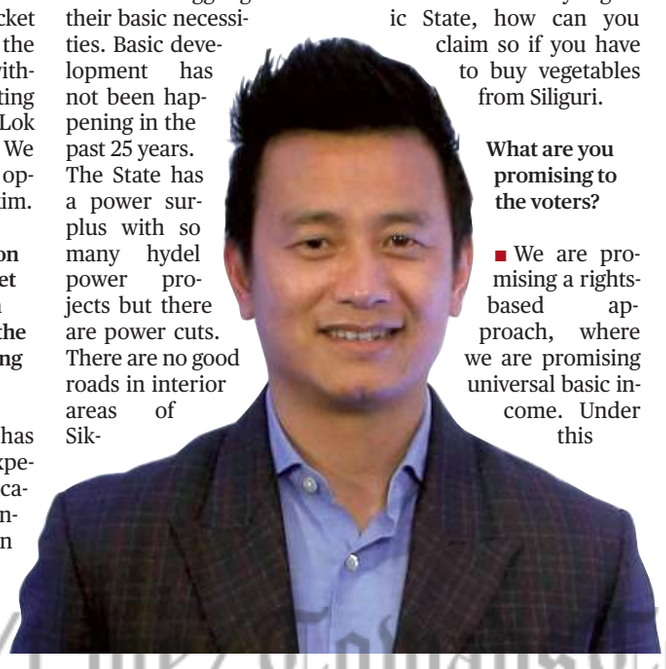
What are you promising to the voters?

▪ We are promising a rights-based approach, where we are promising universal basic income. Under this scheme, every man, woman and child will get ₹18,000 per year or ₹1,500 every month. We are calling the scheme Sikkimey Samman Yojna. We are also promising universal employment to the people of Sikkim, a guaranteed income for farmers. Other than what has been promised in manifesto, we are promising a clean alternative to the people of Sikkim. While there are large-scale allegations against the SDF government in Sikkim, the leader of the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (P.S. Gole) has been convicted in a corruption case. Thus our attempt is give an alternative to the people of Sikkim.

The power-surplus State faces power cuts. One in six youths is into drugs. Suicides are high... These issues are not talked about

Your party is also promising right to sports to every student in Sikkim...

▪ Yes being a small State, we have promised to introduce right to sports in every school in the State. This can be on the lines of Right to Education, where in every school emphasis will be given on sports and it will be made compulsory. By making sports compulsory we can inculcate positive habits among children. This would also put a check on suicide and drug abuse among the children.



India rejects Pak.'s claim of planning another attack

Says Qureshi's comments are 'irresponsible, preposterous'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday rejected as "irresponsible and preposterous" Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's comments that India was planning to attack Pakistan again between April 16 and 20.

In a strongly worded statement, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said the comments by the Pakistani Foreign Minister were aimed at whipping up war hysteria in the region.

'Public gimmick'

"India rejects the irresponsible and preposterous statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan with a clear objective of whipping up war hysteria in the region. This public gimmick appears to be a call to Pakistan-based terrorists to undertake a terror attack in India," Mr. Kumar said.

The MEA spokesperson's statement came hours after Mr. Qureshi said at a press conference in Multan that Pakistan had "reliable intelligence" that India was planning to attack Pakistan again between April 16 and 20.

Mr. Qureshi claimed that ambassadors of the permanent members of the UN Security Council in Islamabad had been informed about "the plan" two days ago.

"We have reliable intelligence that India has made a new scheme and the planning is under way and there are chances of another aggression against Pakistan," he said. "I am saying it with responsibility and I have a responsible position, I know each word I say would make headlines in the international press," he said. Mr. Qureshi said it was aimed at "increasing diplomatic pressure against Pakistan."

India struck a Jaish terror camp inside Pakistan on February 26 nearly two weeks after the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

(With AFP inputs)

Pak. frees 100 Indian fishermen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI

Pakistan on Sunday released 100 Indian fishermen as a "goodwill gesture", media reports said. The fishermen form the first batch of 360 Indian prisoners Pakistan has promised to set free in four phases this month.

The released prisoners have left for Lahore, from where they would be taken to the Wagah border and handed over to the Indian authorities on Monday.

Water attack derails live TV debate

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Congress spokesperson Alok Sharma on Saturday threw a glass of water at BJP spokesperson K.K. Sharma during a live TV debate. The video of the incident has gone viral on social media.

Mr. Alok Sharma lost his cool when his BJP counterpart called him a "traitor" multiple times. He then threw a glass of water at the BJP spokesperson.

The water splashed over the anchor's jacket. No one was hurt. The BJP spokesperson asked Mr. Alok Sharma to apologise for his behaviour. The Congress leader, in turn, sought an apology for being called a traitor.

Akali Dal fields former Minister in Faridkot

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal on Sunday announced the candidature of Gulzar Singh Ranike, a former Minister, for Faridkot, a reserved constituency. While the Congress has fielded folk singer Mohammad Sadiq, the Aam Aadmi Party has renominated Sadhu Singh.

The Shiromani Akali Dal has so far announced seven candidates. Of the total of 13 Lok Sabha seats in the State, the party will contest 10 seats and its ally BJP three.

APPEAL

Nishanth is a one year old child needing your support in bringing a lasting change and a new life. He Suffers from B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and requires **Rs. 6,00,000/-** towards Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. 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 give us your E-mail ID.

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WWS

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INTERVIEW | RAJNATH SINGH

'There is only one party with an ideology — it is the BJP'

Union Home Minister says the Congress is preoccupied with misleading the people to come to power somehow

NISTULA HEBBAR

Accusing the Opposition Congress of trying to fool the people with its minimum income scheme, senior BJP leader and Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** *says the downtrodden sections of society have benefited immensely from the Modi government's schemes such as Ujjwala and the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.*

This election is being seen as a battle between ideologies, of two ideas of India. Do you agree with this?

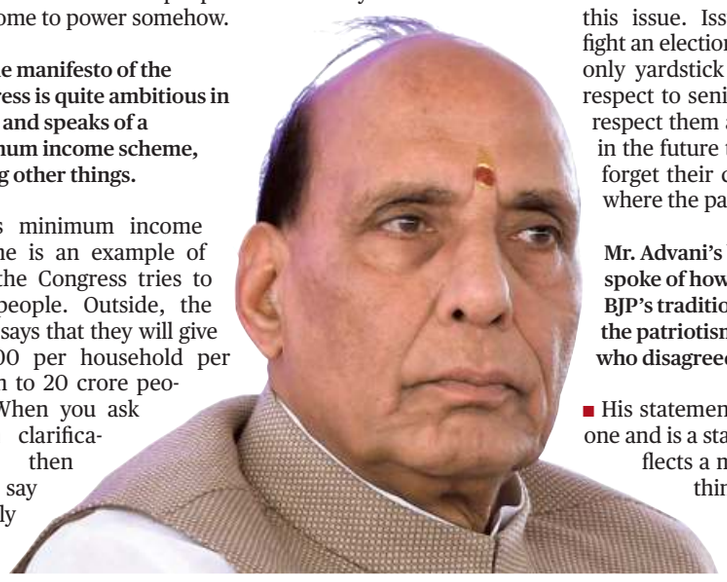
■ This is not a clash of ideologies because I believe that there is only one party with an ideology, and that is the BJP.

What about the Congress?

■ What is the ideology of the Congress? They have only one job – to mislead the people and come to power somehow.

But the manifesto of the Congress is quite ambitious in scope and speaks of a minimum income scheme, among other things.

■ This minimum income scheme is an example of how the Congress tries to fool people. Outside, the party says that they will give ₹12,000 per household per month to 20 crore people. When you ask for a clarification, then they say it's only a top-up, with no clarity on how it will be financed. As far as poverty is concerned, it's not for the first time that they have espoused its removal, but have consistently failed to do so. A Brookings Institute survey showed, however, that in 2016, 12.5 crore people in India were suffering abject poverty but by 2019, that number had come down to five crores. The downtrodden sections of society have benefited immensely from the schemes of the Modi government like Ujjwala, Aawaas Yojana and the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, because there is a visionary thinking behind it.



Congress president Rahul Gandhi has raised the issue of the BJP not respecting its elder leaders like L.K. Advani or Murli Manohar Joshi. Why were they denied ticket?

■ Whether it is Advani*ji* or Joshi*ji*, their contributions cannot be undermined by anyone. To be honest, it was under my presidentship of the party (the second term between 2012 and 2014) that I first mooted the idea that those over 75 years should not be given ticket. I felt we must decide on this issue. Issuing ticket to fight an election cannot be the only yardstick for conveying respect to senior leaders. We respect them and shall do so in the future too. We cannot forget their contribution to where the party is today.

Mr. Advani's blog recently spoke of how it was not the BJP's tradition to question the patriotism of all those who disagreed with it.

■ His statement is a welcome one and is a statement that reflects a mature political thinking.

But the Modi government has been accused of doing the same to opponents and politicising national security issues.

■ Where have we done that? The Congress has attempted to do this, along with other Opposition parties. We have only appreciated the valour of our armed forces, along with the rest of the country, and ask that others do so too. The Opposition parties ask for proof of this valour, put question marks on their bravery.

Opposition parties say, however, that the Prime Minister wants to walk away with the credit that should accrue to the armed forces or scientists in the case of the ASAT test.

■ I really don't know why they ask that question and that, too, without any reference to what has happened in the past. In 1971, when under late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Pakistan was cleaved into two. At that time too, Atal*ji* (former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee) stood up in Parliament and commended her political will and direction and the whole country applauded her. Why shouldn't Prime Minister Modi be praised for similar political will? These people (Opposition) did not even observe common courtesy, that they congratulate the Prime Minister on political direction.

As far as the ASAT test is considered, we had the capability to do this under previous governments, but we were able to carry out the test under Prime Minister Modi because he signed off on it. There is no doubt that credit does accrue to the scientists, but the political decision has to be credited to the Prime Minister.

> **No calls for freedom of expression can abridge the offence of trying to break the country**

The Election Commission has referred to your Ministry the issue of Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh's partisan remarks. Is there any forward movement?

■ I haven't looked into it yet. I have been told it has been sent to the Home Ministry. I have been travelling for campaign lately, but I will look into it.

The Congress manifesto also speaks of abolition of the Act on sedition and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA). What is your view?

■ I was astounded to learn that the Congress party, in its manifesto, has called for the abolition of the Act on sedition. That those who say or do anything to break the country, to hurt its integrity and security, should they not be punished? No calls for freedom of expression can abridge the offence of trying to break the country. Such a freedom of expression is not acceptable to me, and I cannot condone any scrapping of the law that allows for talking about, or conspiring to, breaking the country. As far as the AFSPA is concerned, the way our armed forces have managed to combat insurgency in various parts of the country, this Act is important. But wherever the situation has become normal, we have also withdrawn the AFSPA, as in Tripura, Meghalaya and parts of Arunachal Pradesh. There will be a periodic review for whether it is required in a particular place or not.

What is your view on the demand that the National Security Adviser be brought under parliamentary oversight.

The NSA is an adviser to the Prime Minister on security related issues, and the latter is answerable to Parliament in any case. The final decision is not taken by the NSA, but by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Committee on Security, etc., which is made up of Ministers who are anyway answerable to Parliament. I do not know who is advising such things to the Congress.

POLL POURRI

Rijiju faces a tough fight

ITANAGAR
A tough fight awaits Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju on his home turf — the Arunachal West constituency. The National People's Party (NPP), a member of an anti-Congress forum helmed by the BJP, has put up Khyoda Apik as its candidate opposite Mr. Rijiju, 47. The Union Minister also has to contend with 54-year-old Congress candidate Nabam Tuki, who was ousted as Chief Minister three years ago, and Janata Dal (Secular) candidate Jarjum Ete. Ms. Ete, 56, is the first woman candidate fielded by any party for a Lok Sabha seat in Arunachal Pradesh. Locals believe Ms. Ete, by virtue of her campaigns against child marriage and polygamy, enjoys popularity among women voters, who outnumber men in Arunachal Pradesh. Of the 7,94,162 voters in the State, 4,01,601 are women.

Stay neutral, EC tells agencies

NEW DELHI
The Election Commission on Sunday issued an advisory to enforcement agencies under the Finance Ministry, directing them to be absolutely neutral while carrying out any operation. The EC also directed the agencies to keep the State Chief Electoral Officers (CEO) informed about any action taken against abuse of money power. The advisory is learnt to have been issued in the wake of searches conducted by the agencies in Delhi, Bhopal, Indore and Goa on Sunday. It is alleged that the respective CEOs were not immediately alerted about the searches.

'Will PM take south challenge?'

NEW DELHI
Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Kerala's Wayanad constituency shows he has the confidence to win from both north and south India, senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said on Sunday and asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi would have the courage to fight from a seat in Kerala or Tamil Nadu. With Mr. Gandhi filing his nomination from Wayanad, Mr. Tharoor added that there was palpable excitement across the southern States that the next Prime Minister could be elected from the the region. He slammed Mr. Modi and the BJP for suggesting that Mr. Gandhi chose Wayanad to "run away" from majority dominated areas, saying the ruling party had repeatedly resorted to peddling bigotry. It was dismaying that this was coming from the Prime Minister, he added. PTI

Tribute to Pulwama victims

GUWAHATI
Hafiz Bashir Ahmed Qasimi, the All India United Democratic Front MLA from western Assam's Bilasipara West constituency, was on Sunday adjudged the best legislator for 2018-19. Soon after receiving the award from Assembly Speaker Hitendra Nath Goswami, Mr. Qasimi dedicated the award, including ₹1 lakh, to the victims of the Pulwama terror attack.

Selfie contest on voting day

GUWAHATI
Mizoram Chief Electoral Officer Ashish Kundra has announced a selfie contest for young and first-time voters on April 11, the day of election to the lone Lok Sabha seat in the State. Eligible voters will have to post selfies showing their finger marked with the indelible ink or their voters' ID on Instagram with #MizoramVotes, or send it to the election office's WhatsApp number. The best three selfies will win ₹7,000, ₹3,000, and ₹2,000. "This is to encourage first-time voters to exercise their franchise," Mr. Kundra said.

₹5,000 for jobless graduates

ITANAGAR
Less than a fortnight after Congress president Rahul Gandhi promised minimum annual income of ₹72,000 for 20% poorest families in India, the party's Arunachal Pradesh unit has offered ₹5,000 per month for every graduate unemployed youth in the State. State Congress president Takam Sanjoy, who is contesting the Lekang Assembly seat, said this would not be all. The party would also provide a one-time grant of up to ₹20 lakh for higher education to deserving students.

> **You can run Mr. Modi but you can't hide. Your karma is about to catch up with you. The country can hear it in your voice. Truth is a powerful thing. I challenge you to a debate on corruption**
>
> RAHUL GANDHI
> CONGRESS PRESIDENT

Ripple effect

To the last voter: With Congress president Rahul Gandhi contesting the Wayanad seat, party workers across Kerala are in a buoyant mood. Here, in Chellanam, a coastal village near Kochi, campaigners use country boats to reach voters on small islands. ■ H. VIBHU

We will reply to bullets with bombs, says Shah

'PM Modi has made country secure'

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

While Congress may "shower love on Pakistan", the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will reply to every bullet with bombs, said BJP president Amit Shah in Odisha on Sunday.

Mr. Shah, who addressed two public meetings in Ganjam and Bargarh district, ridiculed the statement of Indian Overseas Congress chief Sam Pitroda that the airstrike on Pakistan was not the right approach on India's part following the Pulwama terror attack.

"The Narendra Modi government has made the country more secure. There had been a Congress government for 10 years. During that period, terrorists kept intruding, exploding bombs and fleeing. There was nobody to catch them," he said.

"When everyone supported India's airstrike, with youths bursting crackers and distributing sweets, there was mourning in two camps. While there was mourning in Pakistan, Congress president Rahul Gandhi was crestfallen," said the BJP chief.

Amit Shah

Taking a dig at Mr. Pitroda, Mr. Shah said, "Sam Pitroda, guru of Mr. Gandhi, said what will airstrike bring, country should hold talks with Pakistan. Sam Pirod*aji*, *Pakistan ke sath aap ILU* (I love U) *ILU kijiye, hum to wahan se goli ayegi to gole se jawab denge* (Mr. Pitroda, you may shower love on Pakistan, but we will reply to every bullet with bombs)."

[**IN FOCUS:** UTTARAKHAND]

Where the battle is between Modi and Pakistan

The main topic of discussion here is national security and the Prime Minister's 'muscular' stance against the 'enemy'

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
HARIDWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's April 5 rally here was large, but the organisers were upset that the parade ground was not swamped by supporters.

Police sources who oversaw the recent rally and the one in 2014, said that last time, supporters spilled over to the nearby markets. Probably, they depend more on WhatsApp and TV coverage than on actual physical presence, the sources said.

It's clear that Mr. Modi's appeal has shrunk a bit but the fact remains that the election in Uttarakhand's five Lok Sabha seats is essentially about him and his "muscular" anti-Pakistan stance.

None of the BJP's five sitting MPs from the State appears to have any overwhelming popularity. What has impressed many voters is Mr. Modi's ability to hit back at Pakistan.

"We voters do not think of jobs and demonetisation's impact on the national economy. We don't think that way," said a resident of Dehradun's business district, lauding the strong response of the Prime Minister to the terror attack on CRPF personnel in Pulwama.

Prime Minister Modi, as expected, highlighted national security during his speech in Dehradun, saying, "There are some people in the country whose actions are applauded by our enemy Pakistan." He tried to paint the Congress as an opponent of the armed forces that will do away with the AFSPA if elected to power. The AFSPA, he said, was a *rakhsha kavach*.

A source inside the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said there were grievances against the BJP MPs from the State. However, the Centre's *Char Dham* road connectivity project has won much appreciation.

"Uttarakhand is a mountainous State and the road construction in the last four years has generated a lot of positive sentiments towards the Central government," said local businessman D.S. Mathur, who is however critical of the State's environment policy.

Rawat's charisma

If the BJP is banking on Mr. Modi, the Congress depends on the regional clout of its leaders. Among the contenders from the Congress is Harish Rawat for the Nainital seat. Mr. Rawat's charisma cuts across party lines. He is as popular as the BJP's B.C. Khanduri and Bhagat Singh Koshiyari. With more than four decades of public service behind him, Mr. Rawat, as a former Chief Minister and general secretary of the Congress, is a formidable player.

One factor working against him is the lack of sufficient time for campaign, Congress candidate Manish Khanduri for the Pauri seat told *The Hindu*. The State goes to the polls on the first day of the election season.

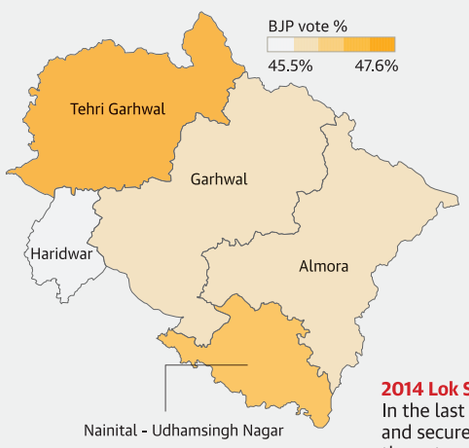
However, the real concern is that though Mr. Manish Khanduri had created a splash by joining the Congress on March 16, his father B.C. Khanduri not crossing over has created some confusion at the local level.

Pritam Singh in Tehri Garhwal is also seen as a major challenger to BJP's Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah.

The Haridwar constituency will witness a strong contest between Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank of the BJP and Ambrish Kumar of the Congress. Here, the minority votes are expected to flow to the Congress, if Rahul Gandhi's April 6 rally is any indication.

Saffron sweep

If the 2017 Assembly election results were aggregated for Lok Sabha seats, the BJP would have led in all the constituencies in Uttarakhand. Map shows the vote percentage of the BJP in Lok Sabha seats based on the 2017 Assembly results



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat with BJP's State poll in-charge Thawar Chand Gehlot during the Lok Sabha election management committee meeting at the party office in Dehradun. ■ PTI

2014 Lok Sabha results
In the last Lok Sabha election, the BJP won all the five seats and secured 56% of the votes. The Congress secured 34% of the votes

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

ELSEWHERE

Iran seeks removal of U.S. troops from Iraq

TEHRAN

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has called on Iraq to demand that U.S. troops leave "as soon as possible", warning that the U.S. is plotting to remove the Iraqi government. The remarks came during a visit to Tehran on Saturday by Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi. AFP

Protesters seek Army's help in ousting Bashir

KHARTOUM

Thousands of Sudanese protesters rallied outside the Army's headquarters in the capital on Sunday for a second day calling on the military to back them in demands that President Omar al-Bashir resign as police fired tear gas to disperse them. REUTERS

Spanish PM rules out referendum on Catalonia

MADRID

There will be no independence for Catalonia, nor a referendum on the question if the socialists are returned to power, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez told supporters on Sunday. "No is no," Mr. Sánchez told a Socialist Party meeting at Zaragoza, in the northeast region of Aragon, ahead of the April 28 legislative elections. AFP

Afghan team to 'exchange views' with Taliban

KABUL

Afghanistan is sending a delegation to "exchange views" with the Taliban in Qatar, an official said on Sunday, in an ongoing push to find a way out of the country's 17-year-old war. Fresh talks are expected to take place in Doha later this month, where Taliban members are due to meet with Afghan officials and other stakeholders. AFP

Libyan commander's rebel forces launch strike on Tripoli

Fighting between the two camps has so far killed 21 people, says government

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TRIPOLI

The conflict shaking Libya escalated on Sunday as forces of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar launched an air strike on a suburb of Tripoli and the UN-backed government vowed a major counteroffensive.

The United Nations called for an urgent two-hour truce to allow evacuations of civilians and the wounded, while the unity government said the fighting had so far killed 21 people.

Rivalries between the two camps threaten to plunge the country into a full-blown civil war after Field Marshal Haftar on Thursday launched an offensive on Tripoli. After a pause overnight, fierce fighting flared anew on on Sunday morning south of the capital between Field Marshal Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA) and forces backing the internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA). As clashes raged in the mainly farmland region of Wadi Raba and the destroyed international airport south of the capital, a spokesman for pro-GNA forces announced a counteroffensive against Field Marshal Haftar's forces.

Colonel Mohamed Gnounou told reporters that operation "Volcano of Anger" was aimed at "purging all Libyan cities of aggressor and illegitimate forces", in reference to Field Marshal Haftar's fighters. The U.S. military said on Sunday that it had temporarily pulled an unspecified number of its troops out of Libya "in response to security conditions on the ground".

Field Marshal Haftar's offensive came as UN chief Antonio Guterres visited Libya Thursday days ahead of a planned UN-backed conference aimed at uniting Libya's rivals and paving the way for elections.

Rebel fighters: Libyan National Army members, commanded by Khalifa Haftar, advancing towards Tripoli. REUTERS

'CRPF personnel evacuated'

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL
NEW DELHI

India has evacuated its entire contingent of peacekeeping forces, comprising 15 CRPF personnel, from Tripoli after the situation there "suddenly worsened", according to External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

"The situation in Libya has suddenly worsened. There is fighting in Tripoli. Indian Embassy in Tunisia @IndiainTunisia has evacuated the entire contingent of 15 CRPF personnel yesterday itself. I appreciate the excellent work by the Indian Embassy in Tunisia. #Libya," tweeted Ms. Swaraj. The CRPF contingent is deployed for peacekeeping purposes, she said.

Rwanda is a family again, 25 years after genocide: Kagame

President says the country is more united than ever before

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KIGALI

President Paul Kagame said on Sunday that Rwandans had become a family again, 25 years after more than 8,00,000 people were slaughtered in a genocide that shocked the world.

Mr. Kagame lit a remembrance flame at the Kigali Genocide Memorial, where more than 2,50,000 victims are believed to be buried, mainly from the minority Tutsi people, as the country began its annual 100 days of mourning that coincide with the length of the slaughter.

They are only some of those killed by the genocidal Hutu forces, members of the old army and militia forces called the "Interahamwe", that began their bloody campaign of death on April 7, 1994, the day after the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu. Some were shot; most were beaten or hacked by machetes.

"In 1994, there was no hope, only darkness. Today, light radiates from this place ... How did it happen? Rwanda became a family once again," Mr. Kagame said. "The arms of our people, intertwined, constitute the pillars of our nation. We hold each other up. Our bodies and minds bear amputations and scars, but none of us is alone. Together, we have woven the tattered threads of our unity into a new tapestry," he said.

Mr. Kagame was speaking at the Kigali Convention Centre, a dome-shaped auditorium in the centre of the capital, a modern building emblematic of the regeneration of Rwanda.

"Our people have carried an immense weight with little or no complaint. This has made us better and more united than ever before," Mr. Kagame said.

The killings lasted until Mr. Kagame, then 36, led the mainly Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) into Kigali on July 4, ending the slaughter and taking control of the devastated country.

(From left) African Union chief Moussa Faki, Paul Kagame, wife Jeannette and European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker lighting a remembrance flame in Kigali. AFP

Former President Nasheed makes a triumphant return to Parliament

'I have had good days but none as good as this,' says MDP leader; President Solih dispels rumours of a rift in Maldives' ruling coalition

MEERA SRINIVASAN
MALE

Former President and popular leader of the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), Mohamed Nasheed, was among the major winners in Saturday's parliamentary polls – the third multi-party contest in the Indian Ocean archipelago that saw President Ibrahim Solih's party heading for a majority.

The popular MDP leader has lived in exile – in the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka – following a widely-disputed criminal conviction in 2015 that many believe was politically motivated during former President Abdulla Yameen's tenure.

Mr. Nasheed returned to the Maldives only after his party colleague Mr. Solih became President last year.

In Saturday's polls, Mr. Nasheed, 51, won a seat from Male, nearly two decades after the lawyer-activist was first elected a Member of Parliament.

Maldives former President Mohamed Nasheed in Male in November last year. REUTERS

On the election win and his party's significant gain, Mr. Nasheed said he had not had a better day in his political career.

"I have had bad days, mind you, very bad days. And I have had good days but none as good as this. I have spent all my life working to build a political party in a very feudalistic society and tonight we have finally succeeded," he told *The Hindu*.

Alliance intact

Speaking to a large crowd of supporters as early results came in on Sunday, President Solih dispelled rumours of about possible splits within the coalition that backed him for presidency last year.

The speculation followed the MDP's decision to go it alone in the general election, reportedly upsetting other members of the ruling alliance. They saw the MDP as reneging on an earlier pledge to stay together for the parliamentary polls.

President Solih is widely credited with holding the coalition together despite growing differences. "Many of our coalition partners in the government were contenders in this election – some were our opponents. I assure the people, as I've done time and again, the coalition remains intact," he told the scores supporters, all dressed in the party's yellow colour, at Male's sea front.

In February, Speaker Gasim Ibrahim, who leads coalition partner Jumhooree Party, refused to call a vote on a bill granting legal powers to presidential commissions tasked with recovering stolen assets and probing unresolved murders.

The main Opposition Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), led by former President Abdulla Yameen, whose leadership was tainted by accusations of large-scale corruption and authoritarianism, fielded candidates in just a quarter of the seats. As per results declared so far, the PPM has lost in most.

Netanyahu pledges to annex West Bank settlements after polls

This could sound the death knell for a two-state solution

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has pledged to annex settlements in the occupied West Bank if he wins Tuesday's elections, a deeply controversial move that could prove to be the death knell for a two-state solution.

His comments late on Saturday, just days before the closely-fought April 9 poll, could be seen as an appeal to right-wing voters who do not believe in the feasibility of a peace agreement with the Palestinians. "I will apply (Israeli) sovereignty, but I don't distinguish between settlement blocs and isolated settlements," he said in an interview with Channel 12 television. He did not provide details on how quickly he planned to move ahead with it and whether it would involve all settlements.

If done on a large-scale, annexation could end already fading hopes for a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

Settlements built on land occupied by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War are deemed illegal by the international community and their ongoing construction is seen as a major barrier to peace. Senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat said Mr. Netanyahu's statement on annexation was "not surprising".

"Israel will continue to brazenly violate international law for as long as the international community will continue to reward Israel with impunity, particularly with the Trump administration's support," he tweeted.

In an interview broadcast Friday, Mr. Netanyahu said he told U.S. President Donald Trump he would not remove settlements or people as part of a future American peace plan. "I said there shouldn't be the removal of even one settlement" from the West Bank, Mr. Netanyahu told Israel's Channel 13 television.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu. REUTERS

Erdoğan's AKP to seek vote recount

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISTANBUL

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's party said on Sunday that it will demand a recount of all ballots cast in Istanbul during last week's mayoral election won by an Opposition candidate.

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) will make the demand by 5 p.m. (1400 GMT), its vice-president Ali İhsan Yavuz said. A recount is already under way in several of Istanbul's 39 districts. On Saturday, a party spokesman said the AKP would accept the results of recounts.

The AKP won most votes nationwide, but results showed the ruling party lost capital Ankara and was also narrowly defeated in Istanbul in what would be one of their worst setbacks while in power.

'Democrats will never see Trump's tax returns'

Chief of Staff dismisses request

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's tax returns will never be handed over to Democratic lawmakers, White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney said on Sunday, defying an effort in Congress to learn more about the Republican leader's personal finances.

Asked on "Fox News Sunday" if congressional Democrats will succeed in obtaining Mr. Trump's tax returns, Mr. Mulvaney said: "Never. Nor should they."

He dismissed an effort to obtain the returns, launched formally on Wednesday by U.S. House of Representatives tax committee Chairman Richard Neal, as a political ploy from Democrats who will never stop attacking Mr. Trump.

"Democrats are demanding that the IRS turn over the documents. That is not going to happen, and they know it. This is a political stunt," Mr. Mulvaney said.

Democrats fired back that Mr. Neal's request to the Treasury Department is grounded in law and a needed inquiry, given Mr. Trump's refusal to disclose his tax records and to divest himself of his business interests.

U.S. Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney. AFP

Algerian MPs to name interim leader on Tuesday

Speaker Bensalah to be President

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ALGIERS

Algeria's Parliament is set to meet on Tuesday to name an interim successor to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, state media reported, after mass protests pushed the ailing leader from power.

"It was decided to hold a meeting of the two chambers of Parliament on Tuesday... at 9:00 a.m. (0800 GMT)," the upper house of Parliament said Saturday in a statement carried by the official APS news agency.

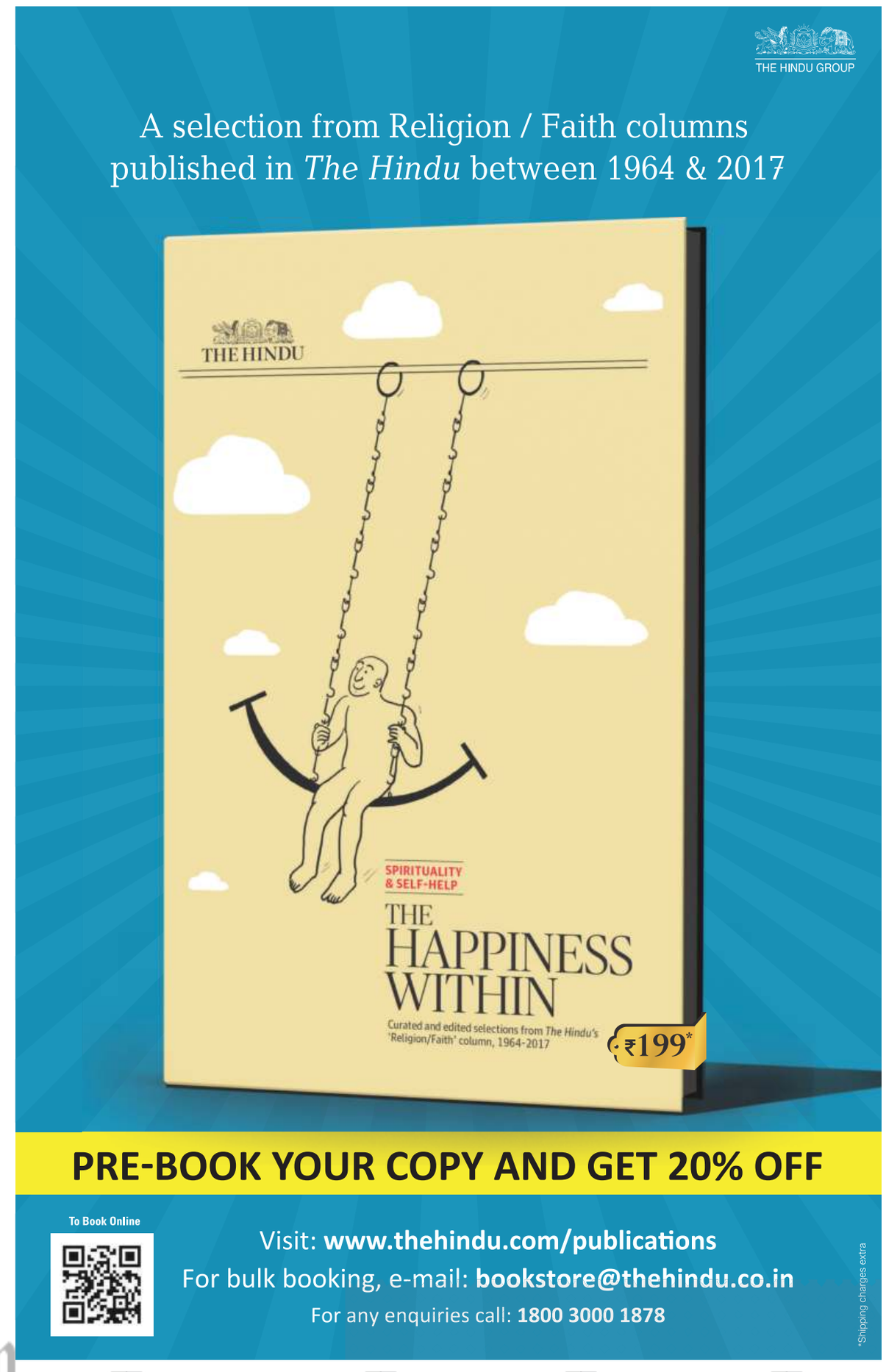
90-day tenure

Algeria's Constitution stipulates that the Speaker of the upper house of Parliament, currently Abdelkader Bensalah, 77, should take the presidential reins. He is to serve for up to 90 days, during which a presidential election must be organised.

The lawmakers are expected to finalise the "vacancy of the post of President... and then designate Abdelkader Bensalah as head of state", said communications head for the upper house of Parliament Salim Rabahi.

Faced with massive street protests across the North African country, Mr. Bouteflika ceded power earlier this week after two decades in power.

Algerians took to the streets across the country on Friday in a continued push for sweeping reform, calling out Boutleflika regime stalwarts who have been entrusted with overseeing the political transition.



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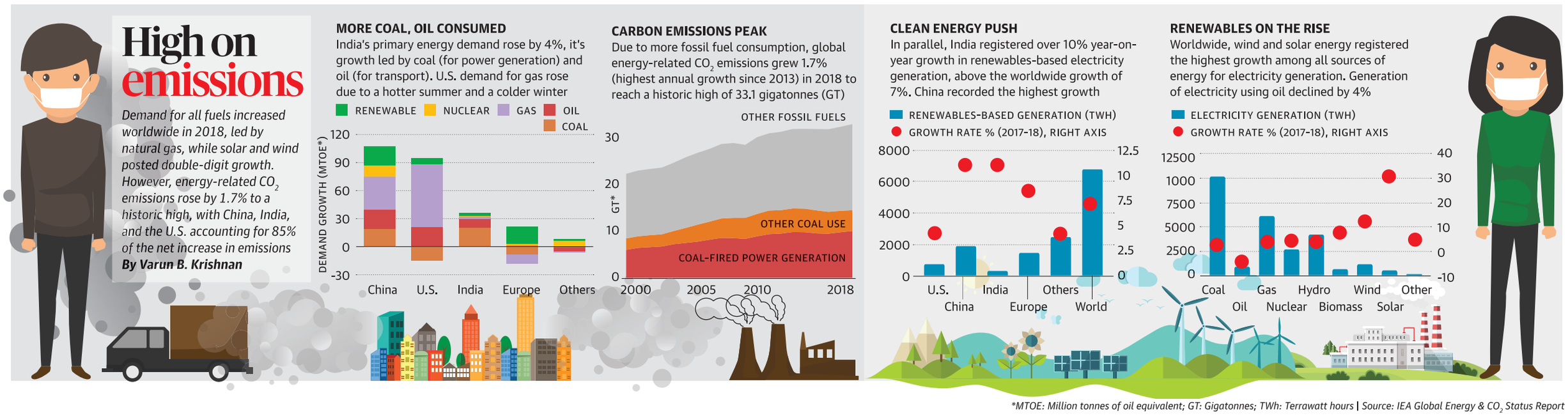


*MTOE: Million tonnes of oil equivalent; GT: Gigatonnes; TWh: Terrawatt hours | Source: IEA Global Energy & CO_2 Status Report

INTERVIEW | MUKESH KUMAR JAIN

'We want to reduce corporate exposure to 25% in five years'

We don't need to raise capital for 3 years, says OBC's managing director

MANOJIT SAHA

Mukesh Kumar Jain, *MD and CEO, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), talks about the lender's growth plans and strategy in an interaction. OBC had come out of RBI's prompt corrective action (PCA) in January. Edited excerpts:*

Have you seen any improvement in growth after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) removed OBC from prompt corrective action (PCA)?

■ Yes. Now we are expecting over 10% growth in loans. Till the end of the third quarter, credit growth was 5.3%. We are extending loans only to highly-rated companies which are AAA or AA, apart from the retail and MSME segments.

OBC saw a sharp decline in net non-performing asset (NPA) ratio in the October-December quarter, that fell to 7.15% as on December 31 from 10.07% in the preceding quarter. Do you think the ratio will be less than 6% by March end? What is the one-year road map for NPA reduction?

■ Yes. Net NPAs will be below 6% by March 31. Gross NPAs, which were 15.82% in March, will also come down. We also have a healthy provision coverage of 75%. Going ahead, I see net NPA ratio falling below 5% by the end of the financial year 2019-20 and gross NPA ratio will be under 10%.

Have you been able to contain slippages?

■ In the last two years, our quarterly slippages were in the range of ₹3,000 crore. But in FY19, the slippages have been contained to below ₹3,000 crore. In the first quarter, it was ₹2,800 crore, about ₹1,450 crore in the second, ₹1,293 in the third quarter. So, there is a declining trend even if there was a negative surprise like IL&FS. This trend will continue in the fourth quarter also and FY20 will be better. We are expecting slippages of ₹1,000 per quarter in FY20.

What is the exposure you have to cases referred to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)?

■ In the first RBI list, i.e. the 12 cases that were referred to NCLT, our exposure was ₹3,364 crore where we had 81% provision till December. In the second list, we have an exposure of ₹2,513 crore and a provision coverage of 91%. Up to December, we have filed 164 accounts [for resolution] in the NCLT, where the amount involved is ₹15,000 crore. Provision is more than ₹12,500 crore, which is over 85%.

While we file cases in NCLT, we always try to go in for a one-time settlement with the party. So, we are using NCLT as a pressure tactic. In such cases, we take a relatively lower haircut of about 20%.

What kind of business growth do you see in FY20?

■ We have made profit in the last two quarters – which has come after seven quarters. Now, we feel we are on the profit trajectory.

Our aim is to have quality growth because the bank has suffered from corporate advances. So, our focus is retail and MSME. We will also extend loans to the mid-corporate segment but only to highly-rated (firms]. So, our growth target is not something big. We are looking at around 10% growth only but the focus is on quality and good margins.

On the deposit side, we are focusing on current and savings account deposits (CASA). We will end up with around 31% CASA [as a proportion of total deposits] this year. We aim to increase it to 35% by March 2020. We are also focusing on digitisation which will also help growth in CASA. Overall deposit growth will be 8%.

What is the share of corporate advances? Are you planning to reduce your dependence on corporate loans?

■ The share of loans to retail, agriculture and MSME is 52% and corporate advances are 48% of the loan book. Since most of the NPAs came from the corporate sector in the last few years, we are slowly reducing our exposure to the corporate sector. Our target is to reduce corporate exposure by 500 bps every year. Over a period of five years, we want to reduce our corporate exposure to 25% while in the RAM [retail, agriculture and MSMEs] sector we will have 75% exposure.

What is the capital-raising plan for FY20?

■ We do not have any need for capital for the next 3 years. We recently raised ₹250 crore via employee stock purchase scheme. The main reason is that we are expecting good recovery from large corporate accounts. For example, our NPAs in Bhusan Power and Steel is ₹1,616 crore. When that is resolved, about ₹850 crore will be added to our profit. This is expected to be resolved in Q2 of FY20. Since recovery will be strong, we will not need to raise capital in the next three years. We will be be able to generate capital to fund a growth of 10-12% for the next three years.

Knotty times for Tiruppur knitwear industry

The ₹46,000-cr. hub faces testing times with thinning margins, declining overseas demand and relatively high labour costs

M. SOUNDARIYA PREETHA

Tiruppur, a hub for knitwear, and its nearby areas, boast of a ₹46,000-crore annual apparel business and house the entire ecosystem that supports the industry.

Almost every street in this 159-sq.km. city witnesses some activity related to knitwear production.

Yet, all has not been well in Tiruppur for the past three years. Export growth is not up to the expected level, investments have been need-based, and there is a struggle to be price-competitive.

"We targeted annual business of ₹1 lakh-crore by 2020, including domestic sales. In the five years between 2012 and 2017, annual exports increased from ₹10,500 crore to ₹26,000 crore.

The growth was flat for the last two or three years. However, we are confident of reaching the target by 2022," says Raja M. Shanmugham, president of Tiruppur Exporters' Association (TEA).

His confidence stems from the recent announcement by the government that all embedded taxes in exports would be reimbursed.

The incentives that the industry received before implementation of GST through different schemes worked out to nearly 13.2%. This was reduced to 5.7% after GST, he says.

Thin margins

"Margins are thin for garment exporters. They can absorb the costs if the incentives were reduced by 3% to 4%. But when there is a drastic cut, it affects liquidity," adds A. Sakthivel, vice-chairman of Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC).

So, why are government policies, and support, critical for garment exporters in Tiruppur? In supplier conferences, buyers give priority to countries that have GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) benefits.

Buyers compare Indian prices with those of Bangladesh, says S.K. Kathiresh, joint managing director of Carona Knitwear.

Bangladesh exports

Annual garment exports from Bangladesh come to about $37 billion, Vietnam clocks $27 billion, and from Cambodia exports $12 billion worth. According to AEPC data, clothing exports from India in 2016-2017 were $17.47 billion, $16.72 billion in 2017-2018, and in the current fiscal till January, exports were $12.8 billion.

> **The inherent strengths of Tiruppur have helped it sustain exports for the last two years**
> A. SAKTHIVEL
> vice-chairman, AEPC

Global race

The industry is witnessing a global race where there is more competition. Some countries have an advantage because of the GSP and the support from their respective governments. Buying trends are also changing.

Some brands have gone in for 16 seasons in a year and have a signature design for each season.

This means garments for each season need to be supplied on time. The exporting units need to adapt to these changes and go with the rhythm, says Mr. Shanmugham.

Despite the challenges, it is the inherent strengths of Tiruppur, and its focus on efficiency and technology that have helped it sustain exports for the last two years, according to Mr. Sakthivel.

The exporters are of the view that they will be able to bag orders if they are price-competitive.

Since countries such as Bangladesh and Cambodia have the GSP advantage, the Indian government's support is crucial for the garment industry.

But, the recent decline in overseas demand has dampened this momentum. Focus on key three areas – incentivising technology upgrades, expanding to new markets, and product innovation – can turn the situation around.

Technology upgrades

India cannot compete on lowering labour costs. The focus should be on expanding schemes for technology upgrades and introducing more policies that incentivise apparel exporters to upgrade technology. Exporters must look to new and emerging markets.

Four markets show high potential for future growth – the U.K., Chile, Israel and Japan. They should identify products with high growth potential and leverage individual strengths such as technology innovation, a report by Drip Capital says.

The knitwear industry in Tiruppur is largely in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) segment. However, its profile is witnessing gradual changes.

Of the 1,500-odd direct exporters, the number of exporting units with more than ₹100-crore turnover is more than what it was a few years ago and there are at least 20 units with more than ₹500-crore turnover.

The number of letter-head exporters has reduced drastically after GST, say industry sources.

The Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) has a positive outlook for exports next financial year.

The opportunities are huge for apparel exports as consumers wear multiple attires in a day – for exercise, work, casual wear, and the like. Further, western brands are eyeing Asian markets for sales, mainly the Indian market. For apparel makers, the market is only growing with this trend.

After the recent announcement by the government on reimbursing embedded taxes, the sentiment is upbeat.

"We are signing orders now. Industries need more working capital. Similar to the 59-minute loan approval scheme for MSMEs, the government should introduce a scheme for working capital," says Mr. Kathiresh.

Several common infrastructure facilities have been added by private players and those with government support. Mr. Shanmugham says the knitwear units will leverage on the opportunities in technical textiles soon.

Europe, a key market

A leading exporter and integrated player in Tiruppur says Europe is the key market for Tiruppur.

The EU and U.S., together, constitute 70% of the market for knitwear exporters.

Quality and delivery are important for exporters to gain the confidence of buyers. Prices can be negotiated. So, managements should focus on ensuring quality even when prices are under stress.

Changes for better operation and management processes need to be adopted by all stakeholders in the knitwear town for it to leap to the next growth trajectory.

Weft and warp: Since countries such as Bangladesh and Cambodia have the GSP advantage, the Centre's support is crucial for the Indian garment industry. ▪ S. SIVA SARAVANAN

No threat to biggies yet but SFBs gathering steam

The ₹30,000-crore deposits held by small finance banks constitute only 0.2% of all scheduled commercial banks' deposits

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN

Although the consensus opinion in the industry is that small finance banks do not pose a threat to either conventional banks or non-banking financial companies (NBFC), the sector has nevertheless been seeing remarkable growth in credit disbursement as well as deposits, albeit on a low base.

Data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) show that the small finance banks, in total, saw their deposits grow 31.6% in the third quarter (ended December) of this financial year, compared with the second quarter.

On a year-on-year basis, this growth was 193.4%. The previous quarters saw even faster growth, with Q2 at 306%, Q1 at 331%, and the fourth quarter of the previous year at 387.5% on a year-on-year basis.

This phenomenal growth, however, has come on a very small base and that's perhaps why the bigger banks and NBFCs don't see small finance banks as a competition just yet.

In context, the ₹30,000 crore of deposits (as of December end) in small finance banks makes up just 0.2% of the deposits in all scheduled commercial banks.

Similarly, the ₹51,673 crore of loans, given by these banks, makes up just 0.6% of the total lending undertaken by the scheduled commercial banks. "If you look at the genesis of small finance banks, they have all emerged from being a non-deposit NBFC or micro-lenders," said Gaurav Anand, co-founder, Namaste Credit, a marketplace for loans.

"They were catering to a segment of the market that was not catered to by regular banks. I don't think it's a direct competition, but is complementary."

The belief is that the overall market for credit is so big that there is no scope for competition yet. Rather, as the market itself grows, the scope for more players to grow also increases.

"Our belief is that the small finance banks are probably not eating into the market share of the NBFCs either," Lucas Bianchi, another co-founder of Namaste Credit, added.

Growing market

"What's largely happening is that the market is growing and there's space for growth for everybody. There are many different segments and not all those segments have been catered to."

This sentiment is echoed by the NBFC players as well, who say that the lack of penetration in the market has meant that there is no phenomenon where small finance banks are eating into the market share of NBFCs.

"Because the market is very large and very under-penetrated, we are not likely to see any pressure from any player in terms of competition in the market," said Sanjay Sharma, managing director, Aye Finance.

"Has the competition changed from three years back to today? I can't say there has been a significant change there either.

"Small finance banks will eventually target the same segments as us, but today they are still trying to come to terms with the setting up the liabilities side of their business, which is the deposits," Mr. Sharma added.

More time to settle

Sanjay Kao, chief business officer, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, also explained that the industry was still in its infancy, where several players were trying out different models. The overall model followed by the industry would settle only in a couple of years, he said.

"There are two arms to a small finance bank, like in any other bank," Mr. Kao explained. "One is the asset arm, and the other is the liability arm. If you look at all the small finance banks, all of them have been micro-finance institutions (MFI) in the past, so the asset business and asset base, which is the lending side of things, has always been there.

What has happened is that a few more loan verticals have been added.

"On the deposit side, it's new for all of us, so it must grow," Mr. Kao added. "It should grow at 120-170%, if not more, depending on the base that each bank operates on. The slowdown in Q3 is, in my mind, due to an increase in the base. If you look at the absolute numbers, I don't think there has been a slowdown, certainly not in the case of Ujjivan."

The lending side of small finance banks has also seen strong growth. The RBI data shows that the total lending by small finance banks grew 88% in the third quarter of this financial year, 235% in Q2, 410% in Q1, and 449% in the fourth quarter of the previous financial year.

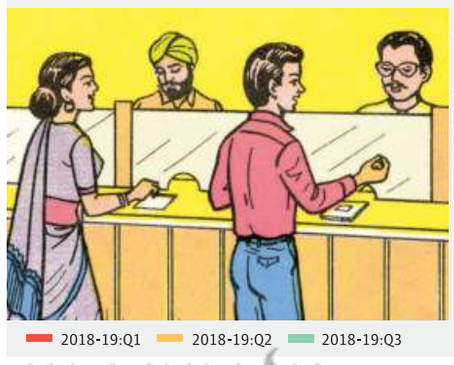
This, however, is explained by the fact that lending by the public sector banks has been subdued, according to a former Governor of the RBI.

The numbers back this assertion. RBI data shows that credit growth for the public sector banks was 8.4% in Q3, 8.7% in Q2, and 5.9% in Q1.

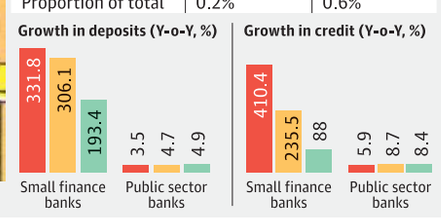
"If the public sector banks are not lending, then the people have to go somewhere for their loans," the former Governor said on the condition of anonymity. "The growth in credit for the small finance banks can be answered by this. People are looking for credit and have nowhere else to go."

Not yet **there**

The phenomenal growth of small finance banks has come on a very small base which is why bigger banks and NBFCs don't see them as a competition just yet



	2018-19:Q3	
	Deposit (₹ cr)	Credit (₹ cr)
All scheduled commercial banks	12,081,891.7	93,75,117.4
Small finance banks	30,003.1	51,673.4
Proportion of total	0.2%	0.6%



Source: RBI

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

ASK US

AARATI KRISHNAN

Q. I am now 58-and-a-half years old. I am yet to draw my employee provident fund (EPF) of ₹29 lakh. Is it wise if I manage my personal finances without drawing my PF?

G. SRINIVASAN

A. It is best that you withdraw your accumulated EPF balance. You will be not be earning an interest on your EPF account after you turn 58.

As per a November 2016 amendment to the EPF rules and a subsequent clarification by the Labour Ministry, an EPF account turns inoperative 36 months after the subscriber turns 55 years of age, or at the age of retirement, whichever is later. Once the account turns inoperative, it does not earn interest.

Not claiming your PF balance presents a very stop-gap solution to managing your personal finances after retirement. In any case, you will have to find alternative avenues to park your EPF proceeds a couple of years later. Given that interest rates in the economy are ruling fairly high at present, it is best that you withdraw your proceeds and start the planning right now. It is possible for you to find reasonably safe avenues such as bank deposits or high-quality NBFC deposits to invest your EPF proceeds today, which also pay reasonably high interest.

Q. I am 18 years old and would like to expand my horizons in stock investments and understand financial terms. How should I begin?

ENAAKSHI MAJUMDAR

A. Extensive reading of business content is the key to developing a good understanding of investing concepts. There are multiple online as well as offline resources that you can regularly rely on for reading material. Books such as *Value Investing and Behavioural Finance* by Parag Parikh, *How to Invest Right and Prosper* by A.K. Narayanan, Let's Talk Money by Monika Halan and the *Easy Money Trilogy* by Vivek Kaul offer good insights into the world of investing.

All business newspapers carry either a daily page or a once-a-week edition devoted to personal finance, which also carry explainers and classroom features that are useful to a beginner. Websites such as moneycontrol.com, personalfn.com, valueresearchonline.com and www.fool.com (a U.S. site) are educative too.

In addition, mutual funds, investor associations and stock exchanges regularly conduct free investor education seminars, which you can watch out for and attend.

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.*

Debentures, the flavour of the season

Three companies are in the market now with NCD offers. Investors can choose among these based on their risk-return profile

PARVATHA VARDHINI C

Bank fixed deposit rates are not having their best run right now. But if you're an investor who prefers fixed income options and is willing to take some risk to earn higher returns, it's raining options.

NCD (non-convertible debenture) issues of three companies – L&T Finance, Shriram City Union and Magma Fincorp – are open for subscription now. All three companies are offering secured, redeemable NCDs for tenures ranging from two to 10 years. Of the three, L&T Finance offers a good risk-return proposition for investors.

L&T Finance (AAA rated)

Tenor	3 years	3 years	5 years	5 years	5 years	8 years	8 years
Interest Payment	Annual	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly
Coupon (%)	8.9	NA	9	8.66	NA	9.05	8.7
Effective yield (%)	8.89	8.9	8.99	9	9	9.04	9.05

Magma Fincorp (AA rated)

Tenor	3 years	3 years	5 years	5 years	5 years	10 years	10 years
Interest Payment	Annual	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly
Coupon (%)	10.25	NA	10.5	10.04	NA	10.75	10.27
Effective yield (%)	10.24	10.24	10.49	10.5	10.5	10.74	10.76

Shriram City Union Finance (AA+/AA rated)

Tenor	24 months	24 months	36 months	36 months	36 months	60 months	60 months	60 months
Interest Payment	Annual	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly	Cumulative	Annual	Monthly	Cumulative
Coupon (%)	9.55	NA	9.65	9.26	NA	9.75	9.35	NA
Effective yield (%)	9.55	9.55	9.64	9.65	9.65	9.74	9.75	9.75

AAA option

L&T Finance's offer is rated AAA by ICRA, Care and India Ratings, denoting the highest degree of safety regarding timely servicing of financial obligations and the lowest credit risk. It is in this aspect that L&T Finance scores over the other two companies.

L&T Finance's NCDs are available for a range of three to eight years. The interest rates for retail investors vary from 8.66% to 9.05% depending on the tenure as well as the mode of interest payment (see table). While the three-year and five-year NCDs have a cumulative interest option, the eight-year option does not. The minimum application amount across all series is ₹10,000 (10 NCDs of face value of ₹1,000 each).

Shriram City Union's credit ratings are lower than that of L&T Finance at AA+ (Care) and AA (Crisil). Magma Fincorp scores lower, rated AA by Brickworks and Acuite.

Thus, while the superior returns offered across tenures for these two companies (see table) look attractive, the associated risk is also higher. These may be suitable only for investors with a high risk appetite.

The three-year cumulative option in L&T Finance that offers 8.9% is for those with a conservative risk-return profile. An interest pay-out option is also available for the three-year NCDs, but it provides only an annual pay-out and may not make much sense for investors looking for regular income. By investing in the cumulative option instead, investors can get the benefit of compounding of interest rate.

With the RBI cutting rates in its Monetary Policy announcement for the second time in a row last week, there is little chance of deposit rates moving up in the near term. Already, the rate offered by L&T Finance in this tranche is lower than in the earlier issue in March 2019. The company offered 8.89-9.35% across various tenures then.

In this scenario, a three-year time-frame will give investors the opportunity to lock into higher rates now, while at the same time giving room for reinvestment elsewhere at a higher interest if the rate cycle changes three years down the line.

Advantage NCD

- Little chance of banks raising rates in near-term
- 3-year time frame can help investors to lock into higher rates now
- Investors get an option different from bank FDs
- Returns may be superior to even NBFCs

The five-year cumulative option which offers only about 10 basis points higher rate at 9% but entails a lock-in of an additional two years, seems less ideal as it is difficult to predict the trajectory of interest rate movement over such a long period.

The 8.9% offered by the three-year NCD is superior to comparable NBFC deposits. AAA rated NBFCs such as Bajaj Finance, LIC Housing Finance, PNB Housing Finance and M&M Financial Services offer between 8.25 and 8.8% for a three-year term.

Private and public sector banks offer 6.5-8.25% for three-year deposits at present. Some small finance banks such as Fincare, Jana and Suryoday offer 9% returns on three-year deposits. Thus, this NCD can help you diversify your fixed-income portfolio if you have exhausted these options.

The NCDs will be listed on the BSE and the NSE. Hence, you can sell it in the stock exchange before the end of the tenure. But note that liquidity may be low.

The interest income on the NCD will be taxable at your slab rates, while the sale of the NCD in the stock market will attract long/short-term capital gains tax.

About the company

L&T Finance scores reasonably well on financial parameters. The October-December quarter saw its assets under management increase 22% year-on-year to ₹94,711 crore. Its gross NPAs have come down to 6.74% from 10.4% a year ago, while net NPAs have reduced to 2.64% from 4.74%. It is well-placed on the liquidity front, too.

(This column is for information purposes only and is not a recommendation to invest)

COVER NOTE: HEALTH INSURANCE

Investing for good health

Understanding policy contours is important while choosing the right cover

K. NITYA KALYANI

The first insurance you should consider buying is health insurance.

Understanding which policy is best for you can be fairly complex. Let's look at the top three factors to consider – what is covered, what is not covered and how much coverage to take

Under hospitalisation policies you can claim expenses incurred in India for hospital stay, food, medicines, treatment, surgery and medical professionals' fees.

Many specified day-care procedures are also covered as are related pre-hospitalisation costs, including diagnostic tests for 30 days and post-hospitalisation costs for 60 days.

Treatment at Ayurveda, Unani and Homoeopathy hospitals accredited with the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals is covered up to 25% of your sum insured (SI).

It is very important for you to know the exclusions in any policy. New polices will not admit any hospitalisation claims for the first 30 days except following an accident.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition, it will be covered after a specified waiting period, usually 36 or 48 months, of unbroken coverage.

Specified treatments and surgery, even if not arising out of a pre-existing condition, are covered only after a waiting period, say 24 months.

They can include cataract surgery, gall bladder surgery and renal failure. The list and the waiting period can vary between companies and policies.

Dental treatment and surgery is a standard exclusion except due to an accident and requiring hospitalisation but several policies now offer them as part of their main fare and some even as outpatient treatment. Apollo Munich Maxima Health has a limited dental outpatient cover and ICICI Prudential Health Saver has a unit-linked insurance plan section that creates a health fund from which dental treatments can be paid for.

Stitch in time: Deciding on sufficient coverage is essential as some procedures may be very expensive. ▪GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Reading the fine print

- New polices will not admit any hospitalisation claims for the first 30 days
- Dental treatment and surgery is a standard exclusion
- Policy period is usually 1 year
- Watch out for sub-limits for different heads of expenses like room rent

Outpatient treatment

Similarly, outpatient treatment is also being increasingly covered in some hospitalisation policies like Bajaj Allianz Tax Gain Plan.

Any policy has a coverage value called sum insured (SI) which is valid for the policy period, typically one year. Deciding what is sufficient coverage for you is critical.

A coronary bypass surgery can cost about ₹4 to ₹5 lakh today in a large city and if you opt for a private room. A gall bladder removal can cost about ₹1.5 to ₹2 lakh and a total knee replacement ₹3 to ₹4 lakh.

Smaller cities are also catching up on medical care costs and you can expect to spend about 75% of these amounts. This gives you an idea of the SI you would need. The premium depends on this and your age.

Watch out for sub-limits for different heads of expenses, like room rent and fees, in your policy. This could compromise the extent of your claim even if you have sufficient SI.

For example, you may have a ₹5 lakh SI, but if your policy says that room rent, boarding and nursing expenses have a limit of 1% of SI per day then anything over ₹5,000 a day will have to be borne by you.

Should you exceed this limit, your claims for all other expenses incurred at the hospital, with the exception of the cost of medicines, will be paid only proportionately.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

Not much sheen seen

Prices likely to remain rangebound or ease marginally

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

The prices of gold and silver remained subdued in the month of March. Gold Futures price at Comex closed almost 1.3% lower at $1,298 an ounce in March while silver dropped by about 3.4% to settle at $15.11 an ounce by end of March 2019.

In the domestic market, precious metals reflected a similar price trend at the Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX). The price of gold futures fell by 3.8% in March to end the month at ₹31,734 per 10 gm. Silver futures at MCX lost 3.5% to settle at ₹37,761 per kg.

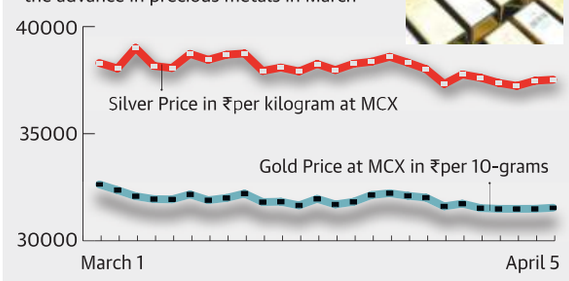
A couple of key factors influenced the price movement of gold in March. The U.S. Federal Reserve's decision to pause interest rate hikes helped gold price seek higher levels. But, the sustained recovery in stock markets globally, along with the firm trend in [U.S.] dollar checked the advance in precious metals in March.

Over the past few days, the prices of gold and silver have edged lower. Comex gold touched its lowest level since January 25 to $1,280.59 an ounce, on April 4, 2019. At MCX, gold price is currently trading well below the ₹32,000 /10-gram level.

Comex gold ended the week at $1,295.90 an ounce and silver at $15.09 an ounce. At MCX, gold price firmed up marginally to ₹31,542 per 10-gm while silver closed at ₹37,519 per kg.

Blip in performance

Gold prices rose on the Fed's rate hike pause. But, global stock market recovery checked the advance in precious metals in March



Based on the recent price action, the short-term outlook for gold and silver does not look too positive. The price of gold at Comex is likely to be confined to the recent trading range of $1,280 – $1,320 in the next few weeks. A decisive breakout past this range is likely to impart some momentum in the direction of the breakout. Until then a rangebound action is expected.

The short-term outlook for silver too is not positive. A range bound price action between $14.8 – $15.17 is likely. A breakout past this range is likely to set the direction for the next significant move in silver. Until then, the recent flip-flop show is likely to continue.

Domestically, the outlook for gold and silver does not look positive. Gold price at the MCX is likely to edge lower to its immediate support at ₹30,150-30,200 per 10 gm. This view will be invalidated if the price moves above the resistance level at ₹32,280 / 10 gm. Likewise, the price of silver at MCX is likely to ease to the immediate support at ₹35,500-36,000 per kg. The weak outlook for silver would be invalidated if the price moves above the resistance level of ₹38,600 – 38,700.

So, the outlook for precious metals does not look too positive. They are likely to remain either rangebound or ease marginally to lower levels. It is prudent to wait for a breakout above resistance levels before entertaining a positive outlook for gold and silver.

(The author is a Chennai-based technical analyst/trader. This column is not meant to be a trading or investment advice. The author shall not be held responsible for any financial outcome based on decision taken on the opinion furnished in this column)

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH

"Oh, I use it as a feel-good factor. The prices are from three years ago!"

Education loan rates for studies in India

Lenders	Min. loan amount (Rs.)	Interest rate %	Processing fee	Margin requirement	Tenure	Moratorium period
State Bank of India	Upto 40 lakhs	8.75 - 10.80	NIL	Premier Institutes: NIL Others- Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs : Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Punjab National Bank	No limit	8.45 - 11.05	NIL	Upto Rs 4 lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Andhra Bank	No limit	8.95 - 10.75	NIL	Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course Period + 1 year or 6 months after getting job, whichever is earlier
HDFC Credila	1 lakh onwards	12.55 + spread	1-2% of loan amount	Upto 100% funding	12 years	6 months to 1 year of grace period is extended after the course completion
Avanse	1 lakh onwards	12.65 + spread	1-2% of loan amount	Upto 100% funding	10 years*	6 months after course completion or 3 months after getting job
Axis Bank	50,000- 75 lakhs	13.70 - 15.20	Upto 10 lakhs: NIL Above 10 lakhs: Rs 5,000	Upto 4 lakhs: NIL Above 4 lakh: 5%	15 years	Course Period + 1 year or 6 months after getting job, whichever is earlier
Bank of Baroda	Upto 80 lakhs	8.65 - 10.65	NIL	Upto Rs 4 lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Union Bank of India	Upto 37 lakhs	8.60 - 11.75	NIL	Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Bank of India	Upto 30 lakhs	8.65 - 11.15	NIL	Upto Rs 4 lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Federal Bank	Upto 20 lakh	10.90 - 15.30	NIL	Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs: 5% (For select premier institutes-Upto Rs 10 lakhs-NIL; Above Rs 10 lakhs-5%)	15 years	Course period + 1 year
Canara Bank	Upto 36 lakh	8.85 - 10.65	NIL	Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course period + 1 year
South Indian Bank	Upto 25 lakhs	9.00 - 15.75	NIL	Upto Rs 4 Lakhs: NIL Above Rs 4 Lakhs: Upto 5%	15 years	Course Period + 1 year or 6 months after getting job, whichever is earlier

** Tenure includes course duration*

Source: Paisabazaar.com

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

Dominant KKR wins at a canter

Rajasthan Royals puts up an insipid display in front of the home fans

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
JAIPUR

There was no Andre Russell show. Kolkata Knight Riders will not be complaining, though.

Dinesh Karthik's men authored one of the most emphatic wins of this IPL, though their biggest star Russell didn't have to bat or bowl. Against a listless Rajasthan Royals at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium on Sunday night, they romped home with eight wickets and over six overs to spare.

The visitors deservedly moved to the top of the table after posting their fourth win in five matches. The Royals are placed second from the bottom after slumping to their fourth defeat.

Royals got nothing right on the night, from the toss onwards. Put in, their batsmen found scoring tough against a steady attack.

But they should have shown a lot more urgency and a risk or two would have been worth taking. They ended up with what was the lowest IPL total batting first after losing three wickets or less.

Early setback

They lost their captain off first ball of the second over. Rahane was trapped plumb in front by Prasidh Krishna. The Karnataka seamer brought his first ball sharply in, beating the batsman's attempt to tuck him through the leg-side.

That brought Steve Smith to the wicket. The Australian was there even after the last ball of the innings, unbeaten on 73. But it took him 59 balls and wasn't the most fluent of his innings.

His only six came in the 18th over, as he stepped out and lifted Sunil Narine over mid-wicket. That would prove to be the second and last maximum of the innings.

The other one was hit by Jos Buttler, who pulled fellow-Englishman Harry Gurney over deep square-leg on what was the latter's IPL debut.

Next assignment

KKR: April 9: vs CSK
Chennai, 8 p.m.

RR: April 11: vs CSK
Jaipur, 8 p.m.

Firing away: Knight Riders' opener Sunil Narine played as he is wont to, by giving the Royals' bowlers the treatment from the word go. ▪PTI

Innings scan

RR		KKR
50	Dots	36
13	Fours	13
2	Sixes	8
28/1	PP	65/0
6.95	RR	10.12

The left-arm seamer didn't have to wait at all for his revenge.

Buttler tried to hit his next ball over mid-wicket only to find the ball landing safely into the hands of Shubman Gill a couple of yards inside the rope. The opener had added 72 for the second wicket with Smith, but it had taken 64 balls.

Rahul Tripathi could not get going either. He too was accounted for by Gurney, with the batsman trying to clear the off-side and skying a catch to Chawla at mid-off.

Coming out firing

The key to chasing a low total, often, is not to emulate your rival's awful run-rate. So, the Kolkata openers Chris Lynn and Suni Narine came out and wasted no time to send the ball into the stands, which were a sea of pink.

The score read 32 for no loss at the end of two overs. Though the in-form leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal sent back both the openers, after Narine was dropped off Dhawal Kulkarni in the third over, their partnership of 91 off 51 balls had sealed the match.

SCOREBOARD RAJASTHAN ROYALS VS KNIGHT RIDERS

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Ajinkya Rahane lbw b Prasidh 5 *(7b, 1x4)*, Jos Buttler c Gill b Gurney 37 *(34b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Steve Smith (not out) 73 *(59b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Rahul Tripathi c Chawla b Gurney 6 *(8b)*, Ben Stokes (not out) 7 *(14b)*; Extras (lb-5, nb-2, w-4): 11; Total (for three wkts. in 20 overs): 139.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-5 (Rahane, 1.1 overs), 2-77 (Buttler, 11.5), 3-105 (Tripathi, 15.4).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING

Chawla 4-0-19-0, Prasidh 4-0-35-1, Narine 4-0-22-0, Kuldeep 4-0-33-0, Gurney 4-0-25-2.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

Chris Lynn c Midhun b Shreyas 50 *(32b, 6x4, 3x6)*, Sunil Narine c Smith b Shreyas 47 *(25b, 6x4, 3x6)*, Robin Uthappa (not out) 26 *(16b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Shubman Gill (not out) 6 *(10b)*; Extras (lb-8, w-3): 11; Total (for two wkts. in 13.5 overs): 140.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-91 (Narine, 8.3 overs), 2-114 (Lynn, 10.5).

ROYALS BOWLING

Kulkarni 3-0-31-0, Gowtham 1-0-22-0, Archer 3-0-14-0, Shreyas 4-0-35-2, Midhun 2-0-27-0, Stokes 0.5-0-3-0.

Toss: KKR. **MoM:** Harry Gurney.

Knight Riders won eight wickets with 37 balls remaining.

Knight Riders on the rampage

Chris Lynn

37 The biggest victory margin in terms of number of balls left, in IPL-12

65/0 KKR's PowerPlay score, the second highest in this edition after SRH's 69/0 against RR in Hyderabad

139/3 RR's total is the lowest for a team batting first and losing three or fewer wickets, replacing the 146/2 by Pune Warriors vs DD (Pune, 2012)

This is the first match Russell did not bat, and was not the 'Man-of-the-Match' for KKR after its last four wins

Russell's MoM performances

49* (25) vs RR (2018)
49* (19) vs SRH
48 (17) vs KXIP
48* (13) vs RCB

It's Capitals' turn to embarrass RCB

Rabada and Shreyas star in the visitors' four-wicket win

Lynchpin: Shreyas Iyer paced his knock well as Delhi Capitals registered its third win. ▪K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

No respite for RCB

6 Number of consecutive defeats for RCB from the start of the season, a dubious record equalling that of Daredevils

6 - DD (2013)
6 - RCB (2019)
5 - Deccan Chargers (2012)
5 - MI (2014)
4 - MI (2008)
4 - MI (2015)

7 RCB's overall losing streak, starting from its final league match in 2018. In 2017, the team had lost six games on the trot

33/103 Of the 103 deliveries (17.1 overs) Kohli was in the middle against DC, he got to face only 33 deliveries

802 Kohli's tally against DC, the second highest after Raina (803 vs MI) against a particular team

797 Gayle vs KXIP
762 Warner vs KKR
761 Raina vs KXIP

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

A sixth consecutive defeat was added to Royal Challengers Bangalore's (RCB) long litany of woes as Delhi Capitals registered a four-wicket win at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Sunday.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer scored a match-winning 67 (50b, 8x4, 2x6) as the Capitals chased down the 150-run target with seven balls to spare.

The visitors lost three late wickets, including that of Shreyas and Rishab Pant, with only a handful of runs left to accumulate. But they didn't have to break much sweat to collect their third win of the season.

Herculean task

RCB, on the other hand, will in all probability need to win each of its eight remaining games – a near-impossible task considering the rut the team is in – to harbour any hopes of qualification.

When Tim Southee dismissed Shikhar Dhawan for nought off the third ball, caught by Navdeep Saini at short third-man, the mood was upbeat. The Kiwi paceman could have had Shreyas in the same over, but a diving Parthiv Patel couldn't cling on.

Southee's redemption, following his forgettable effort against KKR on Friday, lasted only a brief while as Prithvi Shaw creamed him for four consecutive fours in the third over.

Shaw added only 10 more runs, but the cameo threw open the gates for the rest of his teammates to wade through, which Colin Ingram (21) and Pant (18), alongside Shreyas, gleefully accepted.

Next assignment

DC: April 12: vs KKR
Kolkata, 8 p.m.

RCB: April 13: vs KXIP
Mohali, 8 p.m.

Innings scan

RCB		DC
42	Dots	50
8	Fours	18
7	Sixes	3
40/2	PP	53/1
7.45	RR	8.07

Earlier, after being put in to bat, RCB encountered a tricky wicket.

It wasn't the same strip which was used against KKR that saw over 400 runs being scored.

There was considerable green cover, but this proved a decoy, with the pitch double-paced throughout.

Kohli stays put

Kohli, mindful of the fact, played the anchor by tying one end up.

He started with a edged four wide of first slip, but wouldn't breach the ropes until the 17th over when he hit leggie Sandeep Lamichhane for consecutive sixes.

It was left to A.B. de Villiers, and then Marcus Stoinis, to do the scoring but both batsmen failed.

de Villiers did hit two delectable shots, pulling Chris Morris in front of square for six and slashing Ishant Sharma through cover for four.

But he was tricked by a slower ball from Kagiso Rabada (4-0-21-4), with a running Ingram completing the catch at mid-on.

Moeen Ali (32, 18b, 1x4, 3x6) fared better, and when he carted Ishant for a six and a four in the 14th over, the stage seemed set for a death overs assault.

But once Lamichhane had Moeen stumped, and Rabada claimed three RCB batsmen in the 18th over, including the prized scalp of Kohli, caught by Shreyas at long-on, the planned heist never took off.

Both then and later, Kohli's counterpart had the last laugh.

SCOREBOARD ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE VS DELHI CAPITALS

ROYAL CHALLENGERS

Parthiv Patel c Lamichhane b Morris 9 *(9b, 1x4)*, Virat Kohli c Shreyas b Rabada 41 *(33b, 1x4, 2x6)*, A.B. de Villiers c Ingram b Rabada 17 *(16b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Marcus Stoinis c Tewatia b Axar 15 *(17b, 1x6)*, Moeen Ali st. Pant b Lamichhane 32 *(18b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Akshdeep Nath c Pant b Rabada 19 *(12b, 4x4)*, Pawan Negi c Pant b Rabada 0 *(1b)*, Tim Southee (not out) 9 *(9b)*, Mohd. Siraj lbw b Morris 1 *(5b)*, Yuzvendra Chahal (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-3): 5; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 149.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-16 (Parthiv, 1.6 overs), 2-40 (de Villiers, 5.6), 3-66 (Stoinis, 10.4), 4-103 (Moeen, 14.3), 5-133 (Kohli, 17.1), 6-137 (Nath, 17.3), 7-138 (Negi, 17.6), 8-142 (Siraj, 18.6).

DELHI CAPITALS BOWLING

Ishant 4-0-31-0, Morris 4-0-28-2, Rabada 4-0-21-4, Axar 4-0-22-1, Lamichhane 4-0-46-1.

DELHI CAPITALS

Prithvi Shaw c Akshdeep b Negi 28 *(22b, 5x4)*, Shikhar Dhawan c Saini b Southee 0 *(1b)*, Shreyas Iyer c Chahal b Saini 67 *(50b, 8x4, 2x6)*, Colin Ingram lbw b Moeen 22 *(21b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant c Southee b Siraj 18 *(14b, 2x4)*, Chris Morris c de Villiers b Saini 0 *(3b)*, Axar Patel (not out) 4 *(1b, 1x4)*, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 1 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-5, nb-1, w-6): 12; Total (for six wkts. in 18.5 overs): 152.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-1 (Dhawan, 0.3 overs), 2-69 (Shaw, 8.2), 3-108 (Ingram, 13.1), 4-145 (Shreyas, 17.3), 5-145 (Morris, 17.6), 6-147 (Pant, 18.2).

RCB BOWLING

Southee 2-0-24-1, Saini 4-0-24-2, Chahal 4-0-36-0, Negi 3-0-27-1, Siraj 1.5-0-14-1, Moeen 4-0-22-1.

Toss: Delhi Capitals.
Man-of-the-match: Kagiso Rabada.

Delhi Capitals won by four wickets with 7 balls remaining.

Kings XI and Sunrisers look to rebound

UTHRA GANESAN
MOHALI

As the two weary teams arrived here on Sunday after suffering frustrating losses in their games on Saturday, R. Ashwin and Bhuvneshwar Kumar will hope for a change in fortunes when Kings XI Punjab and Sunrisers Hyderabad face-off on Monday.

For Ashwin and Punjab, it would be a welcome return to familiar surroundings, a homecoming to what has been a well-defended fortress. The host has won both games played here this season – one each with the bat and ball – and would be keen to put the disappointment of defeat to Super Kings, chasing a below-par target, behind.

K.L. Rahul and Sarfaraz Khan got the runs but failed to step up the momentum and finish off the game. That they could not do so despite wickets in hand and wayward CSK bowling towards the end would rankle even more.

On the other hand, the Punjab bowling managed to impress again, especially the spin duo of Ashwin and (Murugan) Ashwin in the middle overs, restricting the scoring. They would be expected to do it again against Sunrisers, whose middle-order was tested for the first time on Saturday against Mumbai Indians and came up short.

It was a rare failure from the David Warner-Jonny Bairstow combination at the top.

Tandem: M. Ashwin's performance in the last match at Mohali would have gladdened his skipper R. Ashwin. ▪AKHILESH KUMAR

Points table

Team	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders	5	4	1	0	8	1.058
Chennai Super Kings	5	4	1	0	8	0.159
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	3	2	0	6	1.000
Mumbai Indians	5	3	2	0	6	0.342
Delhi Capitals	6	3	3	0	6	0.131
Kings XI Punjab	5	3	2	0	6	-0.094
Rajasthan Royals	5	1	4	0	2	-0.848
Royal Challengers	6	0	6	0	0	-1.453

*after the RR-KKR match on April 7

Although, to be fair, the Sunrisers batsmen were up against a scintillating 22-year-old fast bowler answering to the name of Alzarri Joseph who rewrote IPL bowling records on debut.

Bhuvneshwar would also be hoping more from Siddharth Kaul who has been profligate and inconsistent even though teams have been smartly cautious against the Afghan spin pair of Rashid Khan and Mohd. Nabi.

Top of the charts

ORANGE CAP

David Warner (SRH)
Matches: **5** | Runs: **279**
HS: **100*** | S/R: **158.52**

PURPLE CAP

Kagiso Rabada (DC)
Matches: **6** | Wickets: **11**
BB: **4/21** | Econ.: **7.55**

*after the RR-KKR match on April 7

Today's match

Vs

MOHALI, 8 P.M.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 12
KXIP **3** | SRH **9**

Live on Star Sports 1, 2 & Select 1 (SD & HD), 8 p.m

CoA meeting today to finalise playoff venues

- The Committee of Adminstrators (CoA) will meet in New Delhi on Monday to finalise the venues for the IPL playoffs. A decision to float fresh tenders for sponsorship will also be taken.

A miracle needed to advance, admits Moeen Ali

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
BENGALURU

After a sixth defeat in six games, a beleaguered Royal Challengers Bangalore will need a "miracle" to advance to the IPL playoffs, admits Moeen Ali.

"We need to win, obviously, all our games. We know that and it's going to be a miracle, to be honest," the all-rounder said after his side's loss to Delhi Capitals on Sunday.

Frustration

RCB was training hard but pressure and frustration were affecting the players, Moeen said.

"We are doing the right things in training, but out on the field we're a bit nervous at times and feel a bit of pressure. The mood in the camp is fine; it's just frustrating as cricketers.

"We're making the same mistakes almost every game, dropping catches, giving wickets away, and you can't afford to do that in the IPL. With all the frustration, it's difficult [to perform].

"You go into games thinking you don't want to be the guy to make the mistake and I don't think you can afford to do that.

"You have to go out, back yourself, back your instincts, just go out and play, enjoy the crowd, the atmosphere. We're trying to do that but I don't think it's quite happening," he said.

Incisive: Kagiso Rabada bowled with purpose to scalp four RCB wickets and take the Purple Cap. ▪K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

Same story

Virat Kohli echoed those sentiments at the post-match presentation, lamenting the fact that dropped catches had cost his side again.

"We need to grab those chances; we shouldn't give excuses," he said.

"When the mind is cluttered, you won't be able to focus on the chances that come your way. We weren't good enough on the day again. And that's the whole story of our season so far."

An emotional Dhoni – no kidding this!

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI

Who is the actual kid? The question was on everyone's lips after M.S. Dhoni, lively and full of fun, joined Imran Tahir and Shane Watson's sons for a playful run at the Chepauk.

While he rarely betrays emotions on the field regardless of the match situation, the story can often be different off it.

Dhoni was in a playful mood after his team Chennai Super Kings' convincing win over Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League (IPL) on Saturday evening.

In the video posted by the franchise, the 37-year-old, after entering the frame, is seen running alongside the kids only to lift Tahir's son and run back to the finishing line.

"Jr. #ParasakthiExpress and Jr. Watto having a sprint face-off and a lightning joins them! Priceless!" CSK wrote on the team twitter handle.

"ParasakthiExpress picks wickets and runs! #Thala picks Jr. #ParasakthiExpress and runs!" mentioned another tweet.

It is well-known that Dhoni is comfortable around kids and his videos with daughter Ziva Dhoni often go viral.

https://t.me/Cowards2Tomorrow

TV PICKS

PKL auction: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 5 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1, 2 & Select 1 (SD & HD), 8 p.m.
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 12 a.m. (Tuesday).
Premier League: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday).

IN BRIEF

Harris boosts Nets' playoff push

LOS ANGELES

Joe Harris sank the go-ahead three-pointer with 84 seconds left as Brooklyn Nets' playoff push got a boost with a 133-128 win over Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday. Nets used a balanced attack to beat the shorthanded Bucks as eight players scored in double figures. They also drained 19 three-pointers. Elsewhere, Philadelphia 76ers trounced Chicago Bulls 116-96. AFP

Deulofeu puts Watford in FA Cup final

LONDON

Gerard Deulofeu starred for Watford as it roared back from two goals down on Sunday to beat Wolves 3-2 and set up an FA Cup final against Manchester City. Goals from Matt Doherty and Raul Jimenez looked like sending Wolves into their first FA Cup final since 1960 but Deulofeu pulled one back and a last-gasp penalty from Troy Deeney levelled the match at 2-2. Deulofeu scored the winner for Watford in the first period of extra-time. AFP

Lin Dan, Tai Tzu-ying win Malaysia Open

KUALA LUMPUR

Chinese badminton ace Lin Dan beat compatriot Chen Long 9-21, 21-7, 21-11 to win the Malaysia Open and claim his first major title in two years. Chinese Taipei's Tai Tzu-ying clinched her third straight crown here after a 21-16, 21-19 win over Japan's Akane Yamaguchi. AFP

Indian women have a slow start

AL AIN (UAE)

Olympian Shagun Chowdhary found herself in the 39th place with a score of 67 out of 75 after three rounds in women's trap in the shotgun World Cup in Al Ain, UAE, on Sunday. Shagun had a series of 22, 24 and 21, which was the best among the three Indians. Rajeshwari Kumari had 66 following 23, 23 and 20, for the 49th place while Varsha Varman struggled with rounds of 20, 17 and 14.

Barcelona inches closer to La Liga title

Breaks resistance of 10-man Atletico, moves 11 points clear; Everton outguns Arsenal

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BARCELONA

Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi scored one each in span of two minutes as Barcelona broke the resistance of 10-man Atletico Madrid to go 11 points clear of its La Liga title rival.

Diego Costa was sent off in the 28th minute at Camp Nou after insulting referee Gil Manzano but while Atletico held on for almost another hour, Suarez and Messi struck late to seal a pivotal 2-0 win.

The victory leaves Barca almost out of sight with seven games left to play. "It is three crucial points," coach Ernesto Valverde said. "We are a little closer."

Costa's early and needless dismissal left Atletico needing snookers just to avoid defeat, let alone pull off the win that its coach Diego Simeone had said last week was the only result to keep its challenge alive. Suarez intervened with a superb long-range strike in the 85th minute, before Messi added a second in the 86th.

The pair has now scored 53 league goals between it this season while for Messi, this was a record 335th La Liga victory.

A peach: Luis Suarez can't hide his joy after lining up a shot from 25 yards to score Barcelona's first goal in the 85th minute. ▪REUTERS

Jagielka's dramatic entry

At Everton, another disappointing away performance saw Arsenal lose 1-0. Phil Jagielka, drafted in at the last minute, scored the game's only goal as the Gunners extended their wretched record as the only club in the top four divisions of English football not to have kept a clean sheet on their travels this season.

Important results: Premier League: Everton 1 (Jagielka 10) bt Arsenal 0.

La Liga: Alaves 1 (Calleri 18-pen) drew with Leganes 1 (Silva 90+3); Getafe 1 (Rodriguez Diaz 78) bt Athletic Bilbao 0; Real Valladolid 0 lost to Sevilla 2 (Mesa Quevedo 84, Munir 90+2); Celta Vigo 3 (Aspas 51-pen, 70, Gomez 90+1) Real Sociedad 1 (Willian Jose 32-pen)

Serie-A: Fiorentina 0 lost to Frosinone 1 (Ciofani 84); Udinese 3 (De Paul 15, 41-pen, Mandragora 45) bt Empoli 2 (Caputo 11, Krunic 24); Inter Milan drew with Atalanta 0-0.

Bundesliga: Augsburg 0 lost to Hoffenheim 4 (Kramaric 6, Belfodil 61, 74, 82); Borussia Monchengladbach 1 (Neuhaus 49) drew with Bremen 1 (Klaassen 79).

On Saturday: Barcelona 2 (Suarez 85, Messi 86) bt Atletico Madrid 0; Rayo Vallecano 2 (Tomas 32, Mario Suarez 90+1) bt Valencia 0.

Serie-A: Sampdoria 0 lost to Roma 1 (de Rossi 75).

No job guarantee for Kovac: Rummenigge

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BERLIN

Bayern Munich CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has warned coach Niko Kovac that he is not safe from the sack, despite the team's breathtaking 5-0 victory over title rival Borussia Dortmund on Saturday.

"Nobody has a job guarantee at Bayern, that is a guiding principle at the club," said Rummenigge in a Sky Sports chat show on Sunday morning.

"Anyone who can't deal with that pressure is at the wrong club."

The pressure on Kovac appeared to evaporate as Bayern regained its perch at the top of the Bundesliga with the thumping win over Dortmund.

Niko Kovac. ▪REUTERS

Earlier trouble

Yet, less than 24 hours later, Rummenigge said that Kovac was at fault for Bayern's troubles earlier in the season.

"In October and November, we tripped ourselves up because the coach decided to rotate an unbelievable amount and that led to unrest in the team," said Rummenigge, laying the blame squarely on Kovac for a run of form which saw Bayern win just two games in seven last autumn.

"You can always rotate a bit," said Rummenigge, but added that Kovac had done so "irrespective of players' performances".

"There were a few things going in the wrong direction at that time, we had some frank conversations about it and corrected it," he said.

But Rummenigge, who is alleged to have favoured Thomas Tuchel over Kovac when Bayern was seeking a new coach last year, admitted that Kovac's task is not an easy one.

"It has been an incredible 10 years for Bayern, we have won doubles and Jupp Heynckes won the treble," he said.

Chennaiyin storms into semifinals

Mailson and Thapa help the side rally from a one-goal deficit

SUPER CUP

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
BHUBANESWAR

Chennaiyin FC erased a goal deficit and scored twice to beat NorthEast United FC 2-1 in the last quarterfinal of the Hero Super Cup at the Kalinga Stadium here on Sunday.

After a forgettable outing in the Indian Super League, the win must have come as a big relief for Chennaiyin FC which moved into the semifinals where it will meet ATK on April 10.

Chennaiyin suffered an early setback but recovered against a NorthEast side that missed five of its regular players.

Early strike

NorthEast capitalised on the hesitation shown by the Chennaiyin defenders when Puitea released Panagiotis Triadis and the Greek winger sent a low cross for Rowllin Borges to tap home in the ninth minute.

Chennaiyin clawed back into the game gradually with Gregory Nelson and Anirudh Thapa showing more intent in the attacking third.

Both midfielders came in as changes to the side that figured in a goalless draw in the AFC Cup against Minerva Punjab FC at Ahmedabad earlier in the week.

The equaliser

Chennaiyin drew level in the 33rd minute when, off a Nelson corner, Thapa sent a sharp cross for an unmarked Mailson Alves to nod home. Chennaiyin went into the lead seven minutes later when Thapa pounced on a mistake by Puitea and made a solo run into the NorthEast box, finishing with an angular shot.

NorthEast United made a couple of changes, bringing in the young Girik Khosla for Triadis in the wings and Keegan Pereira for Croatian Mato Grgic at the back.

The introduction of Khosla brought fresh energy and NorthEast almost pulled level in the 61st minute when Khosla set up forward Juan Mascia. The Italian striker, however, saw his attempt come off the crosspiece.

Mascia was unlucky again when the woodwork came in the way, this time in the 77th minute, when headed in an assist from Janeiler Rivas. Chennaiyin held on for the rest of the contest.

The result:

Chennaiyin FC 2 (Mailson Alves 33, Anirudh Thapa 40) bt NorthEast United FC 1 (Rowllin Borges 9).

On target: Mailson Alves netted the opening goal for Chennaiyin FC. ▪BISWARANJAN ROUT

Sathiyan finishes sixth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
YOKOHAMA

G. Sathiyan, who had booked a World Cup berth with a stunning win over World No. 14 Chun Ting Wong of Hong Kong on Saturday, couldn't reproduce his best. The Indian lost to the 17-year-old Lin Yun-Ju of Chinese Taipei 11-4, 11-8, 11-8, 14-12 in the match for 5-6 spots.

Lin, ranked World No. 21, proved too good for the 26-year-old Indian.

U-23 Challenger Trophy: teams announced

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Harleen Deol, Sushree Dibyadarshini and Devika Vaidya will lead the India Red, India Green and India Blue teams respectively at the U-23 Women's One-Day Challenger Trophy to be played in Ranchi from April 20 to 24.

The teams:

India Red: Harleen Deol (Capt.), R. Kalpana (wk), S. Meghana, Ridhima Aggarwal, Ruzu Saha, Tejal Hasabnis, C.H. Jhansilakshmi, Renuka Chaudhary, Tejaswini Duragad, Arundhati Reddy, Shanti Kumari, Devyani Prasad and Suman Meena.

India Green: Sushree Dibyadarshini (Capt.), Shivali Shinde (wk), Priya Punia, Yastika Bhatia, Ayushi Garg, I.V. Drishya, Ekta Singh, Radha Yadav, Rashi Kanojia, Manali Dakshini, Renuka Singh, A. Akshaya and S. Anusha.

India Blue: Devika Vaidya (Capt.), Nuzhat Parween (wk), Shefali Verma, Simran, Tanushre Sarkar, Prativa Rana, Minnu Mani, Tanuja Kanwar, C. Pratyusha, Simran Dil Bahadur, Kshama Singh, Vrushali Bhagat and Indrani Roy.

Jeevan-Purav duo loses

SPORTS BUREAU
VILLENA (SPAIN)

Third seeds Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Purav Raja were beaten 7-6(5), 6-1 by Gerard Granollers and Pedro Martinez of Spain in the semifinals of the Challenger tennis tournament.

The results:

€46,600 Challenger, Villena, Spain: Doubles (semifinals): Gerard Granollers & Pedro Martinez (Esp) bt Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Purav Raja 7-6 (5), 6-1.

Indian girls to clash with China

SPORTS BUREAU
KUALA LUMPUR

The Indian girls have been clubbed with China, Lebanon and Australia in Group D in the Asia-Oceania World junior under-14 tennis tournament to be held here

The Indian squad of Pari Singh, Veda Raju Prapurna and Shruti Ahlawat, along with skipper Rushmi Chakravarthi, will open against China on Monday.

Serjeant At Arms lives up to his billing

MUMBAI: Serjeant At Arms, ridden by P. Trevor, won the Maharaja Sir Harisinghji Trophy, the main event of Sunday's (April 7) evening races. The winner is owned by Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy and Mr. & Mrs. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy rep. Five Stars Shipping Co Pvt. Ltd. & Mr. Vispi R. Patel. S.S. Attaollahi trains the winner. Trainer S.K. Sunderji and Jockey A. Sandesh won three races on the day.

1 **M.D. PETIT PLATE** (2,000m), Cl. IV, rated 20 to 46: **FANFARE** (Sandesh) 1, Benevolence (Trevor) 2, Brazos (Pranil) 3 and Retained Asset (Dashrath) 4. Not run: Arrecife. 2, 1-1/4 and 4-1/2. 2m, 4.41s. ₹21 (w), 11 and 13 (p). SHP: 34, FP: 49, Q: 22, Tanala: 195 and 134. Favourite: Benevolence. Owner: Mr. K.H. Vaccha. Trainer: S.K. Sunderji.

2 **DIEGO RIVERA PLATE** (1,400m), Maiden, 3-y-o only: **GALLOPING GOLDMINE** (Sandesh) 1, Wizard Of Stocks (Trevor) 2, Istanbul (Merchant) 3 and Sir Ramon (Nazil) 4. 3/4, 8-1/2 and 4-1/4. 1m, 23.71s. ₹16 (w), 10, 10 and 19 (p). SHP: 26, FP: 36, Q: 18, Tanala: 129 and 74. Favourite: Galloping Goldmine. Owners: Mr. Mukul Sonawala, Mr. D.R. Thacker rep. DT Racing & Breeders LLP, M/s. Akhtar Adamji Peerbhoy, Ajay K. Arora & Pramod Gajanan Churi. Trainer: S.K. Sunderji.

3 **MAHARAJA SIR HARISINGHJI TROPHY** (Gr.2) (1,600m), 4-y-o & over: **SERJEANT AT ARMS** (Trevor) 1, Caprisca (Sandesh) 2, B Fifty Two (Zervan) 3 and Turning Point (Dashrath) 4. 2, 1-1/2 and Nk. 1m, 37.52s. ₹10 (w), 11 and 13 (p). SHP: 20, FP: 22, Q: 14, Tanala: 38 and 29. Favourite: Serjeant At Arms. Owners: Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy and Mr. & Mrs. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy rep. Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt. Ltd. & Mr. Vispi R. Patel. Trainer: S.S. Attaollahi.

4 **BEHRAM A ENGINEER TROPHY** (1,200m), Cl. III, rated 40 to 66: **EL COMANDANTE** (Sandesh) 1, Kilkarry Bridge (Peter) 2, Epiphany (Trevor) 3 and Pablo (Kaviraj) 4. Sh, 1 and 2. 1m, 10.88s. ₹23 (w), 12, 10 and 14 (p). SHP: 33, FP: 71, Q: 28, Tanala: 110 and 56. Favourite: El Comandante. Owners: Mr. Cyrus S. Poonawalla, Mr. Adar C. Poonawalla & Mrs. Natasha A. Poonawalla rep. Villoo Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Pvt. Ltd., M/s. Saleem Fazelbhoy, Dinsha P. Shroff & Munchi P. Shroff. Trainer: Altaf Hussain.

5 **KAZAKH PLATE** (1,200m), Cl. IV, rated 20 to 46: **TENERIFE** (Peter) 1, Super Mario (Nazil) 2, Ustad Pedro (Kaviraj) 3 and Philadelphia (P. Vinod) 4. Not run: Lord Commander. 2-3/4, 2-1/4 and 3-1/4. 1m, 12.09s. ₹23 (w), 12, 14 and 11 (p). SHP: 45, FP: 89, Q: 43, Tanala: 115 and 30. Favourite: Tenerife. Owners: M/s. Geoffrey B. Nagpal & Nishant G. Nagpal. Trainer: S.K. Sunderji.

6 **BEJAN BHARUCHA PLATE** (1,200m), Cl. V, rated 4 to 30: **SHE IS A SPY** (Trevor) 1, Golden Horde (Vishal) 2, Cracklin Rosie (Merchant) 3 and Democrat (Ajinkya) 4. 1, Nose and Sh. 1m, 13.19s. ₹23 (w), 12, 14 and 11 (p). SHP: 45, FP: 89, Q: 43, Tanala: 115 and 30. Favourite: She Is A Spy. Owners: Mr. Champaklal Zaveri, Mrs. Bindu C. Zaveri, Miss Niti N Desai & Miss Harsha N Desai rep. Zaveri Stud Farm Pvt Ltd. Trainer: S.S. Shah.

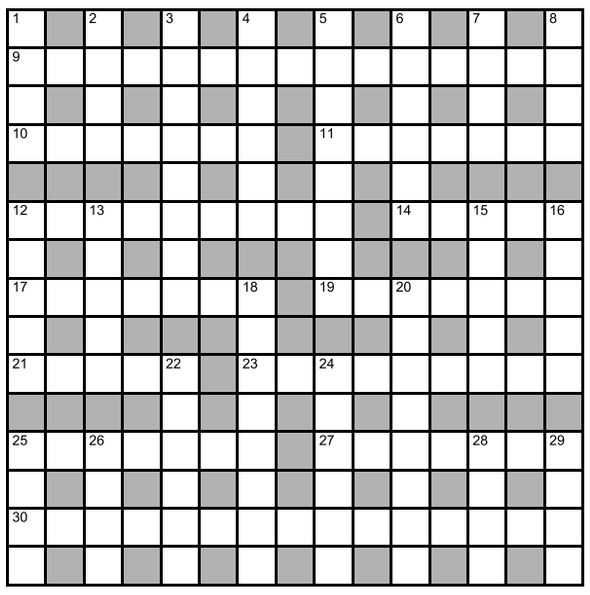
Jackpot: 70%: ₹480 (1,509 tkts.) and 30%: ₹45 (6,822 tkts.).

Treble: ₹337 (125 tkts.).

Super Jackpot: 70%: ₹968 (117 tkts.) and 30%: ₹83 (582 tkts.).

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12594

(set by Hypatia)



ACROSS

9 Soldiers in civilian clothing can cause agitation? (4,2,4,5)

10 Leave the French Navy's party held in boat (7)

11 Reconcile tentatively upon leaving or abandon (7)

12 Spot of excitement heard in Spooner's rabbit call (5,4)

14 Took a dip in water with one holy man (5)

17 One bored by author's never ending exchange with independent liberal? (3,4)

19 Dull about small break ending on Wednesday, say (7)

21 Prison cells smelt bad, from second shift to the last (5)

23 Say, fair maiden by players had no hit wickets taken (4-5)

25 Multiply the inverse of 22? (7)

27 Former scheme to preserve dairy (essentially milk) (7)

30 After mass exodus, more volunteering transformed agricultural movement (5,10)

DOWN

1 Notes swapped by dynasty for tusk (4)

2 Resist under hand lobs to bowl over (4)

3 Like to break up and swallow close to 1000 bits (8)

4 Live wire act got several people turning up (6)

5 What light travellers can be seen reducing? (4,4)

6 Moles burrow in cold seasons (6)

7 Article about denial did not take too long (4)

8 Man, perhaps from hell, essentially recalled afterlives (4)

12 Defy parade after a Nationalist is killed for nothing (5)

13 Stocking material in new building only (5)

15 Comprehensive guide on being raised by one ethnic tribe (5)

16 Think legends camouflage yarn (5)

18 Unusually silent engineer is pulled up, one hears (8)

20 Now, power outage in severe flood (8)

22 She advices anxious patients to lose weight? (6)

24 Spotted animal duck in front of Church's parking area (6)

25 Border's advantage (4)

26 Went ahead with Indian import that's fabricated (4)

28 Drop homeless man at one time? (4)

29 Sound character (4)

SUDOKU

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

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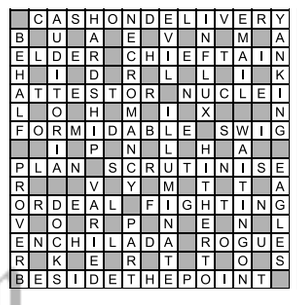
DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12593



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Dasaratha heartbroken

As every episode in the Ramayana unfolds, Valmiki captures the rich insights into human life and nature that is under the powerful influence of a larger destiny, pointed out Kalyanapuram Sri Aravamudhachariar in a discourse. King or commoner, scholar or unlearned, man or woman, are all affected in this samsara. Could there be a greater heartbreak than the one experienced by Dasaratha who is driven to send Rama into exile for fourteen years instead of crowning Him Yuva Raja as promised a few fours back? There is haste in Dasaratha's decision. He confesses to Rama that he has premonitions and ominous dreams which portend death of kings or similar calamities. He says he is resolved to carry out his plan the next day itself without any delay as it happens to be most auspicious for a king's coronation according to astrological experts. This is to take place despite Bharata's absence at the moment. Although Bharata is pious, compassionate and righteous by nature, obedient to all and is self controlled in all ways, the king says that human mind is very unpredictable. Moreover, any resolve to accomplish good ends can be disrupted and one has to guard against any harm or evil within or without. These words are indicative of how destiny forces him to change his own cherished desire to see Rama crowned. As Rama leaves for the forest in the chariot driven by Sumantra, Dasaratha, hit by the rudest of shocks, experiences the greatest void ever in his life and succumbs to sorrow. He gazes at the clouds of dust raised by the speeding chariot until when they are no longer visible and then falls on the ground. He wails that having followed Rama, his sight has not returned. But in such a situation that triggers strong emotions, Rama maintains equanimity and teaches by example how to deal with misfortunes.

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

Retained players and fresh faces in focus at auction

New category permits a franchise to retain a youngster who has completed two seasons with the squad

PKL SEASON-7

NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

Retained players and fresh faces will be the focus of attention at the ProKabaddi League season-7 player auction. Patna Pirates, the most successful franchise, showed the way by retaining four Elite players around whom the squad will be formed when fresh talent is recruited.

Telugu Titans also retained four from last year's squad, from six Elite players permitted.

Defending champion Bengaluru Bulls, U Mumba and Tamil Thalaivas retained three players each.

Match card

Apart from those retained for meeting team management expectations, franchises can also use the Final Bid Match card to bring back an Elite player from their last season's squad for whom another franchise has bid for at the open auction in Mumbai.

Retained Young Players is a new category in force in 2019, permitting franchise to retain a youngster who has completed two seasons with the squad.

Delhi and Yoddhas will be expected to use the FBM card for Naveen Kumar and Nitesh Kumar respectively.

Fresh talent at the auction will include graduates from the league's Future Kabaddi Heroes project, among whom six can be chosen by each participating franchise. Gujarat Fortunegiants' raider Sachin Talwar (best debutant in season five and retained in season six and seven) is a fitting example of how investment in young Indians is paying dividends for team managements.

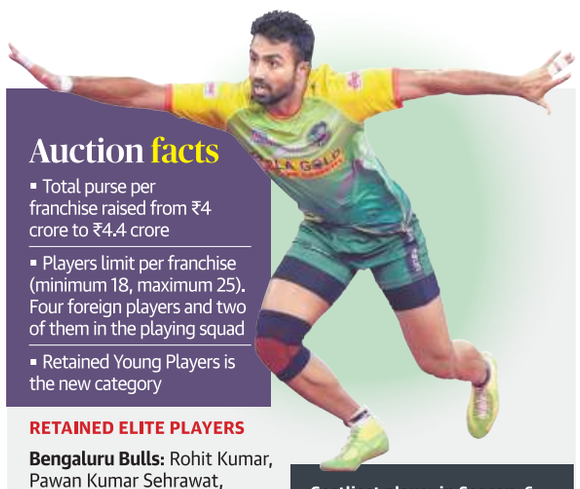
Four Iranians and a Kenyan figure among the elite pros retained

More foreigners will make news at the two-day auctions, as PKL makes it mandatory for teams to play two foreigners in each team, maximum of four in the squad.

Fazel Atrachali turned heads in season six auction with U Mumba paying ₹1crore for his services in the defence.

The Iranian is retained, it is the turn of fellow Iranians and South Koreans to spark off a bidding war, as team managements grapple with buying players within the purse limit of ₹4.4 crore per franchise allocated.

New start: Bengaluru Bulls, champion last season, has retained three of its top players. ▪ FILE PHOTO



Auction facts

- Total purse per franchise raised from ₹4 crore to ₹4.4 crore
- Players limit per franchise (minimum 18, maximum 25). Four foreign players and two of them in the playing squad
- Retained Young Players is the new category

RETAINED ELITE PLAYERS

Bengaluru Bulls: Rohit Kumar, Pawan Kumar Sehrawat, Ashish Kumar.

Gujarat Fortunegiants: Sachin Talwar, Sunil Kumar. Bengal Warriors: Baldev Singh, Maninder Singh. Dabang Delhi: Meraj Sheykh, Joginder Narwal. Haryana Steelers: Kuldeep Singh, Vikash Chandola. Jaipur Pink Panthers: Deepak Hooda, Sandeep Kumar Dhoull.

Patna Pirates: Pardeep Narwal, Vikas Jaglan, Tushar Patil, Jawahar.

Costliest player in Season-6 auction: Monu Goyat (₹1.51 crore, Haryana Steelers)

Tamil Thalaivas: Ajay Thakur, Manjeet Chillar, Victor Onyango.

Telugu Titans: Armaan, Mohsen, Maghsoudloujanfani, Farhad Milaghardan, Nitin Madane.

U Mumba: Fazel Atrachali, Rajguru Subramaniam, Arjun Deshwal.

UP Yoddha: Amit, Sachin Kumar.

Gholamreza to coach Telugu Titans

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Telugu Titans has snapped up Gholamreza Mazandarani as head coach for Pro-Kabaddi League season-7.

The Iranian national team coach was replaced at U Mumba after one season with Sanjeev Kumar Baliyan.

Other head coaches: B.C. Ramesh (Bengal Warriors), Randhir Singh (Bengaluru Bulls), Krishan Kumar Hooda (Dabang Delhi), Manpreet Singh (Gujarat Fortunegiants), Srinivas Reddy (Jaipur Pink Panthers), Ram Meher Singh (Patna Pirates), Anup Kumar (Puneri Paltan), Sanjeev Kumar (U Mumba), E Bhaskaraan (Tamil Thalaivas), Jasveer Singh (UP Yoddha), Rakesh Kumar (Haryana Steelers).

Natl.-ranking tennis from today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The Zee Bangla Central Excise Open AITA men's and women's National-ranking tennis tournament will be held at the Bengal Tennis Association courts here from Monday.

The singles draws will feature 32 players, including eight qualifiers, while doubles has 16 entries.

Top players like Niki Poonacha, Mohit Mayur, Dalwinder Singh among men and Nidhi Chilumula, Yubrani Banerjee, Nithyaraj Baburaj among women will be seen in action in the six-day event, offering a total prize money of ₹5 lakh, according to an announcement at a press conference here on Sunday.

The men's singles winner will receive ₹37,500 and the women's champion ₹25,000.

Kupcho is first queen of Augusta

Wins dramatic duel against Fassi by four strokes

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
AUGUSTA

American Jennifer Kupcho became the first woman to capture a championship at former all-male enclave Augusta National Golf Club, outduelling Mexico's Maria Fassi on Saturday to win at the famed home of the Masters.

In a dramatic battle between two 21-year-old US collegiate stars, Kupcho had three birdies and an eagle in the last six holes in firing a five-under 67 to finish on 10-under 206 for a four-stroke victory over Fassi, who fired her third consecutive 70.

"It's just amazing. It's just great to be able to do that," Kupcho said. "It's a feeling I can't describe."

Distant third

Japanese teen Yuka Yasuda and Yuka Saso of the Philippines shared a distant third on 214.

The amateur tournament was the first women's trophy ever contested at Augusta National, which opened in 1933 but didn't admit its first woman members until 2012.

A field of 72 played the first 36 holes at nearby Champions Retreat before the top 30 advanced to the last 18 holes at the famed Masters layout.

Women's amateur World No. 1 Kupcho, the reigning US college champion, and Fassi, last year's US women's college Golfer-of-the-Year, staged a dramatic duel in a historic moment.

"The ending wasn't what I would have liked but it was still amazing to compete at Augusta for the first time," Fassi said. "I'm just really happy. We played amazing golf. It really is a dream come true."

Kupcho received the champion's trophy in Butler Cabin, where Masters winners are presented with green jackets, and Augusta National chairman Fred Ridley told her, "You're part of Augusta National history now."

Augusta's trademark lightning-quick and undulating greens took a toll on rivals as Kupcho and Fassi battled beneath the Georgia pines in fabled Amen Corner, women shining for the first time over some of golf's most famous holes.

"So cool seeing these women live out their dreams right now," tweeted Rory McIlroy, who hopes to complete a Career Grand Slam by winning his first Masters title next weekend.

Golf legend Jack Nicklaus tweeted his appreciation for women playing at Augusta, writing, "Always considered Augusta National GC & @TheMasters the best at balancing respect for golf's history & tradition with innovative ways to grow our game. Inaugural @anwagolf is the latest great example."

Picture of delight: Jennifer Kupcho savours the moment she became part of Augusta National history. ▪ AFP

Harjeet back in senior national camp

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's Junior World Cup-winning side captain Harjeet Singh was on Sunday named among 60 players for the senior men's national camp which begins at the Sports Authority of India Centre, Bengaluru, on April 8.

The players have been selected based on their performances at the recently held ninth Hockey India Senior Men's National Championship A-Division as well as their recent international showings.

Harjeet, who was the skipper of the Indian team which won the 2016 Junior World Cup in Lucknow, has been called up after nearly a gap of one year.

His junior Indian teammates Santa Singh, Vikramjit Singh, Dipsan Tirkey, Manpreet (Junior) and Armaan Qureshi, who were not part of the previous national camp, too have been selected in the list of 60 players named by Hockey India.

The list will be further pruned down to 33 core probables after a selection trial on April 20.

"This list of players has been selected keeping in mind their recent international performances in both senior and junior men's tournaments as well as the recently held Senior National Championships," said Hockey India's High Performance Director, David John.

Amir's WC chances in question

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI

Mohammad Amir's World Cup selection was thrown into uncertainty after captain Sarfaraz Ahmed expressed concerns over the experienced left-arm pacer's inability to take wickets in One-day Internationals.

"When your main strike bowler is not taking wickets regularly obviously it causes concern to the captain," Sarfaraz told a television channel.

Since the Champions Trophy final at the Oval in 2017, when he produced a match-winning spell of three for 16,

Amir, 26, has not taken more than a wicket in 14 ODIs and has also gone without a wicket in nine of these matches. The selectors are due to announce the Pakistan World Cup squad on April 18. Sarfaraz agreed that there had not only been a drastic cut in the strike rate for Amir but his pace had also come down.

"I can't say whether he will be in the World Cup squad or not but our minds are clear about our plans and when the squad is announced everyone will know."

Nawaz looking to grow as 'sweeper-keeper'

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
BHUBANESWAR

Among the few Indian players who impressed with their performance in the recent Indian Super League, Mohammad Nawaz's name comes high in the order.

The 19-year-old from Manipur made a rapid transition from his junior days to become the top goalkeeper for the ISL runner-up FC Goa.

A product of a training process that went into the preparation for the first football World Cup (under-17) on the Indian soil, Nawaz was left out of the final squad that played the tournament but overcame the disappointment with his superlative show in the ISL.

"I was left in a state of shock on hearing the news of my exclusion. But I did not let negativity get over me and started training even more vigorously till I was drafted in by FC Goa for their development team in the Goa Pro League," says Nawaz, who was apparently left out because the Portuguese coach Luís Norton de Matos chose the taller Sunny Dhaliwal over him.

"When I asked the coach (de Matos) why I was excluded, he said I was not tall enough. I do not agree with him as the main attribute of a goalkeeper is his agility and the timing of the jump and dive that comes with it.

"You cannot measure a goalkeeper by his height and that is exactly why I am with the first team of FC Goa," said Nawaz, who stands 1.75m tall.

Need to be effective

Nawaz says goalkeepers now have to be more versatile to be effective and it is his ability to play as the 'sweeper-keeper' that puts him ahead of the others. "I fit into the FC Goa squad because of my ability to play the 'sweeper keeper.' This is something which my coach [Sergio Lobera] encourages me to do," says Nawaz who idolises the German goalkeeper Manuel Nuer, who has given role of 'sweeper keeper' a new dimension.

The FC Goa head coach, Lobera, also appreciated Nawaz's ability saying that the young goalkeeper has really impressed with his skills and confidence.

Multi-faceted: FC Goa's goalkeeper Mohammad Nawaz is of the opinion that custodians have to be more versatile to be effective. ▪ FILE PHOTO

World Cup remains 32-team affair: Qatar

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KUALA LUMPUR

Qatar says the 2022 World Cup remains at 32 teams as FIFA chief Gianni Infantino piled on pressure to expand the tournament to 48 and share it with other Gulf countries.

Speaking to AFP at the Asian Football Confederation Congress, head organiser Nasser Al-Khater said Qatar was still planning for 32 and that studies about adding another 16 teams were just an "assessment".

"There's a feasibility study on the countries that could possibly host. So together with FIFA we're looking into those possibilities," Al-Khater said here on Saturday.

"So that's where we are now. It's still open as an idea but it's not a done deal for it to be a 48-team World Cup."

Although Qatar has said it is open to expanding, Al-Khater was at pains to underline that "the status quo is that it's still a 32-team World Cup, everything after that is an assessment".

After winning the right to host a 32-team World Cup in 2010, in a bidding process mired in bribery allegations, the Qataris are coming under sustained pressure to switch to 48.

Oman and Kuwait are being studied as possible co-hosts as Qatar remains under a diplomatic and transport blockade from other Gulf neighbours.

Al-Khater said there was no chance of the UAE or Saudi Arabia co-hosting the World Cup, given the current impasse.

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IN BRIEF

Nobel winner biologist Sydney Brenner is dead

LA JOLLA

Sydney Brenner, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist who helped decipher the genetic code and whose research on a roundworm sparked a new field of human disease research, has died. He was 92. Mr. Brenner shared the Nobel Prize in medicine in 2002 for his contribution to work unravelling how genes control cell division. AP

Hackers forced a Tesla to enter the wrong lane

SAN FRANCISCO

Hackers have demonstrated how they could trick a Tesla Model S to enter into the wrong lane by manipulating a machine learning model. The researchers showed that by placing interference stickers on the road, the autopilot system could be fed information that would force it to make an abnormal judgement and make the vehicle change lanes. IANS

Over 40 zoo animals evacuated from Gaza

RAFAH

More than 40 animals, including five lions, were evacuated from a Gaza Strip zoo on Sunday to be taken to Jordan. The Rafah zoo is in the southern Gaza Strip, which has been under an Israeli blockade for over 10 years. AFP

Fungus immune to drugs is secretly sweeping the globe

The rise of *Candida auris* indicates that like bacteria, germs are growing resistance

MATT RICHTEL
ANDREW JACOBS

In May, an elderly man was admitted to Mount Sinai Hospital in Brooklyn, U.S., for abdominal surgery. A blood test revealed that he was infected with a newly discovered germ as deadly as it was mysterious. Doctors swiftly isolated him in the intensive care unit.

The germ, a fungus called *Candida auris*, preys on people with weakened immune systems, and it is quietly spreading across the globe. Over the past five years, it has hit a neonatal unit in Venezuela, swept through a hospital in Spain, forced a prestigious British medical centre to shut down its intensive care unit, and taken root in India, Pakistan and South Africa.

Candida auris in a petri dish. It preys on people with a weak immune system. NYT

Recently *C. auris* reached New York, New Jersey and Illinois, leading the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to add it to a list of germs deemed "urgent threats."

The man at Mount Sinai died after 90 days in the hospital, but *C. auris* did not. Tests showed it was everywhere in his room, so invasive that the hospital needed special cleaning equipment and had to rip out some of the ceiling and floor tiles to eradicate it.

"Everything was positive – the walls, the bed, the doors, the curtains, the phones, the sink, the whiteboard, the poles, the pump," said Dr. Scott Lorin, the hospital's president. "The mattress, the bed rails, the canister holes, the window shades, the ceiling, everything in the room was positive."

C. auris is so tenacious, in part, because it is impervious to major antifungal medications, making it a new example of one of the world's most intractable health threats: the rise of drug-resistant infections.

For decades, public health experts have warned that the overuse of antibiotics was reducing the effectiveness of drugs that have lengthened life spans by curing bacterial infections once commonly fatal. But lately, there has been an explosion of resistant fungi as well, adding a new and frightening dimension to a phenomenon that is undermining a pillar of modern medicine.

Simply put, fungi, just like bacteria, are evolving defences to survive medicines.

For now, the uncertainty around *C. auris* has led to a climate of fear, and sometimes denial. NY TIMES

Swiss protest over global warming

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

Tens of thousands of people demonstrated on Saturday in several Swiss cities against climate change, the Swiss news agency Keystone-ATS reported.

Around 50,000 marched in all, including 15,000 in Zurich and up to nine thousand in the capital Berne and in Lausanne.

"It's about knowing if finally we want to listen to the voice of science," high school student Jan Burckhardt said.

"Save the climate please: it's the last time we ask politely," read one of the placards at the Lausanne demonstration.

The marches were organised by an alliance of activist groups in Switzerland, including Greenpeace, Swiss Youth for Climate and green groups.

2 students dupe Apple by swapping fake iPhones

The firm suffered a loss of $9,00,000

RICK ROJAS

The con was simple: send a fake iPhone to Apple claiming that the device would not turn on and that it was under warranty, and not long after, a genuine replacement arrived in the mail.

It was a scheme that federal prosecutors said two college students in Oregon, U.S., repeated on such a scale that it amounted to nearly $9,00,000 in losses for Apple as they sent in hundreds of counterfeit phones.

The two students, identified as Quan Jiang and Yangyang Zhou, would then ship the iPhones overseas where they would be sold for hundreds of dollars and, in return, they would get a cut of the profit, according to court documents.

The replaced iPhones were sold overseas for hundreds of dollars. REUTERS

Similar logo, design

The investigation started two years ago, after customs officials seized shipments coming from Hong Kong containing cellphones from China. The devices appeared to be Apple products, with the logos and design features of an iPhone, but the shipping methods and packaging raised the suspicions of officials, who determined that the phones were counterfeit..

Investigators discovered that the cellphones were bound for Mr. Zhou's mailing address and that they were part of an importing operation that also included Mr. Jiang, Mr. Zhou's neighbour in Oregon.

Records provided to investigators by Apple allowed them to connect Mr. Jiang to 3,069 iPhone warranty claims. All of them indicated "No Power/Wired Charging Issues" as the reason for the claim.

More than 1,500 of the claims were rejected, but nearly just as many were approved, with a new phone sent out. An Apple representative told an investigator, according to court records, that a key element of the scheme's success was that the phones were inoperable, which meant the replacement process would begin before technicians could figure out they were counterfeit.

Mr. Jiang told investigators that he had submitted some 2,000 phones in 2017. He also said that he employed friends and relatives in the U.S. to help swap out the phones. He said that an associate in China who sold the genuine phones paid Mr. Jiang's mother, who lives in China; she deposited the money in a bank account that he could access in the U.S. With each phone costing $600, the losses for Apple amounted to $8,95,800, officials said.

Recently, a Lithuanian man pleaded guilty to an effort in which he sought to bilk Facebook and Google out of millions of dollars by submitting fraudulent invoices to the companies. Prosecutors said that from 2013 to 2015, the companies wired more than $100 million to the man and his associates. NY TIMES

A 'million word gap' for children not read to at home

Parents who read to them five books a day help them build vocabulary ahead of kindergarten

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

Young children whose parents read them five books a day enter kindergarten having heard about 1.4 million more words than children who were never read to, a study has found.

This "million word gap" could be one key in explaining differences in vocabulary and reading development, said Jessica Logan, assistant professor at The Ohio State University in the U.S.

Even children who are read only one book a day will hear about 2,90,000 more words by age 5. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Even children who are read only one book a day will hear about 2,90,000 more words by age 5 than those who don't regularly read books with a parent or caregiver.

"Kids who hear more words are going to be better prepared to see those words in print when they enter school," said Ms. Logan, lead author of the study published in the *Journal of Developmental and Behavioural Pediatrics*.

"The fact that we had so many parents who said they never or seldom read to their kids was pretty shocking to us. We wanted to figure out what that might mean for their kids," she said.

The researchers identified the 100 most circulated books for both board books (targeting infants and toddlers) and picture books (targeting preschoolers).

They randomly selected 30 books from both lists and counted how many words were in each book. They found that board books contained an average of 140 words, while picture books contained an average of 228 words.

With that information, the researchers calculated how many words a child would hear from birth through his or her 5th birthday at different levels of reading.

They assumed that kids would be read board books through their 3rd birthday and picture books the next two years, and that every reading session (except for one category) would include one book.

They also assumed that parents who reported never reading to their kids actually read one book to their children every other month.

Based on these calculations, children who have never been read to would have heard 4,662 words by the time they were 5 years old. Those who are read five books a day, hear about 1,483,300 words.

"The word gap of more than 1 million words between children raised in a literacy-rich environment and those who were never read to is striking," Ms. Logan said.

Prince William goes undercover with British spies

To better understand their role in combating terrorism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

Prince William has spent three weeks on undercover work placements with Britain's security and intelligence agencies to gain a first-hand understanding of the role they play in combating terrorism.

The 36-year-old, who is second in line to Britain's throne, described the experience of working with the MI5, MI6 and Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) as a humbling one, while the GCHQ said the royal had worked exceptionally hard during his internship.

"William worked exceptionally hard to embed himself in the team and comfortably held his own amongst some highly skilled analysts and operators. His Royal Highness asked some probing questions and demonstrated a real grasp of our mission," the head of counter-terrorism operations at GCHQ, an anonymous post, said in a statement.

Britain's Prince William during a three-week attachment with the country's security and intelligence agencies. REUTERS

The Duke of Cambridge undertook his workplace attachments last month and concluded his mission on Saturday.

"Spending time inside our security and intelligence agencies, understanding more about the vital contribution they make to our national security, was a truly humbling experience," he said.

Racing ahead

Runners cross the Erasmus bridge as they compete during the 39th Rotterdam Marathon on Sunday. AFP

AI robots may assist soldiers in the future

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

Scientists in the U.S. are developing artificial intelligence (AI) systems that could help robots assist soldiers in the battlefield in future.

For the research, published in the journal *Science Advances*, team looked at soldier brain activity during specific tasks for ways to incorporate AI teaming to dynamically complete tasks.

According to Jean Vettel, a neuroscientist at the Army Research Laboratory (ARL), technologies that can predict behaviour of the individual soldier may help create a more optimised team. Scientists are looking at ways the dynamics of human brain may be coordinated to predict such behaviours to optimise team performance.

German birthplace marks Bauhaus centenary with new museum

The art school, which started work in April 1919 under architect Walter Gropius, has inspired modern design forms

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WEIMAR

The German city where the Bauhaus was born a century ago is paying tribute to the school, which is behind a string of modern design icons, with a new museum that opened on Friday to anchor it in its turbulent historical context.

The Bauhaus Museum in Weimar, a functional but elegant concrete cube designed by German architect Heike Hanada, showcases many of the items that blurred the lines between the artistic and the industrial producing some of the precursors of modern mass design and helping make the Bauhaus influential far beyond its relatively brief existence.

Functional design: A visitor standing in front of a sound installation in one of the exhibition halls of the Bauhaus Museum in Weimar, Germany, and Peter Keler's cradle, right, made of a blue circle. AP

Visitors can admire exhibits such as Peter Keler's cradle made of a blue circle, a yellow triangle and red square, produced in 1922 under the direction of artist Wassily Kandinsky; Wilhelm Wagenfeld's domed table lamp of 1924; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's steel easy chair and stool from 1929, and early precursors of the fitted kitchen.

But the museum also explores the wider and constantly shifting ambitions of the Bauhaus, which started work in April 1919 under architect Walter Gropius as Germany grappled with its political future after First World War. It reflects the political troubles that forced the school to move twice then close down shortly after the Nazis came to power in 1933.

The aim is not just to show off architecture and design but also to see the school and its leading lights "in their diversity, with their contradictions and how they are anchored in the 20th century," said Benjamin-Immanuel Hoff, Thuringia State's Culture Minister.

Weimar stands for both the high points of German classical culture and the low points of the country's history. It was home to the poets Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller and composer Franz Liszt, but later to the Nazis' Buchenwald concentration camp.

The museum offers views toward the historical centre and a tower built as a memorial to Buchenwald. It was built next door to the Gauforum, a monumental Nazi-era administrative complex and parade ground, where a permanent exhibit on Nazi slave labour is to open next year.

Gropius, the first Bauhaus director, left Weimar a collection of 168 Bauhaus objects including ceramics, furniture and rugs that is a mainstay of the museum's collection. It survived the Second World War packed up in a room at Weimar's city palace.

Bauhaus students had to learn a craft in one of 10 Bauhaus workshops.

Africa's richest man withdrew $10 mn to feel it

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ABIDJAN

Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote, known as Africa's richest man, told a forum in Ivory Coast on Saturday how he once took $10 million in cash out of the bank just to look at it and get it into his head that this was real money, not just figures on paper.

"When you're young, your first million is important, but after, the numbers don't mean much," Mr. Dangote, a manufacturing tycoon with a range of companies spanning cement to flour, told the Mo Ibrahim forum in Abidjan.

"One day, I cashed 10 million, put them in the boot of my car I put it in my room. I looked at them and thought 'now I believe I have money' and took it back to the bank the next day," he told his audience.

Aliko Dangote

Anecdotes aside, Mr. Dangote said that the two most promising sectors for Africa's future were agriculture and new technologies. But he advised young African entrepreneurs not to get carried away by the first flush of success. "There are ups and downs" in business, he warned.

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DELHI
MONDAY • APRIL 8, 2019

There are no black-and-white answers — each student is unique, and must opt for institutes and boards that help optimise his/her potential

Board Basics

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

- Transitioning to different boards can be a challenge for a few, who have grown up learning through a certain board
- If you are certain of a higher education abroad, it would then be worth considering a board that is internationally recognised
- IBDP is an international board that prefers to use enquiry-based learning methodologies

MONA SEERVAI

Across the country, students would have completed their class X board exams. Like most of their peers, the discussion on what do after class X, would be in progress, and like every batch, the current set of students will be facing a similar dilemma. Traditionally, students select between science, commerce and arts. However, while keeping a larger picture in perspective, students should also consider selecting an education board that will assist them in their higher education.

Transitioning to different boards can be a challenge for a few, who have grown up learning through a certain board. So, what factors must be considered to switch boards after class X to ensure better prospects for a higher education in India or abroad? Here are some points to ponder over, while zeroing-in on the best fit:

State board: Highly saturated and easily available across the country, the stateboard uses a syllabus prescribed by the education department. This board prefers the traditional methods of rote memorisation, and assesses students on the basis of marks and percentages. In comparison to other boards, state board does not enjoy widespread international recognition, and the training offered for global competitive exams is slightly underwhelming.

CBSE: Just as state board, CBSE is also highly saturated across the country, and prefers traditional methods of learning. This board uses a syllabus laid down by NCERT, and enjoys a national, as well as, international recognition. Students are assessed on the basis of percentage, and are provided some basic training for global competitive exams.

ICSE: ICSE follows the syllabus laid down by the Inter State Board for Anglo Indian Education. This board is not as highly saturated as the first two. In other words, it will take some research to look for affiliated institutes in tier-II cities and towns. The board is recognised nationally as well as internationally, and uses application-based teaching methodology. The board provides a good level of training for global competitive exams, and students are assessed on the basis of marks and percentage.

CIE/IGCSE: This board follows the curriculum prescribed by Cambridge International Examinations, and institutes affiliated to this board are mostly located in the metro cities. Students collect credit points for subjects they opt for, and only after completing the required number of credits can they proceed to the next level. This board is well-recognised across the globe, and fully prepares its students for global competitive exams.

International Baccalaureate (IBDP): IBDP is an international board that follows the IB pedagogy, and prefers to use enquiry-based learning methodologies. Mostly available in the metro cities of India, this board places equal importance on academics as well as extracurricular activities, to ensure holistic development. This board also requires students to collect credits for subjects they have chosen. A highly recognised board internationally, IBDP students are well-trained to undertake global competitive exams.

Making the right choice

So, how do you select a board that would work best? The answer lies in having a basic understanding of the students higher educational goals and from where they wish to achieve it.

> **Traditionally, students select between science, commerce and arts. However, while keeping a larger picture in perspective, students should also consider selecting an education board that will assist them in their higher education.**

For example: If you are certain of a higher education abroad, it would then be worth considering a board that is internationally recognised, and prepares you for global competitive exams. Such boards give an obvious advantage over the others. However, if the goal is to learn from the best institutes across India, you need not consider a change in your board, unless you wish to explore a different educational experience.

Both the above examples are, however limited, and there are other factors to consider before coming to a conclusion. Some of these factors are:

Experience with your current educational board: Are you satisfied with the quality of education you have received so far, or would you like to explore new methods and techniques that provide a holistic learning experience?

Geography: While it may seem as an obvious factor, one must understand that not all educational boards are as easily available and affiliated across the country. Boards such as the state and CBSE have a higher saturation, in comparison to international boards such as IGCSE and IB, which are mostly available in metros. In such a case, is the family willing to consider a relocation?

Assessment methods: Assessing a student's skill and capability only on the basis of marks, is not a holistic approach. Students should be assessed for their critical thinking, soft skills, participation in extracurricular activities and overall growth they display in an academic year. Hence, select a board that gives equal weightage to academics and extracurricular activities.

Preparing for the future: An extremely important factor to consider is the board's ability to prepare you for future education choices. Providing students with tools and techniques that help compete on a global platform, is a necessity today, to ensure students are future-ready.

It will be useful to students and parents to understand if the board they are considering is offering the above to take them to the next level of education. There are no black and white answers. Ultimately, each student is a unique individual, and good institutes and boards are very important to ensure they realise their full potential.

The writer is Head of School, Mount Litera School International

VOICES

Breaking free

The 47 days long protest by the Panjab University Syndicate has now led to 24/7 campus access for girls – they can enter and exit the hostel at any hour. Will this lead to a progressive university space?

NEHA RUPEJA

NISHANT KUMAR, III, B.TECH, NETAJI SUBHAS ENGINEERING COLLEGE, KOLKATA

The issue sheds light on the status of women empowerment in India, which struggles to find its legitimate place in the mainstream socio-economic arena, right from the ancient times. This move shouldn't be restricted only to a particular campus, but the higher committee should make a comprehensive probe throughout the country's higher educational institutions. However, we cannot totally reject the safety claims of the government altogether, and a balanced strike should be drawn to make our campus more friendly and gender neutral.

PRATYAKSH PARMAR, II, ECONOMICS, ST. XAVIER'S, COLLEGE, MUMBAI

Equality between men and women is a prerequisite for progress in a nation. As the Panjab University Struggle Support Committee president rightly said, men had more privileges than women in the campus, and there was no suitable reason as to why that inequality was present. Through this move, the University has not only has ensured equality, but had made sure everyone has the right to perform to their optimum capabilities.

VAISHNAV MISHRA, MASTER'S IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, IIT GUWAHATI

This is a welcoming move towards eliminating gender discrimination, and will add a new dimension, promoting deliberate discussions and coordination, transcending the hostel boundaries. It will establish a new ethos in the area of gender sensitisation, if supplemented with a robust security framework. Such measures will surely lead to a healthy and progressive society, upholding the doctrine of equality for all.

ARYA SHRIVASTAVA, II, SCHOOL OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES, NEW DELHI

This move is not going to ensure equality to all.

Unless there is equality in the upbringing of both genders in the country, the status of equality cannot be achieved, no matter how many Acts and Articles are amended in the country, or how many rules are reframed at schools, colleges and offices.

It is the upbringing of a child that needs to be looked into.

> **It will establish a new ethos in the area of gender sensitisation, if supplemented with a robust security framework.**
> VAISHNAV MISHRA

SCHOLARSHIPS

Google PhD Fellowship India 2019

Google India is inviting post-graduation degree holders in computer science and related areas to apply for this multi-year fellowship which gives the opportunity of mentorship, research and internship at Google.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants enrolled for Ph.D. at an Indian institution, who have secured their post-graduation degree, and are employed at an Indian organisation.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: $50,000 in total for a maximum of four years, covering monthly fellowship, contingency grants and travel grants.

DEADLINE: April 13

APPLICATION: Online
b4s.in/EDGE/GPF2

RSTMH Small Grants Programme 2019

Royal Society of Tropical Disease and Hygiene is inviting early career researchers and global health professionals to undertake clinical or scientific research, or fieldwork as stand-alone projects in the field of tropical medicine or global health.

ELIGIBILITY: Early career researchers or global health professionals from India if they haven't received any other RSTMH grant in the previous two years.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: £5000 which can be used for travel, accommodation, field research expenses and equipment.

DEADLINE: April 15

APPLICATION: Online
b4s.in/EDGE/RSG2

Science Without Borders Challenge 2019

Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation is organising this international art competition for developing public awareness towards protection of oceans.

ELIGIBILITY: Students between the ages of 11 to 19 in a institution of formal elementary or secondary education.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: Cash prizes worth $500, $350 and $200 for the first, second and third ranking international entries, respectively.

DEADLINE: April 22

APPLICATION: Offline
b4s.in/EDGE/SWB5

Courtesy:
www.buddy4study.com

INNOVATION

All-seeing eye in the skies

Team Dhaksha is designing drones that find multiple uses, from crowd monitoring and land mapping to rescue and audit of disaster-hit areas

GEETA PADMANABHAN

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The institution is closed for the day, but the design and development centre of unmanned aerial vehicles at MIT is droning with activity. I am invited into the conference room where Dr. S. Thamarai Selvi, Director, Centre for Technology Development & Transfer, Anna University, Chennai, is talking to the Dhaksha team. Their immediate concern is to send the tech-team to Thiruvannamalai to help operate their crowd-monitoring drone during the *deepam* festival. Their tech van is about to leave.

Team Dhaksha is special. Mentored by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam since 2002, it is part of Centre for Aerospace Research, Madras Institute of Technology (MIT), campus of Anna University, Tamil Nadu.

Award-winning

The Dhaksha UAV project was launched with a ₹ 20-crore grant from the Tamil Nadu government under TN Innovation Initiative Scheme, said Director Thamarai Selvi. Other government agencies like DRDO funded the photogramatic mapping. Since then, Dhaksha drones have reached great heights, making customised vehicles for government projects.

The DARPA award the team won in 2012 was a landmark. "We competed against ten teams. We had to fly the drone over 5 km of pine trees and land it on a church roof." They flew it in Savannah, Georgia, where, with great presence of mind, the team tweaked the machine to fly under different conditions. "It then struck us. Why wait for tech-transfer? Why not start our own research centre in India?"

All the members were offered positions in the U.S. for UAV research, but they chose to come back.

Flying high: A drone deployed to assist rescue operations at the Kolukkumalai forest fire tragedy; the Daksha team.

- Team Dhaksha is part of Centre for Aerospace Research, Madras Institute of Technology.
- The team has won the APJ Abdul Kalam Award for contributions in the field of development of science/humanities/student welfare.
- The centre has signed product MOUs with the police departments of Kolkata, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala.

Dhaksha has won contests across the globe: World record for flight-time and endurance by multi-coptor UAV for endurance (about 6 hours) under Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI); HADR Mission Task of flying 60 kms using a hybrid multi-rotor system in the UAV medical express challenge 2018 held at Dalby Model Aero Club, Queensland, Australia. And the team cherishes the APJ Abdul Kalam Award for contributions in the field of development of science/humanities/student welfare, given by the government of Tamil Nadu on Independence Day, 2018.

The centre has signed product MOUs with the police departments of Kolkata, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala; Bharat Electronics Limited; Indian army; and Coal India. Drones are flown to audit mines, map agricultural activities, detect crop diseases.

"We helped with tax-planning for the Kerala government, post-disaster analysis of Gaja cyclone, and salt-pan encroachment in Tuticorin. Our data can be compared with previous data for legal scrutiny, administrative parameters, since they are better than surveillance maps." Drone pictures are used for homeland security and defence training.

In fact, the mapping department's work deserves a separate story, according to Leo Stalin, Project Associate-UAV mapping. "What we do is photogrammetry – photography for surveying and mapping to ascertain measurements between objects," said Dr. Vasantharaj, Scientist-Control & Navigation Division, giving me a tour of the lab. You convert the photos the UAV sends into useful, high-resolution maps. These maps score over satellite maps because these are taken at less height, without clouds blurring the view. They are prepared in on-demand resolution. Photogrammetry helps to map places difficult to reach.

"They give accurate dimensions for road construction, revenue administration, and disaster relief. They show the terrain in 3-D." The cadastral map was overlaid with a UAV-generated map to identify the encroachment of river beds in Cuddalore. "We have done projects to ascertain the mineral wealth of Tamil Nadu and the central government. We can replace Google maps; ours are better in resolution and accuracy."

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

LIVE LIGHTLY

NIVEDITA DAS NARAYAN

Finding strength in similarities

Beneath the rigid exterior of differentness, we are much alike, fairly communal

K.R. DEEPAK

Common ground: Weave bonds

"For a change I will focus on our similarities"– what if you woke up in the morning and that credo stayed with you the whole day? How would the day be? Let us imagine some vivid possibilities.

The middle school-er: Ah, I'm relieved; he too fears speaking up and hates homework!

The young adult stepping out to college: Oh, she too dislikes the way she looks despite the hour in front of the mirror this morning.

The marathoner: I am glad I signed up for the run with them, even though it is not my best timing in the group.

The corporate executive: I had a good appraisal; I am happy that my work is appreciated.

The parent: Your classmate is happy with her score. Why not be like her, son?

The married couple: Oh, I slip up as often as she does. Maybe we can exchange notes on our slip-ups at dinner!

"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another 'What, you too?' I thought I was the only one!" – C S Lewis

Happiness is relative. It is evident in how our euphoria, born of celebratory success, often crashes at the mention of someone's bigger success! In our highly individualistic cultures, we laud and are lauded for our distinctions. I waste a fair deal of good humour noting differences, stating my obvious individuality and finding reasons to stand (and feel) apart. Many of your messages to me suggest your cynicism and discontent as you compare your status with others. We humans are victims of our collective tendency to find dissimilarities.

If you return to the emotions of these dissonant moments, you will notice that your happiness was weighed down by comparisons within your circle of interest – family, friends, peers and often neighbours. Jealousy, despair, pride and disillusionment clouded your peace, as you compared with them. And nothing is more certain to hurt than when you are attuned to evaluating life as the deprived.

Common ground

Individually and certainly alongside, you follow idols and icons who bring you hope and new dreams, as you follow their life stories. Their vision, rigour and perseverance fuel your quiet aspirations and may lead to a leap of faith sometimes. What is different here is that you are not in competition with your idol; you are inspired by their distinctness yet aligned with the human similarities therein. This is the 'I relate to her' feeling.

A similar thread across life manifests in our interaction with nature. As we spend time in nature, our inherent stillness seems to sync with its universal presence and we acquire a heightened sense of our natural harmony with Mother Nature. If you've experienced it sometime, you would find yourself return to experience that fullness, recharge and rejuvenate. Experiencing of nature arises from our alignment with it – like suddenly we begin to understand what nature has been saying all along!

This is the reason why travel, food and music are unifiers – they bring people closer in intimate ways than is possible in the daily humdrum. Forming deep bonds during travel or in discovering common love for music is often possible as our guard (of finding differences) is down allowing the heart to be receptive and open to the sameness – much like finding a part of your nature reflected in the person across. What I'm referring to is an enabled culture of shared existence and experiences with people, nature and everything else in between.

"Comparison is the thief of joy," said Theodore Roosevelt. In these instances, finding connection, connecting to the similarities, going beyond the apparent dissimilarities engender long lasting wellbeing and desirability of repeat experiencing.

So, next time you feel strongly against something or someone – strong enough to cloud your equanimity – look for common ground. Create common linkages when there is none. Anytime you find yourself in a new environment – with a new set of people or challenged by the imminence of forming new bonds – find the similarities that already exist. The common space is a simpler, softer and kinder place to live life from.

Dissimilarities are discordant; similarities are conduits to harmony with the self and everything surrounding us.

The author is a life coach, blogger and writer who simplifies the patterns and archetypes she encounters at work and in life. nivedita@lifealigncoaching.com

One or a half step at a time

Set smaller achievable goals and master each of those tiny steps along the way

BACKPACKER'S GUIDE

USHA RAMAN

Yoga class is a great time to consider carefully what you can and cannot do. Like two dozen straight *suryanamaskaras* on the very first day after you (sort of) grasp the steps? Bad idea. No doubt this could give you a sense of accomplishment (and pride) followed very soon with the kind of body ache that leaves you wondering when you got hit by a truck. Of course, those whose bodies have received consistent and rigorous preparation for such physical exertions will be ready to take on such a challenge, and that might fool the rest of us into thinking that it's no big deal.

Again, bad idea.

Very few tasks can be done with absolutely no preparation. We're often pointed to examples that demonstrate a high level of expertise that belie the blood, sweat and tears – and years – that lies behind it. And while we may not aim to be as good as Roger Federer on the court, as fluid as Arundhati Roy with the pen, or as dexterous as Sanjeev Kapoor with the *kadhai,* most of us would like to be good at something. Maybe just to master the art of executing 24 sun salutations without breaking into a sweat (or pulling a muscle).

The process of getting good at something is about balancing accomplishment and complacency. Any personal trainer will tell you that it is not about getting comfortable with a routine, but to push yourself further, so that you feel some strain ("no pain, no gain").

This is the logic of those repetitive exercises in academic learning. You understand the theorem, and you get comfortable with it by practising the proof in 10 different scenarios. Then you're ready to push through to the next level, by puzzling over a harder problem. You move to higher levels of complexity and understanding bit by bit. Even as you conquer one level, you are presented with another, which might frustrate you at first, but gradually, you manage this as well. Syllabi are built on this underlying pattern – understanding, practice, mastery, challenge, growth.

In school and college, the challenges are externally set. The system is organised to move you through those steps, so the instructor (and the textbook) pushes you through that cycle. In life, we are more often in contexts where growth depends on internal motivators, where we need to choose and set our own challenges. Occasionally, the challenges will present themselves and you will be forced to take that leap. But in reality, that's quite unusual.

Gaining expertise in a particular context may lead to recognition and reward, and it can be very tempting to stay in that zone, doing just what you do well, over and over again. But getting good and comfortable can also mean getting bored or stuck in a rut, with little variation in what you do and how you do it.

Life can stay interesting and work can stay meaningful if we find little ways to challenge ourselves in all the different spaces of our lives. It could be doing just a little bit more, a little bit differently. The trick is to set small, achievable goals, and then push ourselves, gradually, a little further each time, balancing the achievable with the challenging.

Yesterday, in yoga class, I held the *sarvangasana* for 30 seconds. Today, I upped it to a minute. Next week, maybe two minutes?

The author teaches at the University of Hyderabad and edits Teacher Plus. usha.bpgll@gmail.com

Occasionally, the challenges will present themselves and you will be forced to take that leap.

FREEPIK

FREEPIK

Are you burning out?

You don't need high stress or breakdowns to understand that you need a break. A little refocussing can help you come back rejuvenated

EQ... ENGAGE

KRITHVI SHYAM

Last month, we looked at how to cope with the pressure of always being "busy", and the importance of trying to strike a work-life balance. What is the toll that this kind of consistent pressure could have on you? Are you feeling drained all the time – mentally, emotionally and physically? Are you beginning to question your work and shaking your head at the futility of it all? Has your productivity and the quality of your work declined? Are you worried about it but feel you're unable to do anything about it, because you can't put in a concentrated effort like you could before?

If this is the case, then you are probably on the verge of a "burnout". Burnouts are a period of high stress. They can impact your health – physical and mental – and your relationships, both professional and personal. It could cause you to say or do things that you would not normally.

When we looked at busyness, we saw how it has become desirable to always be perceived as a busy individual by those around you. The opposite applies for burnouts. There is a fear that burnouts equal showing weakness or giving up, or an inability to meet the expectations of others.

None of this is true, nor should it matter. If you think you might be getting burned out – or worse, if you are already there – it's time to drop whatever else you are doing and focus on your well-being.

Stop overthinking

Start with overcoming the fear of "what will people say?". While you need not shout from the rooftops that you are burning out, you also don't have to hold on to it like a dark secret. Talk to your manager or your family and explain that you have been feeling overwhelmed with work and need some time off. This doesn't mean extending your lunch break by an hour, but actually taking time away from work or school. The people you talk to about this may not fully understand what is going on; remain assertive and say that you need this time off, as the stress is beginning to affect your health.

Perhaps you are a key member in a project. It may not seem easy to leave your work and take off. If this is the case, work with the project team to do a detailed handover of your work to someone else, so that the team can be confident that you have not left it in a lurch.

If you have situations out of your control, like exams, it isn't as easy to take off. So practice self-care as much as you can. Plan your work better and be realistic about how much you can do in your current frame of mind. Make sure you get enough sleep, and cut back on the caffeine. Schedule breaks to take walks or do activities that aren't related to your studies.

If you have been fortunate enough to take a break, make the most of it. Stay away from your work, or it will constantly be on your mind. Practice new behaviours that will one day turn into habits: Get a health check-up done; join a yoga class; attend therapy sessions to learn stress management techniques; and exercise. You could also treat yourself to a change of scenery by going on a short holiday.

There is nothing wrong with taking time off to focus on improving your health and wellbeing. Whether it is a few minutes in a day, a few days in a month or a few weeks in a year. What is important is that you use the time wisely, so that you can return to the daily grind with a fresh mind.

Make sure you get enough sleep, and cut back on the caffeine. Schedule breaks to take walks or do activities that aren't related to your studies.

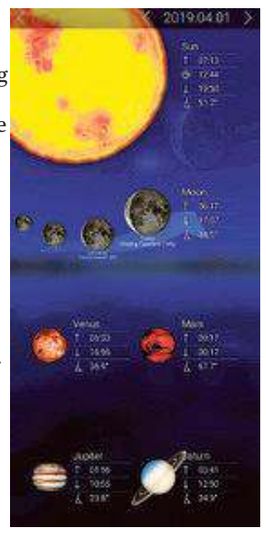
The author is a psychologist and management consultant. krithvis@gmail.com

BON APP-ETIT

ARATHI MINI

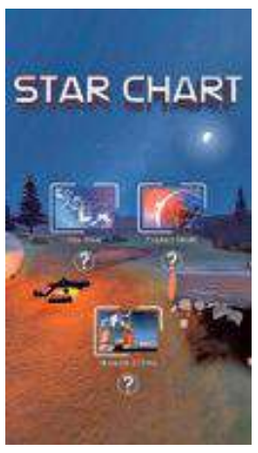
Who among us hasn't wished for a night under the clear sky, gazing at stars? Here are a few apps that will enhance our stargazing endeavours.

Star Walk 2



Apart from letting you explore the sky and identify stars during the day and night, this app lets you find the International Space Station, comets, planets, asteroids and constellations. Information about deep space objects such as galaxies, star clusters and nebulae are also available, which you can read while observing these celestial bodies. In order to use the app, all you need to do is to direct your device to whatever part of the sky you are interested in exploring. There is also an augmented reality view which lets you view charted objects superimposed on the sky, by activating your camera. (http://bit.ly/2FHgw2J)

Star Chart



This app uses GPS, an accurate 3D universe and calculates the real-time location of every star and planet which is visible from Earth, even during the day. Ever come across a star and didn't know what it was? Just point your phone at it and, voila, you have all the information about the star and it origins. Another amazing feature in this app is that if you want to see what people on the other side of our planet are seeing when they look up at the sky, then, all you need to do is point your phone down. The app also has voice control which lets you discover celestial objects by giving voice command such as "Where is the moon?" and so on. (http://bit.ly/2JVxhg3)

SkySafari

Sure, this app lets you find stars, constellations, and other such celestial bodies, but here is the best part – it also simulates the night sky from anywhere on Earth during any point in history and the future. Want to know what the sky looked like on the midnight of 1947? Download SkySafari and find out. By applying the night vision option in the app, you can preserve your eyesight after dark. The "Tonight's Best Feature" option will inform you which celestial bodies are visible from your location. (http://bit.ly/2TKyt5H)

VIDEO CAFE

How to get out of the box and generate ideas

OSHEEN SHARMA

'Think out of the box' is what we are told in every meeting, while writing an essay or trying to coming up with ideas or solutions. Brainstorming is not as difficult as it may seem, as Giovanni Corazza explains. In this video, Corazza explains the importance of long thinking, mix-matching and combining new ideas, and using metaphors to come up with a creative idea. He explains the how, where, what and when of brainstorming: how to get divergent information; where to take your mind to look for alternatives; what is the value of the new idea; and when is it a good time to challenge our environment to think outside the box.

Watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEusrD8g-dM

EAR SHOT

ASHOK RAJAGOPALAN

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

VALUE ADD

Learn, unlearn & relearn

English Language Teachers' Association of India has contributed to the professional development of teachers in several ways

ALBERT P'RAYAN

GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the latest buzzword in education. The need for teachers to focus on professional development has been discussed and emphasised in various forums, in the recent past. Teachers become better teachers when they voluntarily and constantly take steps to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. In order to stay relevant in their profession, teachers are required to prove their professional competence and demonstrate their effectiveness in the classroom.

Professional development is a continuous process and lifelong journey. It is a requirement for English language teachers (ELTrs) who aspire to climb the ladder of success in their career. ELTrs are required to learn, unlearn and relearn, in order to make their teaching more meaningful and relevant. Achieving it becomes easier if they are part of a wider network of teachers, as it can provide them with opportunities to learn from one another and share their knowledge.

- ELTAI is an association that supports the professional development of English language teachers across the country.
- In its 50 years, ELTAI has partnered with both government and private educational institutions to improve the quality of English language teaching.
- The association offers services such as consultancy, training teachers, designing materials, and providing assistance with curricula development and textbooks preparation.

The one teacher association that has been supporting the professional development of English language teachers across the country, is the English Language Teachers' Association of India, known by its acronym ELTAI. It is an associate of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), the U.K.

Active participation

ELTAI, which celebrates its 50 years of existence this year, has been contributing to the professional development of English language teachers in several ways. It partners with both government and private educational institutions in order to improve the quality of English language teaching in the country.

The services the association provides include offering consultancy, training teachers, designing materials, and providing assistance with curricula development and textbooks preparation. ELTAI has 50 chapters across India and each chapter organises conferences, seminars and workshops and contributes to the professional development of English language teachers of the region and some members are actively involved in carrying out action research.

Teachers become better teachers when they voluntarily and constantly take steps to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills.

The Journal of English Language Teaching (JELT), a bi-monthly published by ELTAI, is the oldest ELT journal in the country. The journal is the forum for teachers, researchers and scholars to get their research works published. Besides JELT, the association brings out three more journals and provides opportunities to the ELT community in the country to make their research works known to others.

The annual international conferences, organised by ELTAI, in collaboration with the British Council and Regional English Language Offices (RELO) of the U.S. Embassy, attract hundreds of participants from various parts of the country. The conferences create opportunities for teacher participants to interact and network with globally well-known ELT experts and professionals.

The Golden Jubilee conference of ELTAI is going to take place in Amity University, Noida, betweeen October 9-12. The theme of the conference is "Right to English". When asked why the theme was chosen, K. Elango, General Secretary, ELTAI, says, "English has percolated into the very psyche of the Indian subcontinent, over the last four centuries, and a time has come when we cannot wish it away from our lives. Knowledge of English is no longer the prerogative of a few, but the need of the masses. It is essential to review our priorities and methodologies related to ELT in India. Hence we have chosen the theme." He adds, "The Right to Education (RTE 2009) implies that Right to English for all as well, as proficiency in English has become a global imperative today."

What is going to be the focus of the 50-year-old association? Elango says, "The ELTAI's primary focus is to cater to the needs of those teachers who are toiling to teach English with no exposure to English and not even an iota of how to teach it as a skill. So, the association is set to identify the motivated ones in the unreached areas and initiate the process through its 50 chapters, in different parts of the country. We have envisioned it as a bottom up model to transform the way languages are taught in our country."

Teachers interested in becoming members of the ELTAI can visit the site www.eltai.in

The author is an academic, columnist and freelance writer. Email: rayanal@yahoo.co.uk

POSTCARD FROM...COLUMBUS

Surreal experience

The flexibility to customise the course based on his interests, eventually helped Karthik get a job

NAME: Karthik Chandrasekaran
INSTITUTION: The Ohio State University - Fisher College of Business
COURSE: MBA

To do or not to do an MBA was the question I was contemplating, a couple of years back, when I was working as a technology consultant at IBM. After several months of mulling over the merits of quitting my job to pursue an MBA, I finally decided to act upon it by paying heed to the old adage "nothing ventured, nothing gained".

I shortlisted a few universities and took time to visit each of them before deciding to apply. I was spellbound by the picturesque campus of The Ohio State University - Fisher College of Business in Columbus. Furthermore, the city of Columbus, with its millennial vibe, mouthwatering restaurants, and start-up culture made me feel welcome. After submitting my application, I crossed my fingers and let destiny take its course. I was overjoyed when I got the admit offer along with a scholarship, in the form of graduate assistantship.

The first year of the programme was a great learning experience as I was exposed to core MBA subjects such as finance, marketing, economics, strategy, and so on, taught by world-renowned professors. This acted as a foundation on which I could further explore elective courses in the second year. The unique aspect of the programme was that I could customise my MBA experience based on my career interests. I could choose any elective course from both within and outside the business school. This flexibility enabled me to choose a combination of strategy and leadership courses that eventually helped me secure a job as a management consultant with Ernst & Young.

Hands-on

Apart from classroom knowledge, the curriculum offered experiential learning programmes such as Global Applied Projects (GAP). Through the GAP programme, I got to visit Shanghai as part of a team, to help a steel manufacturing firm streamline its supply chain process. During this trip, I got to visit the Great Wall of China which was memorable. I also took part in the Silicon Valley and Seattle treks where I got to network with executives from Expedia, Starbucks, Amazon and so on. I got to interact with the chairman of Microsoft and the former CEO of Intuit, which was very inspiring.

The student life at the Ohio State University is vibrant and inclusive. I was part of the golf club and also took salsa and tango classes. College football is something that everyone at Ohio State is passionate about. The whole university sports a festive atmosphere when the Buckeyes play at the Ohio Stadium. It was a surreal experience when I walked into the stadium for my graduation with my fellow students cheering me on.

As I reminisce upon my MBA experience at the Ohio State University with fondness, I can state proudly that "I was once a Buckeye, and will forever be a Buckeye".

Karthik Chandrasekaran pursued MBA at The Ohio State University - Fisher College of Business in Columbus, the U.S.

TREND

FREEPIK

Winds of change

The number of women taking up careers in economics is growing; but they will have to train themselves to be heard

NEHA RUPEJA

The appointment of Gita Gopinath, an Indian-American, as the chief economist in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2019 has been encouraging for aspiring women economists, while marking the acceptance and participation of women in this sector. A recent survey by the Ministry of HRD, Government of India for 2017-18 said that out of 97,623 students who enrolled for a PhD, MPhil or PG in economics, 56% (54,876) were women.

Meghnad Desai Academy of Economics (MDAE) has also observed a similar trend with more than 50% of its student applications and enrolments being that of women.

Lubna Akhtar, who pursued her postgraduation in economics from MDAE and is currently working as junior analyst at JP Morgan said, "The classes were mostly women dominated, which was a wonderful feeling. However, there is an inherent bias in the industry that only men are good in technical fields whereas women are conditioned to believe that these fields are not for them. I remember there was a lot of confusion in the class when the option of econometrics (a technical subject) was offered as a choice and not many women students were comfortable taking it up."

Going practical

According to Dhvani Kamdar, Assistant Vice President at Knight Frank, the widening gap between the economics in academia and real world-economics is exceptionally disparate. This problem needs to be addressed by including live projects, case studies, and panel discussions. Economics shouldn't be reduced to pure theoretical knowledge and should be backed by practical experiments. Encouraging women to enter the field, she said, "Leadership is gender neutral and in order to get an edge in corporate sectors, one must blend economics with other subjects like public policy and marketing."

Though Dhvani and Lubna claim that they do not face biases due to gender politics, Kadambari Shah, an associate at IDFC institute felt that women must be outspoken and voice their opinions in the male-dominated boardrooms.

Though there is a rising trend of women entering the classroom sphere, the percentage of women in higher leadership positions in the corporate sectors is profoundly low

She adds, "In high level conferences and during panel discussions, there is deliberate step to accommodate women employees. Awareness is being built within the workspaces which are gradually turning into a reality."

Arushi Mishra, another economics student now working as a consultant at Fractal Analytics says, "In the next five years, there will be a rising demand for economists, researchers, consultants and analysts, and women should be prepared to grab these opportunities, as corporate sectors are becoming more inclusive on all fronts."

EXPERIENCE

Off the beaten track

Manya Modi, a student of Switzerland's Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, speaks about the experience of studying in one of the world's top hospitality schools

BHAVYA VENKATESH

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

New Delhi-based Manya Modi is currently pursuing Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management at Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) in Switzerland. Consistently among the world's top hospitality schools, EHL strives to be an ambassador for traditional Swiss hospitality, with a constant focus on shaping the future of hospitality through innovation.

A conversation with Manya about the EHL experience...

What made you choose hospitality and EHL?

I was in class X when I decided that I want to be in hospitality. I come from a huge family, and I was used to having guests at home. I realised that serving people is a nice feeling, and that is what made me choose hospitality. To be sure that this is the field I wanted, I took up an internship in a hotel for three months. I also did some research and found out that EHL is the best in the world, and then I started the process.

How did your family react to your choice?

They were initially not fine with it. In India, the concept of hospitality is looked down upon. The general notion is that people who are not good in academics get into hospitality. It took me some time to persuade my family, and my parents were fully convinced only after visiting the EHL campus in Lausanne.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT
Manya Modi

Take us through the application and admission process.

The process involves writing an essay and filling an application form. Then there's an online interview, followed by a selection day with a face-to-face interview – either on campus or in your country (they come to India as well). We also have team-building activities on that day to evaluate us, because in EHL we learn everything as teams. There are also online logic tests and French tests. It is a long process and not an easy one. It is one of the best in the world, so it certainly is hard to get in.

What do you study?

The first year was fully practical, with workshops, housekeeping, doing the dishes, serving, making food, and so on. We were on campus for six months and had to take up an internship for the other six months. In the second year, the courses are both business management-based (math, accounting, economics) and hospitality based (food and beverage cost control, rooms division, marketing, human behaviour and performance). We learn a language as well. In our final year, we have a student business project. We form teams and work on real-life business projects for companies. We get hands-on experience, and this is the biggest part of our course.

Is the course expensive?

It is a relatively expensive course, but the facilities are good. The quality of teaching is high, and teachers are experienced in their respective areas. On the whole, the cost is justified. There are scholarships as well – anyone can apply, but the recipients are carefully selected.

What kind of jobs do students tend to take up after graduation?

Graduates from EHL tend to get into managerial positions directly after the course. The EHL name carries value. In terms of placements, career fairs happen every semester, with a variety of companies coming in, not just those based in hospitality. The career fair is open to alumni as well.

How has your understanding of the field changed after starting the course?

I thought hospitality was simple, but after starting here, I know how much hard work is involved. It is a sector that is changing every day. Earlier, I used to look at hospitality from a customer's perspective. Now I see it from the other side, and I understand how much goes on behind the scenes.

And what about the mindset back home?

Some family members back home still think I am doing a culinary course. They ask me what I have learnt to cook! It took my immediate family some time to understand what I am doing, but now they are really happy about it.

The writer was in Switzerland at the invitation of Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne.

ETCETERA

M.A in Ecosophical Aesthetics
INSTITUTION: Gandhian Centre for Philosophical Arts and Sciences(GCPAS)
Duration: Two years
ELIGIBILITY: Anyone with a graduation or equivalent degree.
SELECTION PROCESS: Once the applicant meets the university stipulations, there will be personal/telephonic interview.
FEES: ₹70,000 per year (Indians), $2,000 (NRIs, International students)
DEADLINE: May 31
https://manipal.edu/gandhian-centre/programs/program-list/ma-in-ecosophical-aesthetics.html

(ISC)² Women's Scholarships
Institution: Center for Cyber Safety and Education
ELIGIBILITY: Students pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees related to cybersecurity
DEADLINE: April 15
PRIZE AND REWARDS: 10 awards will be awarded in the amounts of $1,000-$6,000
https://iamcybersafe.org/scholarships/womens-scholarships/

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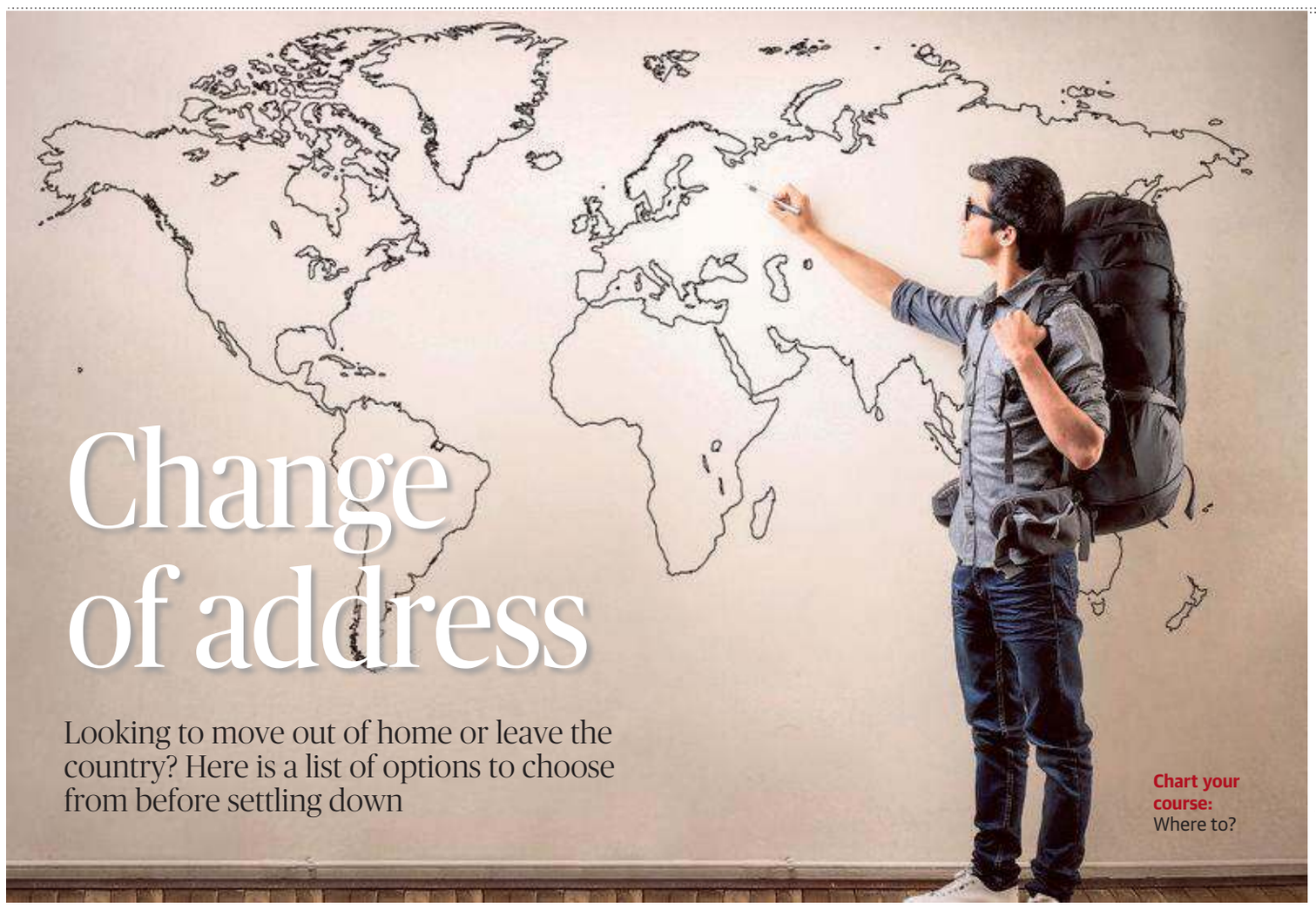

Change of address

Looking to move out of home or leave the country? Here is a list of options to choose from before settling down

Chart your course: Where to?

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

CAREER CUES

RICHA DWIVEDI SAKLANI

Studying abroad is not such a daunting idea anymore and if you are in school or college, you have probably counted your chances and pennies many times already. Here is a quick guide to your options and how to weigh them.

THE U.S.

Forgive my bias, but more than a quarter of Fortune's Global 500 companies are headquartered in the U.S. Home to almost all the world-changing start-ups in the last 10 years, the U.S. leads technology, scientific research, music, movies and college rankings across all disciplines. Tuition fees for top colleges are tough – half a crore rupees annually, but there are over 4,000 colleges and universities with options for all budgets.

Visa and job prospects: "Optional Practical Training" (OPT) allows STEM students up to three years and non-STEM students one year to work. After OPT, students can apply for H1B, other immigrant visas or a green card. One can apply for citizenship after five years on a green card, though the whole process is highly competitive and can take between 10 and 15 years.

CANADA

Canada hosts three of the world's top-ranked universities across disciplines: McGill, Toronto and British Columbia. The country offers great value for money with tuition and cost of living about half that in the U.S. Consistently ranked #1 in the U.S. News Best Countries Quality of Life rankings, Canada is a friendly (though rather cold) place to study. Indians form almost 4% of the population and Punjabi is the fourth most popular language.

Visa and job prospects: Students can stay back for as many years as the degree they graduate in. Lately however, fears of economic stagnation have made many students opt for "co-op" or co-operative education courses that include a year of working. Engineering, IT, bioscience and finance jobs are relatively easier to find. You can apply for Permanent Residency (PR) after two years of working and citizenship after three years. A Canadian passport makes it easier to visit your friendly neighbourhood US as well as to work under H1B, TN1 or L1 visas.

THE U.K.

Oxford and Cambridge are top-ranked across all disciplines, with LSE and UCL not far behind. An OxBridge education often guarantees students higher starting salaries as well as lifetime earnings. New medical colleges in the UK offer high-quality medicine education to international students.

Visa and job prospects: Graduates have only four months to look for a 'skilled-job offer' from an employer with a tier-II sponsorship license (which is not easy to obtain). On the brighter side, several colleges offer "co-op" options. Post Brexit, visa norms and job competition could ease out a bit for Indians.

HONG KONG

It hosts over a third of regional headquarters for MNCs, next only to Singapore. Though English is an official language, learning Mandarin or Cantonese further opens the door to working and doing business in China – the world's second largest economy. A highly affordable destination, Hong Kong is home to top-ranked universities such as Hong Kong University (HKU) offering liberal arts education and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) for STEM, Business and Finance.

Visa and job prospects: Visa norms are friendly and students can stay back for a year after graduation. Jobs for English speaking students are not difficult to come by and you can apply for a PR after seven years of living in Hong Kong.

SINGAPORE

A finance and technology hub, the Lion City accounts for almost half the MNC regional headquarters. Though tuition fees are competitive, top-ranked institutions such as Nanyang Technological University (NTU), National University of Singapore (NUS) and Singapore Management University (SMU) are highly selective with single-digit acceptance rates.

Visa and job prospects: Students have upto a year to look for a job and receive an employment pass, six months to PR and two years from PR to citizenship. However, male citizens need three years of mandatory army service to get citizenship. A Singapore passport is the second most powerful passport in the world with visa-free access or visa-on-arrival for 188 countries.

GERMANY

The fourth largest economy in the world, Germany offers free undergraduate education for international students. Combined with low cost of living, this makes it a leading destination for STEM and finance courses. Students are allowed 120 days of work in a year while studying and can travel to 56 European countries. More than 1000 courses are taught in English at the postgraduate level, and about 150 at the undergraduate level. However, you have to know German to socialise and survive and a language test is a mandatory part of the application.

Visa and job prospects: A Residence Permit of 18 months allows students to look for a job commensurate with their qualification. Job opportunities are attractive for engineering, IT, medicine, nursing or scientific research. One can apply for a PR after three years and for citizenship after another five years.

AUSTRALIA

Consistently ranked among Top 10 Countries to Live In by US News, Australia presents pristine environments with about three people per sq km (compared to India's 455!). High participation in local and international sporting offers a fun and healthy lifestyle. Annual tuition is almost as high as the US but the three-year format makes it more affordable. Australian universities are ranked high internationally, but the best value you get is within Australia itself. Students do not see significant financial advantages in returning to India with an Australian degree.

Visa and job prospects: Australia encourages immigration and Indians comprise about 2% of the population. Their five-year Skilled Migration Programme – like PR – favours software engineers, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, web developers, and salespeople. You can apply for citizenship after four years of PR.

The writer is the author of The Ultimate Guide to 21st Century Careers (Hachette India, 2017). She leads Inomi Learning, a Gurgaon based career and college guidance firm. E-mail: info@inomi.in

REFLECTION

Kindle the life skills spirit

With workplaces becoming competitive, educators need to equip students with key life skills

SUJATHA VARALWAR

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The role of education is to prepare future generations to take their rightful place in society, as future learners, professionals and citizens. Yet, there is often a fundamental mismatch between the skills they are taught in classrooms and those they will need to function effectively in the world. In a survey, more than 60% of bosses claimed that graduates were unable to handle customers professionally, while 50% said that they were not equipped to independently take charge of their professional duties. This is worrying because many of these skills are vital not just for students to become competent professionals, but to take advantage of opportunities in the world. For far too long, they have been taught with an almost exclusively razor-sharp focus on exams, without due consideration to the transferable skills they will need once they exit the world of academia.

With workplaces becoming more competitive, it becomes especially important for educators to equip students with key life skills. Key among these are:

Instead of always intervening for students, take the backseat so that the student can take the lead and stand up for himself/herself.

Emotional intelligence

To teach your students emotional intelligence, begin by first acknowledging their perspective and communicating empathy, even if you do not agree. Accepting a student's emotions, rather than denying or minimising them, enables him/her to accept the emotion, resolve their feelings and move on. In the long term, this teaches students to self-regulate their own emotions and allows them to move on to the next step, namely problem-solving.

Critical-thinking

Students must learn to think for themselves – to use evidence, logically evaluate available information and form their own opinions. A good way to inculcate critical-thinking skills in students is to regularly talk to them about topics that aren't restricted to their textbooks.

Communication

Improve your students' written communication by encouraging him or her to participate in writing-based extracurricular activities. Oral communication can be strengthened with regular, consistent practice – have students discuss their problems with you, rather than only telling them how things should be done.

Work ethic

Never stop stressing on the importance of students performing any task they take up to the best of their abilities. In school, this could mean submitting projects and assignments on time, and making sure they prepare for tests and evaluations. Have students know that they must always strive to achieve what they are truly capable of, instead of making do with good enough.

Time management

Professionals, today, are expected to do more with the limited time and means they have. A good way to begin is by having students buy a planner, which they can use to make a note of upcoming deadlines, goals and key milestones. This exercise can also teach students to prioritise. Finally, help students to identify potential time-wasters and eliminate these.

Advise self-advocacy

Most adults will eventually have to learn to stand up for what they believe in or what they think they rightfully deserve. These situations will always be tricky; giving students enough practice in self-advocacy is especially crucial. Instead of always intervening for students, take the backseat so that the students can take the lead and stand up for themselves. The six-calibration model, to ensure that students are able to learn and retain these lessons for life, is also important:

Lifestyle choice: Students often model the behaviour they see around them. In order to make a lasting impression on a young mind, it is therefore important for you, as an educator, to change your own outlook towards life.

Courage with belief: Believing in students' abilities gives them the necessary positive reinforcement to continue demonstrating appreciable behaviours.

Build capability: Don't hand-hold students through challenges, but help them build their own capacity to adapt and learn.

Confidence: Demonstrate confidence in the student's ability to learn and provide enough positive verbal reinforcement for them to repeat desirable behaviours

Commitment: Be committed to the task at hand, in your teaching and actions.

Consistent: Consistency is key to eliminate confusion in the student.

The writer is a professional pathologist, health and lifestyle adviser (coach) and a professional nutrition consultant.

COLLEGE HACKS

Work smart

Sail through college with these tips that will help you make the most of what you have

OSHEEN SHARMA

College is about setting up your future by securing good grades and participating in extracurricular activities that help shape and polish your personality. The experience also requires you to manage a decent lifestyle within minimum means and supplies. Here's how you can make the best out of the available resources and limited pocket money.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Shaping your personality: Manage yourself and your time efficiently

For studying

As the saying goes, work smart not hard. Use these hacks to complete your syllabus with less stress and fatigue, to arrange for study materials at affordable prices, and to prepare for exams effortlessly.

- Keep the class schedule as your phone's lock screen in the beginning of the semester to get into the habit and to ensure that you do not miss any classes.
- Studying in a room with warm temperature makes you productive. 21°/22° Celsius is the optimal temperature range for greatest output according to a 2006 study by the Helsinki University of Technology.
- Times New Roman is easy to read from the computer if you're required to study from digital files.
- You can rent books on websites such as Ememozin, BigBooks, JustBooksCLC, LibraryWala, and Friends of Books.
- Write down the topics that need to be covered and strike them as you complete them. It gives you a sense of accomplishment and works as a self-motivator.
- Study from videos or recorded lectures if you have less time and a lot to cover.

College life requires you to manage a decent lifestyle within minimum means and supplies.

For extra activities

College requires socialising, which requires money to be spent to hangout after classes. These hacks ensure you don't stay indoors due to being broke.

- Watch movies in the mornings as tickets are sometimes cheaper, plus you get the best seats.
- Salons, cafés, restaurants and a few online shopping sites offer student discounts. Make sure you use them.
- Want new eyeglasses? Get the frames from any roadside stand and get the lenses inserted from an optical shop; you could save thousands of bucks.
- Install budgeting apps such as mTrakr, Splitwise (bill split app), Money View and Chillr to keep a check on your expenses.
- Get free subscription of Amazon Prime for six months on school/college email address to make use of the student offers.
- If your classes are not too far from your hostel or PG, walk rather than spending on transportation. You can save a lot and have good health. Besides, ₹20 spent on transportation every day for a month is ₹600, which can be used for buying books or applying for new courses.

For hostel/dorms

Worry not if your dorm doesn't have the utensils or appliances to live a home-like life.

- Use an iron to heat your food if you don't have a stove or a microwave. Wrap it in aluminium foil first before you do.
- Need an ironed shirt for a presentation? Use a pot or kettle of hot water to iron clothes, works the same.
- No cups or glasses? Use plastic bottles, cut them into half.
- If you have dishes but no wash basin, cover them with a clean wrap before eating, then throw it away.

ADMISSIONS

Bachelor's, B.Tech. and M.Tech.

INSTITUTE: KIIT Group of Colleges
DURATION: 1 year
COURSES: B.Tech. (CSE ECE, EEE, Civil Engineering & Mechanical Engineering), M.Tech (ECE & CSE), MBA, BBA & BCA
ELIGIBILITY: Appeared/passed 10+2 examination for bachelor's degree, and graduation for master's degree programmes.
APPLICATION: Application forms and prospectus can be purchased from the institute office or campus.
SCHOLARSHIP: Will be given to meritorious students and to those under reserved categories as notified by Haryana State Technical Education Society.
DEADLINE: June 30
www.kiit.in

IN BRIEF

Convocation

XLRI - Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur, recently celebrated its 63rd annual convocation. On the day, 518 students received their graduating certificates and medals in the presence of Mr. T. V. Narendran, Chairman, Board of Governors at XLRI & MD — Tata Steel India and South East Asia, Fr. E Abraham S.J., Director of XLRI, Dr. Ashis K. Pani, Dean, Academics at XLRI and other dignitaries.

Linguistic learning

On the occasion of the sixth anniversary of Ka:rmik Linguistic and Literary Association, School of Humanities & Social Sciences of Sharda University, Noida, recently organised an international conference on New Directions in 21st Century Linguistics, Literature and Language Teachings. The conference was aimed at bringing together academicians, researchers, trainers and educators to discuss key innovations, concerns and challenges.

Project Day

SRM Group of Institution, Ramapuram, recently conducted "Project Day" for Easwari Engineering College, SRM IST Ramapuram and SRM Dental College. More than 300 hundred projects were displayed by students, including foldable bikes, a mobile app for the elderly, recovery of people from deep borewell using robot, detection of driver drowsiness while driving, and an automated plastic recycling machine.

https://t.me/TowadsTomorrow

THE HINDU

MONDAY • APRIL 8, 2019

DELHI METRO

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Housing scheme

Exorbitant pricing of the new DDA apartments repel several prospective buyers Page 2

Prison charges

Mandoli charges ₹9,000 for phone,₹500 for tobacco; all payments via e-wallets with help from officials Page 3

Train of thought

Anuradha Kumar writes about the introduction of the Railways in India in her new book *The First Train* Page 4

The last mile

Here's how startups have started bringing cheap medical care to far-flung parts of India Page 6

IN BRIEF

GGSIPU begins online admission process

NEW DELHI

Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (IP University) on Sunday started the online admission process for PhD and MPhil programmes for the academic session 2019-20.

CITY ▸ PAGE 2

Farmer bludgeoned to death in Alipur

NEW DELHI

A 65-year-old farmer was bludgeoned to death at his cattle shed in Tajpur village of Alipur on Sunday morning, the police said.

The police ruled out any cattle theft attempt during the murder. "The murderers had friendly entry into the cattle shed," said a police officer.

CITY ▸ PAGE 3

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	302	Gurugram	295
Ghaziabad	342	Faridabad	233
Noida	292	Greater Noida	306

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

Sex education helped teenager understand she was abused

HC quashes trial court verdict in rape by father, asks it to frame appropriate charges

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

Sex education in school helped a 14-year-old girl understand that her father's behaviour when she was alone with him since she was six years old, constituted rape.

Taking a serious view of the allegations made by the victim, now a 21-year-old, the Delhi High Court has quashed a 2016 verdict of a trial court acquitting the father in the case.

The FIR states the father is blind and living separately from his wife since 2004.

The victim in her statement said she had no memory of when the sexual assaults began. She was born in 1998 and her father was the caretaker of her and her brother. There are several instances narrated by her starting from 2004 when she alleged he had sexually assaulted her.

These include sexual assault while he was giving the child baths in the washroom. In 2006, the father sent the siblings to study in a hostel. When they would come home for holidays (in 2006 and 2007), the father would sexually assault her when she was alone in the house.

> **A child who is subjected to sexual abuse and assault from a tender age of six and which assault continues till she is 14 years of age, would not even be aware that she is being abused**
>
> SANJEEV SACHDEVA
> HC justice

Around 2010, whenever she would come home for holidays, her father would sleep next to her and sexually assault her.

Feared pregnancy

In her statement, she stated that due to lack of sex education, she began to think that she would become pregnant, which led to a lot of stress and mental trauma. It was in 2011, when she went to a different hostel and had sex education that she came to know what happened to her was rape and sexual assault.

Later that year, when she came home, the crime did not stop. Out of fear, she started sleeping on a separate bed. The victim said she was afraid of telling anyone because it was her father and also he was the sole bread earner of the family.

In 2012 and 2013, he tried to touch her but she maintained distance. From then she was always alert when he would be around. In June 2016, she narrated the ordeal to her mother and brother.

Soon after registration of an FIR, the trial began.

The September 2016 verdict of the trial court, however, held that the allegations had been made against a blind person and it was not possible for him to commit the alleged acts.

The trial court also questioned the woman for not seeking police assistance or discussing the issue with anyone for several years.

The Delhi government took the opinion of its Prosecutor, Principal Secretary (Law and Justice) and even the Law Minister before deciding to challenge the trial court verdict before the High court.

A Bench of Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva noted that the complaint was made to the police when the victim attained the age of 18 years.

"A child who is subjected to sexual abuse and assault from a tender age of six and which assault continues till she is 14 years of age, would not even be aware that she is being abused or any offence is happening," Justice Sachdeva remarked.

The Justice also said, "The trial court has erred in not appreciating that the accused is the father of the prosecutrix [girl] and was in a dominating position and keeping in view the relationship, it would not be abnormal for the prosecutrix not to make a complaint against her own father".

Satisfied that the allegations raise grave suspicion against the father of having committed the offence, Justice Sachdeva remitted the case back to the trial court to frame appropriate charges against the father.

Two held for forcing meat shop owners to shut down

More arrests likely; Samiti distances itself from incident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Two persons have been arrested for allegedly forcing meat shops owners to close their establishments on the occasion of Navratri and threatening to kill those not adhering to their diktat, the police said on Sunday.

Armed with swords

The accused along with more than two dozen people, armed with sticks and swords, had forced the meat shop owners in Dundahera along the Delhi-Gurugram border to shut their shops on April 6, the first day of the nine-day festival.

The two persons arrested in this connection are Rajesh and Pramod, both residents of Dundahera.

A case was registered on charges of rioting, unlawful assembly and criminal intimidation under the Indian Penal Code and various sections under the Arms Act at Udhyog Vihar police station in this connection on Sunday.

"The accused would be produced before the court on Monday and taken on police remand. More arrests are likely in the case. The matter is under investigation," said Gurugram police spokesperson Subhash Boken.

> **None of the Hindu outfits, which is member of the Samiti was involved. We made an appeal to the meat shop owners to keep their establishments shut during Navratri**
>
> MAHAVIR BHARDWAJ
> Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti convener

Banners of Hindu Sena

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Udyog Vihar, Birem Singh Poswal, said the accused were displaying banners of "Hindu Sena" at the time of incident.

Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti convener Mahavir Bhardwaj said they had nothing to do with the incident.

"None of the Hindu outfits, which is member of the Samiti was involved in the incident," said Mr. Bhardwaj. He said the Samiti members had met Deputy Commissioner Amit Khatri and Commissioner of Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) Yashpal Yadav in the run-up to the Navratri festival and demanded that the illegal meat shops in the city be shut down.

'MCG started drive'

"Acting on our memorandum, the Municipal Corporation has already started the drive to challan the illegal meat shops and ensure their closure. We also made an appeal to the association of the meat shop owners to keep their shops shut during Navratri and they have promised to cooperate," said Mr. Bhardwaj.

During Navratri, the Hindu outfits demand the closure of meat shops in the city, mostly run by the Muslims.

On a few occasions the activists have also been accused of using force.

The Muslim meat shop owners allege that they are forced to close their shops against their will.

Congress brushes aside reports on tie-up with AAP in Haryana

Stays mum on pact with the party in Delhi; announces slogan

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday dismissed reports stating a possible tie-up with the Aam Aadmi Party or other regional players in Haryana and Punjab. However, the party said it is yet to finalise on a pact with AAP in Delhi.

"There is no conversation or alliance with AAP or any other party either for Haryana or Punjab. We are soon going to declare our candidates [for the two States]", said Congress communication chief Randeep Surjewala at a press conference where the party announced 2019 campaign slogan *Ab Hoga Nyay* [Now, justice will prevail].

However, Mr. Surjewala refused to give a categorical answer about a tie-up in Delhi. "As I have said before, for Delhi please wait for some more time. As soon as we finalise something, we will inform you,"he added.

> **There is no conversation or alliance with AAP or any other party either for Haryana or Punjab. We are soon going to declare our candidates for both States**
>
> RANDEEP SURJEWALA
> Congress communication chief

On Saturday, party president Rahul Gandhi met senior leaders from Delhi, including senior leader P.C. Chacko and Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Sheila Dikshit, to discuss the issue.

Sources said Mr. Gandhi is yet to take a decision but Ms. Dikshit would follow the diktat of the party president.

On April 6, AAP had said it would form an alliance with the Congress in Delhi only if the two parties fight the Lok Sabha poll jointly in Haryana and Chandigarh too.

Equal number of seats

The party had asked for Faridabad, Gurugram and Karnal seats in Haryana in exchange for an equal number of seats in Delhi. It had added that it would be ready to support the Congress' candidate for Chandigarh as well. AAP had also made a precondition that the Congress must openly declare its support to full statehood for Delhi if there was to be an alliance.

Grassroots learning

Leap of faith: A girl makes a small farm of her own under the newly constructed Yamuna Bridge in New Delhi. ▪ ANUJ ARORA

Teen drowns in Yamuna; two rescued

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 16-year-old boy drowned while taking a bath in the Yamuna, the police said on Sunday. Two others have been rescued, they said.

Shaheen Bagh police station was informed about the incident near Kalindi Kunj at 2.30 p.m., they said. The Delhi Fire Service said they received a call around 2.30 p.m. after which a fire tender was rushed to the spot. The rescue operation was completed by 4 p.m.

DCP (South-East) Chinmoy Biswal said Shoab drowned while taking a bath in the Yamuna.

His body was fished out with the help of NDRF rescue team.

The other two teenagers – Sameer and Usman – were rescued by the locals, the police added.

Rain brings relief from heat in the Capital

Met forecasts possibility of light rain today, heatwave-like conditions this week

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

After touching 36 degrees Celsius in the day, mercury in the city dipped by 6-7 degrees Celsius on Sunday evening following a dust storm and thunderstorm, the MeT Department said.

Gusty winds

Several parts of the city witnessed lightning, gusty winds, and light showers.

The Palam and Safdarjung weather observatories recorded winds with a speed 40-50 km/hour.

"IGI reported winds upto 50 kmph in gusts at 8.00 p.m. May increase further," Jatin Singh, CEO of private weather forecasting agency Skymet, tweeted.

The Palam observatory recorded 4.8 mm rainfall, the MeT Department said.

This was a relief from the 39.3 degrees Celsius recorded on April 5 and the 38. 7 degrees Celsius recorded on April 6, about four degrees above normal. Several parts of the city have also been experiencing heatwave-like conditions.

Hailing cars: Waterlogging on Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg near ITO in the city after rain on Sunday evening. ▪ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

While there was a relief in daytime temperatures, the minimum on Sunday settled at 25.6 degrees Celsius, which is six degrees warmer than the average of the season.

The minimum temperature on April 6 was 22.4 degrees Celsius.

The MeT department has forecasted partly cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain/dust storm/thunderstorm accompanied with gusty winds blowing between 30-40 kmph for Monday with the maximum and minimum temperature hovering between 37 and 25 degree Celsius respectively.

The Met department said the temperature is likely to touch 40 degrees Celsius this week with heatwave-like conditions in the city.

(With inputs from PTI)

6 held in immigration scam; 62 passports seized

One of them took ₹6 lakh from accused couple on pretext of making fake Canadian visas

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Six persons have been arrested, including an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) coach, in connection with fake immigration stamps, the police said on Sunday. They claim to have seized 62 passports from their possession.

The arrested persons have been identified as Saurav, an IELTS coach, Vicky, a herbal products businessman and two agents Sachin Kumar and Mukesh Goyal, a couple – Ravinder Singh and his wife Sunita Kumari, the police said.

On the intervening night of March 1 and 2, a complaint was received about a suspected fake and forged Indian immigration stamp in respect of the couple who was seeking departure to Canada on the strength of Canadian visit visa by Air Canada, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (IGI Airport) Sanjay Bhatia.

The passports seized from the possession of the accused. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

During scrutiny of their travel documents, it was found that there was no travel history of the couple in the immigration passenger log and the Indian immigration stamps affixed on their passports were fake and forged, he said.

During investigations, it was revealed that Kumari and Singh wanted to live in Canada. They approached their friend Shyam who introduced them to an agent named Vicky, who runs a shop in Kurukshetra in Haryana, said Mr. Bhatia.

Vicky took ₹6 lakh from them on the pretext of arranging Canadian visas. He arranged them from Sachin who took the couple to Chandigarh to get them their visas. The agent arranged for fake immigration stamps to make them look like frequent travellers, the DCP said.

He said Vicky during questioning disclosed that it was Sachin who had procured the fake immigration stamps and placed the same on the passports. Sachin was then arrested on March 27, Mr. Bhatia said.

Forged papers

Sachin disclosed that he gave the passports of Singh and his wife to one Saurav who got the forged immigration stamp affixed on passports to make them look like frequent travellers. Saurav, who runs an office in Kurukshetra, was also arrested in this regard on March 29, the DCP said.

On his instance, Goyal was arrested and he revealed that till date he had prepared 20-25 fake immigration and bank stamps for Saurav and his accomplices, he said.

Modus operandi

Vicky used to lure people on the pretext of arranging visas and sending them abroad. He used to arrange meetings of the clients with Sachin for the same, Mr. Bhatia added.

Sachin, who was in touch with various agents in Mohali and Kurukshetra, used to take passports of the clients on the pretext of preparing the file. He would then send them to Saurav, who would affix fake immigration stamps of various countries on the passports to create a fake travel history as this assisted in procuring a visa from the embassy concerned, the police said.

Fake bank stamps were used by them to create fake bank account statements, they added.

https://t.me/TowardsTomorrow

Housing scheme not a pocket-friendly deal for many

Exorbitant pricing of the new DDA apartments has repelled several prospective buyers; a few others demanded a provision to fill the forms offline

(Top) DDA housing scheme flats at Vasant Kunj Block; interiors of the high income group flats. ▪ SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

For a majority of the people who had come to inspect the latest housing scheme by the Delhi Development Authority at the under-construction site in Vasant Kunj here, the affordability of flats was the talking point.

The DDA's 2019 housing scheme has on offer 17,922 dwelling units in two locations – Vasant Kunj and Narela.

However, much of the people are interested in the Vasant Kunj housing complex where 1,288 flats are on offer due to its location.

DDA officials said that under the new housing scheme, the urban body has received 3,500 applications, since it began in March 25, where the booking amount has already been paid. The scheme will be open till May 10.

Too pricey

But, for many prospective buyers who visited the Vasant Kunj site, their dream of owning a DDA flat has been tested owing to varied issues, primary amongst them is the price of the houses.

Nilesh, who works in a private sector company in the city, and his wife had come to inspect the flats before making monetary commitments towards submission of application. He has been living in a rented flat in the Capital and is looking to get a stable accommodation, preferably an LIG (lower income group) flat, for his family. "I like the flat but the price is exorbitant," Mr. Nilesh said.

"MIG flat *thoda thik hai, magar* LIG *wala thik nahi hai* [the MIG flat is decent, but not the LIG ones]," Mr. Nilesh added. Interrupting him, his wife, pointing at the MIG and LIG sample flats, observed: "*Wall wagerah aachi nahi hai. Kitchen tile bhi aachi nahi hai*. [Neither the walls nor the kitchen tiles are nice]."

DDA's brochure says that the property is being offered on "as is where basis is". Also, it will not entertain a complaint about the cost of flat, its design, the quality of material used, workmanship or any other defect.

Mr. Nilesh said he has changed his mind on applying for the flat now that he has seen it. Winning two flats in the previous DDA housing scheme in Rohini, only to return them due to "tiny rooms", Kundan Rawat wanted to be sure before he makes another monetary commitment in this year's housing scheme.

Failed precedent

After a thorough inspection of the LIG and MIG sample flats, Mr. Rawat said that the flats are pricey. "It is almost market rate," he said pointing at the ₹48 lakh price tag on the LIG 1 BHK (one-bedroom-hall-kitchen) sample flat door.

"But it is easy to get loan for the DDA scheme houses," Mr. Rawat added.

A study done by the National Sample Survey had revealed that over 28% of people in the Capital were living in rented dwelling in 2011, which was way below the national average of 13%. Despite this, a majority of the winners of the 2014 DDA housing scheme returned their flats citing small size of the rooms.

"Under the previous scheme, buyers had raised issues over the size of the LIG flats provided. To ensure that similar problems do not exist under the new scheme, the size of bedrooms in the LIG flats has been increased," a senior DDA official said.

"Around 1,900 flats out of a total of 3,500 have been booked under the previous scheme which is on a first-come-first-serve basis. Interested buyers can book the flats online and make the subsequent payments. The portal will remain available till the inventory lasts," said the DDA official.

These are the flats the buyers had returned under previous schemes citing size issues. The DDA official said that the online portal for flats put on sale under the previous scheme, is also open simultaneously.

S.C. Rawal, who is looking to apply for a HIG (high income group) flat for his daughter, saw good value in the DDA flats particularly because of their location in Vasant Kunj. "Though the prices are comparable to market rate, but considering the space and location there is value," Mr. Rawal said.

Why just online?

Already residing in a south Delhi locality, Mr. Rawal wants the new house to be in the south Delhi area only. He, however, suggested that the DDA should have made provision for people to apply for the flats through online and offline mode.

"Not all people are well acquainted with computers. If for a person applying for an LIG flat, something goes wrong during the online payment process, where will he or she manage another one lakh?" Mr. Rawat asked adding, "in the interest of general public, the application method should be both offline and online".

In his early 60s, Subhash was struggling to make a video of the LIG sample flat when he offered to give an account of the Janta flats in Narela, which he visited earlier this week.

Janta flats

Praising the Janta flats in Narela, also a DDA project, Mr. Subhash said, "*Woh badhiya hai. Waha pe metro bhi aayegi. Abhi jungle hai aas pass, us hisab se price jyada hai* [they are great. Metro is also scheduled to come there. There is forest area nearby, considering which the price is high]".

Mr. Subhash, a resident of Rohini, has a small family of wife and two daughters – both married. He is looking for a small flat for the "miyan biwi [husband-wife]". He too felt that the price for the LIG flats in Vasant Kunj was steep.

Hope crushed

For Najafgarh resident Jai Bhagwan, his hope of owing an LIG flat under the scheme got crushed after a visit to the sample flats in Vasant Kunj. "Look at the size of the room. They are tiny," Mr. Bhagwan said adding, "even after giving ₹45 lakh, there is no space to even sit".

He was not happy with the price of the LIG flats either. "*LIG ka misuse ho raha hai* [they are misusing the LIG definition]," Mr. Bhagwan said. "How would a low income person afford a ₹45 lakh flat? Do DDA even know the definition of LIG," he remarked adding that he was not going to apply for the LIG flats.

Pawan Kumar, a government sector employee, too concurred that the price could have been lower. He, however, had other issues in mind like the *jhuggi jhopri* cluster adjacent to the location of the Vasant Kunj flats.

DDA on pricing

"The price of the flats have been fixed after taking into account various factors including the cost of land, construction and labour. It is not something arbitrary and has been approved by the authority," the DDA official said.

The DDA commenced its housing activities in 1967 and has played a crucial role in providing houses to the people of Delhi. Its website said it has been constructing houses in Delhi according to the requirements and purchasing capacity of different strata of society.

Realty bites

AMOUNT TO BE DEPOSITED FOR EACH CATEGORY

Category	Amount (figures in lakh)
EWS/Janta	₹25,000
LIG (one bedroom flat)	₹1,00,000
MIG (two bedroom)	₹2,00,000
HIG (two bedroom)	₹2,00,000
HIG (three bedroom)	₹2,00,000

DETAILS OF FLATS AND TENTATIVE COST

Locality	Category	No. of flats	Broad range of tentative disposal cost (figures in lakh)
Vasant Kunj Block	HIG (3BHK)	336	143.06 - 172.58
Vasant Kunj Block	HIG (2BHK)	152	93.67 - 140.72
Vasant Kunj Block	MIG (2BHK)	579	66.22 - 85.24
Vasant Kunj Block	LIG (1BKH)	219	48 - 56.32
Narela	MIG (2BHK)	976	96.92 - 98.55
Narela	LIG (1BHK)	8,164	22.54
Narela	EWS	7,496	10.42 - 19.36
Total		**17,922**	

SOURCE: DDA HOUSING SCHEME BROCHURE

How CBSE helped students beat exam stress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Specialised audiovisual presentations on issues affecting youth, a toll-free helpline for students, an interactive voice response system – that is how the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) helped students counter the board exam stress this year.

According to the CBSE public relations officer, Rama Sharma, as many as 12,000 calls were received on the interactive voice response (IVR) service, which was a new feature introduced this year.

Through the IVR system, students, parents or stakeholders can obtain pre-recorded useful information on tackling board exams which included tips for better preparation, time and stress management, frequently asked questions, along with live tele-counselling services.

With the introduction of the IVR system, the board saw a considerable decline on the calls received on the toll-free helpline in the first phase of counselling, which commenced on February 1 and ended on April 4. The second phase will begin after the board results are declared. The board had roped in a total of 87 counsellors, comprising 65 from India, two special educators and 22 from foreign schools. The helpline got more calls from students as compared to parents. As many as 1,122 calls were received, with more boys (797) calling up the helpline as compared to girls (222). The helpline also received more calls from students of private schools as compared to government schools.

INTERVIEW | ANU SINGH LATHER

'We do not want placements to be accidental'

Expanding the campus; university, social sector and industry partnership will be our key focus areas

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ
NEW DELHI

Recently appointed Vice-Chancellor of Ambedkar University Delhi talks to ***The Hindu*** *about the importance of expansion, and training students to become job creators rather than seekers*

Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD) is now a decade old and you have taken over as its second V-C. What is your vision for the university?

■ The direction of the university was set 10 years ago, we are looking to take the university to higher echelons. A decade ago, the focus was not so much on entrepreneurship and job creation. There was not so much of technology being used for the curriculum. Students these days are tech savvy and the mindset of the students is completely technology driven. We are focusing on an entrepreneurial mindset being developed among our students. When we look at the number of Indian start-up ventures that are coming up, it looks good in terms of world statistics but when it comes to the success of these ventures we are not as good.

On a larger context, I wish to establish AUD as one of the premier institutions of knowledge creation, dissemination in the areas of liberal arts, humanities and social sciences.

What makes AUD stand out from the other universities in the city?

■ The courses that we envisaged here all have direct social relevance. There is not a single course that does not connect to society or individual requirement in some way. Our students go to tribal areas for fieldwork to get a better understanding of the problems being faced in rural India. Our students are sensitive to socio-economic and political realities, and are being trained to not only be job seekers but job creators for emerging futures. They work towards developing entrepreneurial ventures for the establishment of socially relevant, economically sustainable enterprise for creating jobs and eradication of poverty.

It is tough for students from a social science background to get placed directly from college. How are you planning to reach out to employers?

■ AUD students have been trained to work in the social sector and will be very useful to organisations at the policy level. We have an entrepreneurship development cell that is working to set up incubation centres and we have several start-ups at present focussing primarily on social enterprises. We need to open up the closed mindset of the employer. It is this mindset that has created a problem for the social sector. The appreciation for science and technology has been much greater than the appreciation for social sector. We need to change this mindset and that can be done by reaching out to them. We are planning a way to do this in a strategic and aggressive manner.

Employers need to look at the social relevance of our courses. We also need to identify the right employers in the government sector, NGOs and organisations like the United Nations. There are accidental placements that happening right now. We need to change that.

> **The appreciation for science and technology has been much greater than the appreciation for social sector. We need to change this mindset and that can be done by reaching out to them**

Students are the major stakeholders and we are not creating an unemployed workforce for sure. I want my students to get placements. How to reach out to the right kind of employers is very important. We are designing a curriculum which is very niche. And we will have to go the extra mile to reach out to employers and convince them about how relevant our courses are.

The admission season is coming up this month. Any changes in the process? Any new courses?

■ We are going to create more visibility this time with more advertisements. We used to have only one advertisement but this time we will be releasing special advertisements for some of our programmes. We are introducing a new course, which is BVoc in banking and accounting with an intake of 32 seats. Our BA admissions will start from the second week of May. We have realised that if we start admission too early we have many withdrawals. So, it is a judicious decision to start BA admission slightly later. Entrance examinations for the MA programmes will be held in the first week of July.

The administration of JNU and DU seem to be at odds with the faculty and students, with many protests and a crackdown on dissent. How do you plan to keep things cordial in AUD?

■ I do not see any dichotomy between the administration, faculty and students. If we are upright and moral in our administration then how can there be any problems? Majority of the universities have not failed when it comes to the relationship between students and administration apart from a few stray cases when the individuals who sit in the chair make a lot of difference.

AUD is funded by the Delhi government. The Aam Aadmi Party has announced that its focus, after school education, has now turned to higher education. Have they announced any plans for AUD?

■ We have a leadership role to play in the coming times. When we presented our case to the Dialogue Commission, we showed that in terms of numbers, other universities in the city will outnumber us easily in terms of students, faculty, placements and several other parameters. Expansion for us is imperative and we need to expand exponentially. Our graduating batch is only 1,300 students per year. We are a minuscule university and have to increase our student strength, course diversity and introduction of more skill-based courses.

We also need to do better in the ranking structure. We are currently 151-200 in the National Institutional Ranking Framework. We need to get into the top 100 on priority basis and then break into the top 20-50. Further, our goal is to be placed in the first 200 list of QS and Times Higher Education ranking.

In the short term, what are the changes being looked at?

■ We have to create new student facilities and strengthen the existing ones like clubs and societies, as well as sports activities. Construction of a new campus; university, government social sector and industry partnership will be our key focus areas. An expanding institute like AUD will require new structures in place, some of which may be a Human Resource Development Cell, an Equal Opportunity Office, International office, Alumni Cell, a centralised facility for all schools, supporting publications and lecture series, a career-counselling cell, and a training and placement cell.

Admission to 40 programmes will be made on the basis of Common Entrance Tests. ▪ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

GGSIPU begins online admission process

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (IP University) on Sunday started the online admission process for PhD and MPhil programmes for the academic session 2019-20. The university had already started the process for 33,000 seats across its 11 university schools and 120 affiliated-colleges.

The university has notified 58 combined academic programmes in the admission brochure uploaded on the its website *www.ipu.ac.in*. Admission to 40 programmes will be made on the basis of Common Entrance Tests (CETs) conducted by the university.

Two new courses

There will be no CET for six programmes – MBA (Weekend), LLM (Weekend), MBA (Disaster Management), MTech (ECE) Weekend, MTech (CSE) Weekend and MTech (Biotechnology). Admission to these programmes will be made on the basis of marks in the last qualifying examinations, work experiences and the performance in the interview. Admission to MTech (Biotechnology) will be given on the basis of GATE score, the university said.

The university said that two new courses, MSc Yoga and BSc Nursing (post basic) are being started from this academic session. The MBA admission will be through CAT 2018 score, MCA through NIMCET score, BA/BBA LLB through CLAT UG score, BTech through JEE main paper 1, postgraduate medical courses through NEET PG 2019 score, MBBS, BDS, BAMS and BHMS through NEET UG 2019 score, postgraduate Ayurvedic courses will be through AIAPGET 2019 score.

PhD programme is available in information technology, computer science and engineering, computer applications, electronics and communication engineering, mechanical and automation engineering, management, chemical technology, biotechnology, environment sciences, mathematics, chemistry, physics, English, sociology, law and legal studies, mass communication and education. MPhil programme is available in English, clinical psychology and psychiatric social work.

The online application fee is ₹1,000 + applicable processing charges and taxes. The university has asked students to visit its online portal for full details.

https://t.me/Cowadscollow

IN BRIEF

Traffic police campaign on 'golden hour'

NEW DELHI

Around 1,500 people were on Sunday sensitised on the importance of the 'golden hour' and the 'Good Samaritan' laws as part of a campaign by the Delhi Traffic Police on the occasion of the World Health Day. PTI

Burglar held, ornaments worth ₹10 lakh recovered

GHAZIABAD

A man, who was part of a gang whose members posed as electricians and plumbers to burgle flats, was arrested here with ornaments worth ₹10 lakh, the police said on Sunday. Rajesh alias Sumit was arrested from the Gaur Green intersection in Abhay Khand. He was a member of the Rafeeq Bengali gang of Jahangirpuri in Delhi. PTI

Four held for robbing SAIL employee

NEW DELHI

Four men were arrested for allegedly robbing an employee of the Steel Authority of India Limited after stabbing him in south Delhi's Lodhi Colony, the police said on Sunday. The accused have been identified as Mukhtyar, 26, Mohammad Hamid, 28, Rupan, 25, and Sanjay, 20, they said. PTI

Mandoli charges ₹9,000 for phone, ₹500 for tobacco

All payments made through e-wallets, in connivance with a few jail officials, claim sources

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

The 'smartest' and most unique Chinese mobile phones in the country can be found in Delhi's Mandoli jail where a basic version is sold for ₹9,000 and a smartphone for a few thousands more. Those who cannot afford to buy can use them for a 'personal chit-chat' for a price depending on their financial position.

Not just mobile phones, even tobacco is easily available to the inmates for anything between ₹300 and ₹500. The transaction can be made through e-wallets and smartphones, even those being used by some of the jail wardens.

The idea may seem like a plot straight out of a Bollywood film but it's the reality of the illicit transactions transpiring inside Mandoli jail on a daily basis, police sources said.

There are 5,000-6,000 mobile phones inside the jail that are being used and traded by prisoners. ▪ FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

Extortion gang

The racket came to light recently when the Delhi police busted a gang of extortionists and realised that three of the five accused were operating from inside the Mandoli jail premises. The gang was running the extortion ring from Shahdara's Geeta Colony.

When the investigators quizzed the accused on how they were running the racket in Geeta Colony from inside the jail, the revelations made by them were shocking.

"There are about 5,000-6,000 mobile phones inside Mandoli jail which are being used and traded by the prisoners. Most of these are very small Chinese phones, often of the size of a finger, but there are smartphones as well," said a senior officer on condition of anonymity. He added that the inmates break the phones into small pieces after use or when there is a fear of getting caught.

The phones are mostly owned by the more notorious criminals or "those who have a name outside" and the racket of selling them is also run by them. Those who can't afford to buy are charged per phone call, depending on how much they can pay, sources said.

Ongoing practice

When asked how the mobile phones reach the inmates, another officer privy to the interrogation said the practice has been continuing for years. "The number hasn't risen to thousands in a day or week; it's like one phone is smuggled inside every two-three days either in body cavities or inside cricket balls thrown on the premises from housing complexes around the jail," the officer said.

The sources said prisoners make calls to their family members on a daily basis and things like "what clothes and shoes they want are discussed apart from family matters and court proceedings".

Talking about the extortion racket being run from inside jail, the sources said that either the accused already has a target outside or dreaded criminals extort from first-timers or "less influential" prisoners inside.

"In the latest case, the prime accused and the victim were from the same area –Geeta Colony – so the prisoner knew the target. We have identified more victims of the accused but they're scared to come forward. In a lot of cases of extortion inside the jail, the desperate criminals target vulnerable newbies and force them to ask their families to send money," the officer said.

Tobacco sale

Another trade that's fostering inside the Mandoli jail is sale of tobacco. "Tobacco is packaged in small plastic packs and the prisoners swallow it before entering the premises. Once inside the jail, they spit them out," the officer said.

According to sources, there is high demand for tobacco inside the prison because a lot of prisoners are smack addicts and they need "something" to keep going. "Otherwise, they puke and get ill and there are little resources to handle such situations," said a source.

The tobacco is measured using caps of a plastic water bottles; one cap full of tobacco costs up to ₹500, sources said.

How does the money change hands inside the jail? The Geeta Colony accused allegedly told investigators that often the transaction is made using e-wallet such as Paytm, and also sometimes, the jail wardens use their smartphones for the transaction.

"The one who's involved in selling tobacco, or phone, or extortion inside the jail often asks the victim to send the money via Paytm, mostly on a number of a family member. The SIM card is first used to transfer the money to a bank account and then disposed of. The money is also sent on the warden's number which is then used by the accused inside jail," the officer said, referring to the claims made by the three accused.

Safety concerns

There's an obvious involvement of some jail wardens, police sources said. Another officer privy to the interrogation said: "The warden is often forced into keeping mum for his own safety because he has to ensure the inmates don't create a riot inside. Also, if 50 prisoners he's guarding gang up against him, how will he save himself? Not all acts are a result of corruption, there's a safety issue too," the officer said.

When asked where the money extorted or illegally earned by the prisoners is used, sources said it's mostly used for family or court proceedings. "We've seen a pattern that these prisoners ask for smaller amounts. Many of them are sole breadwinners so the money is used for family needs such as kids' education, parents' health, grocery purchase, among others. In the Geeta Colony case, the prime accused who tried to extort ₹50,000 needed the money to get bail," the officer said.

Farmer bludgeoned to death

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 65-year-old farmer was bludgeoned to death at his cattle shed in Tajpur village in Alipur on Sunday, the police said.

The police ruled out any cattle theft attempt during the murder. "The murderers had a friendly entry. It could be a case of personal enmity," an officer said.

Victim Randheer Singh lived with his family in Tajpur village. The house of the deceased was located a few metres away from the cattle shed. "The deceased eked out a living through farming and rearing cattle. He went to sleep at the cattle shed around 9 p.m. on Saturday. He was found murdered on Sunday morning when one of his relatives went to help him feed the cattle. The relative then alerted his family," said a police officer.

The deceased sustained serious injuries on his head. A bloodstained farm tool was found lying next to his body, said the police. "We have registered a murder case and are enquiring his relatives to find out if there was any enmity or family dispute," he said.

MCC violation: FIRs have nothing to do with elections

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A total of 118 FIRs have been filed for violations of the model code of conduct in Delhi, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer has reported. However, a majority of these cases had nothing to do with elections.

Only 32 of these cases were against political parties, among which 14 were filed against AAP, 12 against the BJP, four against the Congress and one each against Bahujan Samaj Party and the Samajwadi Party. The remaining 86 cases were filed against 'others' as non-political offences. An election official said the police had been asked not to include such non-political issues in the cases filed over violations of the MCC but had continued to do so regardless.

These cases are largely realted to hoardings put up on government properties, such as electrical poles, defacement on walls, on municipal corporation dustbins. These include flex posters and phone numbers painted by local traders and organisations to advertise their services.

Special CP Praveen Ranjan said that even though cases were regularly filed against defacement of property, these cases were being registered as well as a form of 'general deterrent.' A majority of the cases filed against political parties have also been on cases of defacement.

Man wanted in Jagatpuri robbery case held; carried ₹50,000 bounty

He and his accomplices looted ₹15 lakh from businessman

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old man wanted in connection with a robbery in Jagatpuri in September last year, has been arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell, they said on Sunday.

Kasana gang member

Prabhjot Singh, a member of the Naveen Kasana gang, was arrested from Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT) at Kashmere Gate on Saturday, they said.

The accused is a resident of Geeta Nagar and carried a reward of ₹50,000, the police said.

Singh, along with his accomplices had looted ₹15 lakh from businessman Umesh Bansal on September 17 last year.

The police said that Singh had gone into hiding following the incident. He had hideouts in Chandigarh and Phagwara in Punjab and Mandsaur in Madhya Pradesh, they said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Kushwah said that the accused was arrested from the ISBT while he was boarding a bus for Punjab. Singh had come here from Mandsaur.

The arrested accused has disclosed that Naveen Kasana had planned the dacoity and he along with Kasana, Shakeel, Ravinder, Anil and his other accomplices, had conspired to rob the businessman, he said.

They were also booked for threatening witnesses in the case. Members of the Naveen Kasana gang are named in over 100 cases, including robbery, at various police stations in Delhi.

Singh has been associated with the gang for the last five years. He had come in contact with Kasana through Shakeel, the police added.

2 delivery boys robbed, 1 of them shot at

Injured victim undergoing treatment; he was shot at when he resisted robbery

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Two delivery men working with an app-based food delivery service were robbed at gunpoint while one of them was shot at for resisting the robbery in north Delhi's Timarpur, the police said on Sunday.

They said that the incident was reported on Saturday afternoon when the two victims were on their way to work on two different motorcycles.

Their motorcycles were allegedly waylaid by bike-borne armed men at Canal Road between Timarpur and Nehru Vihar at gunpoint and they were robbed. One of the delivery boys have also been shot in the stomach. He is undergoing treatment at a private hospital, the police also said

> **Shobit was bleeding profusely. A passer-by dropped us at Timarpur police station**
>
> LAL JI
> One of the victims

Victim Lal Ji said that he and his friend Shobit Trivedi were on their way to work from their respective houses in Sonia Vihar on two different motorcycles. Around 1 p.m., when they reached Canal Road just behind the DRDO flat complex, they were intercepted by three men on a bike and were forced to stop.

"Two persons who intercepted our motorcycles walked towards us. One of them pointed a pistol at me. They asked us to hand over our mobile phones. I took out my SIM card and gave them my mobile phone and wallet," said Mr. Lal Ji.

When the robbers asked Shobit to hand them over his mobile phone, he resisted. On this, one of the robbers shot him in the stomach and snatched his mobile and wallet. Before leaving the spot, the robbers also snatched the keys of our motorcycles," said Lal ji.

"I was scared and failed to note down the registration number of the robbers' motorcycle. Shobit was bleeding profusely. I asked a passer-by for help and he dropped us at Timarpur police station on his motorcycle. The police took Shobit to the hospital," said Mr. Lal ji.

DCP (North) Nupur Prasad said that the case is under investigation. They are making a list of suspects and are also preparing sketches of the robbers.

"A case under IPC Sections 397 [robbery with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt], 394 [voluntarily causing hurt in committing robbery] and 392 [punishment for robbery] has been registered at Timarpur police station." the police said.

'L-G sitting on file for appointment of govt pleaders'

HC seeks response from Baijal and Delhi government on advocate's petition

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has sought response from the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) and the city government on a petition claiming that the L-G was sitting on a file for appointment of government pleaders who appear in courts on behalf of the State government, for over three months.

Justice Vibhu Bakhru has asked both the L-G and the Delhi government to respond to the petition filed by advocate Bharat S. Kumar within a period of two weeks and posted the case for further hearing on May 14.

"The appointment of government pleaders to conduct cases for the Delhi government in district courts of Delhi completely lies in a limbo, with no pinpointed response or clarity from either of the respondents [L-G and Delhi government]," the petition said. The delay in appointment of advocates to conduct cases for the government of Delhi in district courts here has impacted not only the justice dispensation system, but even affected the advocates who have been chosen by the Delhi government, the plea added.

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal ▪

In June 2017, the Delhi government had issued a notification for empanelment of advocates as 'Panel Counsels, district courts' to conduct civil cases for it in the district courts of Delhi. Advocate Kumar had applied for the post and subsequently in December 2018, got intimation that he was selected for empanelment along with 68 other advocates. "Till date, despite over three months elapsing, there has been no confirmation/notification pertaining to the appointment from the L-G," Mr. Kumar said in his petition.

In response to an RTI query from the L-G's office, Mr. Kumar was told that the file for appointment of advocates was received by the L-G's office on January 21, 2019, but was withdrawn by the Chief Secretary's office on January 28, 2019.

Later, the Chief Secretary's office said that the file has been forwarded to the Secretary, Law, for his consideration. Following this, Mr. Kumar contacted the Department of Law, to which it was reiterated that the appointments are still pending consideration from the L-G's end.

"The duty to ensure effective justice delivery dispensation system within the territory of Delhi lies not only with the Delhi government, but with the L-G too," the petition said. "The power to appoint government pleader emanates from Entry 13 of List III in respect of which the government of NCT of Delhi has legislative competence under Article 239AA of the Constitution," the petition said.

CAIT campaign to consolidate traders into one vote bank

To persuade them to vote leaving aside political affiliations

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Declaring its intent to consolidate the 19 lakh traders of Delhi into a 'vote bank', the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) on Sunday said it would start a campaign to persuade them to vote leaving aside political affiliations.

To this end, up to 150 meetings have been held at commercial markets across the city, the traders' body said. CAIT's Delhi State president, Vipin Ahuja, said that a final decision on which party or candidate to back would be taken only once responses are received on its recently circulated 'National Charter of Traders'.

Among problems faced by the traders in the city, Mr. Ahuja highlighted the sealing drive, issues arising out of the Rent Act, alleged corruption in the municipal corporations, the deteriorating conditions of commercial markets which lack proper infrastructure, security, parking facilities among others.

Hits out at BJP

Attacking the BJP, Mr. Ahuja said that as a consequence of being considered the "core vote bank" of the party, other political parties did not approach the community, while the BJP neglected their issues as well.

The CAIT said that traders would have an important role to play in the Chandni Chowk constituency, where it says four lakh voters are traders.

Apart form this, the traders' body added that there are two lakh traders in the New Delhi constituency and "..in the South Delhi seat out of about 19 lakh voters nearly 2 lakh voters; on North-East Delhi seat out of about 22 lakh voters about 3 lakh voters are traders; on East Delhi seat out of about 21 lakh voters about 2.5 lakh voters are traders, whereas on West Delhi seat out of about 22 lakh voters the traders constitute 2.75 lakh voters and on North-West Delhi seat out of 23 lakh voters about 3 lakh are trader voters".

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Lecture on "New India meets a New Nigeria: Creating an Indo-African Growth Story" by H.E. Chris Sunday Eze, High Commissioner of Nigeria to India. Chair: Amar Singh, Member, National Security Advisory Board at Seminar Rooms I, II & III, India International Centre (IIC), 5:30 p.m.

Talk: Dr. Maya Joshi, Associate Professor at Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi will speak on "Rahul Sankrityayan: Untangling a Legacy". The illustrated talk will delineate the major contours of his remarkable intellectual and political growth, at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6:30 p.m.

Exhibition: "Never Let Me Go", a solo painting exhibition by Dr. Balesh Jindal at Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Songs of the Soil", a group art show by 6 artists at Palette Art Gallery, 14, Golf Links, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

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

'Nuh farmers face step-motherly treatment from govt'

Not opening enough centres to procure mustard at MSP: State Congress leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Haryana Congress vice-president Aftab Ahmed has accused the State government of step-motherly treatment towards the farmers in Nuh district for not opening enough centres to procure mustard at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the crop.

As of now, the mustard is being procured at only two centres in Tauru and Punhana, said Mr. Ahmed. Nuh is one of the leading mustard producing districts in Haryana.

Mr. Ahmed visited the grain markets across the district over the past one week and found that most of the farmers were forced to sell their produce at a rate which is around ₹1,000 less than the MSP announced by the Haryana government for mustard.

"Though the farmers start reaching the grain markets in mid-February with the mustard, the government initiates the procurement process weeks later. By the time the government starts the procurement, most of the farmers have already sold their produce to the commission agents," said Mr. Ahmed.

Waive formalities

He also demanded that a host of formalities imposed on the farmers, such as online registration and the maximum limit of procurement for six quintals per acre must also be done away with.

Mr. Ahmed said the BJP government had promised 50% profit to the farmers for their produce over and above the input cost, but later gave an affidavit to the Supreme Court, saying that it was not possible. He said that it was for the first time that a government had imposed tax on equipment and pesticides used in the farming sector.

"The government has imposed 12% Goods and Services Tax on tractors and all farming equipment, 18% GST on pesticides and 5% on fertilisers. It even imposed 12% GST on the cold stores where farmers keep potatoes stored," said Mr. Ahmed.

He said the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana launched by the BJP government also turned out to be a big scam and helped the big corporates make huge money at the cost of the poor farmers.

Opposition questions incomplete PWD work on foot overbridges

BJP leader alleges 3-year delay in completion of projects

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Vijender Gupta, lashed out at the Delhi government on Sunday for an alleged three-year delay in completion of foot overbridges on the Outer Ring Road from Mukarba Chowk to Wazirabad by the Public Works Department (PWD).

Work on five such bridges, which Mr. Gupta said started on November 2016 at a cost of ₹32 crore, was meant to be completed in eight months.

Vijender Gupta

However, due to delays, the date of completion was extended to April 30, 2018, he said. Following visits on April 6 to four of the sites at Mukarba Chowk, Nirankari Samagam, Jahangirpuri and Jagatpur, Mr. Gupta reported that the work remained incomplete.

Attacking the Aam Admi Party's demand for full statehood, the BJP leader said that the blame for the present delay could not be put on the Central government or the BJP and that the same was a consequence of the Kejriwal government's ineffectiveness. Mr. Gupta also said that the present government had acted to stall developmental works in Delhi right since their coming to power.

https://t.me/TowardsCommunism

Anu Kumar's Train of thought

The introduction of the Railways in India had many twists and turns, which Anuradha Kumar writes about in her new book *The First Train*

R KRITHIKA

The introduction of the railways in India by Lord Dalhousie was a one-line toss-away in our school history textbooks. From this meagre beginning, author Anuradha Kumar builds a story of suspense and thrills in *The First Train* (Curato).

The beginnings of the book, says Anu, actually go back to a decade ago when she was writing the Atisa series and *The Dollmaker's Island*. "I wanted to do interesting things with history but was unsure how my writing efforts would be received," she recalls. "But because there was such a gap and this idea seemed so novel and untried that I went ahead pigheadedly, despite all the discouragement I received this time."

Set in Bombay in the early 1800s, the plot revolves around the railway line from Thane to Bombay, the people – both British and Indian – who have a vested interest in seeing it succeed, and those who want it to fail. The city comes alive in Anuradha's prose and this she credits to her 13 years living there, for eight of which she worked at the *Economic and Political Weekly* (EPW). "The *EPW* is a rich archive of scholarly essays on Bombay, and I could always dip into the old bound issues as and when I needed," she recounts when asked about her research.

She goes on to offer a few snippets of other reading: "OUP brought out two books on Bombay by Alice Thorner and Sujata Patel; Prof. Miriam Dossal's wonderful work; *Govind Narayan's Mumbai* by Murali Ranganathan; Amitav Ghosh's Ibis trilogy, which gives a glimpse of the Bombay merchants involved in the opium trade in the early 1840s; and the gazetteers related to Bombay Presidency.... Most of my reading was somewhat tangential, but it all helped."

While her hero Carsten is fictional, the cast comprises a number of historical characters, prominent among them being Dalhousie and Nana Saheb. Anuradha says her choice of characters "reflected, quite aptly, Bombay's cosmopolitanism. It was made by people who had their feet firmly planted in the city but possessed such a fascinating worldview."

For Carsten, whose father is an Irish soldier and mother, the daughter of a thugee, "I wanted someone who was a sort of 'in-between' person; someone unsure of his past, yet able to straddle different worlds on his own, and make something of himself in a city – that even today, in some respects – allows a person this freedom."

Anuradha is known for her historical fiction, both Young Adult and literary. Her last work was a fictionalised retelling of the life of Chandragupta Maurya, *Emperor Chandragupta*. Historical fiction might sound an oxymoron, she says, but there is a lot of *history* in it. She feels it's important to distinguish between historical fiction and "works of mytho-speculative-fantastical fiction that rules the best-seller charts these days."

She is also worried by how history has become a tool for "fake news-makers, who use it as an instrument of hate, to spread all kinds of canards and false information." Is there a way to counter it? Yes, she asserts, by "working on our historical thinking – which, as I read somewhere, combines the ability to be scientifically analytical with being imaginative and empathetic. Historical fiction is a way of trying to do this."

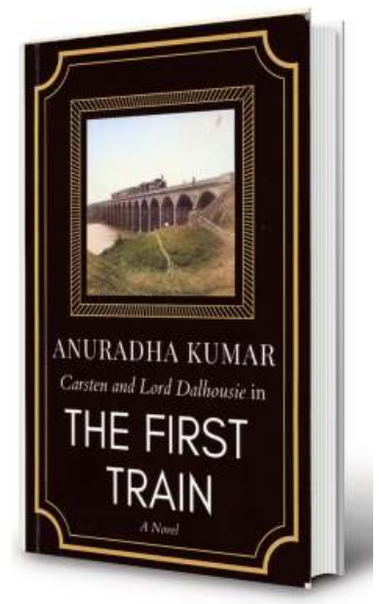
Lastly, I ask if readers will see more of the swashbuckling teenage Carsten. "I hope so," she says, wryly adding, "it's all so sales dependent."

And this brings her back to the point she made earlier about "how history mixed up with myth seems to sell better than historical fiction. I am not sure if this relates to how we understand and perceive history. In that case, there's really a lot of work to be done. One way is to try and write good historical fiction. Which doesn't sell. So its like a chicken-and-egg conundrum. But I'd love to write more Carsten books for this period; it's a fascinating one."

History buff: Anuradha Kumar says there is a lot of history in historical fiction ▪SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

YOUR PROCESS OF WRITING

- When: Through the morning hours, and then late at night.
- Where: Anywhere I can take my laptop, and where there's no one around.
- What: Other books near at hand.
- How: Laptop, and a notepad to take notes.



Your favourites

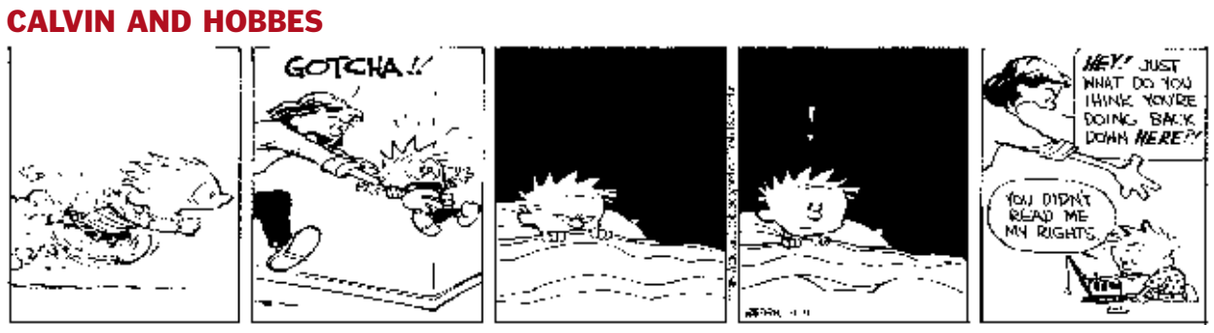
- Authors: Quite varied. Hilary Mantel, Carlo Ginzburg, Robert Darnton, Graham Greene, Amitav Ghosh, Andrew Miller, Marilyn Robinson and Conn Iggulden for his racy pace of telling a good historical story.
- Books: Too many, but one I am reading is an older publication. Joan M Jensen's *Passage from India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America* tells the story of the early South Asians who risked a lot as they made a new life for themselves in the United States.
- Historical Fiction: Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, Colson Whitehead's *Underground Railroad*, among others.
- Movies based on books: I am honestly not a movie person, but I think I loved *The Prisoner of Zenda*, *Pride and Prejudice* and, thanks to my daughter, the Harry Potter movies.

POOCH CAFE

PEANUTS

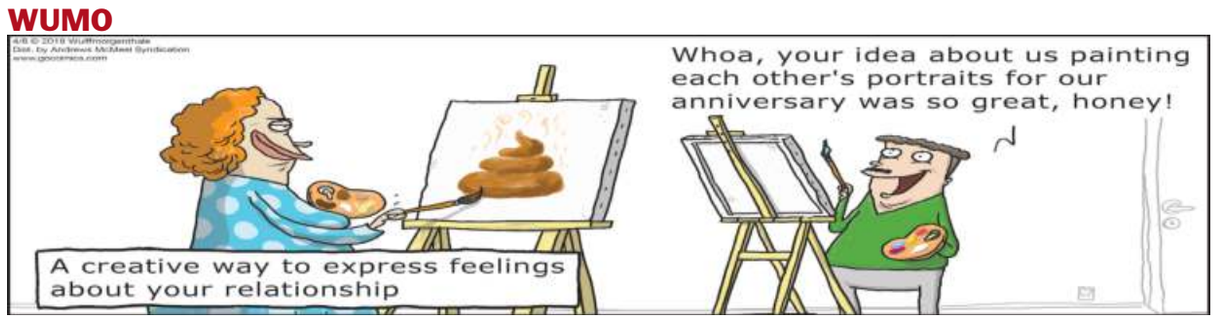
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

CALVIN AND HOBBES

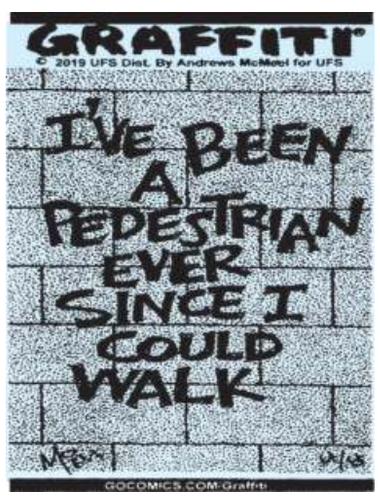


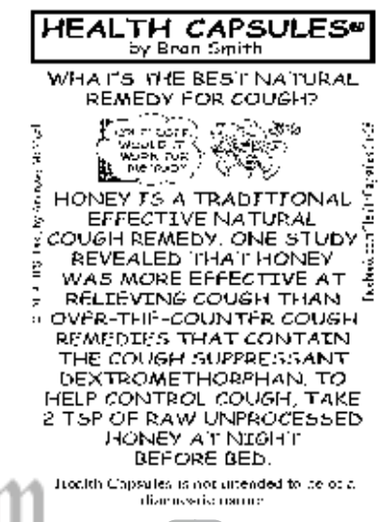
TIGER

WUMO

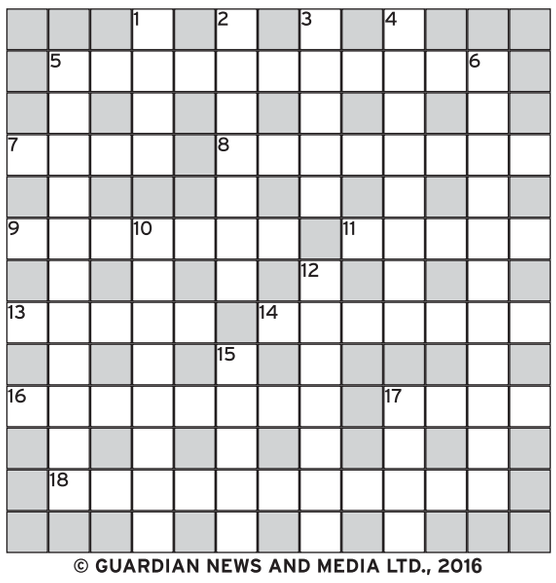


PEARLS BEFORE SWINE





THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13038



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Across
5 Depending on one's own resources (4-7)
7 Flog – band (4)
8 Supplementary text tacked on to the end (8)
9 Narcotics (7)
11 Same as above (5)
13 Wine residue (5)
14 Spiv (4,3)
16 Leave of absence from military duties (8)
17 Attendance figure (4)
18 Noisy and rhetorical (11)

Down
1 Stain (on one's character?) (4)
2 Wrinkled (7)
3 Clearing in a wood (5)
4 Take 9 intravenously (8)
5 Behave promiscuously (5,6)
6 Dependable (11)
10 Candied stalks used as cake decoration (8)
12 Arrogant person (3-4)
15 Biblical betrayer (5)
17 Enjoyable – moral (4)

Solution will appear in Delhi Metro dated April 9, 2019.

Solution No. 13037

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https://t.me/EdwardsEmbrow

Straight off the carts: A city where food and people thrive ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

An unlikely gourmet capital

As Jamshedpur completes 100 years of existence, we look at the food that defines the flavours of this industrial city

ANUBHUTI KRISHNA

A hot griddle sizzles over the fire as a young man swiftly pours the batter and spreads it out in one smooth swirl. Next, he sprinkles a mix of sliced onions, beetroot and a potato mix and pours a copious amount of oil. A few flips later, the batter emerges on a dented steel plate as a glorious golden *dosa*.

On another cart, a man dunks small discs of dough into smoking oil. The puffed-up discs emerge as crisp *puris*. They later rest in a large platter from where they are served on a plate with a spicy potato curry and a large syrupy *jalebi*.

Meanwhile, tea boils on a stove at a nearby shack, *idlis* steam in a large steamer and *rasgullas* rest in a container. Men, women and children hover between the carts, plates in hand and a smile on their face. Welcome to a typical morning in Jamshedpur, a town that lives to eat.

Set up a century ago by the legendary industrialist Jamsetji Tata to support the steel factory, Jamshedpur is today a colourful town with an electric mix of communities. It is also home to some of the best food in the country. Bengali, Bihari, Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati and Parsi influences, married with fresh produce and local culinary practices, make the cuisine here unusual and interesting.

"Jamshedpur is a unique blend of cuisines and cultures," says Gayatri Iyer, proprietor of one of the oldest restaurants in the city. "Today, you see so much food outside, but when my grandfather set up The Madrasi Hotel in 1935, it was the only place to eat out. The *dosa* was, perhaps, the first thing that the townsmen ate outside of their homes."

Brought along by immigrants from southern India, *dosa* has since become synonymous with Jamshedpur. Served with a thin, flavourful *sambhar*, chunky *dal* chutney and sometimes filled with *upma* rather than potatoes, it has its own identity here. It also remains a popular item on any menu, including Iyer's. She feels Jamshedpur could possibly be the largest consumer of *dosas* in any town.

If crispy *dosas* showcase the influences of the South, the *litti* tells you about the city's Bihari connect. These small balls of dough, stuffed with *sattu*, baked and dipped in ghee, are served with a mishmash of potatoes, tomatoes and brinjals. Spiked with green chilli and mustard oil, the *chokha* is spicy and flavourful, while the doughy and crumbly *litti* is filling. Cheap and easily available, the combination not only packs a punch for the palate but is also a storehouse of energy and nutrition – something the army of workers needs in large quantities. If a city thrives on its food, Jamshedpur is indeed a happy one. From the basic meal that caters to a daily wager, snacks that keep students going, to modern adaptations of old recipes, Jamshedpur is a treasure trove of flavours, textures and culinary history.

"I moved to Bengaluru after school," says Gayatri, who decided to give up her life in the IT city to run the 84-year-old institution in this city. "With no one else to take care of the place, I had to step in and am glad I made the decision."

Varun Gazder, the owner of the first Parsi café in town, left his job at the legendary Taj Mahal Palace hotel in Mumbai to open a new place with a vintage feel. "I missed having a Parsi place in Jamshedpur," he says. "I thought of doing something that not only represents our family history but also that of the city." Café Regal, his franchise, has since taken upon itself to revive age-old Parsi recipes and an abandoned theatre that now houses the café. Iron beams, bearing the imprint of the steel factory from the 1920s, support its ceiling, trophies, commemorating golden jubilees of films played here, line its shelves. Furniture from old homes also graces the chequered floor. As locals put it, 'Sitting in Café Regal is like peeking into the past of Jamshedpur'.

No conversation about Jamshedpur's food is complete without talking about its Bengali food. With a sizeable population of Bengalis here, the city has always had a strong Bengali influence. Almost every sweet shop is an expert in Bengali confections. Snacks like chops and *shingharas* (Bengali *samosa*) are eternal favourites. "While returning from work, our father would often carry a parcel of hot *shingharas* or crunchy chops for us," recalls Subhasis Kar, a resident, who feels nothing can beat the city's vegetable chops, often called just 'vegetable'. "Now, my children expect me to get them the same things," he smiles. Crispy, dense and served with a dash of salad, the chops here are a class apart. *Shingharas*, meanwhile, are small, flaky and almost always contain peanuts – a Bengali trademark. *Puchka*, *beguni*, *rosogulla* and rolls are some of the other imports from the land of Tagore, that have invaded the land of Tata.

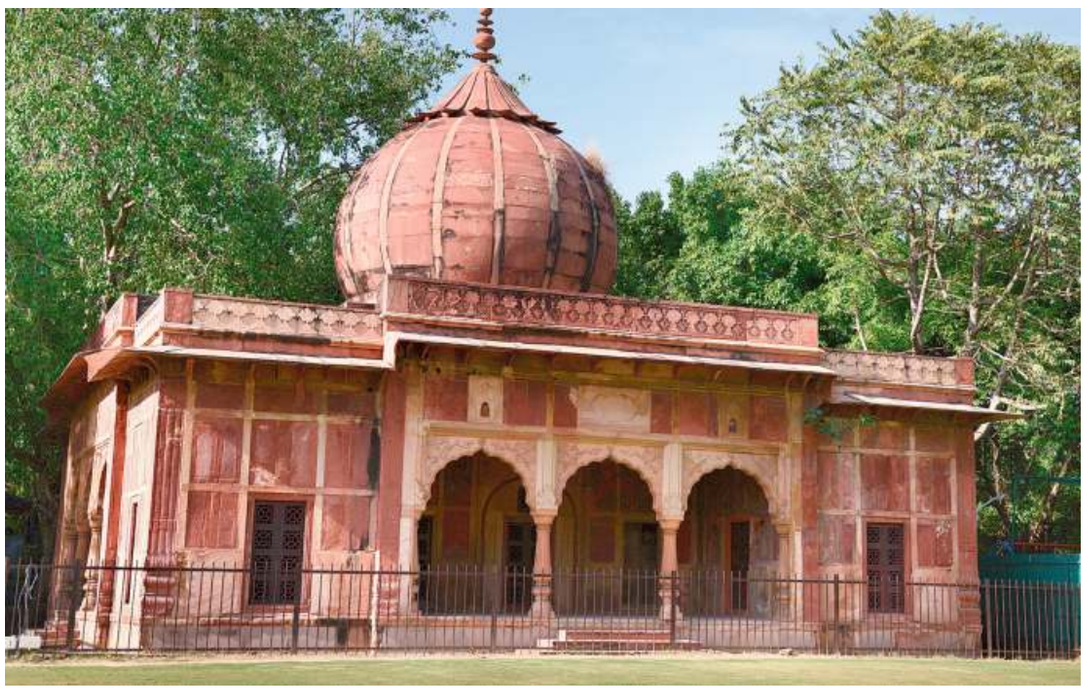
At one time, the city had a considerable population of Germans, Englishmen and Americans – all of whom had came here during the World Wars. To cater to their needs, not only did the city open a new hotel and a bar – which often witnessed drunken brawls and broken chairs – but many bakeries too. "My most cherished memory of Jamshedpur is that of the quaint British-era bakeries," says Maxwell Chhetri, a screenwriter and actor based in Mumbai, who grew up here. "Howrah Bakery and Calcutta Bakery have been making the same things – cream rolls, biscuits, cakes and the softest breads that come apart at the slightest attempt to butter them. They still continue to enchant me." Enchanting seems to be the right word to describe the food of Jamshedpur.

SWEET NOTHINGS

Did you know that by the 5th century AD, crystallised sugar was referred to as khanda and this is where the word candy is derived from.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

R.V. SMITH



Seeped in history: Lal Bangla V.V. Krishnan

The lady who left an Emperor enthralled

Lal Kunwar, a concubine, cast such a spell on Jahandar Shah that he spent little time taking care of his people

Lal Bangla, a landmark of the Delhi Golf Club, has undergone repairs and one is tempted to relate the story of the vivacious Lal Kanwar, the courtesan supposed to be buried there. Jahandar Shah's concubine, as she is known in history, held centre-stage in Delhi, Agra and Lahore during the one-year rule of that frivolous emperor in 1712. He ascended the throne after a battle of succession following the death of Bahadur Shah I, Aurangzeb's son and successor.

Lal Kunwar was the daughter of Khasuriat Khan, a descendant of Mian Tansen, and captivated Jahandar Shah, who was more than double her age. She had wit, charm, coquetishness and skill in dancing. . Her family was one of singers, drummers and fiddlers (Kalawant) and earned its livelihood as such.

It is said that when Jahandar Shah first heard her sing, he got so charmed by her voice that he carried her in his arms to an inside room, where he asked her to sing again and again, staying on till the wee hours, for he was convinced that he had found a mehbooba (beloved) at last.

The infatuation grew and eventually Lal Kunwar was brought to the Red Fort. She was given the exalted tittle of 'Imtiaz Mahal' and her brother Niamat Khan Kalawant appointed Governor of Multan. The appointment was cancelled when the Wazir asked him to supply 1,000 sarangis in lieu of the governorship and he could not comply with the demand.

In Delhi, Lal Kunwar and the Emperor would go out incognito to worship at various shrines and bathe at the tank attached to the mazar of Hazrat Nasiruddin Chirag Delhi, for the blessing of the saint for the birth of a son and heir.

At Lahore, the two held festivals of light thrice a month, resulting in a big increase in the price of oil, so much so that even scholars of Persian thought it worthwhile to sell oil and reap a windfall (*Parhein Farsi bachen tel/Yah dekho qudrat ke khel*). The saying couldn't have applied more aptly. At Lahore the emperor had to flee after a battle and Lal Kanwar found shelter in what was once the palace of Dara Shikoh.

After losing another battle at Agra, Jahandar Shah and Lal Kunwar escaped in a bullock cart, begging their meals all the way to Delhi. Nobody recognised them for they were almost in rags. Many took them for roadside performers, and at Mathura an attempt was made by a gang of ruffians to carry away Lal Kunwar, but the ex-dancing girl was able to fool them and make good her escape.

Their follies and foibles were cut short in Delhi when Farrukhseyer overthrew Jahandar Shah in 1712 with the help of the Sayyid brothers and imprisoned his uncle in Salimgarh, where Lal Kunwar also joined him. Here the ousted emperor was murdered and his consort forced to pass her days in the widows' quarters of the Red Fort. Jahandar Shah was buried in a vault in Humayun's Tomb but it is not known how and why an imposing memorial was built for Lal Kunwar, and by whom?

Most of the stories about her love life were passed on to posterity by Donna Juliana, a Portuguese lady. That she was beautiful and much sought after by men before her romance with Jahandar Shah is beyond doubt. Also beyond doubt is her love for the clownish emperor who doted on her till his dying day, vowing that no bathroom used by Lal Kunwar could stink.

Standing before the Lal Bangla who can imagine that it is the mausoleum of a courtesan who rose to become empress of India? It was only for a few months that the swish of Begum Imtiaz Mahal's gharara turned many heads in the Red Fort where the Rang Mahal was the focus of merry-making every evening. It is a far cry from there to the Lal Bangla you will agree. However, it is said Shah Alam's mother is also buried there. She too was named Lal Kunwar. It was perhaps for her that the imposing edifice was later erected to enclose the existing tomb of the senior Lal Kanwar who died unsung and unlamented in Suhaghpura, where Mughal emperor's wives and concubines stayed put even long after their husband's death. The show at the Red Fort however, vividly brings alive her memory though few remember her less flamboyant namesake.

THE AUTHOR IS A VETERAN CHRONICLER OF DELHI

PEOPLE

Pioneering an art form

Shibu Arakkal propagates iPhonography as niche art of smartphone photography

When Shibu Arakkal, a Bengaluru-based photo-artist, showed a bunch of sixth and seventh graders the iconic photograph of Neil Armstrong's elliptical, horizontally striped shoe-print on the moon's surface, quite a few of his audience called it "fake, doctored." Their response indicates the proliferation of the moon landing conspiracy theory and, more importantly, the now easily accessible knowledge of digital photographic post-processing techniques.

It isn't just the knowledge; the art of photography itself has become accessible, according to Arakkal, after the advent of digital technology, especially smartphones. "Photography is the layman's art form. Of course, it is another matter that we, in India, don't look at it as an art form, but look around you, everyone clicks pictures. Just before getting into a flight, you will see people taking a selfie," he says.

It isn't just selfies, digital technology can be used to make sophisticated art, too. Arakkal, for instance, won the Lorenzo il Magnifico Gold Prize in digital art at the Florence Biennale in 2013 for his series of portraits, 'Constructing Life'. In the artwork, Arakkal digitally superimposed the portraits of several Indian construction labourers on old, broken-down walls, attempting to reveal "the character in their form and faces."

Arakkal conducts workshops to initiate participants into smartphone photography. This, in a way, is an extension and propagation of his idea, 'iPhonography', which, according to him is "the essence of artistic expression and experimentation using the iPhone and the photographic works." He says he wants to go to schools and art schools to talk about art in general.

Arakkal admits that in a four-hour workshop, he can't make participants master smartphone photography. "You can, at the most, make them grasp 10 to 20% of the knowledge and introduce to them certain artistic and creative ideas and procedures. For example, I have a set of 10 codes that you can follow to take a good photograph," he says.

The art is intricate and, hence, Arakkal feels it's important to simplify it for the first-timers. "But you can't also over-simplify something that is complex in nature," he says. His initiation into photography, when he was 18 (in 1996), was with a Yashica FX-3, which belonged to his dad — the late Yusuf Arakkal, a renowned artist. Of his initiation, Arakkal says, "A friend of mine, who was into modelling, wanted me to take a few photographs and I did. The photos were lying around at home. At that time, a lot of creative people used to come home to meet dad. Some of them saw the photos and said they were very good."

For the first three years, he continued using the FX-3. The dawn of this millennium saw the explosion of digital technology in photography as in other fields. Arakkal was excited. Photoshop and other image processing software gave him "the freedom" to do what he wanted. Several photographers, however, looked down on digital image processing. "They took pride in their untouched images. They also told me digital cannot surpass the old-school style. Look where we are now," he laughs.

Arakkal isn't dismissive of the old-school techniques and styles; in fact, he reveres them. "Most of the things we do on Photoshop today, the masters of the past, had done it in dark rooms. It is, hence, important to know and learn about these things. It will keep you grounded and honest."

For workshops, contact him at email@shibuarakkal.com

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

PRODUCTS

Go accessory fishing

Flying Fish Accessories is an observation of all that's around, the mundane and the exotic, in personal accessory form: earrings, rings, brooches, nose pins and more. Nitika Bose, a design graduate from NIFT, says she's passionate about metal and loves to explore forms along with her team of craftsmen. Most of her jewellery is contemporary, in silver (92.5%), though there is some use of semi-precious stones too.

Available at flyingfishaccessories.com; ₹800 upwards

Facing up to pollution

One way of controlling the pollution in our cities is to be more responsible citizens. Another is to use the Skeyndor City Pollution Block Cream +o2 (for normal to dry skin). Pollution, as we know, clog pores, cause skin damage, acne, dullness, premature ageing and several other skin problems. Said to contain "a high perfluorodecalin content", a chemical described by PubChem as "capable of dissolving large quantities of oxygen," the product claims to to protect against pollution, when applied on the skin.

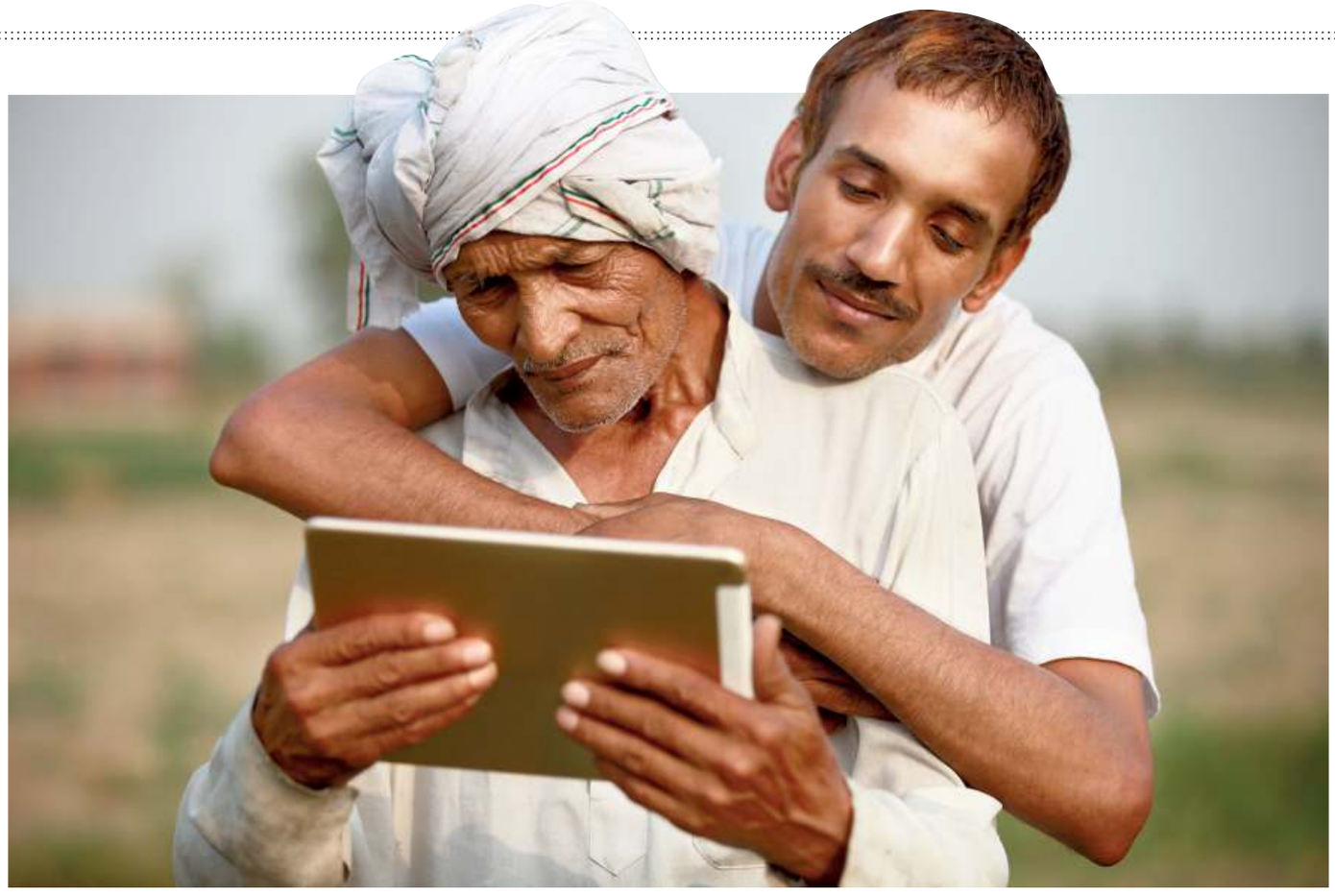
Available at skeyndor.in; ₹3,180

https://t.me/TodaysTomorrow

DELHI THE HINDU
MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2019

THE LAST MILE

As we dilly-dally on universal health coverage, here's how startups have started bringing cheap medical care to far-flung parts of the country



Tech meets health: (Anti-clockwise from far left) Gramin Healthcare camp in West Bengal; at a 3Nethra screening; Gramin Healthcare camp in Ghaziabad; Rito Maitra of ChironX ▪ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SWETA AKUNDI

With a single screen in your hands, you could – in the span of a few minutes and a few taps – track your sugar level, check your urine for markers, keep a cardio-health journal, search for cancer clinical trials, check in with your therapist, do a basic diagnosis of your pain, and book a doctor's appointment. The boom of smart technology in the past decade is reflected very well in the healthcare industry.

The catch, of course, is the comfortable assumption that everybody owns a high-end smartphone with good Internet connectivity. Furthermore, does everyone have access to healthcare professionals? According to the National Health Profile released last year, one allopathic doctor in India attends to 11,000 people. And that's the average; the situation worsens in states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Every person, no matter what their financial status, has the right to benefit from health services. With this as the motto, the World Health Organization decided on universal health coverage as their theme for World Health Day this year – 'health for all'.

Even as the rhetoric on Ayushman Bharat rises and quality, affordable healthcare plummets, Indian technology startups have been silently working towards making healthcare less expensive, and reachable to everyone. Here's how.

Bringing doctors to villages

Since 2016, the rural districts of Haryana have been dotted by brick-and-mortar kiosks. Frequented by villagers in need of primary healthcare, these centres were set up by Ajoy Khandheria, and his Gurugram-based company, Gramin Healthcare. "We wanted to institutionalise healthcare in areas where there is no accessibility, to bring down costs of travel," says Sonia Vohra, operations head at Gramin Healthcare.

Inside the primary healthcare centres are nurses; doctors are available on screen remotely, performing diagnoses with the help of telemedicine. Each patient is given a health card, and their medical history is digitised. In the three years of their operations, they have expanded to over 120 centres, in Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

The company, that is working with the Ayushman Bharat scheme to offer tertiary services, now also has three poly-clinics, which "will employ three to four specialised doctors," says Sonia.

"One individual can't create the difference that is required in rural India, hence our model allows communities and corporates to come together and make the difference at the last-mile level."

Companies such as Forus Health have focussed on creating medical equipment that makes remote diagnosis easier.

LITERACY AND SMARTS

According to a 2018 study by CyberMedia Research, Kerala leads the nation in terms of smartphone penetration.

Diagnosis on the cloud

Started in 2010, its first product was 3Nethra Classic, a device that does retinal imaging, with the aim of catching conditions that could cause blindness. "We create cheap, portable products, that can be installed in remote locations. The images are sent to ophthalmologists in cities, who then recommend the next course of action," says K Chandrasekhar, founder of Forus Health.

In strengthening the roots of his company, Chandrasekhar has personally held screening camps in Tier-4 and 5 cities, from Nandurbar and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, to villages around Puri in Odisha, and Pavagada, Tumkur in Karnataka, besides camps 14,000 feet above sea level in Leh.

"My first camp was in Madurai, where we met one person who found out that he had diabetes only after the screening. That's the thing, in India 80% of blindness is preventable; patients only get their eyes checked in the later stages," he says.

The main difficulty in getting equipment to remote places, according to Chandrasekhar, is the poor condition of the roads. "Optical equipment is very sensitive, so the challenge was to make it rugged enough to travel in autos, cars and buses," he says.

With a global presence now – 3Nethra is also available in Nigeria, Kenya, and the Amazon basin – it is headed to scaling up its operations by collaborating with Microsoft. "We partnered with Microsoft that created an artificial intelligence engine to grade the retinal images as normal and abnormal, before they go to a doctor. That makes the diagnosis much faster and more efficient," he says.

The World Health Organization decided on universal health coverage as their theme for World Health Day

AI steps in

But what if you could eliminate the need for a doctor completely for a primary diagnosis? Let's look at another start-up ChironX, also working in the retinal imaging space.

Started in 2017 by Sombodhi Ghosh, Mausumi Acharyya and Rito Maitra, ChironX has developed a method of analysing fundus images (the image of the back of the retina) using artificial intelligence. The software will then tell you if your fundus image steers away from the normal, indicating whether you have any cardiovascular conditions, hypertension or diabetes.

"You only have so many retinal specialists to analyse images. And those ophthalmologists are on a rotational basis at different hospitals," says Rito. Instead, the startup uses machine learning to feed millions of images into the computer, until it can identify a normal, ideal image from a dysfunctional one. Collecting that data wasn't easy, he says, because India doesn't have a very strong electronic record system. "The AI can get you a diagnosis within a minute," he claims. For this, the startup has teamed up with hospitals such as Dr Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital in New Delhi, and with ones in rural areas of Haryana. It has also done camps in rural Karnataka and suburbs of Kolkata. Adds Rito, "We are now working with the Maharashtra Government to employ our AI in Nandurbar and Wardha."

Fast unto mind-body connect

We know Chris Pratt tried The Daniel Fast diet. Do you need to?

NEERAJA MURTHY

As more and more research confirms the effectiveness of plant-based diets, one dietary pattern that has caught on recently has a spiritual connection. The Daniel Fast, a diet of prayer and fasting, has been around since 2007, but thanks to Hollywood actor Chris Pratt, has picked up momentum on social media now. A few weeks ago, he told his followers on Instagram that he would observe 21 days of prayer and fasting, and give himself limited food choices.

What is it?

The Daniel Fast Diet gets its name from prophet Daniel from the Old Testament in Bible, and is a fast that eliminates animal and 'precious' (date syrup, for instance) foods. This tradition is seen across religions that believe in periodical fasts to spiritually cleanse and improve physical and mental health. "Every food has a property which affects the mind too," says Dr Prasan Shankar, who practises Ayurvedic medicine. So when we eat calorie-dense food, the energy of the body is spent in digestion, whereas light food will keep us active and focussed.

Is the 21-day diet healthy?

Delhi-based dietician Ritika Samaddar calls The Daniel Fast, a farm-to-table diet. Similar to a vegan diet, though stricter, it eliminates dairy, processed foods, and all beverages except water. It also cuts down on salt. While there is no restriction on calorie intake, the focus is only on deriving nutrition from whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts. This dietary pattern highlights simple living and going back to our roots.

Ritika says that for a healthy person, following the Daniel Fast may provide benefits, because it eliminates all junk food. Its best results are when you adhere to regular meals with only the foods suggested. However, the diet is sometimes practised with elements of intermittent fasting and even day-long fasts. "Do check with your dietician if you plan to do this. For those with any kind of health conditions, please ask your doctor," she says. And if you plan to extend the diet beyond three weeks, again, get professional help.

There are alternative options of almond and coconut milk (to dairy), says Visakhapatnam-based dietician Anjali Dange. "However, one does miss out on vitamin B12, available in animal-based food. Calcium and vitamin D levels need to be monitored. Also, staunch non-vegetarians may find it difficult to suddenly give up all animal products."

The diet does not have caffeine either, so people addicted to their teas and coffees might have mood swings and headaches. "The initial few days might be tough, when the body is slowly getting adjusted. It is always better to take professional help and have supplements so that one doesn't end up with a deficiency," she adds.

Fasting benefits

Fasting has many benefits. It reboots our digestive system and we dwell inwards. With no thoughts of food, our mind finds balance and stability. "From an Ayurvedic perspective, this process of 'Langhanam' (giving a break to the digestive system periodically) helps in maintaining one's metabolic state. Healthy people should do it periodically and in a right way," says Dr Shankar. Also, there seems to be a connect between fasting and certain phases of the year. "With seasonal changes, the body's metabolism also changes, affecting digestion; one of the reasons why we stay away from certain foods."

The spiritual fast: The 21-day cleanse may be a good idea for the healthy ▪ GETTY IMAGES

FOODS TO AVOID

- Meat and animal products
- Dairy products
- All sweeteners like sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, and cane juice
- All leavened bread including Ezekiel bread (it contains yeast and honey) and baked goods
- Refined and processed food
- All deep-fried foods
- Coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol.

(Source: danielfast.wordpress.com)

FOODS TO INCLUDE

- FRUITS, IN ANY FORM (SUGAR-FREE AND CHEMICAL-FREE): Apples, apricots, bananas, berries
- VEGETABLES: Broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chilli peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic
- WHOLE GRAINS AND LEGUMES: Brown rice, millets, quinoa, oats, barley, wholewheat pasta, kidney beans, white beans, lentils
- NUTS AND SEEDS: Sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame
- OILS: Olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame
- BEVERAGES: Spring water, distilled water or other pure waters
- Tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasoning, salt, herbs and spices

Q&A

I am an undergraduate student living in Delhi and currently preparing for exams in May. My workload is piling up, and I'm under huge stress and pressure. What is a good diet for a teenager, which will help me to concentrate better and boost energy?

■ 1) Start your day with one litre of water, as staying up late studying can be dehydrating and will leave you exhausted, especially in this heat.

2) Within one hour of waking up, have a banana with a fistful of mixed almonds and walnuts, soaked overnight.

3) Focus on eating lentils, chickpeas or *rajma* for your main meals, as they are packed with vitamins and minerals, and provide sustained energy. Avoid junk food.

4) Restrict caffeine to a maximum of two teas or one coffee a day and have a glass of bael (wood apple) juice or lemon water or buttermilk instead.

5) To de-stress and for better concentration, have a cup of cold milk with 1 tsp ashwagandha powder 30 minutes before bedtime daily.

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I am 28 years old, and anaemic. Will this affect my chances of conception?

■ Yes, anaemia can decrease the chances of conception, and additionally, if you are significantly anaemic during your first two trimesters, you are at greater risk for having a pre-term delivery or low-birth-weight baby. Aim for 25-30mg iron daily. Check to ensure you're not deficient in vitamin B6, B12 or folic acid. Include whole eggs, spinach, amaranth and legumes in your diet for your daily iron dose. Include non-vegetarian sources, if you can. Do consult a dietician who may be able to help you.

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Nothing in this column is intended to be, and is not, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please seek independent advice from a licensed practitioner if you have any questions regarding a medical condition. Email us your questions at mp_health@thehindu.co.in

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