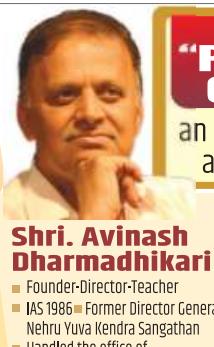




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NEARBY



No proposal received on
free metro rides: Puri

NEW DELHI

The Centre has not received any proposal from the Delhi government for making metro travel for women free, Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs (Independent charge) Hardeep Puri told the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The Minister said this in response to a question by All India Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Man ends life over house demolition

NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man ended his life after his house was demolished by officials in outer north Delhi's Bawana on Thursday afternoon, the police said. DCP (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said the man is survived by his wife and two children.

CITY ▶ PAGE 4

Inmates, cops clash in Punjab jail

CHANDIGARH

A violent clash broke out between inmates and police at Punjab's Ludhiana Central Jail on Thursday, leaving one inmate dead and five injured.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

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FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 8 PAGES
(TABLOID)

Trump terms India's high tariffs on U.S. products unacceptable

President says he will take up the issue with PM Modi at G-20 summit in Osaka

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump has said he will speak to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on India's "high tariffs" on American products, which are "unacceptable".

"I look forward to speaking with Prime Minister Modi about the fact that India, for years having put very high Tariffs against the United States, just recently increased the Tariffs even further. This is unacceptable and the Tariffs must be withdrawn!" Mr. Trump tweeted on Wednesday night Washington DC time, en route to Osaka in Japan for the G-20 meetings.

He was referring to the tariffs India had levied on 28 goods, including walnuts, pulses and almonds, starting



I look forward to speaking with Prime Minister Modi about the fact that India, for years having put very high Tariffs against the United States, just recently increased the Tariffs even further. This is unacceptable and the Tariffs must be withdrawn!
— DONALD TRUMP, U.S. PRESIDENT

June 16. This was in retaliation for the March 2018 tariffs the Trump administration had levied – ostensibly on national security grounds – on steel and aluminium from a number of countries, including India.

U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, who was in New Delhi this week, discussed trade with his counterpart, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Mr. Modi is expected to meet Mr. Trump at 9.35 a.m. local time in Osaka on Friday, prior to which he will hold a trilateral with Mr. Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. On Thursday, the White House issued a statement on the G-20, which talked about Mr. Trump's intent to achieve "fair and reciprocal trade".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 13

Four bank accounts of Nirav Modi, sister frozen

Swiss action came on request by ED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI/ LONDON

Four bank accounts of Nirav Modi, main accused in the PNB fraud case, and his sister have been "frozen" in Switzerland as part of the money laundering probe against them in India.

Mr. Modi was further remanded in judicial custody in the United Kingdom until July 25 on Thursday. Official sources said the accounts, at present, have

deposits totalling ₹283.16 crore and were frozen on the request of the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

PMLA provisions
The ED, the sources said, made the request to the Swiss authorities sometime back and had also sent an official request under the criminal provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Official sources said the accounts, at present, have

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

AI flight suffers 6-hour delay after bomb hoax

Diverted to airport near London

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A hoax bomb threat to Air India's Mumbai-Newark flight on Thursday forced it to divert to an airport near London, where it was escorted by the Royal Air Force's fighter jets. The plane, with 327 passengers, landed safely and, following a security drill, resumed its journey after a delay of over six hours.

"AI 191 (Mumbai-Newark)

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

was diverted to London Stansted Airport around 9.50 a.m. local time on June 27, following reports of a security alert. All 327 passengers were deplaned and served snacks and beverages," Air India's spokesman said.

The drama unfolded after a mail was sent to Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Airport about a bomb threat.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

The drama unfolded after a mail was sent to Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Airport about a bomb threat.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Haryana Congress leader shot dead in Faridabad

He was attacked while leaving a gym; 13 FIRs registered against him

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Congress leader Vikas Chaudhary was on Thursday shot dead by unknown assailants in Haryana's Faridabad, an incident which evoked sharp criticism against the ruling BJP-led government by Congress leaders.

The police said initial investigation indicated that the murder appeared to be connected to his own criminal background.

Additional Director General of Police Navdeep Singh Virk, on Twitter, said: "As per the leads so far Vikas



Vikas Chaudhary ▶ ANI

Chaudhary had a criminal background and 13 FIRs of extortion, kidnapping, and attempt to murder, were registered against him since 2007 in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh."

shots at the vehicle from two sides. The bullets hit him on the neck and chest," ACP Jaiveer Singh Rathi told reporters.

Mr. Rathi said Chaudhary was rushed to a nearby private hospital where he was declared dead. "Twelve spent cartridges have been recovered from the crime scene. The body of the deceased was handed over to the family after post-mortem. The post-mortem report is awaited," he added.

Police have registered a case under Section 302 of the IPC, and investigation is under way.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 2

National mission on natural language translation soon

₹450 crore-proposal is part of the 100-day action plan charted out by MeitY

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Electronics and IT will soon place before the Union Cabinet a ₹450 crore proposal for Natural Language Translation – one of the key missions identified by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).

The proposal is part of the 100-day action plan charted out by MeitY, following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's instructions.

The national mission on natural language translation aims to make science and technology accessible to all by facilitating access to

Going local
The Ministry of Electronics and IT's Natural Language Translation mission aims to enable access to teaching and researching material in English and one's native language

SOURCE: CENSUS 2011

Language	Mother tongue of speakers (%)
Hindi and associated languages	43.63
Bengali	8.03
Marathi	6.86
Telugu	6.7
Tamil	5.7
Gujarati	4.58
Urdu	4.19
Kannada	3.61

The proposed cost of the Natural Language Translation mission is ₹450 crore

translation and human translation.

"We will be looking at speech-to-speech machine translation as well as text-to-text machine translation for this. Additionally, human

translation will be used," a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

The official said the Ministry had proposed an outlay of ₹450 crore for the mission over the next three-year period.

The official said that to overcome the language barrier, the government planned to set up an ecosystem which involved the Central and State agencies and start-ups.

"Start-ups can help expedite the work to build implementable solutions to help make research," he said.

Translation activities can also help generate employment for educated unem-

ploved, he pointed out, adding that the mission would help not just students who find it difficult to access knowledge because of language barrier, but also teachers, authors, publishers, translation software developers and general readers.

The IT ministry is the lead agency for implementation of the mission along with Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Science and Technology.

The PM-STIAC is an overarching body that identifies challenges in certain areas of science and technology.

11 students killed in Kashmir road accident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Eleven students, including nine girls, died when the vehicle they were travelling

in fell into a gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district on Thursday. The accident happened when the vehicle skidded off the road

and rolled down the gorge near Pir Ki Gali. "Seven others were injured in the accident," said the police.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 5

At Hindu, it is 99% for B.A.(H) political science

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

Hindu College stopped just short of asking for a perfect score for students seeking admissions to B.A. (Honours) political science with the first cut-off list, released on Thursday, calling for 99%. Last year for the same course it was 96.75%.

At LSR, the highest cut-off is for B.A. Psychology at 98.7%. The highest cut-off at Miranda House is for B.A. (Honours) Economics and B.A. (Honours) Geography at 98.25%.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 2

TESTIMONIAL

I owe my success to the whole Nirvana IAS Academy team for guiding me throughout my journey. My success today is because of the proficiency and expertise of the teachers at Nirvana and their immense faith in their students.

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Shubham Gupta, AIR-6, CSE 2018

World calls for joint efforts to protect global growth as G20 draws near

Ahead of the Group of 20 (G20) summit in Japan, the international community is calling for joint efforts by major economies to help maintain global growth amid rising uncertainties.

THREATS TO GLOBAL GROWTH

The bloc of major economies will soon be in the Japanese city of Osaka as the global economy is increasingly threatened by protectionism.

In the name of protecting domestic industries, Washington has slapped steep tariffs on billions of U.S. dollars' worth of products from its partners, heightening trade tensions worldwide and rocking the foundation of the multilateral trading system.

"Today uncertainty is not so much about integration but about disintegration. Multilateralism and free trade have come under pressure, for example, with international trade conflicts," said Burkhard Balz, a member of the executive board of Deutsche Bundesbank.

Moving towards isolationism and unilateralism damages the G20 spirit significantly, said Lee Hee-ok, a professor of political science at Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul.

Finance ministers from the G20 economies on June 9 issued a joint statement, saying global growth "remains low and risks remain tilted to the downside" and listing trade tensions as the key factor.

The latest World Trade Outlook Indicator reading of 96.3 remains at the weakest level since 2010, signalling continued falling trade growth in the first half of 2019, said the World Trade Organization (WTO).

According to a key UN report released earlier in June, global foreign direct investment (FDI) slid to 1.3 trillion dollars in 2018, in its third straight annual decline.

Factors such as escalating trade tensions "risk continuing to weigh on FDI in 2019 and beyond," said Mukhisa Kituyi, secretary-general of the UN Conference on Trade and Development.

"Economic prospects are now weaker in nearly all G20 countries than previously anticipated," said the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in its recent interim economic outlook. Besides, there are other major risks such as geopolitical tensions and climate crises.

Kituyi said the main drag on FDI in Europe is the "negative pull of Brexit in Britain," which has created considerable uncertainty.

In its latest monthly report, the U.S. Energy Information Administration cut its 2019 world



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, June 13, 2019. (Xinhua/Yin Bogu)

oil demand growth forecast by 0.2 million barrels per day (bpd) to 1.2 million bpd, amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. "According to the World Bank, air pollution costs societies more than 5 trillion dollars every year," said Joyce Msuya, deputy executive director of UN Environment.

"This meeting is coming at a time which is seeing perhaps the most significant shift in the global environment since the Cold War," said Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg.

NEED FOR CONSENSUS

What concerns the international community the most is whether G20 economies can show solidarity at the upcoming summit in tackling the risks of global economic downturn.

Although many G20 economies have repeatedly called for coordination of economic policies over the past few years, the bloc is still divided on certain thorny issues, such as rising protectionism and climate change.

For example, the G20 ministerial meeting

earlier in June failed to include the part of opposing trade protectionism in the joint statement due to objections from the U.S. side. "The United States ... lost interest in cooperating in a multilateral format and actually stalled the process of reforming the system of global governance," said Professor Yana Leksyutina of St. Petersburg State University.

Besides, the UN climate change conference held last year in Poland also witnessed some countries voicing opposition to including the draft text in the final outcome document.

Participating countries of the G20 summit should act positively to reach some agreement "which would be beneficial to people across the world," Qian Meijun, professor of the College of Business and Economics in the Australian National University, told Xinhua.

OECD Chief Economist Laurence Boone suggested "governments should coordinate policy actions to avoid a further downturn."

In an interview with Xinhua, Atsushi Sunami, vice president at the National

Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo, called on all to understand the real impact of trade tensions, and end the trade frictions as soon as possible.

There will not be any winner, Takakage Fujita, a political analyst, told Xinhua.

He said the economic and trade friction provoked by the United States hurts not only China, but also U.S. farmers as well as U.S. industries, which have already issued warnings against such reckless acts of the U.S. government.

Economy has no borders, Tadashi Yanai, founder of the famous Japanese clothing brand Uniqlo, told Xinhua, adding he hopes all could understand that the world is closely linked, and people of all countries look forward to a peaceful and stable life.

CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

Many hope that G20 economies can take concrete actions such as returning to the negotiating table to alleviate trade tensions.

Fujita suggested major economies like the United States should, from the perspective of

being conducive to world peace and development, return to talks, and solve issues through rational negotiation and consultation.

Talks are the only right choice, he said.

The international community also urged G20 economies to develop open and fair platforms like the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and promote the reforms of international organizations, to better defend the multilateral trading order.

The BRI really supports the growth of the global economy, said Sunami.

It is a more open and multilateral idea that goes against unilateralism and isolationism, said Lee.

Developing countries should take part in the effort to strengthen the role of the UN in world affairs and reform backbone institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the WTO, said Leksyutina.

During the G20 summit in Argentina last year, many leaders called for a WTO reform. And so did the joint statement issued after the foregoing G20 ministerial meeting.

It is important for G20 leaders to come up with more transparent rules, especially concerning trade tensions and the digital economy, said Sunami.

They need to talk about the WTO and other world organizations, and whether the WTO can play a more active role in creating a fair environment for everybody to agree on, he said.

"Leaders must do something more than repeat the call. It is imperative that we see action," Director-General of the WTO Roberto Azevedo said.

He particularly called on joint efforts to reform the WTO's dispute settlement system to avert an acute Appellate Body crisis.

Besides, Chen Yulu, deputy governor of the People's Bank of China, suggested carrying out an IMF quota reform to objectively reflect the relative positions of member countries in the global economy, and strengthen the voice of emerging market economies.

"How the major central banks should react to the most recent developments on the market and the world economy, including interest rates, quantitative easing as well as currencies, is another issue," said Dawie Roodt, chief economist at African financial services company Efficient Group.

Experts also expect the upcoming summit to help find solutions to climate change.

According to Ottmar Edenhofer, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, G20 leaders should consider carbon pricing and the development of new low-carbon technologies to cut emissions, and integrating their carbon markets to push forward ongoing international negotiations.

President Xi's talks on China's development, global governance at G20 summits



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a keynote speech at the Business 20 (B20) summit in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, Sept. 3, 2016. (Xinhua/Ma Zhancheng)

As one of the most-anticipated global gatherings every year, the Group of 20 (G20) Summit provides a multilateral platform for countries to seek consensus on global governance and sustainable development.

On the eve of the upcoming G20 summit in Osaka, Japan, a review of Chinese President Xi Jinping's remarks at previous G20 summits will help draw further inspiration from Chinese solutions to challenges facing the world.

ON ECONOMIC GROWTH

Economy is always ranked high on the agenda of the G20 Summit.

"In mankind's relentless quest for development and progress, the trend toward openness and integration among countries is unstoppable despite ups and downs in the global economy," Xi said at the G20 summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2018.

"Greater co-operation and complementarity among countries meet the need of productivity growth. They will also shape the future of relations of production," he said.

"In this process, countries are increasingly becoming a community with shared interests, shared responsibilities and a shared future."

Xi has called for building an open global economy many times.

"This commitment of the G20 to build open economies saw us through the global financial crisis, and this commitment is vital to re-energizing the global economy," he said in 2017 at the G20 Hamburg Summit.

Making an appeal to foster new sources of growth for the global economy, Xi said that "innovation, more than anything else, is such a new source of growth."

Another source of growth derives from making greater efforts to address the issue of development and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and such efforts will both benefit developing countries and generate business and investment opportunities for developed countries," he added.

ON GLOBAL COOPERATION

Cooperation is another keyword in Xi's remarks at previous G20 summits.

At the G20 summit in China's Hangzhou in 2016, Xi said that "We will continue to reinforce macro-policy dialogue and coordination, work in the spirit of

partnership to promote mutual help and win-win cooperation, and focus our minds and energy to pursue strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth."

"We should forge strong partnership and step up macro policy coordination. Partnership is the most valuable asset of the G20," Xi said at the G20 summit in Buenos Aires in 2018, emphasizing that "we G20 members should work together to surmount whatever difficulty that lies ahead."

As regards the rising protectionism, Xi said in his remarks at the G20 summit in 2015 that "we should reject protectionism and uphold and strengthen the multilateral trading regime in order to provide sufficient space for the development of different countries."

"As the world's major economies, we should and must lead the way, support the multilateral trading system, observe the jointly established rules and, through consultation, seek all-win solutions to common challenges we face," Xi reiterated in 2017 at the G20 summit in Hamburg.

ON CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT

As the leader of the world's second largest economy which has contributed over 30 percent of global growth, Xi has always been generous in sharing China's development experience.

"China owes its progress to reform and opening-up, and will continue to advance on this path," Xi said in 2018 at the G20 summit in Buenos Aires.

"China will continue to improve its business environment, and hopes that all countries will work together for a free, open, inclusive and orderly international economic environment," he added.

Speaking of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, Xi said in 2017 at the G20 Hamburg Summit that "guided by a new vision of governance, we built a new platform of cooperation to tap into new sources of growth. The commitment of the Belt and Road Forum is highly compatible with the goal of the G20."

Also in remarks at the Hamburg summit, Xi called on the participating countries to "work together to promote interconnected growth for shared prosperity and build toward a global community with a shared future."

World looks to G20 Summit to address challenges of world economy, says expert

by Pankaj Yadav



Blake Hurst, president of the Missouri Farm Bureau, also a corn, soybean and greenhouse farmer, stands on his fields in Tarkio, Missouri, the United States, June 10, 2019. (Xinhua/Liu Jie)

All eyes will be on the Group of 20 (G20) summit in Osaka this week, as observers look for solutions to challenges facing the world economy, an expert has said.

"In the 21st century, the global focus has shifted from security to development and G20 represents the largest economies on the planet," Professor Swaran Singh of the School of International Studies at Delhi-based Jawaharlal Nehru University told Xinhua.

"They (leaders of G20) sit together and decide what should be the direction of the global economy and how to address the challenges that the global economy has at that given time," said Singh.

These 20 top economies of the world represent specific regions, and the increasing connectivity of G20 with their respective regions mean the stakes are high, he added.

"When you talk of economic relations, these are extremely not only intertwined but interdependent," said the professor.

The G20 meeting, slated for June 28-29, comes at a time when the U.S.-initiated trade disputes with China is raising concerns worldwide about the prospects for future global economic development.

Chinese President Xi Jinping held a telephone conversation with his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump on June 18 at the latter's request.

Trump said he looks forward to meeting Xi again during the upcoming Group of 20 summit in the Japanese city of Osaka later this month and conducting in-depth discussions on bilateral ties and issues of common concern.

The Chinese president said he stands ready to meet Trump in Osaka to exchange views on fundamental issues concerning the development of China-U.S. relations.

"G20 is going to be very focused on finding some kind of respite, if not resolution, to this continuing tension between the United States and China," said Singh, adding that the proposed meeting between Trump and Xi "is of interest to everybody around the world." Citing data by the International Monetary Fund, Singh said that due to the U.S.-China trade and tariff tensions, the world economy is likely to shrink by about 0.5 percent, or about 500 billion U.S. dollars.

Trump's protectionist policies and the idea of "American First" have surely rattled global business and economic relations, said Singh.

"Even if this is sowing some positive growth in the short term, American companies are already voicing their long term fears of negative implications. Major economies are so intensely intertwined that it is insane to imagine sealing economic interactions within national borders or dictating terms to other sovereign nations," said the professor.

Regarding the U.S. ban on Chinese company Huawei, Singh noted that the U.S. tactic was nothing but politics.

"China's unprecedented development and American economic deceleration has triggered alarm bells in Washington about China possibly overtaking it sooner than later," he said.



A man looks for special offers at a sporting goods store in Alhambra, Los Angeles County, the United States, Aug. 1, 2018. (Xinhua/Li Ying)

"The basic motive behind raising trade tariffs or banning of Huawei remains their sentiment to delay China's rise as much as possible," he added.

When asked if U.S. trade disputes with China is responsible for recent weakness in global growth, Singh replied that several reputed international institutions had already given their forecasts of a "negative impact" of the trade disputes.

IN BRIEF



Two arms suppliers held; 19 pistols recovered

NEW DELHI

Two arms suppliers have been arrested from Ghazipur, the police said on Thursday. They claim to have recovered 19 pistols, two revolvers and 34 magazines from their possession. The accused were active in Delhi-NCR for the last 20 years. They used to transport weapons in a truck from Sardha in Madhya Pradesh to supply in Delhi-NCR, the police said.

Contractor killed for not returning money

NEW DELHI

A 36-year-old contractor identified as Fateh Ali was stabbed and shot dead by two persons over a money dispute in Sangam Vihar on Wednesday night, the police said on Thursday. The accused – Pintu and Rafiq – said they committed the crime as the victim was not able to pay them, the police added.

HC grants protection to couple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted police protection to a 21-year-old woman and her husband who married against the wishes of her parents. They apprehend danger to their lives.

Justice Najmi Waziri directed the police that the matter be looked into by the Station House Officer (SHO) concerned and the petitioner's family be duly sensitized about her constitutional rights.

"The petitioner seeks protection from this court to her as well as her husband life, limb and liberty and she shall be granted protection for the same," the court said.

Man ends life over house demolition

'Officials manhandled him when he resisted'; consumed poisonous substance; cops

HEMANI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man ended his life after his house was demolished by government officials in Outer North Delhi's Bawana on Thursday afternoon, the police said.

DCP (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said the man is survived by his wife and two children.

Had taken loan

"Preliminary enquiry revealed that he had recently constructed the house for which he had taken a loan. During demolition, he consumed a poisonous substance. He told his wife about it when he was rushed to a hospital. He died during treatment," Mr. Sharma said.

His nephew said the deceased was a private LIC agent and also did pest control work. "Around 12 p.m.,



Government officials on Thursday demolished 26 houses in Bawana. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

officials came and started taking out his belongings from inside the house. He pleaded to the officials but they manhandled him," said the nephew added.

A government official said the land, on which the house was built, was acquired for

construction of highway and the proceedings were on since 2012.

"The residents had approached the High Court and the Supreme Court regarding the matter. In January, the courts demarcated the land for demolition. Initially,

there were 70 houses and then it was finally brought down to 26, which were demolished today [Thursday]. The residents were informed on June 19 to vacate their houses when they had asked for a few more days, which they were given," the official said, adding that the family is authorised to get compensation. His family claimed that he had written to Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), demanding "action against actual culprit".

His family said he had sold his property in his hometown in Bihar's Samastipur after which he had bought this land and constructed the house.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -7.30 p.m.

Homeless man killed by speeding car; driver held

One injured; victims yet to be identified

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A homeless man was killed and another injured after a speeding car hit them in north Delhi's Kashmere Gate, the police said on Thursday.

The victims are yet to be identified, they said.

The incident took place on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday on a flyover near ISBT when Imran (42) and his younger brother were heading towards Kashmere Gate from Seelampur in their car, they said.

Imran was driving towards Kashmere Gate when he spotted a truck and tried to make way for it but lost control and hit a divider, injuring two pavement dwellers before their

vehicle overturned, said an officer.

The occupants of the car have been rescued unhurt, the officer added.

The victims were rushed to a nearby hospital where one of them was declared brought dead while the other is undergoing treatment, the officer added.

A case has been registered and Imran has been arrested, the police said.

Youth drowns in North body swimming pool; probe on

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 21-year-old youth drowned in a North body swimming pool on Wednesday afternoon, the police said.

DCP (North-West) Vijayanta Arya said the victim has been identified as Parth from Sabzi Mandi. "A PCR call was received from Fortis Hospital regarding death of a boy. The police were told that he drowned in a pool at BK-II in Shalimar Bagh," Ms. Arya said.

She said they are trying to find out if a lifeguard was present at the pool. A case has been registered under Section 304 A (causing death by negligence) of the IPC and probe is under way.

Cops failed to deliver justice, say murder victim's parents

Neetu Solanki was killed in 2011

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

"The police have failed to deliver justice to our daughter as none of the officers took the case seriously," alleged parents of Neetu Solanki, who was murdered by her live-in partner Raju Gehlot in 2011.

On Wednesday, Gehlot who had been absconding since 2011, died in a private hospital in Gurugram. He had killed the woman and abandoned her body outside New Delhi Railway Station.

The victim's father Kartar Singh said the accused managed to evade arrest for eight years in a city adjacent to the Capital. "The police could not trace him," he said, adding, "It has become easy for criminals to get away by obtaining a fake ID. We did not get justice. We were waiting for the day when Gehlot will get caught. We wanted to see him behind bars, but it never happened," Gehlot had ob-

K We were waiting for Gehlot to get caught. We wanted to see him behind bars, but it never happened

KARTAR SINGH

Victim's father

tained a fake ID in the name of Rohan Dahiya and was working with an automobile company, the police said.

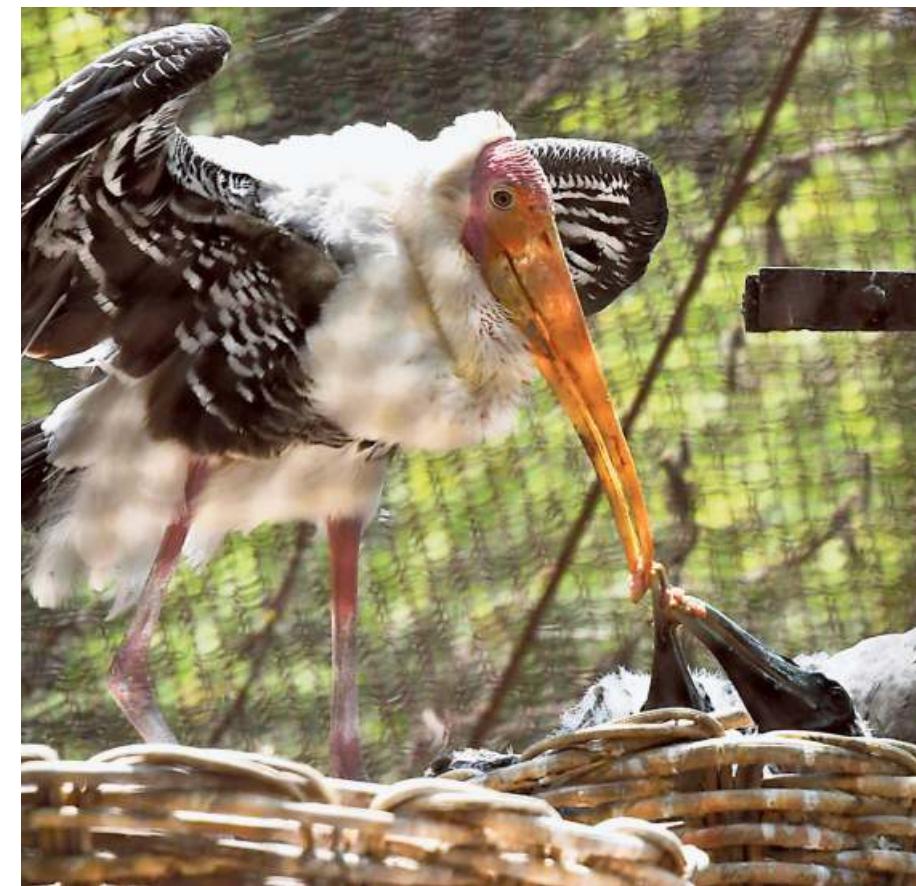
The police got to know about him after they got a call from the hospital where he was being treated for a liver ailment.

"We rushed to the hospital in Gurugram when the doctors told us that he died in the morning," said an officer.

Request to close case

The accused was a proclaimed offender and had a bounty of ₹2 lakh on his head. "Now, we will submit his death certificate in the court and request to close the case," added the officer.

Stork market



The little birdies: A stork feeds its chicks inside an enclosure at Delhi zoo. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Two held for firing at TV crew in Barapullah

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Two persons have been arrested for allegedly firing at a television crew's cab on Barapullah flyover over two weeks ago, the police said on Thursday.

The accused were wanted in more than 20 cases, they said.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Ravi Ranjan said the accused have been identified as Tayyab (23) and Shahid (20).

They had signaled the cab driver to stop but the journalist asked him to keep driving. After this, the duo fired three shots at the cab, but the crew managed to escape. During probe, CCTV footage helped them identify the accused.

Civic body assistant commissioner gets four-year jail term in bribery case

Fined ₹40,000; both sentences to run concurrently, orders court

NIRNIMESH KUMAR

NEW DELHI

Allowing plea for a lenient punishment in view of family's woes, a court here has awarded four years of imprisonment to a civic body assistant commissioner in a 2016 corruption case.

Sanjeev Kumar was posted at Karol Bagh, North Zone when the CBI caught him red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe of ₹15,000 from a clerk at the office.

The officer had offered the complainant to post him as a licensing inspector on a bribe of ₹50,000. Instead of the clerk, it was the officer who had approached him for awarding a new responsibility.

Not only that, when the complainant showed no interest in the

Anti-Romeo squads to issue red cards in Noida'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NOIDA

The police will issue "red cards" to offenders found harassing women in public places as a warning before initiating criminal proceedings against them if they are caught indulging in the act again, officers said on Thursday.

The "red cards" will be served through anti-Romeo squads, which comprise constables – both male and female – who are deployed in public places in plain clothes.

The squads were constituted to check stalkers and eve-teasers in Uttar Pradesh soon after Yogi Adityanath assumed the office of the Chief Minister.

The 'red cards' will be handed out to offenders as a warning and if a person who has been previously issued this card is found indulging in such activities again, criminal proceedings will be initiated against that person," a police spokesperson said.

They will have details of the offenders like their name, age, address, parents' information along with the offence for which they have been issued the card, he said.

Government of India : Ministry of Railways

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For and on behalf of President of India Global Tender is invited from established and reputed consultants, in two packet system in sealed envelope as per following detail.

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Tender Documents and detailed Notice Inviting Tender can be seen at - www.rdsd.indianrailways.gov.in → Tender → Others directorate tender → Works (Global tender)

File No.:TM/IM/87(GPR Tender) Date:26.06.2019

(Shriram Chandra Srivastava
Executive Director/Track Machines
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CPR/Misc-34 Chief Public Relations Officer, Gorakhpur

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Tender Notice No. 01 / 2019-20 Ambendment

The Tenders are invites online by Executive Engineer Panchayat (R&B) Division, Chhotaudepur. Pin code No. 391165 Phone No. (2669-233053) for the Suvidhapat (Total 4 Works) Which Estimated cost ranging from Rs.50 Laces to Rs. 295 laces by E-Tendering from the eligible and Approved Registered Contractor by Government of Gujarat. For Further particulars contact of above office. The website for tender document is <https://npnprocure.com> and seen also Mahiti Department website:- www.statetenders.com

: TIME SCHEDULE OF E-TENDERING :

Online download Tender last date	Dt: 08/07/2019 18:00Hrs
Submission of Tender Fee, EMD & other documents	Demand Draft for tender fee & E.M.D. & other documents shall be submitted in electronic format only through online & All the necessary documents shall be send to this office by R.P.A.D. from 7 days after opening
On line Opening Tender	Dt. 09/07/2019 12:00Hrs
Place of Opening tender	S.E. Panchayat (R&B) Circle Office at Vadodara Ph. No. 0265-2421092
Agency should write own Name, Address and name of work compulsorily, when they submit physical document by post.	Executive Engineer Panchayat (R&B) Division Chhotaudepur

(INF-BRD-285-2019-2020) (190-Corrigendum)

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DELHI **Timings**

FRIDAY, JUNE 28	RISE 05:26 SET 19:23
SATURDAY, JUNE 29	RISE 05:26 SET 19:23
SUNDAY, JUNE 30	RISE 05:27 SET 19:23
	RISE 03:10 SET 16:56

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 39 29
Safdarjung 39 29
Palam 41 30

Delhi Palam Today
41°C A pollution level will increase. Dry and hot weather will persist. A partly cloudy sky will prevail.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
42°C Dry weather will prevail. Day will be hot and windy with a partly cloudy sky.

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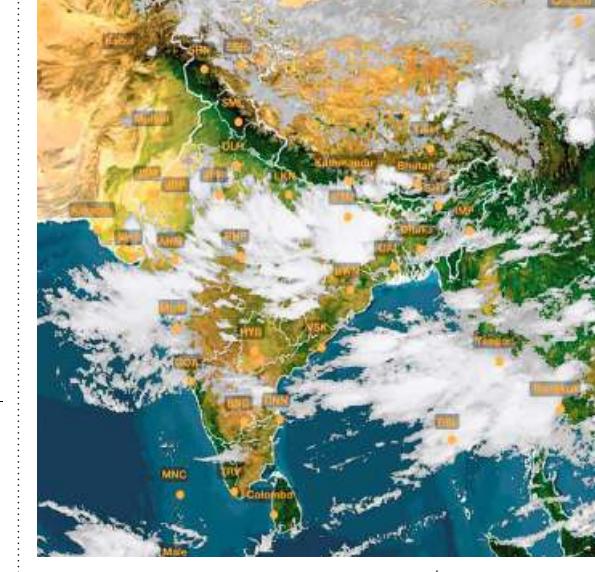
IN BRIEF

M.P. govt. mulls jail term for cow vigilantes

The Madhya Pradesh government has approved a proposal to amend the cow protection law and award jail terms ranging from six months to five years to those who indulge in violence in the name of cow vigilantism. The proposal to amend the M.P. Cow Progeny Slaughter Prevention Act, 2004, was cleared at a Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Kamal Nath on Wednesday. State Minister Lakhman Singh Yadav confirmed that the proposal has been cleared. PTI

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 Friday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, central Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, coastal Karnataka, Konkan & Goa and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN
Agartala 36.... 26.2 Kozhikode 25.0.... 23.0
Ahmedabad 36.... 27.8 Kullu 37.... 26.4
Aizawl 27.5.... 20.2 Lucknow 41.2.... 29.2
Allahabad 42.8.... 31.2 Madurai 38.8.... 26.9
Bengaluru 31.0.... 21.6 Mangalore 0.7.... 30.1.... 23.8
Bhopal 26.9.... 26.9 Mumbai 4.1.... 33.2.... 26.2
Bhubaneswar 36.0.... 27.1 Mysuru 31.0.... 20.8
Chandigarh 37.4.... 28.5 New Delhi 39.1.... 28.6
Chennai 30.1.... 23.4 Patha 8.4.... 37.... 26.0
Coimbatore 35.2.... 24.6 Port Blair 20.8.... 28.9.... 24.4
Dehradoon 36.7.... 25.5 Puducherry 0.9.... 36.2.... 26.3
Gangtok 27.... 19.7.... 18.0 Pune 0.7.... 30.7.... 23.7
Goa 96.1.... 28.5.... 24.0 Raipur 39.6.... 27.8
Guwahati 26.8.... 29.8.... 25.5 Ranchi 13.5.... 33.4.... 26.0
Hubballi 26.0.... 22.0 Shillong 71.3.... 22.6.... 15.2
Hyderabad 35.8.... 25.0 Shimla 25.5.... 17.3
Imphal 6.8.... 27.0.... 21.5 Srinagar 1.2.... 28.7.... 12.3
Jaipur 40.3.... 30.6 Tiruvanamalai 32.0.... 26.1
Kochi 32.0.... 28.0 Tiruchi 39.9.... 28.8
Kohima 1.6.... 32.7.... 18.2 Vijayawada 44.2.... 38.9.... 27.0
Kolkata 35.3.... 29.1 Visakhapatnam 33.6.... 28.8
(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES SO: NO: CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE
Ahmedabad..... 48 187 9.0 117
Bengaluru 6 41 .68 44 .97
Chennai 6 .56 .38 61 .74
Delhi 16 9 .52 159 .274
Hyderabad 11 .31 .11 .27 .43
Kolkata 5 .11 .11 .37 .43
Lucknow 3 .64 .50 .246
Mumbai 30 .19 100 .20 .45
Pune 63 .8 .31 .7 .7
Visakhapatnam 14 .59 .100 .100

Yesterday
In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 302 indicating an unhealthy level of air. In contrast, Guwahati recorded a healthy AQI score of 32.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: 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.

NO₂: 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

Inmates, police clash in Ludhiana Central Jail

One prisoner dead; Amarinder orders magisterial inquiry

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

A violent clash broke out between inmates and police officers at Punjab's Ludhiana Central Jail on Thursday, leaving one inmate dead and five injured. Around half a dozen police personnel also sustained injuries.

The violence erupted around 11.30 a.m., after news of the death of a prison inmate, identified as Sunny Sood, at the Rajendra Medical College Hospital, Patiala, reached the jail. Sood was an undertrial in a case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

Violence over death
"The news of Sood's death triggered a riot on the jail premises. The 3,100-odd inmates refused to go back into the barracks and started throwing stones, which were available due to some ongoing construction work. They also set fire to the record room and the car of the Jail Superintendent, and vandalised the jail property," said an official statement.

The inmates tried to break the prison gates and the police fired in the air to stop them, the statement added.

Meanwhile, additional



Heavy police force deployed at Ludhiana Central Jail after the clashes on Thursday. ■ PTI

police forces, including tear-gas vehicles and around 300 personnel, reached the spot to control the violence.

"The situation was finally brought under control around 1.30 p.m., when the prisoners were put back in the barracks," added the statement. The prisoner killed in the violence was identified as Ajit Baba.

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has ordered a magisterial inquiry, to be conducted by Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana, into the incident.

Opposition slams govt.
Soon after the incident, Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal demanded the immediate sacking of Punjab's Jail Minister Sukhjinder Randhawa and

blamed the State government for the complete breakdown of law and order in the State's prisons.

Capt. Amarinder told reporters in New Delhi that the incident did not reflect any law and order breakdown in Punjab.

On the Opposition's demand for Mr. Randhawa's ouster, Capt. Amarinder said there was no question of it. "The Akali Dal and the Aam Aadmi Party have nothing constructive to say, except to make such illogical demands. We are dealing with the situation."

Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Harpal Singh Cheema also accused the Congress government of failing to control the deteriorating law and order situation in the State.

All the victims belonged to

Swaraj India to contest all 90 seats in Haryana

To issue 'Imanpatra' instead of manifesto

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Swaraj India party on Thursday announced that it will contest all 90 Assembly seats in Haryana, where elections are due later this year.

Its national president Yogendra Yadav said the party had entered politics to change the established practices, and hence it has decided to contest all the seats in the Haryana Assembly polls.

"Over the last four years, Swaraj Abhiyan and Swaraj India have been raising the issues of agrarian distress, unemployment and corruption. It was because of Swaraj India's struggle that government procurement of



Yogendra Yadav

bajra and mustard increased in Haryana," he said.

"Instead of a manifesto with empty promises and fake claims, Swaraj India will issue an 'Imanpatra' with concrete policy proposals," he said.

The party's national secretary Avik Saha said one-third of Swaraj India's candidates would be women and youth.

Rajasthan budget to be presented on July 10

House pays tributes to Saini, Parrikar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot will present the 2019-2020 budget on July 10 in the Assembly. The date was decided by the Business Advisory Committee at its meeting convened in the Assembly on Thursday, the opening day of the budget session. Mr. Gehlot also holds the Finance portfolio.

The second session of the 15th State Assembly started with the members paying tributes to Rajasthan BJP president and Rajya Sabha MP late Madan Lal Saini, former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar and the victims of a mishap at Jasol in Barmer district last week,

when a tent fell on a crowd during a religious event.

The Congress Legislature Party passed a resolution expressing faith in the leadership of Rahul Gandhi and requested him to continue as the party president. In a meeting held at Mr. Gehlot's residence before the session commenced, the CLP also resolved to counter the "smear campaign" of the Opposition against the government.

Meanwhile, journalists covering the Assembly proceedings staged a demonstration outside Assembly Speaker C.P. Joshi's office, demanding the withdrawal of new rules restricting their movement in the House.

11 students killed in Kashmir road accident

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Eleven students, including nine girls, died when the vehicle they were travelling in fell into a gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district on Thursday.

The accident happened when the vehicle skidded off the road and rolled down the gorge near Pir Ki Gali. "Seven others were injured in the accident," said the police.



An injured girl being taken to SMHS hospital in Srinagar on Thursday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Poonch in the Pir Panjal Valley, and were students at a computer institute. They

were on a excursion to Pir Ki Gali.

"One critically injured

person has been referred to a Srinagar hospital for specialised treatment," said Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Owais Ahmad.

Governor Satya Pal Malik expressed grief over the loss of lives and announced an ex gratia payment of ₹5 lakh each to the next of the kin of the deceased.

Hurriyat leaders as well as mainstream parties expressed their condolences to the bereaved families.

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SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed one boy namely Sunny, S/o Suresh Kumar, R/o H.No. E-61/AD-1/224, Jhuggi Nand Nagri, Delhi, Age: Approx 22 Years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing Sky Blue colour Shirt, Blue colour Jeans and Red colour Shoes in feet, has been missing from his house since 26.05.2019. In this regard a DD No. 36-A, Dated 28.05.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Nand Nagri, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail : cib@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639

Ph. No.: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/7118/NE/19

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AIR-222 AIR-290 AIR-432 AIR-538 AIR-629 AIR-725

'Chandrakant Patil must resign'

Minister denies wrongdoing in land deals, Opposition objects to clarification

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

A day after Maharashtra Revenue Minister Chandrakant Patil was accused of involvement in a multi-crore land scam, the State Assembly on Thursday witnessed an uproar from the Opposition benches as Mr. Patil presented his clarification inside the House. The Assembly had to be adjourned twice due to the uproar.

Addressing a press conference, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLA Jayant Patil had on Wednesday accused the minister of irregularities in deals for two plots in Pune district. He had alleged that the State exchequer incurred a loss of ₹42 crore in one of the deals. He had earlier made the allegations inside the Assembly, but his speech was expunged by Speaker Haribhau Bagde over the technical issue of not giving notice to Mr. Patil before making the allegations.

The Opposition objected to Mr. Patil's clarification, wherein he denied any wrongdoing in the land deals.

'No clarification needed' The NCP's Mr. Patil said, "The minister had responded to the allegations by addressing a press conference. There was no need for the



On the back foot: Revenue Minister Chandrakant Patil in Assembly. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

quasi-judicial powers and cleared the transaction without recovering the premium," he said. Mr. Patil also showed papers relating to the *devsthan* land.

In the second case, he accused the minister of favouring a builder over land at Balewadi in Pune. The NCP leader alleged that land reserved for a playground was usurped by Shivpriya Realtors. "The minister favoured the builder," he said, seeking his resignation.

Privately-owned land In his clarification, the minister said the 17 hectares of land at Haveli taluka in Pune district was privately owned and not *devasthan* land coming under the Inam III category. Hence, the levy of premium was not necessary.

He admitted that the Pune divisional commissioner had asked for payment of premium for the transfer of land to Radhaswami Satsang in 2008. An appeal was made to the district collector that the plot did not belong to the Inam III category and no premium payment was necessary.

Similarly, in the Balewadi case, Shivpriya Realtors complained about the land measurement and hence the job was transferred to another deputy superintendent of land records, the minister said.

'Probe Pune land deals'

SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

The government was put on the defensive in the Council by the Opposition parties who have accused Revenue Minister Chandrakant Patil of being involved in a ₹350-crore land scam.

Leader of the Opposition Dhananjay Munde (NCP) alleged that two land transactions approved by the Cabinet Minister had led to the loss of ₹350 crore to the State exchequer.

This was followed by a heated exchange of words following which the House was adjourned by the chairman. "In the case of Shiv Priya Realtors in Balewadi, Pune, the ministers gave illegal stay orders to ensure the developer made a windfall of Rs 300 crore," Mr. Munde alleged during question hour.

The Opposition urged the Government to constitute a probe into the land deals, and punish the minister if found guilty. "We have documents and proof of corruption against several other ministers which could put this government in the dock," Mr. Munde said outside the House.

Council adjourned over delay in reservation for Dhangars

Proceedings disrupted, House adjourned thrice

SHARAD VYAS

MUMBAI

The Opposition and treasury benches were locked in a heated debate in the Council on Thursday over the promised reservation for the Dhangar (shepherd) community. The noisy exchanges forced the Council chairman Ramraje Nimbalkar to initially adjourn the House twice for 10 minutes each, and then for an hour.

However, as both the ruling and opposition members continued to argue and shout slogans against each other, the chairman adjourned the House for the day.

The point was raised by Congress legislators under Rule 97 on Thursday. However, there was pandemonium when ruling party members objected to the unparliamentary language used by Congress MLC Bhai Jagtap. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena members trooped into the well of the House shouting slogans against the Opposition.

Speaking during the debate, Mr. Jagtap said the Government has failed to fulfil a promise made after this government was formed.

That promise still remains on paper. "Why have you [government] fooled the community. They [Dhangars] are not a family property (they do not belong to your dad's estate). Immediate justice must be given to them and Government must fulfil its promise," Mr. Jagtap said.

Noisy scenes followed the statement forcing the chairman to adjourn the proceedings. Members



Ruling and Opposition party MLCS clash outside the House after the Council was adjourned on Thursday. ■ P. SRUSHTI

of the treasury benches objected to the statement by Mr. Jagtap and Ramhari Rupnavar who accused the government of being lethargic in pursuing the quota for Dhangars with the Centre.

Mr. Jagtap asked if the Government was waiting for people to commit suicide on this issue.

The Maratha community had to undertake 54 morthas and 42 people died before they were given a reservation, the Opposition asked. "I have been in the House for 15 years and my civility has never been questioned. I will not accept the removal of my words from the record or apologise. There is nothing objectionable in what I have said in the House," Mr. Jagtap said when asked to apologise to the Chairman for use of objectionable language.

BJP targets 50% increase in membership: Chouhan

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Thursday said that the party aims to increase its existing 1.07 crore membership in Maharashtra by at least 50%.

"While the party has touched a new high in Lok Sabha, we believe we are yet to reach the peak. That will be achieved only when we will have our governments in States where we haven't yet won. For Maharashtra, where we are in power at present, our target is to increase our tally. Our target here is to win 226 seats," said Mr. Chouhan, who leads the party's membership drive, at a press conference in Mumbai.

Mr. Chouhan said the party will be targeting States where elections are to be held later this year. "We, along with Shiv Sena, won more than 50% votes in the Lok Sabha polls. This membership drive will target areas where we lacked and could not win satisfactory votes. There are 95,472 booths in the State and the target is to enrol at least 50 new members at each booth," he said. He added that initially the party had aimed at 20% growth in the membership but the enthusiasm of workers shows that it will go up by 50%.

The BJP's membership drive will begin on July 6, the birth anniversary of Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee, will continue till August 11. The party will be doing both online and offline membership. "The person who will give us missed call to become the member will be verified physically by our workers. The membership drive will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and every CM or president will lead the campaign in the State," he said.

Mother's milk banks to come up at government hospitals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Guardian ministers would be asked to provide funds from District Planning Development Committees (DPDCs) to set up mother's milk banks in all government-affiliated medical colleges in Maharashtra, the Assembly was informed on Thursday.

Minister of State for Higher Education Ravindra Chavhan told the House space has been provided at the Nagpur Medical College and Hospital (NMCH) to set up such a bank, where healthy lactating mothers can donate milk.

Mr. Chavhan was responding to a question by Sudhakar Deshmukh (BJP) about the delay in setting up a mother's milk bank at the state-run NMCH.

Two men throw stones at leopard in Vadodara zoo, security tight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VADODARA

Two inept men threw stones at a leopard in a zoo here in Gujarat, prompting the civic authorities to step up security arrangements for the animals.

The incident took place at the civic-run Sayaji Baug zoo here on Wednesday when the leopard was sleeping in its enclosure.

"Two youths, who were drunk, threw stones at the leopard, but the animal was not injured," Vadodara Municipal Commissioner Ajay Bhadoo said on Thursday.

When some visitors brought the incident to the notice of the authorities, the security guard caught one of the drunk men and thrashed him, but the other one ran away.

While the guard was taking the man to the zoo office, he also managed to run away, zoo curator Pratyush Patankar said.

"We have decided to make special security arrangements, including appoint more security guards and install CCTV cameras, for the animals and birds lodged at the zoo," Mr. Bhadoo said.

The zoo, located in the 140-year-old Sayaji Garden here, is home to nearly 1,079 animals and birds of various species, with Asiatic lions being among the main attractions.



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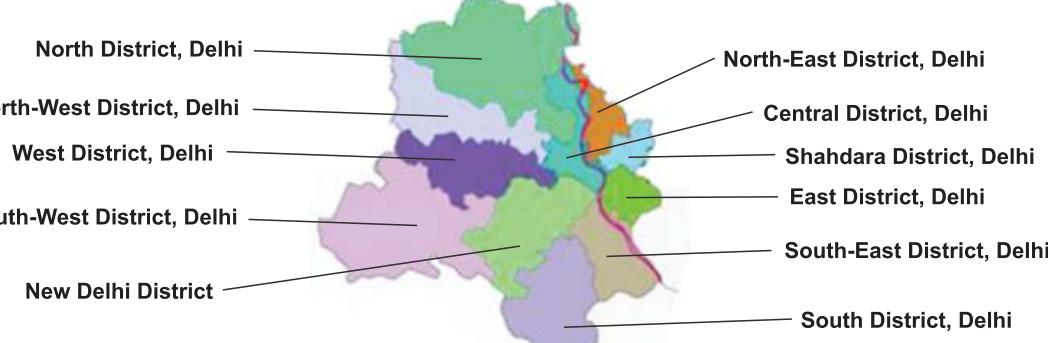
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IN BRIEF



Hearing in nun rape case posted to July 9

KOTTAYAM The judicial first class magistrate court in Pala on Thursday posted the hearing in the nun rape case against Bishop Franco Mulakkal (in picture) to July 9. Though the court was set to commit the case to the principal sessions court in Kottayam, the proceedings during the day had to be postponed after the accused's counsel sought copies of a few more documents.

Mumbai court stays arrest of Binoy till July 1

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM A Mumbai court on Thursday accorded Binoy Kodiyeri, son of CPI(M) State secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, immunity against arrest till July 1 in a case of rape and cheating registered against him on a complaint of a 33-year-old woman by the Oshwara police on June 13. The Dindoshi court will hear Binoy's anticipatory bail plea next week.

Work begins on Telangana's new ₹400 crore Secretariat

All Ministers to have dedicated conference halls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao laid the foundation stone for the new Secretariat complex on Thursday after performing *bhumi puja* amid Vedic chanting.

The State government is equipping the new complex with state-of-the-art connectivity and other features, including spacious conference halls, one for each Minister. The project is being taken up at an estimated cost of ₹400 crore.

The Chief Minister was reported to have told those in charge of the work that the new Secretariat complex should be a model for other States. Mr. Rao has considered several designs submitted by reputed architects for the complex, which is expected to have a built-up area of close to 6 lakh sq.ft.



In with the new: Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao launching work on the new complex in Hyderabad. ■ PTI

The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone for the new legislature complex modelled on Parliament House. The legislature, being planned at an estimated cost of ₹100 crore on a 17-

acre premises at Errum Manzil, is expected to have modular buildings for the Assembly and Council in addition to a central hall on the lines of the Parliament complex.

Actor-director Vijaya Nirmala no more

SERISH NANISSETTI HYDERABAD

Legendary actor-director Vijaya Nirmala passed away late on Wednesday at a city hospital due to heart attack. She was 73. She is survived by husband Ghatamaneni Krishna, son Naresh, and a number of foster children and grandchildren.

Some of the memorable roles essayed by the actor include *Tata Manavadu*, *Rangula Ratnam*, *Buddhamantu*, *Om Shanti*, *Pandanti Kapuram*, and *Hema Hemeelu*.

Telangana Chief Minister



Vijaya Nirmala

K. Chandrasekhar Rao condoled the demise of Ms. Vijaya Nirmala and conveyed his sympathies to the members of the bereaved family.

Born in Tamil Nadu in 1946, she began her career as a child actor aged just four with *Machcha Rekhai* in Tamil in 1950. At the age of 11, she made her debut in Telugu movies with *Panduranga Mahatyam*. Her first big break as an actor was in Malayalam with *Prem Nazir* in *Bhargavi Nilayam* in 1964. In 1969, she married her co-star Krishna who has been her constant companion.

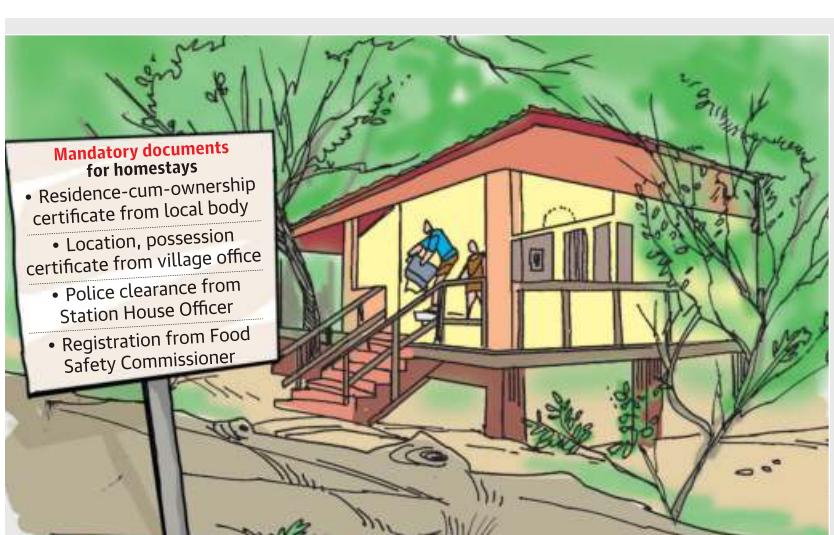
She stepped into the role of a director besides essaying the lead role in *Meena* (1973).

Ms. Vijaya Nirmala broke the mould when she acted and directed in *Devadasu* in

1974, though Akinenni Nagaswara Rao's *Devdasu* (1953) was considered a benchmark in Telugu cinema for the tragic love story written by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay.

Ms. Vijaya Nirmala's name was listed as one of the most prolific woman directors with 44 movies under her baton.

"Her body will be kept at our residence at Nanakramguda for public viewing from 11 a.m. Her final rites will be held on Friday (June 28)," tweeted Mr. Naresh on Thursday.



Kerala's homestay industry trapped in paperwork

Certificates mandated for accreditation cause hassles'

E.M. MANOJ KALPETTA

The guidelines set by the Kerala State Tourism Directorate have cast a cloud over the lives of thousands of homestay owners, including farmers who have set up farm tourism facilities on their properties.

The norms, issued in 2015, have made mandatory documents such as residence-cum-ownership certificate from the local body, location and possession certificate from village office, police clearance from the Station House Officer and registration from the Food Safety Commissioner to obtain government accreditation to run a homestay, says Sunil Krishnan, secretary, Accredited Homestay Owners Association (AHOA).

Ignorant owners
Though the guidelines were issued four years ago, many homestay owners come to know of the difficulties involved only when they approach the authorities for accreditation. Homestays can be run

though the guidelines were notified to standardise facilities, they forced the closure of many homestays because of the hassles involved.

Without government accreditation too, but stakeholders say that the status is crucial for their enterprises' credibility.

They demand that the norms be implemented after consultations with them.

90-point checklist
Homestay units fulfilling all the criteria prescribed by the Kerala Tourism on the 90-point checklist are given Diamond House status for Class A, Gold House status for Class B and Silver House status for Class C category.

Though the guidelines were notified to standardise facilities, they forced the closure of many homestays because of the hassles involved.

Mr. Krishnan said.

He cited a criterion whereby a certificate from the Pollution Control Board had to be obtained to get residential-cum-ownership certificates from local bodies. After the intervention of the organisation, that norm was exempted recently, Mr. Sunil said.

Hundreds, including farmers and retired hands, entered the industry expecting an extra income from their property.

"The Tourism Department will tell you it is a non-commercial operation, retaining the colour and character of your old home. However, after you convert your home to a commercial establishment with all the requirements such as high tariffs and certification fee and various registrations, you will realise that there is no support from the Tourism Directorate in promoting the homestay or in finding guests," Sasi A. Pillai, president of the organisation, said.

Mr. Krishnan said.

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Hundreds, including farmers and retired hands, entered the industry expecting an extra income from their property.

"The KSHEC executive body has seen a general consensus during the discussions that centred around the possible ramifications of opening the floodgates to pursue more than one course concurrently. While it feels that it would be unwise to prevent students from taking up online or distance education courses in view of the high Internet penetration, the panel has stressed the need for strict regulation of the provision.

"Enabling students to enrol for two or more courses could dilute the essence of the learning process. While it is illogical to discourage online courses in the age of Massive Open Online Courses, the current move could be aimed at legalising a market for private varsities," an official said.

Though the guidelines were notified to standardise facilities, they forced the closure of many homestays because of the hassles involved.

BJP leaders oppose move, arrested

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

The BJP made an attempt to stage a demonstration at the Secretariat to protest the TRS government's move to launch construction of a new Secretariat and Assembly buildings with a ground breaking ceremony but it was thwarted by the police on Thursday.

While city president N. Ramchander Rao and MLA Raja Singh were picked up before they could reach the protest site, former MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy and others were arrested at the Secretariat.

Mr. Rao said, "The government is squandering public money on a new Assembly building even as government hospitals are crying out for funds."



Mass defection: TDP and Congress leaders from Telangana joining the BJP in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

3 TDP, 2 Cong. leaders from Telangana formally join BJP

Muralidhar Rao says his party is main challenger to TRS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Three Telugu Desam Party and two Congress leaders from Telangana joined the Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday in the presence of party general secretary P. Muralidhar Rao who claimed it was his party that had emerged as the main challenger to the Telangana

Rashtra Samithi. Former Ministers in the undivided Andhra Pradesh – E. Peddi

Rao and Boda Janardhan Reddy and others were arrested at the Secretariat.

"The Congress is helping the TRS and people see the BJP as a stable party which avoids family and caste politics," said Mr. Rao.

The BJP has been aggressively wooing leaders from the TDP and other parties in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Trafficked girl rescued but family lives in fear

Minor was forced into prostitution to recover family's dues in Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MYSURU

The family of a 15-year-old girl, who had allegedly been taken hostage by a moneylender and forced into prostitution to recover dues from her parents in Mysuru, is now living in fear in a temporary shelter. The city police rescued the minor earlier this month.

The girl, who had to discontinue her studies in Class 8 in a school in the city owing to financial distress, had already been through a har-

rowing ordeal for more than five months when the moneylender forced her into prostitution.

In her statement to the police, the girl said that she was raped by three to four people.

The family remains fearful even a fortnight after the rescue, which led to the arrest of three persons – moneylender Padma, her customer Prasanna, and Mahesh, who is a head constable with the traffic police and an alleged associate of Padma. All the three had threatened the girl

and her parents with dire consequences.

"Goons gathered outside their house after the rescue," said E. Dhananjaya, a member of Mysuru District Child Welfare Committee.

The entire family – the girl, her parents and grandfather – has been provided temporary shelter at a government-recognised child care institute.

The girl's family was barely managing with her father's small catering unit. They fell on hard times when the

mother took ill about two years ago. They were forced to borrow ₹3 lakh from a moneylender Padma at a very high rate of interest.

"They had to pay a weekly interest of ₹20,000 till they repaid the debt. As they were unable to make the weekly payment, the debt rose to about ₹5 lakh," Mr. Dhananjaya said.

The girl's mother approached the NGO, which complained to the police, and facilitated the minor's rescue.

Unsafe shelter



Adivasi children sitting in a dingy anganwadi centre at Kolam Markaguda in Telangana's Adilabad district. The centre has not received oil, dal or milk for the last three months. ■ S. HARPALSINGH

Centre's move puts Kerala on verge of grave financial crisis

₹6,000 crore cut effected in annual borrowing limit

N.J. NAIR THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Centre has pushed the State government to the brink of a grave financial crisis by effecting a ₹6,000 crore cut in its annual borrowing limit for the current financial year.

Finance Department sources told *The Hindu* that the decision that is applicable only to Kerala would put the funds-starved government in dire straits and could have a serious bearing on its routine functions. The State is facing a resource crunch as revenue collection suffered a steep fall in and expenditure has been soaring.

The decision is being construed as a deft political move by the National Demo-

cratic Alliance, especially the Bharatiya Janata Party, to put the Left Democratic Front in the dock ahead of a string of Assembly byelections due soon and the local body elections scheduled in a year.

The State would be constrained to resort to extreme steps to tide over the crisis and that would draw flak from its political opponents. While the revenue collection remains static at around 10%, the expenditure has been estimated at 16%. Since 2013-14, the revenue collection has been plummeting from 20% against a steady growth in expenditure.

Prime reasons
A variety of reasons, includ-

ing the impact of the imple-

mentation of the Goods and Services Tax, are being cited as reasons for the current resource crunch.

The State had been looking forward to shoring up its revenue through an amnesty scheme for collecting value-added tax arrears and by bolstering the enforcement to plug GST revenue leak among others. But most of such initiatives had to be deferred once the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha election came into force, sources said. Public account borrowing through Treasury Savings Bank was the prime option the State had in its ambit to weather such crises earlier. Once the Centre choked this route in 2016-17, the State finances have been left gasping.

A.P. to extend 'Amma Vodi' to Inter students

STAFF REPORTER VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday announced that the 'Amma Vodi' scheme – under which mothers would get an assistance of ₹15,000 per annum for sending her children to schools – was being extended to Intermediate students.

Intermediate students in both government and private colleges and also residential schools and hostels will be eligible.

Mr. Reddy also sought a status report on the private universities that got land allotted in the capital region but did start operations. He sought details of every school and college with photographs of their infrastructure so as to make improvements.

IN BRIEF



SC to hear rebel AAP MLA's plea today

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court will hear on Friday the rebel AAP MLA, Devender Sehrawat's petition against the disqualification notice that the Delhi Assembly Secretariat had served on him under the anti-defection law for joining the BJP. In his petition, Mr. Sehrawat has said he is yet to get the BJP's primary membership and termed the notice arbitrary and illegal.

Muslim family conducts last rites of Hindu man

BHADOHI

In an example of communal harmony, a Muslim family in Uttar Pradesh's Harirampur village conducted the 'terhvi', a post-death ceremony, of a Hindu man. 'Terhvi' is held on the thirteenth day after death. Morari Lal Srivastava, 65, a worker at a farm owned by Irfan Mohd. Khan and Farid Khan, died while working on the farm on June 13, police said. Since he had no immediate family members, his body was handed over to the Khans who completed his last rites as per Hindu tradition. PTI

More time to give views on draft education policy

NEW DELHI

The deadline for submission of comments by the public on the draft National Education Policy (NEP) would be extended by a month from the existing last date of July 1, Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. A committee, chaired by former ISRO chief Dr. K. Kasturirangan, had submitted the draft policy to the HRD Ministry on May 31.

Missing man from M.P. traced to Pak. prison

REWNA

A 25-year-old man from Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh, who went missing four years ago, is reportedly lodged in a jail in Pakistan, the police said on Thursday. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs recently got in touch with the State police to verify the details of Anil Kumar. Kumar went missing on January 3, 2015. PTI

Mom, daughter tonsured for resisting molestation

HAJIPUR (BIHAR)

A group of people allegedly assaulted a woman and her daughter, and tonsured them before parading them in their village in Bihar's Vaishali district on Thursday for resisting their bid to molest the two, police said. Two persons, including the main accused, were arrested, they added. Some villagers led by a local ward member allegedly barged into the house of the two women and tried to outrage their modesty, SHO Sanjay Kumar said. PTI

Sherin's foster father gets life sentence

Mathews accused of killing his three-year-old daughter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DALLAS

Wesley Mathews, the Indian-American foster father accused of killing his 3-year-old daughter Sherin Mathews and dumping her body in a culvert in 2017, was sentenced to life by a Texas court judge on Wednesday, in a sensational case that attracted global attention.

Mathews, 39, pleaded guilty on Monday to a lesser charge of injury to a child in Sherin's death.

He was originally charged with capital murder by authorities in the U.S. State of Texas after they discovered Sherin's highly decomposed body after a massive search that lasted 15 days.

Mathews stared ahead and did not look at jurors as Judge Amber Givens-Davis sentenced him to life in prison.

The 12-member jury deliberated on Wednesday for about three hours before coming to a unanimous decision to give Mr. Mathews a sentence of life in the death of Sherin. He will be eligible for parole after 30 years' imprisonment, U.S. media reports said.

"Mathews is obviously saddened by the verdict," said his defence attorney Rafael De La Garza.

"Anybody would be, but he knows the jury, he respects the jury's decision and he's going to weigh out his options."

Prosecutors argued that Mathews, hailing from Kerala, killed Sherin in October 2017.

She was adopted by Mathews and his wife Sini Mathews from an orphanage in Bihar's Nalanda district in

Crime & punishment

Nalanda-born Sherin was adopted by Wesley Mathews and wife Sini in July 2016. A look at the key dates associated with her death and the subsequent murder trial in the U.S.



Oct. 7 2017: Sherin is reported missing by family in Richardson, Texas. Wesley says he had ordered the child to stand in the backyard as punishment for not drinking milk. Wesley arrested

Oct. 11: Police search their home. They find that Wesley's car was absent from the house for an hour after the toddler was allegedly sent outside

Oct. 24: Police confirm that the body was of Sherin

Nov. 29: A physician who treated Sherin tells court that she found several bone fractures on the girl

Jan. 12, 2018: Grand jury indicts the couple for the disappearance and death of the toddler

March 3, 2019: Sini released from prison as charges are dropped against her due to insufficient evidence

June 24: Wesley charged with capital murder but pleads guilty to a lesser charge of injury caused by omission

June 27: Wesley sentenced to life imprisonment



2016.

Mathews claimed that Sherin accidentally choked to death on milk.

He initially told police that Sherin went missing on October 7, 2017, after he put her outside their home at 3 a.m. in Richardson, Texas because she would not drink her milk.

When he checked in on her 15 minutes later, Mathews said Sherin was missing.

He later admitted she died when he "physically assisted" her in drinking the milk and got choked.

Sherin's badly decomposed body was found 15 days later in a culvert by a cadaver dog.

Reacting to the sentencing,

the Richardson police tweeted that, "We feel justice has been served with today's verdict of life in prison given to Wesley Mathews by a jury of his peers.

"We would like to thank the law enforcement agencies and civilian partners for the resources and time spent on this case. We will always remember Sherin Mathews," the police said.

Just another lie'

Prosecutor Sherre Thomas argued that Mathews' testimony was just another lie. She said testimony and medical records show that it was "medically impossible for a child who is 3 years old to stand up and choke to

death" as Mathews claimed. "It means he's still a liar. It means he killed that little girl. And when he killed her, he panicked," Ms. Thomas argued, WFAA TV reported.

She said Mathews also took the time to clean up himself and turned off the location tracker on his phone to try to hide what he had done.

Speaking directly to Mathews, prosecutor Jason Fine said, "You told investigators Sherin's death was a mistake but by your own words, you caused the death of your daughter and put her lifeless body in a trash bag and disposed of her.

I don't call that a mistake, I call it murder."

Fish eye



Seize the day: Women catching fish with traditional nets after the release of water from Tilpara barrage, on the outskirts of Suri in Birbhum district of West Bengal on Thursday. PTI

New Supreme Court roster allows top five judges to hear PIL matters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

With the Supreme Court all set to work in its full strength of 31 judges from July 1 after summer vacation, Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi has notified a new roster of work which said that the top five judges

will be hearing Public Interest Litigation (PIL) matters.

Earlier, fresh PIL matters were notified to be heard only by the CJI and the second seniormost judge after the CJI.

According to the fresh roster, the CJI will deal with the PIL matters and it would

be in his discretion to assign PIL cases to other top four judges - S.A. Bobde, N.V. Ramana, Arun Mishra and R.F. Nariman.

Other matters with CJI

The bench headed by the Chief Justice will also hear petitions on letters received,

matters related to social justice, elections, company law, monopoly and restricted trade practices, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, the Security Exchange Board of India, and the Reserve Bank of India.

The CJI has also kept with himself matters concerning

arbitration, *habeas corpus*, criminal cases, contempt of court and ordinary civil matters.

A bench led by Justice Bobde will hear matters like those related to direct and indirect taxes, mercantile law and commercial transactions. Justice Ramana has

been assigned, among others, matters related to compensation, arbitration appeals, criminal matters and ordinary civil matters. Other 10 benches have been assigned regular matters related to taxes, property, land and acquisition, service and compensation matters.



Relatives consoling the sister of the journalist killed in the refrigerator blast in Chennai on Thursday. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Journalist, kin die after refrigerator blast

Chennai police suspect short circuit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KOCHI

A pall of gloom descended over the residence of Wesley Mathews' parents here on Thursday after news broke out of a U.S. court sentencing him to life in connection with the death of his three-year-old foster daughter in 2017.

"We have nothing to say," a tearful elderly woman who opened the door of their two-storey house said when his family living here was approached for reaction to the sentence awarded by a jury at Dallas on Wednesday. When she came to know that media persons were at her doorstep, the sobbing woman said, "You know everything."

Orphanage suspected foul play

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PATNA

The caretaker of an orphanage in Bihar from where Sherin Mathews was adopted had suspected foul play a few days after her disappearance.

"I want to speak to the foster parents of Saraswati, who was later rechristened as Sherin, as I suspect that she may have become dispensable to the couple as they now have a child of their own," Babita Kumari, secretary of the now defunct Mother Teresa orphanage had said days after the girl went missing.

At 10.15 a.m., Durga, the domestic help, came to the house and knocked the door. As there was no response, she alerted the neighbours who broke open the door.

They found the rooms blackened and charred due to a fire and the inmates lying in different places.

Personnel from the Fire and Rescue Services and the police from Selaiyur station rushed to the spot. They en-

tered the house and found thick soot settled on the floor.

A fire officer said, "When we entered the house, we found Prasanna and his family members lying dead in three different places. There were signs that a fire had occurred a few hours ago due to an electric short circuit in the puja room. The refrigerator was found to be damaged and other plastic materials had been gutted in the fire. The outer layer of the concrete ceiling had shattered due to the impact of the blast."

St. Thomas Mount Deputy Commissioner of Police M.S. Muthusamy and Selaiyur Assistant Commissioner of Police R. Srinivasulu held an inquiry. Mr. Muthusamy said, "Experts inspected the spot and collected the samples from there. As per initial investigation, the fire was caused due to a short circuit in the switchboard above the refrigerator in the puja room. The stabiliser burst and the fire engulfed the refrigerator which led to the blast. As a consequence, plastic materials and PVC cupboards also caught fire.

The thick smoke that arose from this suffocated them."

The police ruled out any foul-play in the deaths. Further investigation is on.

Aditya Pancholi booked for rape on actor's complaint

She accuses him of physical abuse, exploitation



Aditya Pancholi

with Mr. Pancholi between 2005 and 2008, and that he abused and exploited her. The allegations range from keeping her under house arrest to physically abusing her to blackmail her.

The actor, in her complaint, has also alleged that Mr. Pancholi had sexual intercourse with her against her wishes by giving her intoxicants and that he took pictures of the act without her knowledge, which he later used to blackmail her.

"We have recorded a detailed statement from the victim. As the offence occurred several years ago, we will have to visit the locations named by the victim and get in touch with those she has named," an officer with the Versova police station said, and added that Mr. Pancholi had not yet been summoned.

The actor, in her complaint, has also alleged that Mr. Pancholi had sexual intercourse with her against her wishes by giving her intoxicants and that he took pictures of the act without her knowledge, which he later used to blackmail her.

Delhi Technological University invites applications for its Bachelor of Design Programme (B. Des.) for the academic session 2019-20. The deadline for submission of online application has been extended till 02.07.2019 (Tuesday) till 12:00 Midnight, due to implementation of EWS Quota. Please visit the University's website: www.dtu.ac.in for more details. Note: Candidates who have already applied and wish to change to EWS category will be able to unlock their applications and make changes accordingly.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EWS QUOTA

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Earth System Science Organisation (ESSO) Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Govt. of India Hyderabad

Earth System Science Organisation (ESSO) inviting applications for filling up of one post of Project Scientist 'B' on CONTRACT MODE at Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad under Earth System Science Organisation, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India as per the following details :

Post Code	Name of the Post	No. of Posts & Reserved for	Consolidated Monthly Emoluments	Age Limit (as on the date of closure of application)
01	Project Scientist 'B'	One & OBC	Rs. 59,640/-	35 yrs.

Further details about the position, eligibility, academic qualifications, responsibilities, experience, application procedure and other general conditions are available at INCOIS website www.incois.gov.in under 'Vacancies'.

Closing Date : The last date for receipt of online application is 30 days from the date of publication of this vacancy circular in Employment News.

Advt. No. ESSO/INCOIS/RMT/01/2019

Director, INCOIS

Lalu's elder son to start 'Tej Sena'

Tej Pratap Yadav announced setting up online platform Tej Sena • PTI

ing defeat in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls, failing to win even a single seat. Prasad's younger son and heir apparent, Tejaswi Yadav, had spearheaded the

poll campaign and led the party in the election.

Lalu-Rabri Morcha

Mr. Tej Pratap, who had complained of being sidelined in the party, had floated a political outfit named 'Lalu-Rabri Morcha' and even fielded candidates of his choice in the Sheohar and Jehanabad constituencies during the general election. The older Yadav scion had also earlier started the *Dharmnirpeksha* (secular) *Sewak Sangh* (DSS) to counter the RSS's influence in the State.

Pay more for flight changes in last 72 hours

Indigo follows SpiceJet, hikes charges



At the high table

India must think big as it takes a step towards a non-permanent seat on the UNSC

By winning the unanimous endorsement of the 55-nation Asia-Pacific Group at the United Nations Security Council, India has cleared an important hurdle in its quest for a non-permanent seat for 2021-22. The decision of the grouping this week was taken as India was the sole candidate for the post. In the next step, all 193 members of the UN General Assembly will vote for five non-permanent seats in June 2020, when India will need to show the support of at least 129 countries to go through to the UNSC. It will then occupy the seat at the UNSC for a two-year period, as it has previously on seven occasions since 1950-51. There are several reasons why India decided to pursue its candidature for 2021-22. The government at the time had felt it was necessary to have India's voice at the high table as many times as possible, and therefore began the process for another seat shortly after it had ended its previous tenure in 2011-2012. By rotation, that seat would have reached India only in the 2030s, and India had to reach out to Afghanistan, which had put in its bid already for the 2021-22 slot, to request it to withdraw. Afghanistan did so because of the special relationship between the two countries. India has a unique role to play at the UNSC, given the near-complete polarisation among the permanent members (P-5 nations), with the U.S., the U.K. and France on one side, and Russia and China on the other. India's ability to work with both sides is well known. The year 2022 also has a sentimental value attached to it, as it marks the 75th year of India's Independence, and a place at the UNSC would no doubt add to the planned celebrations that year. Since 2013, when it first announced the bid, the government has run a quiet but consistent campaign towards this goal.

It is significant that despite the poor state of bilateral relations with Pakistan, and the many challenges India has faced from China at the UN, both the countries graciously agreed to the nomination. From this point on, it is necessary for the government to think beyond the campaign for the UNSC, and work out a comprehensive strategy for what it plans to do with the seat. In the past, India has earned a reputation for 'fence-sitting' by abstaining on votes when it was required to take a considered stand on principle, and the seat will be a chance to undo that image. Given the twin challenges of a rising China, and the U.S. receding from its UN responsibilities, India must consider how it will strengthen the multilateral world order amid frequent unilateral moves by both the world powers. An even bigger challenge will be to nudge all five permanent members on the one issue they have unitedly resisted: towards the reform and expansion of the UNSC, which would include India's claim to a permanent seat at the high table.

Prudent prescription

An RBI panel's suggestions on the MSME sector cut to the heart of crucial issues

The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector in India is not only a key engine of growth, contributing more than 28% of the GDP and about 45% to manufacturing output. It is also a true reflection of economics where people really matter. Providing employment to about 111 million people, the sector's health is crucial to the economy's vitality and society's well-being. An expert committee constituted by the Reserve Bank of India has in this context submitted a substantially germane study on the issues bedeviling MSMEs and made a fairly exhaustive set of recommendations to redress them. The panel is emphatic that the policy environment needs to be urgently refocused. To that end, it is imperative that the thrust of the enabling legislation – a 13-year-old law, the MSME Development Act, 2006 – be changed to prioritise market facilitation and ease of doing business. Observing that many Indian start-ups that are at the forefront of innovation are drawn to look overseas, given the conducive business environment and the availability of infrastructure and exit policies, the experts suggest that a new law ought to address the sector's biggest bottlenecks, including access to credit and risk capital. A substantial part of the study is justifiably devoted to reimagining solutions to improve credit flow to MSMEs. For instance, the experts recommend repurposing the Small Industries Development Bank of India. In its expanded role, it is envisaged that the SIDBI could not only deepen credit markets for MSMEs in under-served regions by being a provider of comfort to lenders including NBFCs and micro-finance institutions, but also become a market-maker for SME debt.

With technology, especially digital platforms, having become so ubiquitous, the panel has made a case for greater adoption of technology-facilitated solutions to a plethora of problems encountered by the sector. To address the bugbear of delayed payments, the mandatory uploading of invoices above a specified amount to an information utility is a novel approach. The aim is to name and shame buyers of goods and services from MSMEs to expedite settlements to suppliers. While it does sound simplistic, and banks a lot on the power of moral suasion, it is a task worth trying. Another suggestion entails expediting the integration of information on the Government e-Marketplace, or GeM, platform with the Trade Receivables Discounting System. The goal here too is to boost liquidity at MSMEs. A noteworthy recommendation urges banks to switch to cash flow-based lending, especially once account aggregators are operational and able to provide granular data on borrowings. The RBI and the Centre clearly have their work cut out in acting on this prudent prescription to help actualise the sector's true economic potential.

A democratic requirement

India's brooding parliamentary Opposition needs to study its historical legacy to chart the road ahead



VALERIAN RODRIGUES

Today the parliamentary Opposition in India is not merely fragmented but also in disarray. There seems to be hardly any Opposition party with a vision or strategy for its institutional working or for the Opposition as a whole. Such a state of affairs is probably worse than the defeat most of the Opposition parties have suffered in the elections to the 17th Lok Sabha. Given this impasse, some of them may seek an alternative in strengthening their State-level bases either to ward off poaching by the ruling dispensation or to work to better their prospects in the elections in the offing. There would also be much showcasing of Opposition unity particularly during a Lok Sabha session. While such exercises could be defended as modes of survival in hard times, or even as inevitable tactics, should the Opposition limit itself merely to them? Should not the Opposition reinvent a distinct and broader role for itself? Is the despondency the parliamentary Opposition is caught in conducive to the pivotal role it is called upon to play in a post-colonial democracy such as India?

An early assertion

At the time of India's first elections, there was little doubt regarding the potential ruling party of the country. The matter of concern, however, was the state of the parliamentary Opposition. There was little doubt in anyone's mind, unlike probably today, that without a viable and effective Opposition, parliamentary democracy would largely be a sham. Without it there would not be an effective oversight on representative con-

cerns, in eliciting responsiveness from wielders of power and enforcing accountability. While there could be other organs of the state for specific purposes, it was the parliamentary Opposition, it was believed, that held the popular trust to its safe-keeping. In other words, India's claim to be a working democracy rested not in posting an electoral majority, but in engendering a parliamentary Opposition that would be the conscience of the nation.

Jawaharlal Nehru was acutely conscious of the absence of an effective Opposition in the House, and once wrote provocatively, under the pseudonym Chanakya, saying, "a little twist and Jawaharlal might turn into a dictator sweeping aside the paraphernalia of a slow-moving democracy". He repeatedly cajoled Jayaprakash Narayan, who had opted for public service outside the electoral arena, to enter Parliament and lead the Opposition. It is a different matter, though, that when such an Opposition came to crystallise, it was not much to his liking! This Opposition was made of disgruntled leaders moving out of the ruling party and the existing parliamentary Opposition largely made of socialists and communists. The Bharatiya Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party were to soon foist their distinctive markers on the Opposition. The development produced dozens of truly outstanding parliamentarians – Hriday Nath Kunzru, J.B. Kripalani, A.K. Gopalan, H.V. Kamath, Ram Manohar Lohia and M.R. Masani, just to name a few. India's parliamentary Opposition was an invention of its own and a development of momentous significance with certain distinct characteristics.

Bound to social movements

From the early 1960s powerful movements broke out all over India on issues such as land reforms, rights of the industrial working



PTI

class, unemployment, foodgrains and their distribution, ethnic demands and language rights. While the strength of the parliamentary Opposition continued to be puny and divided till 1967, it was enormously bolstered by linking itself to these social movements, and vice-versa. Such a bonding, however, went alongside a reflective commitment to constitutional and parliamentary democracy. It encompassed the broadest spectrum of the Opposition, including the communists, a section of whom had initially entertained doubt regarding the prospects of social revolution under the aegis of constitutional democracy. While the government proceeded against some of the leaders for their role in the social movements, there was obviously a limit to which it could go.

In the early 1970s, the parliamentary Opposition became the site that reflected a comprehensive critique of the direction charted by India's democracy. The parliamentary communists, with all their internal ideological and political squabbles, continued to employ the frame of class struggle – imperialism, big capital and landlordism on the one hand, and working class, peasantry and middle classes on the other. But it was the socialists who made the terrain of democracy in place as their anchor, developed a critique of the path of industrialisation, cen-

tralisation and concentration of power, deployment of institutions of constitutional democracy as instrumentalities of the ruling regime as well as the resultant outcomes of agrarian crisis, devastation of traditional crafts and small-scale industry, assault on citizenship rights, intolerance of dissent, aversion to federalism and decentralisation of power, rise in bureaucratic stranglehold and security apparatuses, muzzling of the media and disregard to languages and local cultures.

It was this Opposition that issued the call for civil disobedience as foundational to democracy when the parliamentary Opposition came to be subdued. Jayaprakash Narayan became the rallying symbol for this Opposition, bringing down the authoritarian regime of the Emergency (1975-77), and enabling it to ride to power with huge popular support in the elections.

It is a different matter that the internal squabbles within the ruling Janata Party, its inability to order its priorities, and its susceptibility to the insinuations of the Opposition in place gave this experiment a short shrift. The Congress party in Opposition (1977-1979) too experimented with an oppositional stance which was largely to discredit the party in power, and seek a restoration of the post-colonial regime. The strategy of merely discrediting the ruling regime as an oppositional stance does not hold much prospect today, given the unity of the ruling regime and its hold over media and communication networks. Besides, it does not reflect the creativity and ingenuity that the Opposition has imparted to parliamentary democracy in India.

Conceptions of nationalism
From the 1980s parliamentary Opposition came to make a place for itself by advancing one or the other conception of nationalism.

There are clearly three significant conceptions in contention. The first is a majoritarian conception which argues against any special consideration to minorities and disparages pluralism. The second is a secular conception that upholds equal citizenship while extending special considerations to distinct concerns and ways of life. The third argues that Indian nationalism and the post-colonial polity have largely been in the service of a privileged strata and measures should be taken to tilt this balance in favour of the disadvantaged as well as reflect India's deep diversity. It is important to bear in mind that while each one of these conceptions has tried to outwit the others, they have selectively reached out to some elements of the rest with the aim of securing electoral majorities.

A majoritarian conception of the polity, avowing a strong state that has an overriding say with regard to rights and freedoms, but with a pronounced tilt to the market, has been triumphant today. But it can hardly be said that other perspectives in contention have lost their salience and the legacy of the parliamentary Opposition in India has lost its mettle.

In this context, the parliamentary Opposition in India has much to learn from its own legacy. It can draw from it lessons to position itself as the representative voice of democratic and egalitarian urges that is at the same time critical of the idea of the nation that has left behind a significant section of its population from any meaningful sense of belonging to it. But it also may be the opportune context to think of new ways by which dissent and opposition can be sustained in a new media-induced public culture that invariably breeds docility and compliance.

Valerian Rodrigues had taught political Science at Mangalore University and Jawaharlal Nehru University

A policy to regulate coaching centres

Coaching institutions undermine mainstream education and impose a huge cost on students



YUGANK GOYAL

In May, a deadly fire at a coaching centre in Surat snuffed out 22 young lives. The rate of suicides in Kota, where many students converge to prepare for entrance exams, remains high. And yet, the coaching industry is rapidly growing. Data from the National Sample Survey Office's 71st round reveal that more than a quarter of Indian students (a stupendous 7.1 crore) take private coaching. Around 12% of a family's expenses go towards private coaching, across rich and poor families alike.

What purpose do coaching institutions serve in society? Do they enhance human capital? If they do, they serve the same purpose as schools and colleges. But if they don't, then they are imposing a huge emotional cost to society. They crush creativity. In most cases, they only help a student to swiftly secure marks in some entrance exam, which is widely understood to be a sign of merit. This is a questionable connection. To signal merit, exams are only one

criterion, and not necessarily the best one. So, coaching institutions exist to help people achieve only one idea of merit. This is a small benefit. They do not enhance human capital. Confining students in classrooms and making them study subjects they often hate destroys their natural talent. Hence, the social cost of these institutions outweighs their benefit by far. The industry needs a re-look.

Unregulated spaces

First, why must anything be regulated? Economic theories suggest that when markets fail, governments need to be brought in. Market failure may occur because of the presence of externalities or asymmetry in information. Governments are also important because they act to coordinate moral norms. On all these counts, coaching institutions emerge as the proverbial villains. Hidden behind legislations meant for tiny shops (Shops and Establishment Act) as 'other' business, they run an empire of evening incarcerations that arrest creative freedom. The big ones draw an entire generation of young minds and systematically erode their imagination. They ignite psychological disorders in students, undermine mainstream education, impose huge opportunity costs to students, charge an



SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

exorbitant fee which is often untaxed, and yet remain unaccountable (several court cases on breach of promise of refund are underway). This paints a picture of coaching centres as market bullies. The social costs are exacerbated by the absolute disregard for the well-being of students, who are shoved into tiny rooms with little ventilation, let alone a fire exit. Society bears the burden – only for the sake of finding out who is marginally better than the other in cramming for some exam.

The building in Surat had an illegally constructed terrace. It had a wooden staircase that got burnt, thus disabling any possibility of escape. It had no fire safety equipment, nor any compliance or inspection certificate. The response of the State government was to shut down all coaching institutions in Gujarat until fire inspections were completed. This was a typical knee-jerk reaction.

The building which caught fire was located in a premise that was supposed to be a residential space, according to the approved plan of 2001. In 2007, a two-floor commercial complex was illegally built. It was legalised in 2013 under Gujarat's regularisation laws. The other floors where the fire broke out were constructed illegally later. With such patterns of violating the laws, these inspections will only serve a tick-mark purpose. But here is the point. Although government measures are more emotional than rational, they have achieved the purpose of drawing our attention to coaching centres. In the last six months, three fire incidents have involved coaching institutions in Gujarat.

Valueless idea
Why do people start coaching institutions? Barring a few exceptions, coaching institutions sell a valueless but costly idea. Only those enterprises which have no value themselves play with the law. To blame the systemic flaws in the implementation of safety laws and to blame corruption in the government is to normalise the lack of integrity in the entrepreneur who decided to violate the law. To harp on lapses by the government is to turn a blind eye towards what kind of ethics we are drawing out

of our enterprises, particularly those which purport to provide 'education'. Coaching institutions, of course, are not necessarily ethical entities. Most of them do not add to the value of education.

While the reason for the growth of coaching institutions is the entrance exam culture of India, what is urgently required is a policy on regulating them. Some States have already passed laws to regulate the coaching industry – centres have to register with the government and meet certain basic criteria – for instance, they cannot employ teachers of government-recognised schools. Existing State laws, however, do not evince a consistent rationale that could aid in framing national regulations. There is also the Private Coaching Centres Regulatory Board Bill, 2016 in discussion. A PIL was recently filed in the Supreme Court on regulating coaching institutions. But we must recognise that a bad law is worse than no law. While the discourse being triggered is a welcome step, it is now important to ensure regulations that emerge are agile, forward-looking and empowering.

Yugank Goyal is an Associate Professor at OP Jindal Global University. He also sits on the Governing Council of the Indian School of Public Policy

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.

Lawless land

The Prime Minister finally broke his silence on the incident, but his responsibility seems to end with offering lip service ("Modi says he is pained by Jharkhand lynching", June 27). Was it right on his part to defend Jharkhand? The Supreme Court urged Parliament to enact a law to curb mob lynching, but the Central and State governments continue to do nothing about this. Simply saying that the law will take its own course is meaningless when there are no sincere efforts taken to enforce the rule of law. D. SETHURAMAN, Chennai

In search of a home

The photograph of the

migrant and his daughter in Mexico was deeply distressing ("Drowned dream", June 27). It reminded me of the photograph of the Syrian toddler, Aylan Kurdi, who had drowned in the Mediterranean Sea while attempting to escape to Europe in 2015. Photos like these highlight the perils faced by migrants fleeing their countries due to war and poverty. It's shocking and sad that so many people are losing their lives in search of a home. How many more photos do we need to shake our conscience before we find a lasting solution? Nothing, not even borders, is more valuable than lives. TALA B. RAGUNATH, Thanjavur

State of health
While it is heartening that Kerala ranks first among States in the NITI Aayog's Health Index, the State cannot afford to be too happy as it continues to have the highest incidence of diabetes and cancer in the country ("Kerala tops list for best performing State in health", June 27). Even the dreaded Nipah virus first came to Kerala. Changes in lifestyle, new food habits and other reasons are responsible for this. Prevention is more important than cure. S. JAGATHSIMHAN NAIR, Thiruvananthapuram

are too many loopholes in the healthcare system. While these cannot be corrected quickly, the State can use its large population to its advantage. It can deploy this manpower in hospitals and ensure that there are a higher number of well-trained doctors and researchers, and better infrastructure. KHUSHAL TRIVEDI, Kanpur

Mamata in a bubble
Now, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wants to join hands with the CPI(M) and the Congress just to oust Prime Minister Narendra Modi ("Left, Congress and Trinamool should unite, says Mamata", June 27). Does she think that Mr.

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

>>Instagram post, not a tweet: The Titanic hero, Leonardo DiCaprio, actually took to Instagram to alert his followers on Chennai's drought. A front-page headline (June 27, 2019) and text had erroneously called it a tweet.
>>Wrong photograph: One of the photographs carried along with the report, "Balakot air strike planner named by government as RAW chief" (June 27, 2019), was not that of Arvind Kumar as the caption said.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

Will the idea of 'one nation, one poll' work in India?

PARLEY

The proposal will undermine the federal structure by pushing the regional parties out

Last week, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi convened an all-party meeting to discuss the idea of 'one nation, one poll', several parties stayed away, calling the idea "anti-democratic" and "anti-federal". In a discussion moderated by Anuradha Raman, Tiruchi Siva and Jagdeep S. Chokkar speak of the implications of the proposed move. Edited excerpts.

When Prime Minister Modi floated the idea of 'one nation, one poll' yet again and invited the Opposition for a discussion last week, many prominent parties, including the DMK, stayed away from the meeting. What are your concerns?

Tiruchi Siva: One of the reasons the ruling party puts forth [to hold simultaneous elections] is the huge expenditure involved in the election process. In a democratic country, it is the right of the people to exercise their franchise. It is the discretion of the people to elect or unseat a government. Citing expenses incurred in elections is not such a big issue in a country as vast as ours.

Our main contention is that as long as we have Article 356 in the Constitution, which allows any State government to be removed by the Central government, how can you be sure that the Centre will not unseat a State government for its own personal reasons by using Article 356 if simultaneous elections are held? What will happen to the remaining tenure of that elected Assembly? As long as Article 356 is in the Constitution, no State government is assured its full term of five years. Will somebody give us an assurance that Article 356 will be removed from the Constitution?

Some argue that simultaneous elections will be long-drawn, drain manpower, that the role of money is questionable, and that the Model Code of Conduct will stall government activities. How valid are these reasons?

Jagdeep S. Chokkar: Well, are we trying to get the cheapest possible democracy or are we trying to get the most effective and representa-

tive democracy? I think it is wrong to put a monetary value on democracy and elections.

The point on the issue of expenses is, who spends this money? The money that the Government of India and the Election Commission spend, which is public money, is minuscule compared to the money that political parties and candidates spend. If political parties and candidates want to reduce expenditure, they can do that. Nobody is asking them to spend that money. They spend this money because no political party is internally democratic.

The Model Code of Conduct only says that if the government wants to introduce a programme or a policy which may have a bearing on the result of the elections, it has to seek clearance from the Election Commission. There are a number of cases where the Election Commission has given such permission. The Model Code does not say that all existing schemes should be stopped. So, to say that development stops because of the Model Code is strange. The reason is that parties which are in power think of development programmes in the last six months or three months before the elections.

Then there's the point about the government machinery getting caught in the election process. Every State has two elections every five years – one for the Assembly and one for Parliament. Today, elections to a small and remote State Assembly are considered to be a referendum on the national government, so much so that the national government and the political establishment gets into that election. A State election should be fought by the people of the State. Why should Ministers of the Central government and the Prime Minister go to every State to campaign? As a matter of fact, a case can be made that the Minister who takes an oath to fulfil his ministerial duties to the best of his ability for five years and then goes on electoral campaigns violates the oath of office which requires him to do his work as a Minister. If there are people required to campaign everywhere in the country, let them not be made Ministers. If elections are held in one or two States, why should the administra-



tion in the remaining States stop functioning?

The Law Commission, a Parliamentary Standing Committee, and the Election Commission have supported this idea in principle.

TS: Adding to what Mr. Chokkar said, till 1967, simultaneous elections were in vogue. The situation changed after that. All the reasons Mr. Chokkar gave are valid. You see, in a democratic country, an election is the core thread through which people can express their views about the government. At other times, the government has the upper hand. Saying that a few crores being spent on elections is a waste is not a valid argument.

Then I come to the Lok Sabha. In 1977, the Lok Sabha's term lasted only for three years. In 1989 it lasted only for two years. In 1996, the 11th Lok Sabha lasted for 18 months, and the 12th Lok Sabha lasted 13 months. Even the Lok Sabha cannot be assured of a full term. And if the Lok Sabha is dissolved and the State governments are stable, what is the solution to that?

Does the proposal display a contempt for the parliamentary system and the federal arrangement?

TS: Yes, there is an apprehension that it is so. What is the urgency when there are so many issues to debate? There are serious concerns about the federal structure and its

C Are we trying to get the cheapest possible democracy or are we trying to get the most effective and representative democracy?

future against the backdrop of this proposal.

JSC: Part VI of the Constitution concerns the States. The States have an independent constitutional entity and existence. They have their own rhythm of elections. To forcibly change a constitutional entity's natural progression is unconstitutional. And as has been said by Siva, it is a violation of the federal structure. So, one, there is independent constitutional existence, and two, there is the famous *Kesavananda Bharati* judgment in which a 13-judge Bench said, yes, Parliament does have the power to amend the Constitution, but that power does not extend to the point where the basic structure can be changed. The basic structure has been defined variously by several Supreme Court judgments. And in all those descriptions the federal character of the Constitution is a permanent component and prevents Parliament from amending the basic structure of the Constitution. Therefore, I maintain that even if all parties agree that simultaneous elections should be held, it is unconstitutional and it will not stand the test of judicial scrutiny. It is against the spirit of democracy and it should not be done.

If the party in power wants to

have absolute control over all the States, it should move a formal proposal to have a presidential form of government. I have no problem with that, but that should be discussed in that form and not through this devious and circuitous way.

How unfair is this proposal to smaller parties and particularly regional parties?

TS: Importance to States was accorded only after the emergence of regional parties. Till then, the national party dominated. After the emergence of regional parties, importance was given to local issues, and regional importance, of course, gained momentum. That cannot be sought to be undermined or underestimated in the future. If a simultaneous election comes through, the national party may take that as a sign for a simultaneous verdict. There are chances that the prevailing situation will help a party to remain in power at the Centre and in the States. This proposal will undermine the federal structure by pushing the regional parties out.

JSC: Absolutely. I feel that this is perhaps one of the unstated intentions. To get rid of all the minor parties, so to say, is to get rid of the Opposition. Regional parties will lose out because it will be argued that we are also voting for Parliament and for national issues. So, should the voter be voting on national issues in the State elections or on regional issues?

I had written a piece with Sanjay Kumar for your newspaper [in 2016] where I had said that [from the 1989 general election onwards], out of 31 instances where elections for State Assemblies and Parliament were held simultaneously, in 24 cases the same party was voted for the State Assembly and Parliament. So, the chances of voters voting together for the same party for the State and the Centre are high.

Even when the Congress was in power, and during Indira Gandhi's time, there was a proposal for a presidential form of government, though the slogan of 'one nation, one election' was not used. So, it is a fact that any party which finds itself in a rather strong position feels like perpetuating its rule. But that does not mean that it is democratic.

The third issue is that in the last

three years, there have been a number of discussions on simultaneous elections. And this government, even before Parliament meets, calls a meeting of the political parties on this issue. This makes me wonder whether it is a diversionary tactic of the government so that people don't think about other issues.

What do you have to say about electoral bonds brought in by the NDA government to ensure transparency?

JSC: It is ironic that there is a limit on the expenditure that a candidate can incur during elections but there is no limit on the expenditure that a party can incur. What is the source of income of political parties? Nearly 70-80% of the income of parties on an average is from unknown sources. And now, on top of that, we have this new scheme called electoral bonds. This is a blatant way of converting black money into white. Data show that in 2017-18, 95% of the bonds were received by the party in power. Now, this is a way of choking the funding to all Opposition parties, big or small. And if funding to all Opposition parties is choked, obviously other parties will be unable to function. That's why we are in the Supreme Court and the matter is under the consideration of the Court. Our contention is that it is against all the apex court's judgments on transparency. I mean, the whole exercise of making electoral bonds a Money Bill, which it is not, is questionable. There are many things wrong with electoral bonds and they will make the election expense issue even more opaque.

I repeat, election expenses are not an issue. If political parties are going to be truly democratic in their internal functioning, they have to stop choosing candidates on their winnability quotient, the exact definition of which is not known to anybody, but we do know that money and muscle power form two very important parts. Till that is corrected, the election expenditure issue is not going to be sorted out.

TS: I would like to know how much money can be saved by holding simultaneous elections. We will oppose the move and continue to do so. The government cannot paralyse the best practices which have been followed so far.



Tiruchi Siva
is a DMK member
in the Rajya Sabha
from Tamil Nadu



**Jagdeep S.
Chokkar**
is one of the
founding members
of the Association
for Democratic
Reforms



Scan the QR code to
listen to the full
interview online

SINGLE FILE

BIMSTEC, a viable option

Unlike SAARC, it provides an opportunity for economic, cultural and social cooperation in the region

RADHIKA CHHABRA



S. Jaishankar's first foreign visit as External Affairs Minister to Bhutan might be indicative of the government's attempt to rekindle India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy that started with Prime Minister Narendra Modi inviting SAARC leaders to his swearing-in ceremony in 2014.

The shift of focus from other regional initiatives such as SAARC to BIMSTEC in the past five years can be attributed to the inability of SAARC to foster regional cooperation and make progress. Regional cooperation under SAARC saw no progress, as indicated by the fact that the group has not met since 2014. Further, the summit stood cancelled in 2016 because it was boycotted by India, along with three other member states, owing to terror attacks in India allegedly sponsored by Pakistan-linked operatives. This prompted the Indian government to shift its focus to BIMSTEC to enhance regional cooperation, as manifested by the BIMSTEC state heads being invited to the oath-taking ceremony of the incoming Modi government.

The Indian government, however, needs to be cautious in its approach toward BIMSTEC, otherwise it may meet a fate akin to previous attempts at cooperation in the region. Indeed, the trajectory of regional cooperation is driven by the nature and success of previous attempts at regional cooperation because there tends to be an acquiescence to the way states interact in a region. This is not to say that states will interact only in that manner. As seen in Europe, the relationship dynamic has changed time and again over the decades.

Regional initiatives in Asia, like SAARC, have been defined along the tangents of strategy and security more than they have been along economic, cultural and social lines. This can be attributed to contemporary geopolitical concerns and the mistrust that exists among the countries that are party to these organisations. Nevertheless, it is likely that looking towards BIMSTEC for regional economic, cultural and social cooperation may prove fruitful. This is because it does not include Pakistan, which has been an impediment to SAARC's success and has kept the group's relational dynamic focused on security and strategy. Further, China's absence in BIMSTEC could mean that there may be fewer obstacles hindering the achievement of the organisation's mandate. This is because bilateral and contentious issues will be excluded from the group's deliberations, especially given that India and China have conflicting world views and sometimes clash on regional goals. As the renegotiation of SAARC remains unattainable, BIMSTEC might be a viable option for India to maintain its foreign policy discourse. However, New Delhi will have to take into account the fact that in Asia, economics and politics have historically been deeply integrated, and not fall into the acquiescence trap.

The writer is a researcher with Observer Research Foundation



NOTEBOOK

Drought teaches people the value of water

Tamil Nadu has become receptive to the idea of water conservation only now

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

Twelve years ago, I asked the then Agriculture Secretary of Tamil Nadu whether his department was undertaking any programme to promote the concept of water conservation without compromising on yield. I had just returned from the U.S. where I had seen people conserve water in different ways. I told the officer that in Minnesota, the place of origin of the Mississippi river, farmers were taking to sprinkler irrigation in a big way.

The officer clearly did not like my question, nor did he like the U.S. example. He curtly replied that his department was doing everything it could. The implication was that he did not need a lecture on water conservation.

The officer's attitude was not an isolated case. Around the same time, I went to Mayiladuthurai in Nagapattinam district in

Tamil Nadu and asked a relative whether he would be receptive to the idea of water conservation, even while maintaining the same level of yield.

The relative, a post-graduate and a resourceful farmer, shrugged off the question. "We are used to utilising water in a particular way, whether there is enough water in the Cauvery or not. This is how society has been treating water for thousands of years," he replied.

Would people be willing to change their ways even after experiencing droughts and trying times, I wondered.

Thankfully, changes do happen. Over the last couple of weeks, I have been in touch with farmers from different regions in Tamil Nadu. The State is now facing a severe water crisis. I broached the subject of water conservation with them, just like I did with the State Agriculture Secretary and my relative more

than a decade ago.

I was in for a pleasant surprise with the relative. The tables had turned. This time he gave me a lecture on how to save water while raising paddy. He is an avid practitioner of the System of Rice Intensification (SRI), a method of cultivation involving less water and seeds. The spell of drought that the Cauvery delta had faced seven years ago had convinced him of the idea of using water efficiently. He realised that he could no longer rely on the "traditional" practice of using more water than what was required.

R. Muthukumar, a young farmer of Tiruvannamalai district, which is not known to be a water surplus area, said he could not spot anyone who was interested in concepts such as SRI six or seven years ago, despite the groundwater in their lands going down steeply. But this has changed, he said. Now the

people in his village are interested in knowing about the various ways in which water can be conserved. Drought teaches people the value of water.

Micro-irrigation is gaining currency in several parts of Tamil Nadu due to a host of factors including the support from the State government. Sugarcane, banana, coconut, and vegetables like brinjal and tomato are being raised through this method. Drip irrigation for sugarcane is becoming popular in many parts of the State.

This is not to say that the problem has been solved. There continues to be enormous scope for efficient utilisation of water. But in a moment of crisis such as this, the silver lining is that no one now, whether a farmer or an officer, scoffs at the idea of water conservation.

People are waking up to reality now, and hopefully it's not too late.

FROM The Hindu ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 28, 1969

Forward trading in scripts

The Union Government has banned with immediate effect forward trading in shares at all stock exchanges. A notification has been issued to this effect today [June 27, New Delhi] in the Gazette of India Extraordinary. The existing contracts entered into upto the date of the notification and remaining to be performed are permitted to be liquidated in accordance with the rules, bye-laws and regulations of the stock exchanges concerned. It is explained that this step has been taken to curb the unhealthy trends that have lately developed into the shares and securities business. If they are allowed to continue unabated, there is a danger to the health of the stock market and to the investment climate, particularly at a time when there is a revival of public investment interest in the capital market. The Central Government has, therefore, banned forward trading in shares to prevent undesirable speculation.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 28, 1919.

Cholera in Calcutta.

In reply to a question on Cholera among the Rangoon passengers, the chairman of the Calcutta Corporation said [in Calcutta]: On the afternoon of the 13th June [Friday] the Port Health Officer reported to me through telephone that there was a large congregation of passengers for Rangoon by the B.I.S.N. Company's Steamer at Nos 7 and 8 jetties and that a number of cases of cholera had occurred. These cases were removed to the hospital. He considered this as a serious menace to the health of the city and suggested that the segregation station at Surinam should be at once utilised for the accommodation of these passengers. This was arranged by the Health Officer working in concert with the Port Health Officer and the next day arrangements were completed for accommodating these passengers.

CONCEPTUAL Futarchy

POLITICS

This refers to a form of government where voters get to vote on the values that need to be upheld by their government, but the best policies that need to be adopted in order to achieve these popular values is decided through the means of prediction markets. It is believed that prediction markets, where investors bet money on the future outcomes of various policies, can offer better policy ideas than regular democracies where politicians decide the policies of the government. Futarchy was first proposed by American economist Robert Hanson who summarised the idea as "vote on value, but bet on beliefs" in a manifesto released in 2000.

MORE ON THE WEB

Video | Meet the man who is trying to revive bommalattam
<http://bit.ly/bommallattam>

FROM PAGE ONE

India's high tariffs are unacceptable: Trump

"President Trump will encourage our allies and partners to lower tariff and non-tariff barriers to free, fair, and reciprocal trade," the statement read.

The White House also referred to "the free flow of data" – curbs on taking data outside border, or 'data localisation' is one of the trade issues on the table for India and the U.S., with India having initiated policies for data localisation. "The United States urges members of the G-20 to work together to advance an open, fair, market-based digital economy, which will benefit all our nations through the free flow of data," the statement said.

On the world trading sys-

tem, the statement said: "The United States is urging reforms and modernisations to the World Trade Organization (WTO), while making sure the WTO functions as originally intended." Interestingly, the U.S. is seen by critics as crippling the ability of the WTO to execute a crucial aspect of its mandate, by blocking the appointment of judges to the WTO's Appellate Body (trade court). Without the statutorily mandated number of judges to hear cases (three or more), the trade court will become non-functional for all practical purposes at the end of this year, if the U.S. does not allow new nominees to go through.

Bombay HC upholds quota for Marathas

Welcoming the verdict, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said in the Assembly, "The court has upheld the extraordinary and exceptional circumstances mentioned in the report to provide quota to Marathas, due to which the reservation quantum in the State has crossed 50%."

In the 487-page judgment, the Bench noted, "We hold and declare that the report of the Gaikwad Commission has set out the 'exceptional circumstances and extra-ordinary situations' justifying crossing of the limit of 50% reservation as set out in the Indra Sawney case (Supreme Court)."

The court recorded, "The 50% limit of reservation can

be crossed subject to availability of quantifiable and contemporaneous data reflecting backwardness, inadequacy of representation and without affecting the efficiency in administration."

'Justified' classification

The judgment said the classification of the Maratha class into "Socially and Educationally Backward Class" was justified. The court held that the classification "complies with the twin test of reasonable classification permissible under Article 14 (equality before the law) of the Constitution of India, namely, intelligible differentia and rational nexus to the object sought to be achieved."

For the first time in the

Four bank accounts of + Nirav Modi, sister frozen

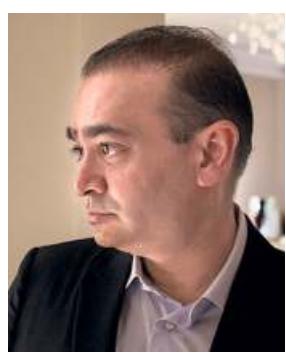
Judge Jonathan Radway presided over the short remand hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court via video link from Wandsworth prison and re-confirmed July 29 as the next date for the hearing in the diamond merchant's extradition proceedings.

Provisional order
The ED issued a provisional order for the attachment of the four accounts, and one more in the name of a company controlled by Nirav Modi, in Mumbai in September last year.

The five overseas accounts then had ₹278 crore in deposits.

The sources said while the accounts of Nirav Modi, under arrest in this case in London, have deposits of ₹3,74,11,596, the accounts in the name of his sister Purvi Modi have deposits of ₹27,38,136.

The total amount is about ₹283.16 crore, they said.



Mr. Modi has been lodged at Wandsworth prison in south-west London since his arrest in March. Under the U.K. law, Mr. Modi is expected to be produced before the court every four weeks, which now falls on July 25.

The Indian side has until July 11 to present an opening position statement, laying out the *prima facie* case against him, with the next hearing set for July 29 when a timeline for extradition trial is expected to be laid out.

AI flight suffers 6-hour delay after bomb hoax

Six hours after the plane landed at London Stansted and was taken to an isolation bay for a detailed security drill, the local police gave the aircraft an all-clear.

The plane was rescheduled to take off for Newark at 5 p.m. local time.

"Following investigations on the plane, we have now been able to establish there is nothing suspicious on board. The aircraft has been handed back to STN Airport (Stansted) and the operator," the Essex Police posted on Twitter.

But the news from Mumbai had already created panic and UK's Royal Air Force (RAF) scrambled its fighter jets to intercept the Air India flight and escort it to the airport. "Quick Reaction Alert Typhoons were

scrambled earlier from @RAFconingsby to intercept a civilian aircraft; this was safely escorted to Stansted. The Typhoons were authorised to travel at supersonic speed and any inconvenience caused to local residents is regretted," the RAF said on Twitter.

Life term for 2017 case
Earlier this month, an Indian businessman, Birju Salla, was given a life imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹5 crore by a NIA court for placing a hoax hijack note on a Jet Airways plane in October 2017.

This was the first conviction under the amended anti-hijack law notified in 2017, which broadens the definition of hijack and provides for punishments up to death penalty.

Trinamool MLA and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Tapas Roy raised a point of information in the West Bengal Assembly on Thursday, saying the unity call of the Chief Minister was

Furore over military pensions

Congress MPs rush to the Well, allege that Centre is neglecting disabled retirees

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



Ruckus again: Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury speaking in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. ■ PTI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday told the Lok Sabha that his Ministry would look into the issue of taxing disability pension after the Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, strongly raised the issue.

Mr. Singh said defence preparedness and welfare of the armed forces personnel were the top-most priority of the government. "I will look into the issue. The Ministry is gathering information and will get back with details to the House," Mr. Singh said.

Armed forces personnel who suffer any kind of disability due to their service receive separate disability pension. But the Congress alleged that on June 24, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) came out with a circular that mentioned that disability pension would be taxable.

For the first time in the

17th Lok Sabha, Congress MPs trooped into the Well of the House after Mr. Chowdhury could not raise the issue as planned.

Though the Congress leader had given an adjournment motion – a parliamentary provision when all other business is suspended to discuss an issue – Speaker Om Birla asked the Opposition

leader to raise it after Question Hour.

Speaker's caution

Congress members rushed to the Well and raised slogans like *Sena ko nyay do* (Give justice to the Army) and *Sena ke naam pe vote mangana band karo* (stop asking for votes in the name of the Army).

With Congress members creating a ruckus in the House, the Speaker allowed Mr. Chowdhury to speak but told him that the Congress was disturbing new members. The Congress leader then raised the CBDT circular. He also said the One Rank One Pension (OROP) had become 'one rank, five pensions'.

Lok Sabha passes Bill on homoeopathy council

Law gives more time to rejig body

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2019, which enables the government to extend the tenure of the Board of Governors for a further period of one year with effect from May 17, 2019.

This is the second Bill passed by the newly constituted Lok Sabha and will replace an ordinance issued by the previous NDA government.

Urging the government to re-examine the proposed legislation, the Congress's leader of the House Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury sought to move a statutory resolution that was defeated by a voice vote.

Another Opposition MP, N.K. Premachandran of the RSP, also unsuccessfully proposed amendments to the Bill.

The Opposition lashed out at the government for

the second day in a row for taking the ordinance route.

"Ordinance should not be used for ordinary rule," Mr. Chowdhury said. "It is not good for the health of the democracy. The Minister has so far been unable to tell us about the urgency to bring in an ordinance. The fact is that the government is bringing in ordinance after ordinance, which is against the spirit of democracy. The House can't be used as a rubber stamp to pass ordinance after ordinance," the Congress MP added.

Repeating to the Opposition, AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik said the day-to-day affairs of the Central Homoeopathy Council (CHC) had been entrusted with a Board of Governors comprising eminent and qualified homoeopathy doctors and eminent administrators till such time that the council was reconstituted.

The clarification comes as questions continue to be raised if the IAF will stop flying them in mountainous areas following the recent crash. On June 3, an IAF AN-32 crashed after it got airborne from Jorhat in Assam for the Mechuka advanced landing ground in Arunachal Pradesh. The wreckage was located after nine days and

all 13 people on board were killed.

Earlier this week, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal B.S. Dhanola, said in Gwalior that AN-32 aircraft would continue to be flown in the mountains till a new aircraft was induced. "We don't have a choice," he said. The new aircraft, once induced, would be used in the mountains and AN-32s would be used for training and other purposes, ACM Dhanola added.

In 2009, India and Ukraine concluded a five-year contract for \$397.7 million to repair and upgrade 105 AN-32 aircraft – 45 to be upgraded in Ukraine and 60 in India. The project was delayed following the conflict between Russia and Ukraine over Crimea and has now been resolved.

In July 2018, the West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution recommending the name change. The Union Home Ministry, which is the arbitrator in this issue, has not taken any step on the issue.

No plan to phase out AN-32 aircraft: Rajnath

The fleet is being upgraded in phases, he tells Parliament

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



Rajnath Singh said the aircraft had a useful residual life. ■ PTI

The AN-32 aircraft is the workhorse of the IAF transport fleet and has not met with frequent accidents, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said.

"A part of the AN-32 fleet has been upgraded with better avionics and airframe reinforcement. The remaining aircraft are planned to be upgraded in a phased manner. There is no plan to phase out AN-32 aircraft presently as they have useful residual life," Mr. Singh said in a written reply in Parliament on Wednesday.

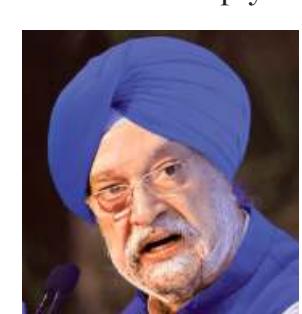
Only two accidents
In the past four years, apart from the crash early this month, only one AN-32 was lost, on July 22, 2016 while flying over the Bay of Bengal, he said.

MPs raise their voice against high airfares

Uproar over Aviation Minister's reply

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



₹90,000 during the 2016 Jat riots in Haryana, fares skyrocketed when Cyclone Fani hit Odisha recently.

When Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Puri explained that airlines charged differently for different segments, Opposition MPs, including those from the Congress, the DMK and the Trinamool, closed ranks to protest against high airfares.

"Are you trying to justify predatory pricing?" asked the MPs. Though the Minister said that he should be allowed to complete his answer, which could satisfy the queries of members, the uproar continued.

During the Zero Hour, Hasnain Masoodi of the National Conference also shared his concern that tickets on the Delhi-Srinagar route were costlier than that of Delhi-Dubai.

In the Zero Hour, Dr. Subhash Bhambhani raised the issue of attacks on doctors by relatives of patients and urged the Centre to explore legislation that protected doctors.

Javadekar not doing his job: Jairam

Congress leader says an Environment Minister's job is 'not to clear projects'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

How can you be serious on climate change if you are going to liberalise all your environmental policies, you are weakening Forest Conservation Act, neglecting the Forest Rights Act, you are liberalising Coastal Regulation Zone

JAIRAM RAMESH
Congress MP and former Environment Minister



courage we expect the Honourable Minister to demonstrate," Mr. Ramesh added.

Action plan in place

Mr. Javadekar enumerated the steps taken on climate change. He said 33 States and Union Territories had prepared their climate action plan. "India will also work towards creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030," he added.

The Minister said the "emission intensity of GDP" had decreased by 21% in 2014, when compared with 2005 levels, thereby "already achieving our voluntary pre-2020 goal of reducing emission intensity by 20-25% from 2005 levels by 2020".

During the Question

Hour, Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari informed the Lok Sabha that the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project, which seeks to significantly cut travel time between the two metros, is proceeding at the desired pace.

"We would like to complete this project and dedicate it to the nation before the completion of our term. In fact, we would like to dedicate it to the nation in the next three-and-a-half years," Mr. Gadkari told the Lok Sabha. The highway would be a boon to Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana, he said.

Project hurdles

The Minister said projects had been delayed mostly because of problems with land acquisition or securing environmental clearances, and urged MPs to help clear bottlenecks by working with the local authorities.

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Pinaki Misra raised the issue of airlines charging exorbitant fares during crises or natural calamities.

The MP pointed out that, just as a Delhi-Chandigarh air ticket had shot up to

Trinamool leader says the unity call of the CM was distorted by the media

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's appeal to the Left parties and the Congress to join hands with the Trinamool to fight the Bharatiya Janata Party has generated a lukewarm response from them.

Trinamool MLA and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Tapas Roy raised a point of information in the West Bengal Assembly on Thursday, saying the unity call of the Chief Minister was

distorted by a section of the media.

Leader of the Left legislative party Sujan Chakraborty objected to it, and said that point of information could not be raised on a matter reported in the media. Mr. Chakraborty demanded that he be allowed to speak and later walked out of the House along with Congress MLAs.

Mr. Roy told presspersons that the essence of the Chief Minister's address in the House on Wednesday was in the context of the situation in the country and in West Bengal and not in terms of electoral alliances.

Mr. Chakraborty and Congress leader in the Assembly Abdul Mannan blamed the Chief Minister for the rise of the BJP in West Bengal.

Rajya Sabha passes Bill to amend SEZ law

Trusts get to open units in such zones

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Thursday cleared the Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Bill, 2019, that seeks to allow trusts to set up units in special economic zones, a day after the Lok Sabha passed the measure.

The Bill will replace the Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019, promulgated in March.

The Opposition parties had criticised the government for issuing the ordinance, which allowed trusts to open units in the SEZs, just days before the general election was announced.

Replies to the debate, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the government had issued the ordinance because of the continuous disruption in Parliament.

The Opposition parties had criticised the government for issuing the ordinance, which allowed trusts to open units in the SEZs, just days before the general election was announced.

Replies to the debate, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the government had

Modi and Abe discuss economy, bullet train

They had a 'very constructive and detailed discussion'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

OSAKA
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held wide-ranging talks with his Japanese counterpart, Shinzo Abe, on the global economy, fugitive economic offenders and disaster management, and announced that President Ram Nath Kovind would participate in the coronation ceremony of Emperor Naruhito in October.

It was the first meeting between the two leaders since the start of Japan's Reiwa era and Mr. Modi's re-election.

Mr. Modi thanked Mr. Abe for the warm welcome for him and the delegation visiting Japan for the G-20 Summit. He appreciated Japan's leadership as the G-20 chairman.

Mr. Modi said he was looking forward to Mr. Abe's visit later this year for the annual summit.

Later, Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale told pressper-



Cementing ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Osaka, Japan, on Thursday.

sions that the meeting between the "old friends" was "warm" and they had a "very constructive and detailed discussion" on bilateral ties.

"Abe initially began discussion with his expectation from the G-20 Summit. They spoke about the importance of focussing on global economy," Mr. Gokhale said.

"These are the areas where Abe hoped that he would get the understanding and support of the G20 members, including that of India," Mr. Gokhale said.

Mr. Abe also referred to his forthcoming visit to India.

The two leaders also had a brief discussion on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor and on a convention centre being built in Varanasi, Mr. Modi's constituency.

They agreed on the delivery of both the projects on time.

Says there is respect for each other's culture and civilisation and a sense of belonging and goodwill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KORE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that ties between India and Japan had become stronger from the time the two countries cooperated to make a car to coming together to manufacture a bullet train.

Addressing the Indian community in this Japanese city, Mr. Modi said Japan had played an important role in India's economic development.

Mr. Modi said the bilateral ties are going to become more robust as India aimed to become a \$5-trillion economy in the next five years.

"There was a time when we were collaborating in building cars and today we are collaborating in building a bullet train," Mr. Modi said.

Indelible mark

"Today, there is no such part of India where Japan's projects or investments have not left its mark. Similarly, talent and manpower of India are contributing to strengthen Japan," he told the enthusiastic Indian diaspora who gave a rousing welcome to



Establishing connect: Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeting the Indian community at a programme in Kobe on Thursday. PTI

the Prime Minister.

India is planning to run its first bullet train between Mumbai and Ahmedabad with Japan's help.

Mr. Modi thanked the Indian diaspora for being part of the world's largest democratic process, which saw the participation of 61 crore voters. "When it comes to In-

dia's relationship with the world, Japan has an important place in it. This relationship is dated back to centuries. There is a sense of belonging, goodwill and respect for each other's culture and civilisation," he said.

"Almost two decades ago, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the then Japa-

nese premier, Yoshiro Mori, together made our relationship as a global partnership. After becoming Prime Minister in 2014, I got a chance to strengthen our friendship with my dear friend Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. This relationship will become stronger in New India," he said.

Thanking the Indian dias-

pora for playing a vital role in the recently concluded Indian elections, in which he was voted back to power with a stronger mandate, the Prime Minister said while several Indians from Japan worked on the field, many used social media to spread the message of the democratic process.

Amit Shah calls for zero tolerance of terror

Asks security agencies to ensure the 'safe and smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra'

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday chaired the meeting of the Unified Headquarters, an umbrella organisation of security agencies, and called for zero tolerance of terror.

"There should be zero tolerance towards terrorism and terrorists. There should be continued strict action against terror funding. The rule of law should be enforced," Mr. Shah told the agencies.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with family members of slain policeman Arshad Khan on Thursday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

He appreciated the "significant improvement" in all the parameters relating to the security situation.

The Minister directed the agencies to focus "on a safe and smooth conduct of the Amarnath Yatra".

"All security agencies should be fully alert and take all preventive steps to ensure a violence-free Yatra. There should be no laxity in the enforcement of the SOPs. Senior officers should personally supervise the arrangements at all levels," he said.

All praise

Mr. Shah, who visited the family of police officer Arshad Khan who lost his life in a terror attack, praised the work of the J&K police in counter-

ing terrorism and militancy. He asked the State government to "commemorate the martyrdom of its policemen in their hometowns and villages in an appropriate manner each year".

"All prominent public places should also be named after martyred policemen," he said.

He directed the recently created Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) "to focus more on the cases of rampant corruption in the State by the high and mighty".

Manmohan Singh's election to Rajya Sabha from T.N. unlikely

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The chance of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's election to the Rajya Sabha from Tamil Nadu is more or less ruled out as the Congress high command has not made any efforts to approach the DMK leadership to take the proposal forward.

The DMK is said to have decided to nominate former Additional Advocate-General P. Wilson and LPF leader Shanmugam to the Rajya

Sabha, besides allotting one seat to MDMK general secretary Vaiko. Though senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel spoke to DMK president M.K. Stalin a week ago, there

was no follow-up.

"There is no word from Congress leader Sonia Gandhi. They could have sent an emissary to meet our leader," a DMK source said.

Some civil society organisations requested the DMK to nominate former IAS officer M.G. Devasahayam to the Rajya Sabha. Bishop Ezra Sargunam met Mr. Stalin with the recommendation. But Mr. Stalin is learnt to have said that he could not nominate someone who is not a party member.

IN BRIEF



Pakistan extends airspace closure till July 12

NEW DELHI
Pakistan on Thursday yet again extended its airspace closure for flights from and through India till July 12. This means that passengers bound for Europe and the U.S. would continue to suffer longer flights and higher airfares. The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority had earlier imposed airspace restrictions till June 28.

Acharya sworn in as Manipur Governor

IMPHAL
Nagaland Governor P.B. Acharya was sworn in as Manipur Governor on Thursday. He will stand in for Najma Heptulla, who is on leave for a month. Manipur High Court Judge L. Jamir administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Acharya at a function the Raj Bhavan. In a statement before leaving Imphal, Dr. Heptulla said, "I am going to the United States to meet my children. I hope my people in Manipur will continue to have a peaceful atmosphere. I will meet you after one month."

Militant affiliated to al-Qaeda found dead

SRINAGAR
One militant of the al-Qaeda affiliate 'Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind' was found dead and another injured in Anantnag's Bijbehara on Thursday, amid reports of clashes between two militant outfits. "The body of the active militant, Adil Dass from Waghama in Bijbehara, was recovered from the orchards in Bijbehara. Another injured militant was arrested by a joint team of police and security forces from the area," police said. The body of the militant was handed over to his family members while the injured militant is being treated in a hospital."

Ahead of polls, Rahul asks Haryana Cong. to be united

Insists he is not party chief and will not effect changes



Rahul Gandhi

claimed that Mr. Gandhi was very upset with the performance of the party in the State.

Supporters of former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupender Singh Hooda want the party to make him the chief of the Haryana Congress and blame the current Haryana chief, Ashok Tanwar, for the debacle.

The State where the Con-

gress got wiped out, losing all the 10 Lok Sabha seats is witnessing an intense fight between these two factions. At a recent meeting, chaired by Mr. Azad, leaders of the rival factions nearly came to blows.

But with Mr. Gandhi insisting on his departure as the Congress chief, the party may not go for any drastic changes at the top.

A source told *The Hindu* that Mr. Gandhi directed the State leadership to work unitedly and strengthen its presence at the booth level.

Among those who attended included Mr. Hooda, Mr. Tanwar, Kumud Selja, and Capt. Ajay Yadav among others. Prominent absentees included Randeep Surjewala and Kiran Chaudhary.

BJP gets 2 more acres for Delhi headquarters

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI
The Bharatiya Janata Party has got an additional 2 acres of land for its national office on Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg here. Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry notified the land-use change for the plot in question this week.

In the 'Masterplan for Delhi-2021', the plot had been earmarked for residential use. Now, the land-use has been changed to "public and semi-public facilities," the note said.

Fresh fiat
The existing BJP office is located at 6-A, DDU Marg. The additional land of 8,860

square metres, or 2.189 acres, is at 3-B, DDU Marg, according to the land-use change notification issued on Wednesday.

The Central government had proposed to amend the Zonal Development Plan of Zone-D, with the Delhi Development Authority publishing a notice on March 9 seeking objections or suggestions. The notification said "no objections/suggestions has been received" in a 30-day period after the notice and the Central government had decided to modify the 'Masterplan and Zonal Development Plan' to reflect the changes after "carefully considering all aspects of the matter."

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE SATISH DHAWAN SPACE CENTRE SHAR CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP SRIRAKHOTA-524124.

NO:CMG/TG/S 1987015 DT: 10/06/2019

Sub: Construction of Toilets and Cloak rooms at parking area of Proposed Visitors Complex, SDSC SHAR Design and build of RCC Precast Structure including foundation, Civil, PH and Electrical works)- Reg, Ref: e_NIT NO: CMG/C/S 1987015, Dt: 10/06/2019. Please note the following change in the Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for the subject work.

Description Read for Read As
Period during which the tender documents can be requested From:14/06/2019,10:00Hrs Extended upto: 03/07/2019
Last date and time for uploading of tenders. 26/06/2019,14:30 Hrs Extended upto: 05/07/2019

All other terms & conditions of tender remain unaltered. This corrigendum also forms a part of the tender document.

Group Director, CMG, SDSC SHAR

NBCC (INDIA) LIMITED

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CIN-L74899DL1969G0003335

Office of General Manager (CPG), NBCC Bhawan, Lodhi Road, New Delhi, India

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Dated 27.06.2019

NBCC (India) Ltd. invites open e-tenders from eligible applicants who fulfill qualification criteria as stipulated in NIT for: (1) NIT No. NBCC/CPG/IIFT/Maidangali/Pkg-I/2019/213-Construction of New State of Art Educational Campus for IIFT at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi under Package-I & Design, Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Basis* Estimated Project Cost: Rs. 254.03 Crs. Last Date of Submission of Bid: 27.08.2019. Completion period: 21 (Twenty One) Months. (2) NIT No. NBCC / CPG/NICL/Worli/Mumbai/2019/212 - Structural Repair, Retrofitting and Renovation of Office Building, National Insurance House for National Insurance Company Limited (NICL) at Worli, Mumbai*, Estimated Project cost: Rs. 34.81 Crs. Last Date of Submission of Bid: 19.07.2019. Completion period: 15 (Fifteen) Months. The detailed NITs will be available on websites www.tenderwizard.com/NBCC and www.eprocure.gov.in. Corrigendum/Addendum to this publication if any, would appear only on the said websites and not be published.

General Manager (CPG)

DELHI JAL BOARD

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

ROOM NO.306, VARUNALYA PH-II

KAROL BAGH, NEW DELHI-110005

prodjb114@gmail.com

Sl. No. Name of the Work Publication date of Tender on DJB portal LLast date & Time for receipt of EOI

01. Expression of Interest (EOI) for renowned and professional Social Media Agencies 27.06.2019 10.07.2019 At 18:00 hrs

The EOI has uploaded on DJB website. The complete details can be seen on Web Site: "www.delhijalboard.nic.in" under "Expression of interest" link.

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 116/2019-20

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TENDER NOTICE

Competitive Tenders are invited for following. For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> or www.kmml.com

No. Tender ID Items

1 2019_KMML_28306_1 For Design, Fabrication and supply of 70 MT LPG bullet

2 2019_KMML_283620_1 For supply and application of Acid Resistant Bricks

Chavara 26.06.2019 HOU

ELSEWHERE



Tunisian President in 'critical condition'

TUNIS

Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi, 92, was in "critical condition" on Thursday after being taken to hospital with a serious illness, a key adviser said. Mr. Essebsi "was taken seriously ill and transferred to the military hospital in Tunis," the presidency said on its Facebook page. AFP

Court rebuffs Trump on citizenship question

WASHINGTON

The Supreme Court ruled on Thursday against adding a question about citizenship to the U.S. census, calling the rationale for it "contrived," in a defeat for President Donald Trump. In a separate ruling, the court's conservative majority refused to rule against electoral redistricting practices. AFP

Islamic State, al-Qaeda are products of U.S. adventurism, says Iran

'U.S. is trying to trigger hostilities among friendly nations'

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI

Terror groups such as the Islamic State and al-Qaeda and lingering conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq were products of American adventurism in West and South Asia, Iran said on Thursday, in response to allegations of terrorism made by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in New Delhi.

"The rise of extremist groups like the Taliban, al-Qaeda and ISIS are contemporary demonstrations of U.S. adventurism. The crises in our region, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and

Democrats clash on health care, border

In their first debate, presidential hopefuls attack Trump, saying his policies benefited the wealthy

REUTERS
MIAMI

Democratic presidential contenders battled over health care coverage and border policy on Wednesday during a surprisingly heated first debate that laid bare the party's divisions on whether to abolish private insurance and shift to a Medicare-for-All system.

In the first round of back-to-back debates, several of the lesser-known candidates vied for attention in the crowded race to take on President Donald Trump, shouting over one another to grab the spotlight and prove that they are capable of standing up to the Republican in the November 2020 election.

The Democratic contenders repeatedly attacked Mr. Trump, saying his economic policies benefited the wealthy at the expense of working Americans, and calling his border policies heartless.

"On January 20, 2021, we'll say 'Adios' to Donald Trump," said former Housing Secretary Julian Castro.

But they also turned their fire on each other, most often targeting Beto O'Rourke. The former Congressman tangled with Mr. Castro, a fellow Texan, on border policy, and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio on health care.

The intensity of the exchanges after six months of a relatively mild campaign reflected the high stakes in what could be a make-or-break moment for some of the contenders struggling to be noticed in the Democratic field of more than 20 candidates.

Second debate

No one mentioned front-runner Joe Biden, who took the stage with top rival Bernie Sanders and eight other candidates in the second debate on Thursday night.

The battle over health



Debating points: (From left) Democratic presidential hopefuls Julian Castro, Cory Booker and Elizabeth Warren during a break at the debate in Miami, Florida, on Wednesday. ■ REUTERS

care began when the candidates were asked to raise their hands if they support eliminating private health insurance. Only Senator Elizabeth Warren and Mr. de Blasio did so, but they quickly challenged the other eight candidates on stage.

Ms. Warren, a leader of the party's progressive wing who has been surging in opinion polls, said private insurance was taking advantage of Americans. She backs a government-sponsored Medicare-for-All approach and criticised those who say it is not politically feasible.

"What they are really telling you is they just won't fight for it. Health care is a basic right, and I will fight for it," she said.

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"What they are really telling you is they just won't fight for it. Health care is a basic right, and I will fight for it," she said.

But former U.S. Representative John Delaney, an outspoken critic of Medicare for All who supports a universal health care approach that includes private insurance, said Democrats should not throw away a system that some Americans are happy with. "I think we should be the party that keeps what's working and fixes what's broken," Mr. Delaney said.

After years of defending former Democratic President Barack Obama's landmark health care law known as 'Obamacare' from Republican attempts to repeal it, Democrats have struggled during the campaign to agree on the best approach to fixing it.

Mr. Trump hinted that he would not tweet his reactions to the debate live. It was taking place as he flew to Osaka, Japan, for a G20 summit. But shortly after it began, he could not help himself. "BORING!" he tweeted.

The plaintiffs have alleged that Mr. Rajapaksa was from 2005 to 2015 in command of security forces who systematically abducted, tortured, raped, and extorted money from sus-

pects, the South Africa-based International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) and U.S. law firm Hausfeld that filed the case in the U.S. District Court in central California said on Wednesday.

A spokesman for Mr. Gotabaya rejected the allegations and said the lawsuits were aimed at tarnishing his image ahead of the election, which is expected by December.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa faces new lawsuits in U.S.

Cases could jeopardise his poll plan

REUTERS
COLOMBO

Sri Lankan torture victims have filed 10 new claims for damages in a U.S. court against wartime defence chief Gotabaya Rajapaksa, lawyers for the plaintiffs and a rights group said, possibly jeopardising his plan to run for President.

Former Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa

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Ex-Pak. envoy sues newspaper

Haqqani seeks retraction of article calling him a U.S. agent

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Pakistan's former Ambassador to the U.S., Hussain Haqqani, has initiated legal proceedings against *The Nation* newspaper for calling him an American agent and saying that he is a fugitive under Pakistani law.

Pompeo's statement
Mr. Pompeo, during his press conference with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, had described Iran as the "biggest" sponsor of terrorism.

Iran said the U.S., through its actions and utterances, was trying to sow seeds of hostilities among friendly

countries and described sanctions as a "brutal form of terrorism". Ties between the U.S. and the rest of the world were affected by the U.S.'s actions, stated the Embassy. "[M]iscalculations and wrong understanding of the U.S. administration towards other nations and many international and regional issues have aggravated the situation between the U.S. and the rest of world."

Iran has claimed it is a victim of terrorism, and urged for "regional dialogue" in the Gulf region for ensuring security for the stakeholders.

Iran won't breach nuclear deal now

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE VIENNA

Iran will not exceed on Thursday a uranium stockpile limit agreed under a nuclear deal with world powers, contrary to what Tehran said earlier this month, according to a diplomatic source in Vienna.

"They won't exceed it today," the source said.

The source suggested that there might be a "political reason" for this, given intensified efforts by European governments in recent days to de-escalate tensions in the Gulf region.

There was no indication at present to suggest that the agreed limit would be exceeded this weekend either, the source added, saying that Tehran can suspend its uranium enrichment activities at any time. Iran had said 10 days ago that it would surpass the agreed 300-km reserve of enriched uranium on June 27.

Speaking at a seminar that took place in Vienna, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said: "We are in the middle of an economic war with the U.S., not a military war – yet."

Tensions rose because of the economic war. "There will be no de-escalation unless there is a ceasefire in this economic war," he added.

Family says no information from Australian reportedly held in N. Korea

Govt. has got a 'report' of a citizen being detained there

REUTERS SYDNEY



indication he had been detained in North Korea.

The family of an Australian student reportedly detained in North Korea said on Thursday they had not heard from him for several days and the Australian government said it was seeking urgent clarification on his whereabouts.

Alek Sigley's family said they had not heard from the 29-year-old university student in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, since Tuesday, a spokeswoman for the family said in an emailed statement.

"He has not been in digi-

tal contact with friends or family since Tuesday morning Australian time, which is unusual for him," the spokeswoman, Lesley Parker, said.

Mr. Sigley's family said he is a postgraduate student at Kim Il Sung University and had travelled to North Korea several times since 2012.

Honouring an iconic Punjab Maharaja

Merkel suffers episode of trembling

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BERLIN

Chancellor Angela Merkel suffered another episode of uncontrolled trembling on Thursday, a week after a similar incident sparked questions about her health. It came hours before Ms. Merkel was due to board a plane for the G20 summit in Osaka, Japan.

She began to tremble as she stood next to President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who was addressing a ceremony to formally appoint a new Justice Minister. The shaking went on for about two minutes, according to a DPA photographer who was present.

Ms. Merkel folded her arms in a bid to stop the trembling, which finally subsided after she took a few steps.

Ranjit Singh's sculpture was unveiled in Lahore to mark his 180th death anniversary

Sriram Lakshman
WASHINGTON
Pakistan's former Ambassador to the U.S., Hussain Haqqani, has initiated legal proceedings against *The Nation* newspaper for calling him an American agent and saying that he is a fugitive under Pakistani law.

Mr. Haqqani's lawyer, Yasser Latif Hamdani, has sent a legal notice to the paper, asking for an apology and retraction for the offending article, a statement from Mr. Haqqani said.

Legal proceedings
Failing this, Mr. Hamdani "would start legal proceedings not only in Pakistan but also in the U.K. and other jurisdictions where the newspaper's online edition is read, seeking damages to the tune of Pakistan Rupees 15 billion [\$95 million]," Mr.

vention to prevent the military from overthrowing the civilian government. The incident came to be known as 'memogate'.

Mr. Hamdani's notice said Mr. Haqqani "has always endeavoured lawfully and constitutionally to uphold democracy and civilian supremacy in Pakistan and that contrary to propaganda he had not been found guilty of any crime in any court of law," as per the statement.

Haqqani's statement read. Mr. Haqqani, who heads the South and Central Asia programme at the Hudson Institute, was Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. between 2008 and 2011. He resigned following his alleged involvement in a memo that was passed to then U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Fallon seeking American inter-

vention to prevent the military from overthrowing the civilian government. The incident came to be known as 'memogate'.

"Maharaja Ranjit Singh's sculpture is a small step in that direction. Lahore Fort and its vicinity have his footprints all around... He figures very prominently in the history and culture of Punjab," Mr. Lashari told *The Hindu*.

Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry, an admirer of the Maharaja, said Ranjit Singh's governance reforms, especially land reforms, were "the most practical reforms made by any ruler... He was also extremely wise to call French Generals to train his army – which was a very progressive decision," said Mr. Saifuddin.

Mr. Saifuddin spoke of how they selected the horse. A model of Ashq-e-Laila, the Maharaja's famous horse, would have overshadowed the personality of the Maharaja himself, who was just 5-feet, 5-inches tall. So the sculptors chose a horse called Kahir Bahar, gifted to the Maharaja by Dost Mohammad.

Kamran Lashari, Director General Walled City of Lahore Authority, said that their basic objective is to promote religious tourism, which is in line with the present government's policy as well. Kartarpur Corridor is one such initiative.

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The statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

ture. But many years passed before the idea became a reality. "It was a very lengthy and tiring process – from getting permission from the government to commissioning the sculpture – but it was worth it," Mr. Saifuddin told *The Hindu*.

He added that while India has many statues of the famous Maharaja and this will be his first sculpture in Pakistan, "this is by far the best sculpture when it comes to

expressions, anatomy and overall look."

8 months in the making
Mr. Saifuddin asked three artists – Salman, Burhan and Zark – to design it. Two of them are students of the National College of Arts in Lahore and Rawalpindi, while Mr. Zark works with Mr. Saifuddin and has studied from Naqsh School of Arts. "This took eight months to make," said Mr. Saifuddin.

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MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	39,586	-0.01
US Dollar	69.07	0.11
Gold	34,350	0.52
Brent oil	66.36	-0.01

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	406.50	-8.45
Asian Paints	1361.40	1.45
Axius Bank	800.45	11.85
Bajaj Auto	2965.85	-2.85
Bajaj Finance	8443.90	33.40
Bharti Airtel	3642.20	14.25
BPLC	393.20	0.80
Britannia Ind	2725.90	-7.00
Cipla	551.95	-4.60
Coal India	259.40	-0.90
Dr Reddys Lab	2565.60	-13.35
Eicher Motors	19479.30	327.45
GAIL (India)	306.65	-2.60
Grasim Ind	921.80	2.65
HCL Tech.	1062.75	-16.00
HDPC	2195.45	27.35
HDPC Bank	2462.30	-5.60
Hero MotoCorp	2598.40	24.80
Hindalco	206.10	-2.25
Hind Unilever	1774.40	13.40
Indiabulls HFL	627.45	15.20
ICICI Bank	440.95	2.30
IndusInd Bank	1450.20	15.40
Bharti Infratel	274.80	3.60
Infosys	730.55	-8.65
Indian Oil Corp	156.60	1.65
ITC	273.50	-3.90
JSW Steel	277.35	0.20
Kotak Bank	1481.60	-9.00
L&T	1550.90	-0.30
M&M	657.90	14.40
Maruti Suzuki	6486.70	6.40
NTPC	140.15	0.10
ONGC	170.60	3.05
PowerGrid Corp	207.70	-1.95
Reliance Ind	1274.15	-20.00
State Bank	362.15	4.00
Sun Pharma	402.80	3.35
Tata Motors	165.85	4.75
Tata Steel	510.70	0.10
TCS	2252.55	-1.65
Tech Mahindra	701.95	-16.15
Titan	1329.20	20.15
UltraTech Cement	4599.15	1.75
UPL	943.50	-14.95
Vedanta	176.85	-1.00
Wipro	282.10	-4.05
YES Bank	112.40	-0.65
Zee Entertainment	343.50	0.60

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	68.86	69.18
Euro	78.25	78.61
British Pound	87.51	87.92
Japanese Yen (100)	63.83	64.13
Chinese Yuan	10.01	10.06
Swiss Franc	70.40	70.73
Singapore Dollar	50.85	51.09
Canadian Dollar	52.44	52.68
Malaysian Ringgit	16.60	16.70

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

June 27 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g) 40.6... (40.8)

22 ct gold (1 g) 3239... (3247)

Home, IT Ministries discuss data protection bill

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

To expedite work on the draft Data Protection Bill, the IT Ministry is currently undertaking inter-ministerial consultations to allay any concerns over the proposed Bill.

Last week, the Home Ministry had called a meeting with IT Ministry officials, along with other stakeholders, to put forth concerns over the impact of the draft bill on law enforcement agencies while maintaining privacy of the citizens' data, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad attended the meeting. "They had some concerns over how the proposed Bill would impact the working of the departments under the ministry, and how would that be balanced with privacy of citizens' data," a source said.

In talks to develop land: Godrejs

Godrej & Boyce, other firms own 3,500 acres in Mumbai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

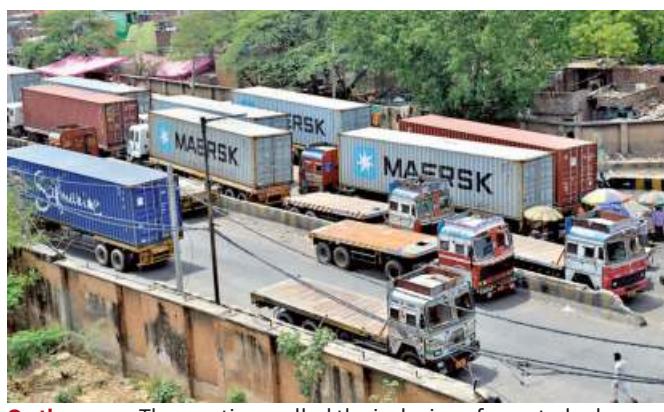
The Godrej family, which owns large tracts of land in Mumbai through holding company Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co. Ltd. and other group companies, has admitted that it was in a discussion on how much industrial land could be converted into real estate and developed by group company, Godrej Properties Ltd.

They said they had sought external help to finalise a long-term strategy for the group for several years. As part of this exercise, we have sought advice from ex-

ternal partners to help us think through options," Adi Godrej, chairman, Godrej Group and Jamshyd Godrej, chairman, Godrej & Boyce, said in a statement.

"The family regrets the sensationalist media coverage of these normal and private family discussions," they added in the joint statement. The statement came a day after a section of the media reported about 'extreme differences of opinion' between family members on the quantum of company-owned land that should be converted into real estate.

Godrej Properties usually enters into joint development agreements with group firms and shares a percentage of revenue with the land owner.



On the move: The meeting mulled the inclusion of a central scheme for a cold chain across India, in the draft logistics policy. ■ V. SUDESHAN

merce said in a release following the meeting.

One key aspect discussed in the meeting was the need to reduce the time taken for the trans-

sport of farm produce such as foodgrains, fruits and vegetables from the farm to the market, according to an official in the Ministry of Commerce, who also at-

tended the meeting. "There was also some talk about including a central scheme for a cold chain across the country to be included in the draft logistics policy," the official told *The Hindu*.

Reducing loss of produce

"The focus of the Minister in this regard was to reduce the loss of agricultural produce of the farmers."

"Commerce and Industry Minister also directed that whenever any new road, railway, airport and shipping port project is being considered, the Logistics Department must be a part of the consultation process so that holistic planning will be possible, freight movement will be rationalised and passenger experience will improve," the release added.

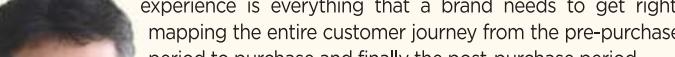
'Customer experience' – how do you perceive it?

I think customer experience is often not given the kind of attention that it needs to get. Customer experience is the ultimate moment of truth in the engagement between the brand and its audiences.

Whether it is in the physical or digital retail platforms, customer experience is everything that a brand needs to get right; mapping the entire customer journey from the pre-purchase period to purchase and finally the post-purchase period. Brands that differentiate and deliver superior customer experiences will be the ones that will eventually thrive in the long run. So for me, it is a no-brainer. I think an experience that delights customers while helping them make their choices is the one that needs to be consistently and diligently driven.

Karan Kumar
Chief Brand and Marketing Officer
Fabindia

The video series of *Mind your Marketing* begins with Karan, scan the QR Code to watch what he has to say.



SEBI tightens norms for MF investments

Regulator does not recognise funds' standstill agreements with company promoters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

In a reaction to a series of credit-related events that put investor money at risk, markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Thursday tightened norms on investments by mutual funds (MFs).

Wowing to take action against MFs getting into standstill agreements with the promoters of companies, SEBI Chairman, Ajay Tyagi said, "We don't recognise any such standstill agreements. MFs are not banks and there is nothing called 'standstill'. They (MFs) are investing rather than lending and some of these restrictions have been put to bring in more discipline."

Last month, the markets watchdog had questioned the legality of an agreement between some fund houses and the Essel Group, giving the business house time till September to repay its dues.

Early this year, the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group



Investor friendly: SEBI's move comes as a reaction to a series of credit-related events that put investor money at risk. ■ PTI

had reached an understanding with more than 90% of its lenders to avoid sale of any stock pledged by the promoters until September 30.

This was despite the collateral cover shrinking and margins contracting following an unprecedented fall in share prices of the group firms.

SEBI is also looking into the recent stake sale by Ema- mi promoters in the company to raise ₹1,600 crore from

listed non-convertible debentures. All fresh investments by MFs in commercial papers (CPs) and equities will also be allowed only in listed securities and liquid mutual fund schemes will have to hold at least 20% in liquid assets.

Protecting investors

Amit Singh, CEO, Investica, an online platform for investing in mutual funds said, "Today's SEBI meeting has created a tighter framework for debt mutual funds which will ensure that investors are not exposed to undue risk. By making it mandatory to invest in listed NCDs and CPs, SEBI has taken a step towards ensuring the liquidity of the instruments."

SEBI's board had decided on key reforms over liquid funds, credit rating firms, promoters' pledge of shares, and royalty payments.

SEBI said MFs will now be mandated to invest in only

20%. The additional exposure of 15% to HFCs shall be restructured to 10% to HFCs and 5% in securitised debt," said SEBI in a statement.

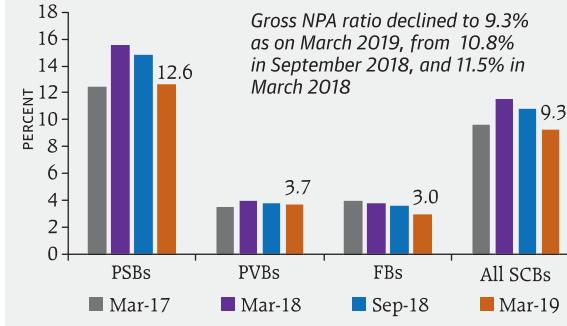
In a further tightening, promoters, promoter groups and persons acting in concert (PACs) will need to disclose the reason for creating an encumbrance as soon as 20% of their share capital is leveraged.

SEBI also approved the framework for issuance of differential voting rights (DVRs) and introduction of superior voting rights for tech companies, which will be effective from July 01, 2019.

Welcoming SEBI's move to allow DVRs for Indian tech companies, Bhavish Aggarwal, founder, Ola, in a tweet said, "I'm certain this will encourage Indian companies to list within the country, backed by our own people. Made in India businesses and entrepreneurs can control their destiny and build for the world!"

A dip in time

The fall in number of banks having over 20% gross NPAs in March implies a broader improvement in asset quality, says RBI



NPAs down, credit growth picking up: RBI

Capital infusion helps improve CAR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Gross non-performing assets in the banking system have declined for the second consecutive half year, while credit growth is picking up, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in the half yearly Financial Stability report.

"With the bulk of the legacy non-performing assets (NPAs) already recognised in the banking books, the NPA cycle seems to have turned around," the report said. Gross NPA ratio declined to 9.3% as on March 2019. It was 10.8% in September 2018 and 11.5% in March 2019.

Further decline

Gross NPAs could further decline to 9% by March 2020, the macro stress tests indicated.

Following capital infusion by the government in public sector banks, the overall capital adequacy ratio of commercial banks improved from 13.7% in September 2018 to 14.3% in March 2019, with state-run banks' CAR improving from 11.3% to 12.2% during the period. However, there was a marginal decline in the CAR of private sector banks.

In his foreword, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said state-run lenders showed a noticeable improvement with recapitalisation, with both provision coverage as well as capital adequacy improving, though a significant rise in provisioning had impacted the bottomline.

Highlighting the need for

governance reforms, Mr. Das said that the proof of the pudding lay in the public sector banks' ability to attract private capital through market discipline, rather than being overly dependent on the government for capital.

With the number of banks having more than 20% gross NPAs coming down in March 2019, RBI said this implied a broader improvement in asset quality. Credit growth of public sector

Tata Steel
Europe CEO
to step down

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Tata Steel on Thursday said its European business chief executive Hans Fischer will step down, effective July 1.

However, Mr. Fischer will continue to serve on the board of Tata Steel Europe (TSE) as non-executive director and advise T. V. Narendran, CEO and MD of Tata Steel Limited, till September 30, according to a regulatory filing.

Henrik Adam, currently chief commercial officer Tata Steel Europe, has been appointed to succeed Mr. Hans as the CEO from July 1, 2019. He will also join the board of TSE and report to Mr. Narendran.

Centre to
restart AI
sale process

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government is all set to re-start the procedure for Air India's (AI's) disinvestment, it said on Thursday in what is the first official statement on the matter after the general elections.

Continued support from the government had resulted in improvement of financial and operational performance of Air India.

As per the recommendations of AISAM (Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism), the government will now go ahead with the process of disinvestment of the company," Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Hardeep Singh Puri tweeted.

Sources say that another preliminary information memorandum with revised terms of sale is likely to be out on July 7.

And so, after all the drama, L&T now owns Mindtree

With the engineering major's open offer oversubscribed, it now owns almost 60% of shares of the mid-sized IT firm

MINI TEJASWI
BENGALURU

Technology firm Mindtree has come under L&T's fold. The engineering major's ₹5,030-crore open offer is reported to have been oversubscribed.

The offer closes tomorrow. With this, L&T would have gained control of almost 60% of the shares in what is regarded as the first hostile acquisition in the Indian IT space.

NEWS ANALYSIS

It all started with L&T signing a definitive agreement to acquire 20.32% stake from coffee baron V.G. Siddhartha and two of his coffee enterprises for more than ₹3,000 crore on March 18. The deal was formalised in late April.

Besides announcing an open offer for 31%, the engineering giant bought another 8.58% in the open market at ₹980 a share, bringing its total ownership to 28.9%.

Soon, a war of words broke out between the managements of the companies.



Changing hands: A concerted effort by Mindtree to stop L&T in its tracks failed. ■ G R N SOMASHEKAR

Although Mindtree launched, albeit a little late, a concerted effort to stop L&T and save the company's 'carefully nurtured culture', it yielded little result. Even the panel of independent directors it set up found L&T's offer of ₹980 per share a fair price. No wonder then, large

investors in Mindtree didn't think twice before offering their stake in the open offer.

One of the co-founders, Subroto Bagchi also quit the board. Amidst everything, its second biggest single investor Nalanda Capital sold its 10.6% stake to L&T and exited two days ago. S.N. Subrah-

manyam, L&T CEO and MD, joined the Mindtree board as non-executive director. Jayant Damodar Patil, senior executive vice president, defence business of L&T, and R. Shankar Raman, its CFO, also joined the Mindtree board.

The case presents a curious side as the promoters possibly had time on their hands to bring in a white knight, but still acted too late.

Cultural misfit

Their argument, that L&T was a cultural misfit and the bid sends out a wrong message to budding entrepreneurs, didn't attract too many buyers. Meanwhile, L&T focussed its energy on Mindtree. A.M. Naik, the group chairman of L&T was on record that Mindtree was top most on his agenda. Was

Mindtree a soft target for a hostile acquisition? The turn of events hints at that. In corporate history, hostile buyouts are not frequent. Here, a professionally run company has been snapped up with ease.

"Mindtree was a soft target in a way. A company started in 1999 actually took two decades to hit its first \$1 billion revenue. It was suffering some kind of slowness," said Hans Iyengar, senior analyst at U.K.-based Ovum Consulting.

Promoters hold 13.32% in Mindtree, of which the founding promoters together hold 8.96% – including Krishnakumar Natarajan (3.72%), Subroto Bagchi (3.1%), N.S. Parthasarathy (1.43%) and CEO Rostow Ravan (0.71%).

NMDC to terminate ₹1,395-crore BHEL contract

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Public sector miner NMDC on Thursday said it was invoking the termination clause of a ₹1,395 crore contract awarded to state-owned engineering major BHEL following a delay of more than five years in completion of the work.

Pertaining to the 3 million-tonne integrated steel plant that NMDC is setting up in Nagarnar in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh, the Raw Material Handling System (RMHS) Package contract was awarded to BHEL on August 1, 2011.

The original date of completion of the ₹1,395 crore work was February 28, 2014. However, "there is a huge delay of more than five years in completion of this package. Even after continuous follow up at NMDC and at Ministry level, BHEL is not accelerating the progress of the project," NMDC said.

Stating that a notice had been issued to BHEL on Wednesday for termination of the contract, a release from NMDC said:

"the progress of work has been abysmal and after approximately 94 months since commencement of the contract, the RMHS is far from completion."

The iron ore mining major said "the work of BHEL is lagging inordinately, and is lacking intent to complete the project. BHEL is negligent towards the completion of the project. Therefore, NMDC has [invoked] the termination clause."

NMDC will now take steps through new options for expeditious completion of the work, the company said in a release.

Air India ground handling arm divestment delayed for fifth time

Govt. tied up with Budget work, yet to clarify bidder queries

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI



The disinvestment of Air India's ground handling arm, Air India Air Transport Services Limited (AIATSL), has been delayed for the fifth time in five months. The government issued a fresh corrigendum on Thursday informing that the deadline for selecting qualified bidders had been postponed.

The government had floated a tender for AIATSL on February 12, inviting expressions of interest for a 98% stake in the Air India subsidiary.

As per this tender document, the deadline for shortlisting bidders was April 30. This has now been post-

poned to August 30, as per the latest communication.

The process has not progressed after the submission of queries by the interested entities on February 26.

A source closely involved with the privatisation process said that the "interested bidders had raised certain queries but the government is busy with the Budget an-

'Preparing responses'

A government official said that the process of forming responses to questions about AIATSL's contractual commitments was under way.

The questions posed by ground handling companies pertain to grandfather rights of AIATSL at various airports as well as its contracts for providing services to Air India, among others.

FundsIndia founders cease to be employees, confirms company

Financial services platform gives no reason for departure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Wealth India Financial Services that runs online financial services platform FundsIndia.com, on Thursday confirmed that the company's founders C.R. Chandrasekhar and Srikanth Meenakshi cease to be employees of the company.

The erstwhile CEO and COO, Mr. Chandrasekhar and Mr. Meenakshi, cease to be employees of the company, it said. However, it did not give any reason for their departure.

"Mr. Chandrasekhar continues to serve on the board of the company. The vast majority of the existing leadership team remains in place and will continue to tirelessly service the company's customers as they have

been doing expertly for the past several years," it added.

The company also said its board of directors had appointed Girirajan Murugan as CEO and Suraj Kaeley as a senior adviser.

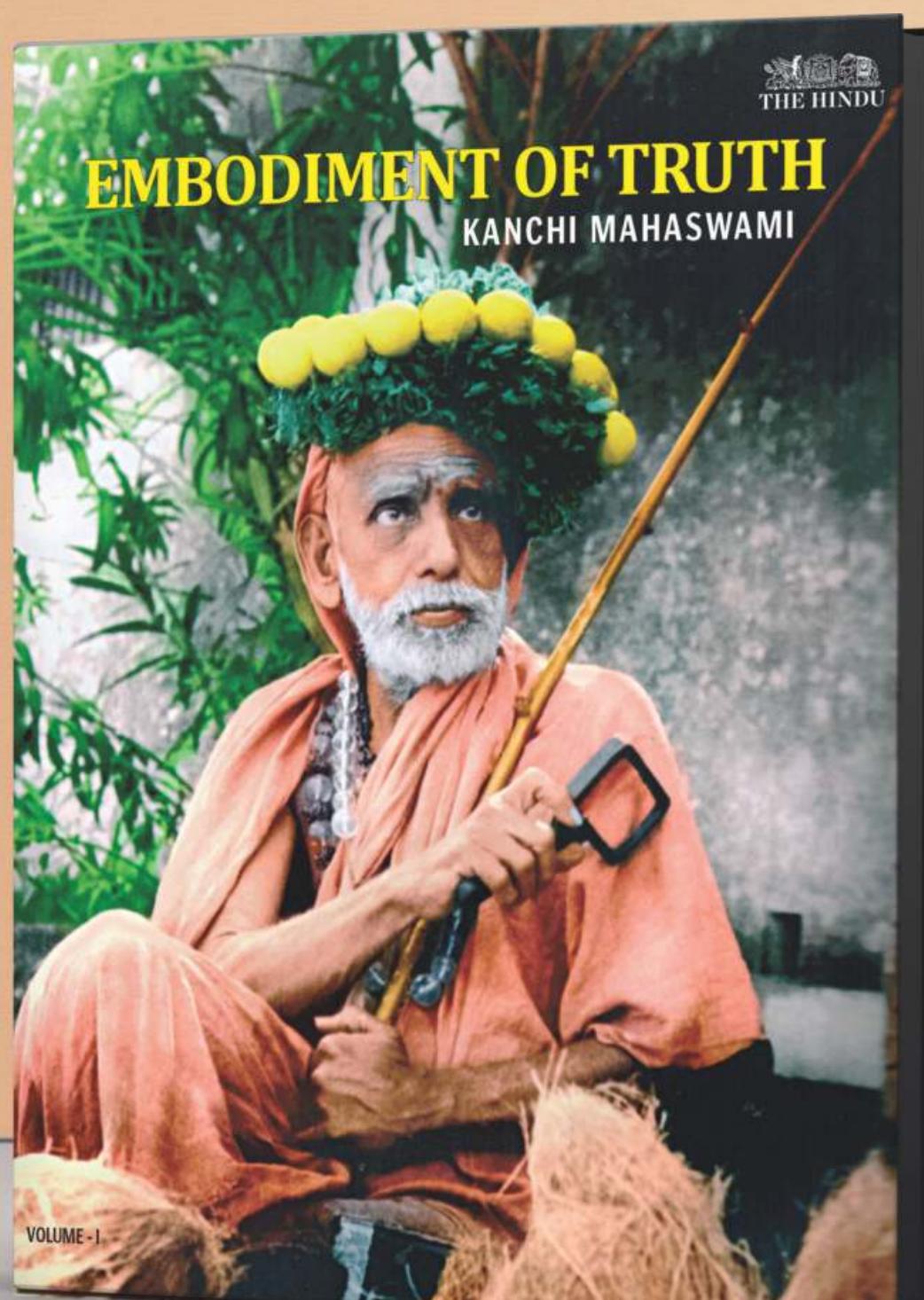
nakshi had ceased to be on the board of directors of the company since February 2018 and has been operating in a reduced capacity since then and his departure had been planned for many months, the company said.

"Mr. Chandrasekhar continues to serve on the board of the company. The vast majority of the existing leadership team remains in place and will continue to tirelessly service the company's customers as they have



THE HINDU GROUP

EMBODIMENT OF TRUTH KANCHI MAHASWAMI



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CM
YK

ND-NDE

Kohli and Shami star as clinical India hands Windies a drubbing

Dhoni's half-century and Pandya's cameo propel India to 268 for seven, before an exceptional bowling effort completes the job for the Men in Blue



Run machine: Virat Kohli's poise and application shone through as he top-scored for India on a sluggish wicket. • AFP



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

Bollywood numbers were a recurrent chorus and vocal chords found fresh life through unbridled enthusiasm as a packed Old Trafford heaved with a vast majority of Indian fans. There was much to cheer for the boisterous audience while Virat Kohli's men extended their unbeaten run in this World Cup.

After scoring 268 for seven against the West Indies here on Thursday, India bowled out the opposition for 143 in 34.2 overs and registered a 125-run victory.

India's fifth triumph pushed its tally to 11 and a better net run-rate (+1.463) helped it go past New Zealand to the second slot and inch closer to a semifinal berth. The West Indies,

though, found its tenuous dreams for a last-four finish dissipate.

Gayle fails

A Chris Gayle special was needed if the West Indies had to harbour hopes of a successful chase but the opener failed. The southpaw nearly chopped Mohammed Shami onto his stumps and when the spearhead dug it short, Gayle's half-swat found Kedar Jadhav. Worse was to follow when Shai Hope was unable to thwart Shami's excess inward movement.

The West Indies found respite through a 55-run partnership that Sunil Ambris and Nicholas Pooran scripted for the third wicket. But Hardik Pandya dismissed Ambris and Pooran followed suit as he chanced his arm against spinner Kuldeep Yadav.

The men from the Caribbean Islands were in trouble at 80 for four in the 21st over while illustrious predecessors like Clive Lloyd in the member's stand and Michael Holding and Curtly Ambrose from the commentary boxes watched with a wistful look.

The spirited comeback never happened as captain Jason Holder perished to Yuzvendra Chahal and, Jasprit Bumrah, after softening up Carlos Brathwaite with a series of yorkers, drew the edge and an air-borne M.S. Dhoni plucked a right-handed catch. Off the next ball, Bumrah scalped Fabian Allen and, though a hat-trick proved elusive, the fight had ebbed away from the West Indies.

Slow pitch

Earlier, like the trams that slither through Manchester, India steadily progressed after Kohli elected to bat. The pitch was slow and the fast bowlers kept it tight except when they sprayed bouncers. But India found its core runs from Kohli (72), Dhoni (56 not out), K.L. Rahul (48) and Pandya (46).

Openers Rahul and Rohit Sharma were watchful against Sheldon Cottrell and Kemar Roach. The last named got one to nip back and there was ambiguity over whether the Mumbaikar had edged to wicket-keeper Hope but Holder sought a review and to Rohit's conster-

nation, the plea was validated.

Rahul then buckled down and stitched a 69-run second-wicket partnership with Kohli. The alliance settled after a few scares due to

etched his fourth consecutive 50 and added 40 for the fifth wicket with Dhoni.

The former skipper enjoyed a reprieve on eight as Hope missed a regulation stumping off Allen. At the



SERVO CRICKET TRIVIA

Lance 'Zulu' Klusener has batted in 10 different positions in ODIs.

upish flicks and haphazard running. There was bonhomie too. Gayle effected a diving save and Kohli applauded his former Royal Challengers Bangalore team-mate.

Wobbling middle-order
Just as Rahul neared his fifty, he played all over a Holder delivery and Vijay Shankar, after essaying a few drives, failed to counter Roach's late moment. The middle-order wobbled as Jadhav fell as another West Indian review for a caught-behind was upheld. Meanwhile, Kohli

other end, panache was evident in a Kohli on-drive of his counterpart Holder, but immediately the premier willow-wielder miscued a swivel pull. A touch tentative at 180 for five in 38.2 overs, India needed a second-wind and it breezed in through a 70-run sixth-wicket partnership between Dhoni and Pandya. The duo ran hard and smote a few.

Holder employed Brathwaite following a thumb injury that briefly benched Oshane Thomas and the Indians prospered. The last 10 overs

STAT SPHERE

1 Kohli (417 innings) is the fastest to reach 20,000 runs in International cricket (6,613 in Tests, 11,159 in ODIs and 2,263 in T20Is)

417 Kohli

453 Tendulkar

453 Lara

464 Ponting

483 de Villiers

491 Kallis

492 Dravid

1 Kohli is the first Indian captain to win his first five games in the WC

1 The 125-run win by India is its biggest against West Indies in the WC in terms of runs, bettering the 80-run victory in the 2011 edition. West Indies' last win against India in the quadrennial event came in 1992

1 West Indies scored the fewest runs in the first Powerplay (10 overs) in this WC, replacing the 30-2 managed by NZ vs WI

1 Shami has become the first Indian bowler to claim a four-for against West Indies in the WC

BEST BOWLING

4/16 Shami, Manchester, 2019

3/12 Mohinder, Lord's, 1983

3/26 Shastri, Manchester, 1983

3/26 Zaheer, Chennai, 2011

2 Shami has also become the second Indian to register consecutive four-fors in the WC, after Umesh in 2015

3 West Indies, with Thursday's defeat, has become the third team to crash out of this edition after Afghanistan and South Africa. The Men in Maroon could not improve on their lone semifinal entry (in 1996) after the 1983 edition

4 Consecutive half-centuries for Kohli in this WC

▪ He is the third player to do so for India, after Sidhu (1987), Tendulkar (1996 & 2003)

▪ He is also the third one to notch up four fifties on the trot as captain, after Graeme Smith (2007) and Finch (2019)

46 Number of dot balls bowled by Holder, the most recorded by a bowler in a single match in this WC

▪ Gayle's last ODI ton against India was back in 2006. He has gone without a ton against the Men in Blue for 21 matches over 13 years after scoring four in his first 17 outings



72 Kohli's score is his lowest while bagging the Man-of-the-Match award in ODIs

SCOREBOARD INDIA VS WEST INDIES

INDIA

K.L. Rahul b Holder 4 (64b, 6x4), Rohit Sharma c Hope b Roach 18 (23b, 1x4, 1x6), Virat Kohli c sub b Holder 72 (82b, 8x4), Vijay Shankar c Hope b Roach 14 (19b, 3x4), Kedar Jadhav c Hope b Roach 7 (10b, 1x4), M.S. Dhoni (not out) 56 (61b, 3x4, 2x6), Hardik Pandya c Allen b Cottrell 46 (38b, 5x4), Mohammed Shami c Hope b Cottrell 0 (2b), Kuldeep Yadav (not out) 0 (1b); Extras (b-wt, w-6): 7; Total (for seven wkts. in 50 overs): 268.

WEST INDIES BOWLING

Cottrell 10-0-50-2, Roach 10-0-36-3, Thomas 7-0-63-0, Allen 10-0-52-0, Holder 10-2-33-2, Brathwaite 3-0-33-0.

WEST INDIES

Chris Gayle c Jadhav b Shami 6 (19b, 1x4), Sunil Ambris lbw b Pandya 31 (40b, 2x4), Shai Hope b Shami 5 (10b, 1x4), Nicholas Pooran c Shami b Kuldeep 28 (50b, 2x4), Shimron Hetmyer c Rahul b Shami 18 (29b, 1x4), Jason Holder c Jadhav b Chahal 6 (73b), Carlos Brathwaite c Dhoni b Bumrah 1 (5b), Fabian Allen lbw b Bumrah 0 (1b), Kemar Roach (not out) 14 (21b, 3x4), Sheldon Cottrell lbw b Chahal 10 (8b, 1x4, 1x6), Oshane Thomas c Rohit b Shami 6 (11b, 1x4); Extras (b-9, lb-3, nb-1, w-5): 18; Total (in 34.2 overs): 143.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-10 (Gayle, 4.5), 2-16 (Hope, 6.5), 3-71 (Ambris, 17.6), 4-80 (Pooran, 20.2), 5-98 (Holder, 23.5), 6-107 (Brathwaite, 26.1), 7-107 (Allen, 26.2), 8-112 (Hetmyer, 28.3), 9-124 (Cottrell, 29.5).

INDIA BOWLING

Shami 6.2-0-16-4, Bumrah 6-1-9-2, Pandya 5-0-28-1, Kuldeep 9-1-35-1, Jadhav 1-0-4-0, Chahal 7-0-39-2.

Toss: India. MoM: Virat Kohli. India won by 125 runs.

INNINGS SCAN

INDIA

2	Maidens	2
27	Fours	12
3	Sixes	1
70 (6th)	Best stand	55 (3rd)
5.36	RR	4.16

WI

47/1	10 overs	29/2
97/1	20 overs	80/3
148/4	30 overs	124/9
186/5	40 overs	--
268/7	50 overs	--

PROGRESSION

IND

47/1	10 overs	29/2
97/1	20 overs	80/3
148/4	30 overs	124/9
186/5	40 overs	--
268/7	50 overs	--

WI

47/1	10 overs	29/2
97/1	20 overs	80/3
148/4	30 overs	124/9
186/5	40 overs	--
268/7	50 overs	--

TOP SHOWS

For

Kohli 72 (82b, 8x4)	Shami 4/16 (6.2)
Ambris 31 (40b, 2x4)	Roach 3/36 (10)

Batting

Kohli 72 (82b, 8x4)	Shami 4/16 (6.2)
Ambris 31 (40b, 2x4)	Roach 3/36 (10)

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
Australia (Q)	7	6	1	0	12	0.906
India	6	5	0	1	11	1.160
New Zealand	7	5	1	1	11	1.028
England	7	4	3	0	8	1.051
Bangladesh	7	3	3	1	7	-0.133
Pakistan	7	3	3	1	7	-0.976
Sri Lanka	6	2	2	2	6	-1.119
West Indies (E)	7	1	5	1	3	-0.320
South Africa (E)	7	1	5	1	3	-0.324
Afghanistan (E)	7	0	7	0	0	-1.634

*till the India-West Indies match on June 27; Q: Qualified E: Eliminated

'On wickets like this, 250-260 a good score'

Big game against England but we are confident, says Rahul

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

Pitch-forged into the opener's slot after Shikhar Dhawan was ruled out following a left-thumb fracture, K.L. Rahul has done reasonably well up the order in the World Cup. In his new role, Rahul scored 57, 30 and 48 against Pakistan, Afghanistan and the West Indies respectively. He is aware that he has to capitalise on his starts.

A happy Rahul, who played his part in India's triumph over the West Indies, addressed the press at Old Trafford here on Thursday.

Excerpts
Surface tension: The pitch was similar to the one in Southampton. It was slow but here there was a bit of two-pace. On wickets like this, 250 or 260 was a good score. After the first 10 overs, after the discussions we had – Rohit (Sharma) and I, Virat (Kohli) and I – we sent the



Spearhead: Mohammed Shami continued from where he left off against Afghanistan, picking up another four-for. • AP

feedback to the dressing room that this isn't a 300 wicket.



Turnaround: The win against England has given plenty of hope to the Sri Lankans as they face South Africa. ■ AFP

Batting a worry for Lanka in must-win game

South Africa has only pride to play for

WORLD CUP

SHAYAN ACHARYA
CHESTER-LE-STREET

It's do-or-die for Sri Lanka as it takes on South Africa in a World Cup fixture at the Emirates Riverside here on Friday.

Placed seventh with six points in the kitty, a win against the Proteas would take Sri Lanka up to the fifth spot, trailing close behind England, and tighten the race for the semifinals.

The islanders, who turned around their campaign in the tournament after stunning England in Leeds last week, have a good chance against a lowly South Africa side, which is already out of the semifinal race.

Cause for concern

But Sri Lanka's batting department remains a cause for concern. Angelo Mathews struck form in the last outing, but it is now time for the others to step up.

Though the seasoned La-



sith Malinga – who scalped four wickets – and Dhananjaya de Silva helped Sri Lanka defend a relatively modest target against England, the side lacked consistency in their batting.

And in his pre-match media interaction, Lankan coach Chandika Hathurusingha admitted that there have been discussions with the players on their batting form.

"That is what we have discussed even before the England game. They all have done this before, especially someone like Mathews, a world-class player, and he showed a lot of mental resilience in that innings," Hath-

urusinha said, referring to Mathews' knock of unbeaten 85 against England.

For South Africa, this has been its worst-ever campaign in the tournament, where it failed to go past the first round – for the second time since 1992. But when it takes on Sri Lanka, the Faf du Plessis-led side will play for pride.

With a bright day expected, Chester-le-Street gears up for its World Cup debut, hoping for a run feast. The last match on this ground – between England and Australia a year ago – was a high-scoring affair, with England running down a 311-run target in just 45 overs.

INTERVIEW

SHAYAN ACHARYA
SOUTHAMPTON

In his long career as cricket administrator, Ali Bacher, has seen South African cricket come a long way. After failing to make it to knockout stage, Bacher, former chief of United Cricket Board, admits that the next couple of years would be tough for South African cricket. In London on work, Bacher spoke to *Sportstar* on a range of issues. Excerpts

This is for the first time since 2003 that South Africa has failed to make it to the World Cup knock-outs. Your thoughts.

I had predicted that we will have difficulty in reaching the semifinals. We had three great players. A.B. de Villiers, one of the greatest, is not available. Hashim Amla



Ali Bacher. ■ FILE PHOTO

two-three years ago was averaging 50 in ODIs. He is 36 now, so age is obviously catching up.

Then, Dale Steyn, who in my opinion is our best-ever fast bowler. His career is also coming to an end. You have a lot of younger players with potential but the problem is, they are inexperienced.

The young pace bowlers, Kagiso Rabada and Ngidi Lungi, have failed to make a

mark in English conditions. Rabada, according to Steyn, is our best-ever fast bowler. The problem is, he is overbowled. He looked a bit jaded against Pakistan.

Ngidi has just started. He has some injury problems, and you can see that while he is bowling.

With senior players set to retire, how will the future be?

It's gloomy at the moment. In the next couple of years, we will have a tough time in international cricket.

But if the selectors have faith in the young players, I think we will have a much stronger side before the next World Cup.

The house looks divided over de Villiers' comeback? It doesn't matter who you are, you cannot (make a choice) on whether or not to play. It destroys team spirit. The team management did the right thing.

All's well



Andre Russell thanked his well-wishers after a successful knee surgery. ■ ANDRE RUSSELL/INSTAGRAM

Weekes recovering after suffering a heart attack

AGENCIES

BRIDGETOWN

West Indies legend Everton Weekes is expected to be discharged from hospital in the coming days after suffering a heart attack overnight.

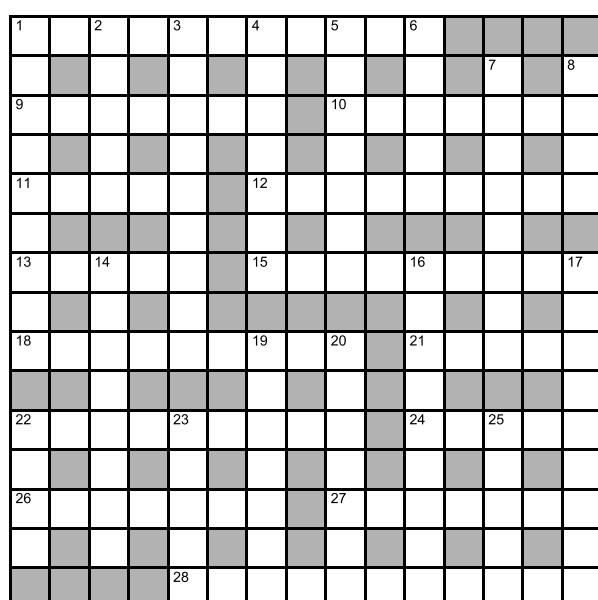
The 94-year-old, who



Everton Weekes.

■ SHAUN BOTTERILL/GETTY IMAGES

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12664



ACROSS

- With three foreign articles, note is said to be where the sub is hidden (5,3,3)
- Grand, without ace put in danger (7)
- If you get money for this, it is profit obtained by little effort (3,4)
- Heart of cricket team is in art film (5)

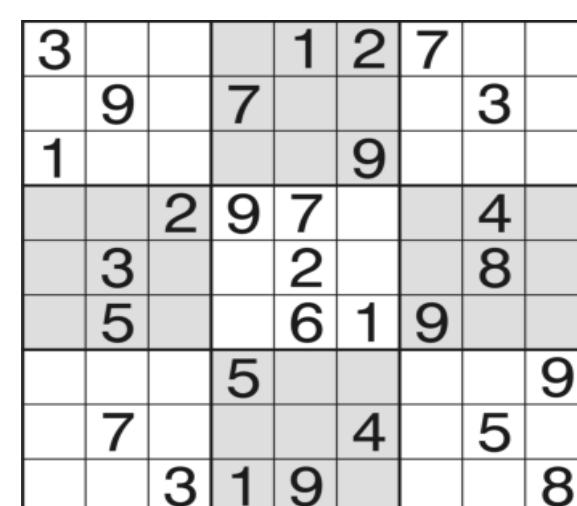
(set by Gridman)

- A loose pig tortured? Say 'Sorry!' (9)
- Secret heart of victors... (5)
- ...not the same and, without hesitation, I'd add, reserved (9)
- Something wrong reported by the half-sister in the making of compounds (9)
- The sort of care that is only skin-deep? (5)
- Alas, saint turns attacker (9)
- Note householder finally stripping messy water plant (5)
- A writer's credit (7)
- Listener, as a consequence, is worldly (7)
- Good couple's half-simply belting out religious songs (6,5)
- You finally find one drunk in bondage getting services (9)
- Drugged daughter dead after over-exercise (5)
- Heart brought about by element? (4,5)

DOWN

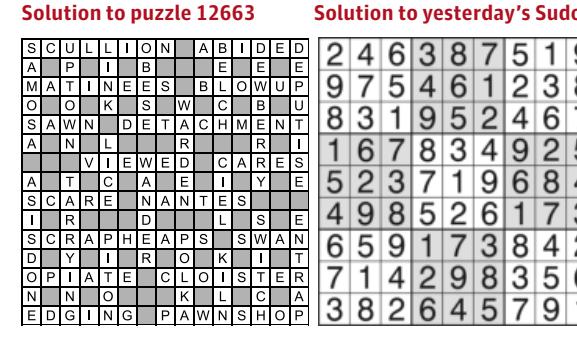
- You finally find one drunk in bondage getting services (9)
- A girl leaves society – so sorry! (4)
- Speaking out: village officer's out to get fringe benefit (5)
- Body of beliefs of those taking drug to the head (5)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 12663



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

Hurdles to Moksha

Jivatas are bound by their countless sins that constitute a veritable ocean. How is one to remove these sins that are tough hurdles which prevent one from attaining moksha? Sastras reiterate that the answer is in accepting the path of prapatti or saranagati, pointed out Velukkudi Sri Krishnan in a discourse. The power and greatness of surrender has been illustrated in the Ramayana and in the Bhagavad Gita when the Lord Himself incarnates as Rama and Krishna and propounds this path for the struggling jivatas. Rama's promise of unconditional protection to those who seek Him, and Krishna's total assurance to rid those jivatas who take refuge in Him of all sins stand as a beacon light of undying hope for humanity.

Ramanuja's Gadya Traya is a prayer that reflects his subtle grasp of the truth in the Vedas regarding surrender as the only and sure path to moksha. Ramanuja does atma bhara samarpana, that is seeks surrender at the feet of Thayar and Namperumal in Srirangam. He teaches every jivata the spirit in which one has to surrender to the Lord by renouncing one's ego. By honest self-assessment alone can one realise that there is no way by which the sinful acts that continue to haunt one since time immemorial can be absolved. The only hope is in the form of the compassionate Lord who promises to rid him of sins and lead him out. This is the greatest fortune for him, to entrust himself to the Highest and Supreme Lord, who holds the sole authority to grant moksha. All other means of help in this world cannot equal that of the Lord. He alone has the full power and willingness to remove all obstacles, tangible and subtle, seen and unseen, in the way to salvation. When He is the guide, there is no cause for anxiety or worry.



I wasn't too good on grass so I thought this was a good chance to win a match

Jiri Novak

TV PICKS

ICC World Cup: Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3 p.m.
FIFA Women's WC: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD); 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)

IN BRIEF



Vijender set for US debut on July 13 against Snider

NEW DELHI
Indian boxing star Vijender Singh will make his debut on the US professional circuit on July 13 against local favourite Mike Snider in Newark. Undefeated in his 10-bout pro career, the 33-year-old Indian was originally scheduled to have his first fight on US soil in April in Los Angeles but an injury during a sparring session delayed it. It is set to be an eight-round contest. Snider has a record of 13-5-3. **PTI**

Brazilian Neto moves to Barcelona nets

BARCELONA
Brazilian goalkeeper Neto is on his way to Barcelona from Valencia in an exchange deal with Jasper Cillessen, Barca's backup keeper heading the other way, the Spanish champion said on Thursday. Neto, 29, has signed a four-year deal at Camp Nou for €26 million with €9 million in add-ons and a €200 million release clause. Dutchman Cillessen's departure in the opposite direction was announced the previous day for a similar sum. **AFP**



Durant decides to be a free agent

SAN FRANCISCO
Golden State Warriors star forward Kevin Durant has declined a \$31.5 million option for next season and will become an unrestricted NBA free agent. Durant, the 2017 and 2018 NBA Finals Most Valuable Player and 2014 NBA MVP, ruptured his right Achilles tendon in the second quarter of game five of the NBA Finals earlier this month and underwent surgery to repair the injury. Durant is still expected to have several offers when NBA free agency opens on Sunday. **AFP**

Liverpool snaps up teenager van den Berg

LONDON
Liverpool has completed its first signing of the summer with the capture of 17-year-old Dutch defender Sepp van den Berg from PEC Zwolle. The European champion has paid just £1.3 million for van den Berg, beating Bayern Munich to the youngster's signature. van den Berg is expected to spend next season with the club's academy sides. "It is, for me, the biggest club in the world and it's a dream come true. I am really excited," said van den Berg. **AFP**



Former England opener Trescothick to retire

Former England star Marcus Trescothick on Thursday announced he would retire at the end of the season, bringing down the curtain on a 27-season career with county side Somerset. The 43-year-old opener, who played 76 Tests and 123 ODIs, has a total of 26,234 First Class runs since making his debut for Somerset in 1993. **AFP**

National aquathlon from Saturday

KOLKATA
The inaugural National Open aquathlon championships, including running and swimming events, will be held here on June 29 and 30. Around 170 athletes from 17 units are expected to participate. Competitions will be held in six age group categories.

CM YK

Argentina wary of pacy Venezuela

Goalkeeper Armani cautions against taking opponent lightly

COPA AMERICA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIO DE JANEIRO

Argentina goalkeeper Franco Armani warned his teammates on Wednesday not to be caught out by minnows Venezuela when the sides meet in the Copa America quarterfinals.

Argentina scraped into the knock-out rounds courtesy of a 2-0 win over invitee Qatar in its final pool match having gone into it bottom of Group B.

And now it is wary of avoiding a banana skin against the tournament minnows, one of only two of South America's 10 national sides – the other being Ecuador – never to win the Copa.

"We need to score goals, to be very careful... to avoid a surprise," said the River Plate goalkeeper ahead of Friday's clash at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium.

Armani said Venezuela



Fun time: Venezuela's players are no longer overawed at the prospect of facing Argentina. ■ AP

would "look to win back the ball quickly and attack" from the flanks, where "they have quick players."

And in Newcastle United forward Salomon Rondon, they have "a center-forward

who holds up the ball well and has good movement."

Finding form

While 14-time former winner Argentina may have been a disappointment for many

onlookers, Armani feels it has been finding its form as it progresses deeper into the competition.

There has been little so far to suggest it might end a 26-year trophy drought,

though. "We've gone from worse to better in this Copa. Match by match we've gained confidence, we've gained the functionality the team needs, and we arrive in good shape for this quarterfinal," he said.

But Argentina hasn't beaten Venezuela in their last three meetings, and lost 3-1 when the sides met in Madrid in a friendly in March, when five-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi made his long-awaited return to the national team after an eight-month absence.

For Venezuela captain Tomas Rincon, Argentina has lost the fear factor it once had thanks to a multitude of star players.

"It's been a while since they won, with their history and their (star) names," said Rincon.

"What's important now is the teamwork, how you play as a team. We respect everyone, but we fear no-one."

Paes-Paire duo bows out

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
ANTALYA

Leander Paes and Benoit Paire of France lost a close match 6-7(11), 4-6 in the quarterfinals to fourth seeds Romany Jebavy and Philipp Oswald in the ATP tournament on Thursday.

The quarterfinal entry was worth 45 ATP points and €4,000.

The results: **€507,490 ATP, Antalya, Turkey:** Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Roman Jebavy (Cze) & Philipp Oswald (Aut) bt Benoit Paire (Fra) & Leander Paes 7-6 (11), 6-4.

\$25,000 ITF men, Harare, Zimbabwe: Pre-quarterfinals: Takayni Garanganga (Zim) bt S.D. Prajwal Dev 6-3 retd.; Charl Morgan (RSA) bt Rishi

WOMEN'S WC

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

As the eight survivors caught their breaths, and prepared for their quarterfinals, the headlines at the women's World Cup on Wednesday were dominated by a man who is not playing or even in France.

Holder the United States is the last one standing in the way of a European winner. There had never previously been more than five European teams in the last eight at the tournament since its inauguration in 1991.

"As a football fan, to me I would want a little bit more diversity at this point. I find European football sometimes a little boring," said Heath.

Rapinoe had repeated her unwillingness to meet Trump in a video released earlier in the day. That provoked another of Trump's

public feuds with high-profile athletes and celebrities.

The reigning world champion meets France on Friday for a match USA co-captain Rapinoe says she hopes will be "wild and crazy".

Rapinoe's team-mate Tobin Heath, meanwhile, was less happy about the unprecedented European presence in the last eight.

Holder the United States is

the last one standing in the way of a European winner. There had never previously

been more than five European teams in the last eight at the tournament since its

inauguration in 1991.

"The only issue concerns penalty kicks, and honestly we have been a bit surprised," Collina said.

The problem, he acknowledged, was not the slight

loosening of the law, to allow goalkeepers to take one step off the line, but the use of the video assistant referee to spot when they cheated and they had, Collina argued, been cheating a lot.

Fairytales finish for Sreeja Akula

Amalraj prevails in a marathon

NORTH ZONE TT

RAKESH RAO
SONEPAT

Unseeded Sreeja Akula has been causing the odd upsets since her junior days. But this week, this Telangana girl stitched them all together to walk away with the women singles honours in the National-ranking table tennis (North Zone) tournament here on Thursday.

Sreeja continued her sensational winning streak by knocking out fourth seed Sutirtha Mukherjee in the final. Sutirtha had blanked top seed Archana Kamath in the semifinal.

Second seed and former National champion A. Amalraj needed seven sets to down a fighting Sudhanshu Grover squandering a 3-1 lead in the semi-final. "I took it a bit easy and let him come back into the match," said Amalraj and continued, "I was really determined in the decider and allowed him just two points."

In the final involving the top two seeds, Amalraj raced away with the first three sets before letting Manav pull one back. But Amalraj was not to be denied as he kept his errors in check and marched to another zonal crown.

The results:

Men: Final: A. Amalraj (Pet) bt Manav Thakkar (Pet) 11-9, 12-10, 11-8, 9-11, 11-8; Semifinals: Manav bt Sanil Shetty (Pet) 11-7, 11-9, 6-11, 11-9, 11-6; Amalraj bt Sudhanshu Grover (Pet) 8-11, 11-6, 11-3, 11-8, 11-13, 8-11, 11-11.

Women: Final: Sreeja Akula (RBI) bt Sutirtha Mukherjee (Har) 6-11, 7-11, 14-12, 13-11, 11-9, 11-9. **Semifinals:** Sutirtha bt Archana Kamath (Pet) 12-10, 12-10, 11-8, 11-5; Sreeja bt Anusha Kutumbale (MP) 11-8, 8-11, 11-7, 5-11, 11-7, 3-11, 12-10.



A. Amalraj.
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tendulkar sues Aussie batmaker

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY

Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar is suing an Australian sporting goods manufacturer for allegedly failing to pay him millions of dollars under an exclusive licensing agreement, his lawyers said on Thursday.

Tendulkar entered into a worldwide exclusive sponsorship agreement with the Spartan Sports group in 2016 to promote Spartan's sporting goods and sportswear.

new champion. She had held her nerves to win the decider 12-10 in a marathon battle.

Similarly, Amalraj needed seven sets to down a fighting Sudhanshu Grover squandering a 3-1 lead in the semi-final. "I took it a bit easy and let him come back into the match," said Amalraj and continued, "I was really determined in the decider and allowed him just two points."

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The charm of competition

Disciplinary action against Cameroon opened

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

FIFA on Wednesday announced disciplinary proceedings against Cameroon for misconduct and offensive behaviour in their women's World Cup match against England.

The game at Valenciennes was marked by Cameroon players' furious response to several refereeing decisions.

At one stage they apparently threatened to walk off the pitch.

A spokesperson for football's ruling body



Look there! Cameroon players plead unsuccessfully with referee Qin Liang in the game against England. ■ REUTERS

confirmed "proceedings have now been opened by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee against the Cameroonian Football Association."

Good day for Indian teams

ASIAN TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU
DHAKA

Indian boys and girls teams sailed into the finals without facing much challenge from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh respectively in the semifinals of the Asian under-12 tennis championship here on Thursday.

The boys will play Nepal in the final, and the girls will

face Sri Lanka.

The results (semifinals):

Boys: India bt Sri Lanka 3-0 (Rethin Pranav Senthilkumar bt Semukitham Gunaratne 6-1, 6-0; Manas Dhamme bt Lisan Goonetileke 6-1, 6-1; Rethin & Arnav Paparkar bt Lisan Goonetileke & Methwan Sanjaya Wijemanne 6-0, 6-2).

Girls: India bt Bangladesh 3-0 (Riya Sachdeva bt Prothsha Das 6-0, 6-0; Ika Raju Kanumuri bt Said Afrin 6-2, 6-0; Riya & Samiksha Dabas bt Sadia & Prothsha 6-0, 6-0).

Veer and Navaneeth enter last eight

ASIAN SQUASH

MACAU: Veer Chotrani upset higher-seeded Danial Nurhaqiem Shahrukh Islam (Malaysia) 13-11, 20-18, 11-5 in a hard-fought match of the boys' u-19 category to enter the quarterfinals in the

Asian junior individual squash championship here on Thursday.

The unseeded S. Navaneeth Prabhu overcame Pakistani Noor Zaman's challenge 11-13, 11-4, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9 in an under-17 contest.



Hitting back: Donald Trump responded to Megan Rapinoe's latest assertion that she would not visit the White House by accusing her of "disrespect". ■ AP

Shweta prevails in women's air rifle

Anish Bhanwala and Adarsh Singh come good in 25m rapid fire pistol

SHOOTING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Multiple Asian Games medallist Shweta Singh warded off the challenge from the young brigade to clinch the top place in women's air rifle in the National shooting selection trials on Thursday.

'Article 15 underlines the social fabric of the country'

Ayushmann Khurrana on dealing with caste-based discrimination in both the real and the reel world

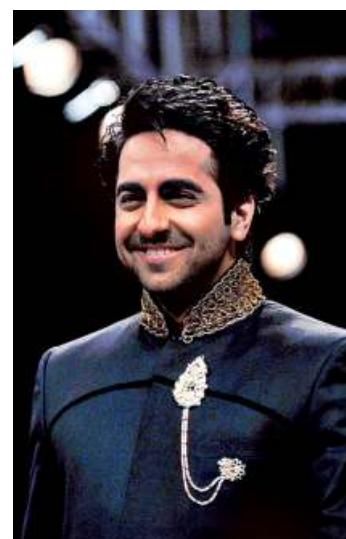
NAMRATA JOSHI

Since his debut in 2012, Ayushmann Khurrana's filmography has been all about putting his weight behind several unconventional themes and subjects, whether it's infertility and sperm donation in *Vicky Donor*, erectile dysfunction in *Shubh Mangal Saavdhan* or middle-aged pregnancy in *Badhaai Ho*. So is *Article 15*, on the contentious issue of caste system, the first out and out political film of his career?

Khurrana considers it more social than political. "Society is intrinsic to the politics. The film underlines the social fabric of the country," he tells *The Hindu* over a phone conversation from Kanpur where he's shooting for what seems like yet another way-out film, on premature balding, called *Bala*. And that just isn't it. Coming up next is also *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, a same-sex love story.

Making the invisible, visible

Coming back to *Article 15*, Khurrana thinks that the film is about real India. The not-so-faudable aspects of the Indian society got invisibilised and sanitised in his



Actor and singer Ayushman Khurrana. ■ AFP

ban upbringing but Khurrana embraced them when doing theatre in Chandigarh. "Since my college days I have been doing street plays on social issues," he says. The film, for him then, is an extension of those days.

While Khurrana hasn't experienced caste-based discrimination in his own privileged world,

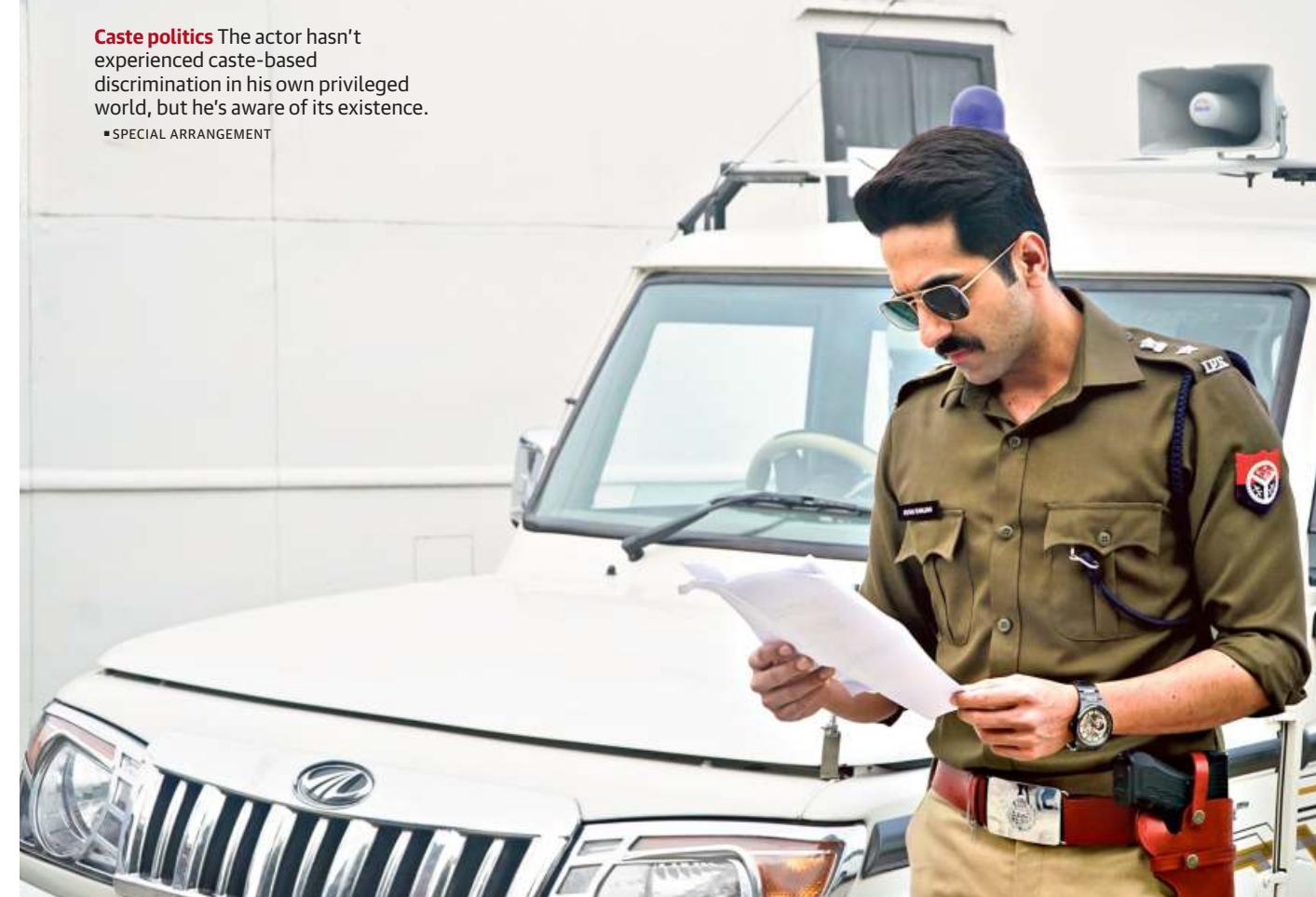
he knows of it second-hand. That is, through a meritorious topper friend in an engineering college who never revealed his 'identity' and remained in a shell lest his success be attributed by everyone to "reservation".

Khurrana's friend continues to remain an introvert till date. Other instances, the actor recalls are while travelling in a local bus to BITS Pilani for a campus festival and being asked about his caste by strangers.

"I got taken aback. Why would someone ask it? As though the answer was necessary to carry the conversation forward," he says. It made the actor realise that the need to know the caste of another person is written in the "DNA of our countrymen". "It is part of the system and needs to be done away with," the actor asserts. While the family name or surname might be needed for logistical reasons, why does caste need to be spelt out everywhere, Khurrana wonders.

Courageous choices

Has Khurrana's phenomenal success in the past couple of years emboldened him to choose more fiery subjects? It does give him



the courage, admits the actor but, more than that, it also ensures a bigger audience for the film.

"It isn't just about preaching to the converted, who are sensitive and on the same page with you. It's about reaching out to even those who believe in discrimination and making them think twice about their biases after watching the film," he emphasises.

Being nationalistic for the actor, is all about being "one" and patriotism is as much a celebration as it is about taking a critical stance towards society: "We call our country Motherland but it's

also a child. We need to nourish it and not just pamper it and let it go out of hand," he shares.

Article 15, for him, is one of the most important aspects of the Constitution and also the most underrated. "It is violated everyday," he says. The most beautiful and complex aspect about India, its diversity – whether it's in terms of the culture or language, weather or food – can also render it very vulnerable. "The pluralism can also be our weakness. The Constitution helps strike the balance," he says. It's the glue that binds us all.

Empathy as art

What about the criticism heaped against the film, even before its release, that it might be about caste politics but has been made from the perspective of a privileged protagonist? "We have to start somewhere. The film is a comment on the society as a whole," he says. He's emphatic that the film is not offending any community in particular but is against every wrong doing.

In his research for the film, Khurrana watched *India Untouched: Stories of a People Apart*, the 2007 documentary by

Stalin K. He also read Omprakash Valmiki's book *Joothan*.

"It is heart-wrenching. I was reading it simultaneously as I was shooting. It gave me sleepless nights." He admits that while reading is easy, it's empathising that's much more difficult. And there are still miles to travel on the issue, for society in general and him in particular.

For the actor, things will not end this Friday with the release of *Article 15*. "I am still learning," says Khurrana. As are all of us, from daily interactions to stories we see and hear.

FOOD SPOT

Revisiting fluffy puris

Bille di Hatti, a DU-student haunt, continues to serve patrons its usual dose of chholey-puri and creamy lassi at its new branch in West Delhi



RAHUL VERMA

There was a time, many years ago, when I lived in Rajendra Nagar. That may explain the fondness I have for this neighbourhood and the areas around, just a few kilometres from downtown Delhi. I was a grubby little boy then, too young to go looking for food outlets. But family legend has it that I told my mother, in all earnestness, that I had seen a tiger throwing stones. I have gone back there many times since then, and to my sorrow, am yet to see the tiger in question. On the other hand, I have certainly come across a great many restaurants and small food shacks.

Then I recently heard from my friend Raj that one of our favourite chholey-puri shops, Bille di Hatti, which had fed thousands of students of Delhi University, had opened an outlet in Patel Nagar.

So one Saturday morning, when the birds (the late-risers, not the worm-gatherers) were still chirping away, I drove up to Patel Nagar. Raj showed me the way (97, Sujal Prakash Marg, Block C, West Patel Nagar, phone:



41767788), and we landed up at Bille's just in time for breakfast.

If you are in Patel Nagar, coming from, say, Connaught Place, and moving towards Shadipur Depot, you will see an IndusInd Bank on your left.

Right after that there is a traffic light. Turn right here,

and then left. You will be on a parallel road. About 500 metres ahead, turn right. That is where you will find Bille di Hatti.

If you spot scores of Swiggy and Zomato delivery boys there, you will know that you have reached your destination.

Now Bille in Kamla Nagar

Memories (left) Chholey-puri; the facade of the eatery

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

was a legend. He set up shop there in 1952. Bille is no more, and his nephew runs the place there. The one in Patel Nagar, which opened some months ago, is handled by his son, Kritu.

I used to go to the original Bille for their lassi, which is one of the draws in the new outlet as well.

The lassi is thick and sweet, and has a creamy layer on top. A large glass costs ₹60, a small one ₹40.

But the place is still known for its puri-chholey. A plate of two puris and chholey, with pickle on the side, costs ₹60. Kachori-aloo is ₹30. Chholey-chawal, rajma-chawal and kadhi-chawal are ₹60 each, while palak-chholey-chawal is ₹80. A small do-

na of suji halwa is ₹35.

There is seating inside the small eatery. I had one puri with chholey, and enjoyed it immensely. The puri is soft and fluffy, while the chholey is very different from the usual fare you get everywhere. The chickpeas are small and come from Sudan, Kritu tells us.

The chholey is not oily, and has pieces of potatoes and little vadas in it. And the pickle, of green chillies and ghiya, is nice and tangy.

I came back home, carrying some puri, chholey and halwa. So we had some for a late brunch. All in all, it was a nice outing that ended with two very nice meals. Bille would have been happy.

The writer is a seasoned food critic

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



MUSIC

The Unplugged Project

The Unplugged Project, a Delhi-based band, will regale music lovers with its flair for blending retro Hindi with English medleys. The band consists of singers Aditya Jassi and Manish Gunthey, Ashwani Kumar on drums, Elton Fernandes on saxophone, Vipin Sharma on bass.

VENUE: Farzi Cafe, GF 01-FF 01, Aerocity, Indira Gandhi International Airport

TIME: 9:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.



FOOD

Treasures of the Orient

Experience the fragrance of Oriental cuisine as the Thai Pavilion celebrates a legacy of 25 years and the House of Ming celebrates 40 years of culinary excellence. Try dishes such as Koong Yang Rad 'Preaw-ped', Som tam, Gaeng ped kai, Tahu kratiem prik Thai and Tub tim grob.

VENUE: The Taj Mahal Hotel, 1, Mansingh Road

TIME: 12:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.;
7:30 p.m. - 11:45 p.m.



FILM

Friday Night Flicks

Friday Night Flicks 2.0 celebrates the monthly theme of LGBT rights with a screening of the film *The Kids are Alright*. Created in 2010, the film centres on a lesbian marriage. Directed by Lisa Cholodenko, the film cast includes Annette Bening, Julianne Moore and Mark Ruffalo.

VENUE: American Center, 24, Kasturba Gandhi Marg

TIME: 6 p.m.



F&B

Bleed Blue

With World Cup fever at its height, cheer team India with a live screening of matches on the giant screen at Cove-The Bar. While watching the match, relish delicacies specially curated for the cricketing championship like Bumrah Chicken Wings, Mahi Tikka, Kholi ki Toli, Gayle ka Khel and Smith Slider.

VENUE: Cove-The Bar, Radisson Blu, Faridabad

TIME: 3 p.m. - 11 p.m.



MUSIC

Project Raag

Enjoy the soulful music of Project Raag, with band members Pratham Tandon on the keyboard, Mohit Arya on guitar, Deepak Malik as lead vocalist and Avinash Kumar, on the drums. Inspired by many different styles, the band has evolved their own distinct flavour. There are beverages and nibbles on offer too.

VENUE: SCO, Sector 29, Gurugram

TIME: 9 p.m. onwards

Tales pixels tell

Sanath PC on why visual effects artists should be involved in the filmmaking process from the get-go



APARNA NARRAIN

Sanath PC is easily spotted in a crowd, thanks to his rather distinctive appearance. Tall and with a flowing beard, he cuts an imposing figure. In reality though, the unassuming National Award winner (through his company Firefly Creative Studio) gets animated only when discussing visual effects, films and more.

The visual effects artist sat down for a chat after his talk at the Bengaluru GAFX meet. It was in 2002 that he along with Phani Eggone and Nagesh HN – all graduates of National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, founded Firefly in Hyderabad. Since then, the company has worked on effects for *Anji*, (which won the National Award), *Maghadheera*, *Eega*, *Enthiran*, *Jersey* and *Baahubali*.

Emphasising the need for visual effects artists being more involved in the filmmaking process, he says, "We are using VFX to tell stories, not just to make things look good. So, once you know the story

and understand the feelings, you can figure out how to manipulate it better. For instance if someone asks for tiger, I would want to know why they want a tiger. Is to scare somebody, is the tiger scared, is it wounded or old?"

So, would that mean having in-depth discussions with the director and DOP (Director of Photography) even before filming starts?

Sanath says, "Everybody sees VFX as a post (production) process. But if the director says I want this (scene or background) in red, the VFX person/team should take an extra step to understand why. The director will have a particular reason but as the visual effects artist, you may have a different suggestion. It is all about the emotional connect. As VFX artists, we should try and understand the emotional side so that we can make a proper contribution to the film."

He adds that though the audience is exposed to a lot of FX-heavy Hollywood films, one should not make the mistake of comparing the Indian film industry with Hollywood. "You should compare the storytelling,"

says Sanath and adds, "There is a lot lacking in terms of people talking about the history of our films. Anything to do with visual effects and immediately, Hollywood is the benchmark."

To the question of whether there is more scope to use VFX in epics such as *Baahubali* or *KGF*, Sanath says: "Anything larger than life gives maximum scope for VFX. Even when we did *Anji* (2004), people thought that if you wanted *VFX* done realistically, it had to be done abroad. It was a huge surprise for the local industry that it could be done in India. When we got the National Award, it got a little more attention. For *Chatrapathi*, we animated a shark in an underwater sequence. That was unthinkable at that point of time."

Then came *Magadheera*, and *Eega* where the character itself was CGI. The entire point is to do something that people think can't be done. Even with *KGF*, nobody expected that in Kannada films. Visually, it is quite different."

However, the audience may not even realise certain elements have been created digitally. During his

talk, Sanath mentioned that people don't even realise 40% of the effects. This was highlighted as he explained that in *Jersey* (2019), the cricket stadium was digitally rendered, complete with a cheering crowd. But why not use an actual stadium?

"There are a lot of grounds where people practise cricket that are a lot cheaper and accessible. Getting permission for a stadium is difficult and even if you get permission there are a lot of restrictions regarding movement, and crowd control is difficult. This way, we are able to sort out all these problems."

Sanath said while creating CGI, you still have to ensure the action is physically possible. For example, in *Enthiran* (2010), multiple Chittis (Rajinikanth) come together to first form a huge ball, a large python and finally, a giant.

"Sometimes when watching a film, you may have the thought that 'oh, this doesn't look real'. If you are engrossed in the story and suddenly, something doesn't work, it takes you out of the film. So, if I am inserting something digitally into an environment, I have to follow all the rules of that environment," he says.

He adds, "When we were talking about the Chittis forming the ball, we discussed how the joints will work, how the robots will be connected. All that needed to be worked on. The moment you do that, it looks more real. The layperson may not know why it doesn't work but if it doesn't, they will be the first to know, especially with regard to perspective."

As for what he is working on at present, Sanath says, "We are working on the Surya-starrer *Kappaan*, a Kannada film and doing world building for a different series on *Baahubali*."

He adds, "We are trying to push the boundaries in terms of what has not been done before and take Indian films to the world."

As for whether that means, having more Indian-centric and digging into our own history and culture, he says, "If you try to make a film like them (Hollywood), it will be just like their films. If you want to outdo them, you should show and talk about the things that they cannot. That takes effort, conviction, trial and error."

We couldn't agree more.

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



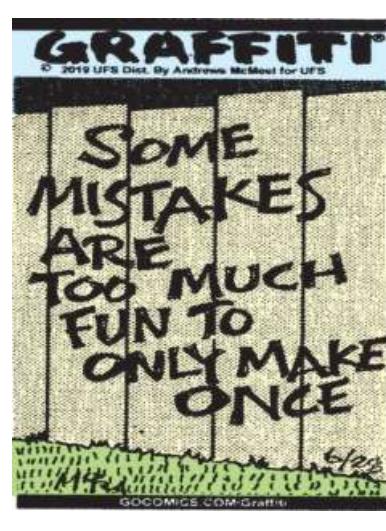
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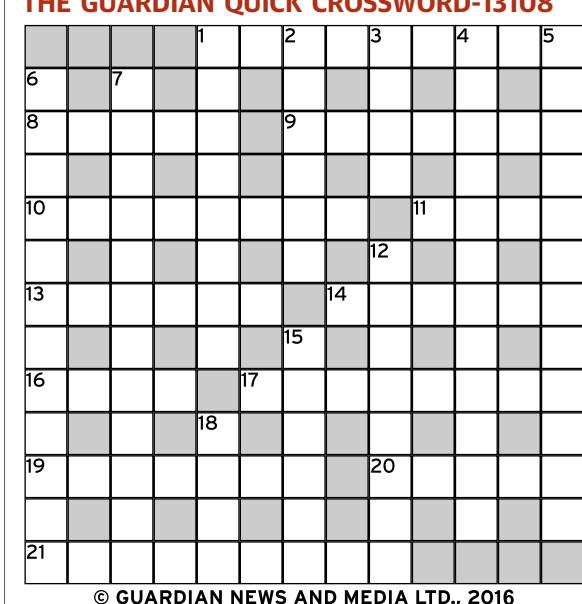
CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13108

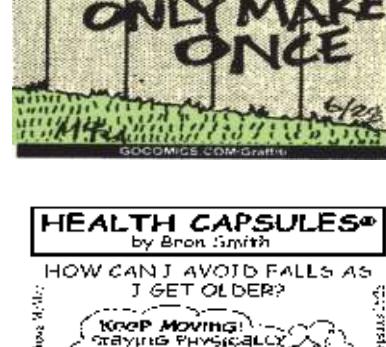
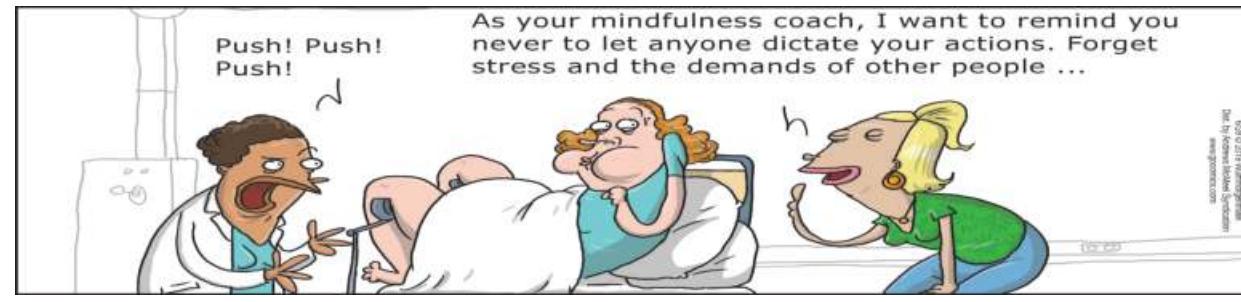


- 4 Make a lot of noise (5,3,4)
5 Polite (4-8)
6 Payment of money from a fund (12)
7 Coastal resort city in southern California (5,7)
12 Vision (8)
15 Easy task (6)
18 In addition (4)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated June 29, 2019.

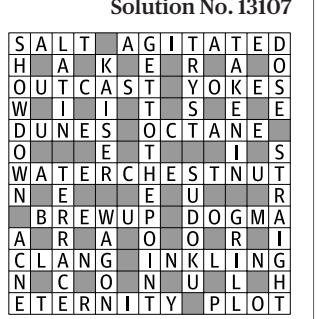
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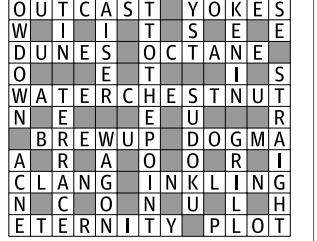


- Across
1 Bottle opener (9)
8 Adult insect post-metamorphosis (5)
9 Warlike (7)
10 Incidentally (2,3,3)
11 Group of players (4)
13 Eraser (6)
14 Heavy non-venomous snake (6)
15 MacDonald, first British Labour PM (6)
16 Auditory organs (4)

■ Down
1 Confined to a small space (8)
2 Macdonald, first British Labour PM (6)
3 Certain (4)



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



IN BRIEF



Vicky Kaushal to play role of Sam Manekshaw

MUMBAI Actor Vicky Kaushal is all set to portray 1971 war hero Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw in an upcoming biographical film *Sam* to be directed by Meghna Gulzar. The actor tweeted the news along with a picture on the 11th death anniversary of the Army veteran on Thursday. PTI



535 'phone walkers' killed by Dhaka trains

DHAKA A total of 535 people have been killed since 2010 after being hit by trains while wearing headphones on tracks in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka, police said on Thursday. Fatalities hit a record high in 2014 when 109 people died. AFP



Spain wildfire rages amid Europe heatwave

BARCELONA A Spanish forest fire raged out of control on Thursday amid a European heatwave, devouring land as hundreds of fire-fighters battled through the night, local authorities said. The blaze has destroyed over 13,500 acres so far. AFP

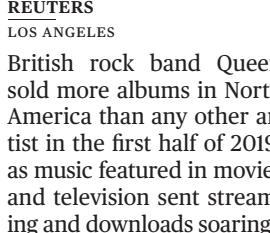


Viral video shows lucky catch of falling toddler

ISTANBUL A viral video has turned a young man into a hero in Istanbul after he was seen catching a toddler as she plummeted from a second-floor window. 17-year-old Fawzi Zabaat stepped in right on time to catch the child as she fell. AFP

Bohemian Rhapsody makes magic for Queen

Film leads to music sales soaring



Freddie Mercury during a performance in 1986. ■ AP

open the Oscars when it kicked off the annual ceremony in Hollywood with a live performance of *We Will Rock You* and *We Are The Champions*.

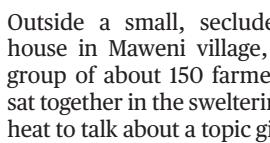
Lady Gaga and actor-director Bradley Cooper's steamy performance on the Oscars stage of their winning duet *Shallow* from *A Star Is Born* also sent sales soaring.

The romantic ballad has seen some 648,000 digital song downloads so far this year, the report said.

Queen in February became the first rock band to

Peace ambassadors' ease water conflicts in Kenya

Teach villagers about sustainable farming and how to share resources



Outside a small, secluded house in Maweni village, a group of about 150 farmers sat together in the sweltering heat to talk about a topic giving them all sleepless nights: water.

Martin Muasya, one of the farmers, spoke about a phys-

ical fight he had with a neighbour four years ago, when they both thought each was stealing water from the other.

"I not only broke my jerry can, but we also held a grudge for almost a year, with each blocking the way so that one could not trespass on the other's farm in

search of water," he said.

Across Kenya's arid and semi-arid regions, communities face intensifying water shortages, as growing populations draw water from sources already depleted by climate change-linked drought.

The stress of competing for water can lead to conflict that ranges from neighbours trading punches to attacks between rival tribes that

leave dozens of Kenyans dead each year.

That is why the farmers in Tharaka Nithi County in central Kenya had gathered to hear "ambassador of peace" Tabitha Kaburi explain how to conserve water and, hopefully, stop the fighting.

Kaburi is part of a project run by the non-profit Strategies for Agro-Pastoralists' Development Kenya (SAPAD Kenya).

It teaches volunteers, dubbed "ambassadors of peace", about sustainable farming and conflict resolution, then sends them out to take those lessons into rural communities.

The idea is that the volunteers show farmers how to do more with less water, removing the need to fight over the dwindling resource, explained SAPAD executive director Zaverio Chabari.

"Water shortages are a jeopardy in the region, but if the communities are well informed, the threat can slowly be curbed and lead to peaceful communities," said Mr. Chabari.

Selfies are five times deadlier than shark attacks

Global study finds that the most number of deaths in accidents while clicking photos were in India

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

RIO DE JANEIRO

Selfies, which have become a global sensation in the last decade or so, have remarkably killed five times more people than shark attacks.

And the death toll has crept up incrementally each year as smartphones become more sophisticated and selfie-sticks increase the range at which people can snap themselves, prompting them to take bigger risks for the perfect shot.

Between October 2011 and November 2017, at least 259 people died taking selfies around the globe, according to the *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, compared to just 50 people killed by sharks in the same period.

While women take the most selfies, young men, who are more prone to take risks, make up three quarters of the selfie deaths – in drownings, crashes, falls or shooting accidents.



Tricky spot: Young women taking a selfie on a Mumbai beach. ■ AP

India, with a population of more than 1.3 billion and 800 million cell phones, holds the record for the number of people dying in the act of photographing themselves, with 159 recorded so far.

That is more than half of the global total – and a testament of sorts to the nation's love of group photos and its

youthful population. The situation has become so dire that the country has set up "no selfie" zones – 16 of them in the city of Mumbai alone. The country came in far ahead of Russia (16 deaths), the United States (14) and Pakistan.

In Russia, people have fallen from bridges and high-rise buildings, shot themselves or even died while handling a land mine. Police issued a guide to "selfies without danger" in 2015.

In the United States, most of those involved in selfie deaths fatally shot themselves while seeking the perfect pose. A number of people have fallen to their deaths at the Grand Canyon.

Rescue services in Croatia

used Twitter to ask tourists to "stop taking stupid and dangerous selfies" after a Canadian miraculously survived a 75-metre fall in the Plitvice lakes region.

In January, Taiwanese social media celebrity Gigi Wu – known as the "Bikini Climber" for taking selfies on top of mountain peaks dressed in a bikini – died when she fell into a ravine.

Macabre mode

Even when they are not fatal, selfies can be extremely macabre. In 2014, a Brazilian woman sparked rage online when she took a smiling selfie in front of the coffin of presidential candidate Eduardo Campos at his funeral.

Selfies in places deemed sacred or hallowed – especially when they honour the dead – can also raise questions.

At the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz in Poland, visited by 2.1 million

people every year, museum staff do not hesitate to contact people who post selfies deemed to be inappropriate.

From Brazil to Vietnam and Germany, witnesses to traffic accidents have posted selfies at the scene of the crash.

More and more, selfies – even in tourist havens – are becoming a bit of a nuisance for locals.

Residents of the picturesque Rue Cremieux in Paris were so disturbed by the constant stream of selfie-snapping tourists outside their windows that they started their own Instagram account, *clubcremieux*, where they publish pictures of the most absurd posers outside their doors, skewering them with barbed captions.

The same thing happened in Hong Kong, where residents of the vast multi-colored Quarry Bay apartment complex put up signs banning photos.



Oxford honour for Poonawalla

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON Cyrus Poonawalla, founder and Chairman of the Serum Institute of India, received an honorary degree from the University of Oxford for his work in the field of life-saving vaccines and philanthropy.

Mr. Poonawalla was awarded his degree on Wednesday at the world-famous university's annual Encaenia academic ceremony alongside Pakistani singer Rahat Fateh Ali Khan as part of a total 2019 cohort of eight honorary degrees.

Lost Delacroix painting resurfaces

The picture was a preliminary study for the more famous *Women of Algiers*

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS

It's been hanging on people's walls for almost 170 years without drawing much attention, but a painting showing a group of women has turned out to be more than meets the eye.

The most recent owner of the picture, a Parisian woman, has found out that what she has is a long-forgotten painting by 19th century French Romantic artist Eugène Delacroix.

"A woman walked into the gallery with a painting under her arm, telling me she'd just visited the Delacroix exhibit at the Louvre Museum ... and that she thought her painting shared some resemblance" with the artist's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, said Philippe Mendes, director of the Mendes Gallery in Paris.

"I took a look at the painting, which was dirty and with a very thick yellow varnish, but I felt it had Delacroix's very particular style. So I said, let's clean the



Philippe Mendes with the Delacroix work. ■ AP

painting and let's see what comes out of it," he told in an interview.

"After we cleaned it, the radiant and extraordinary colours typical of Delacroix really stood out and we knew we had to start doing some real research."

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lours, compared it with other Delacroix paintings, then used infra-red and X-ray images to look deeper.

After more than a year of examination, her verdict: the painting is a Delacroix work, a study for *Women of Algiers*. The study was sold at auction in 1850 and hadn't been shown in public since.

She called it a discovery "of prime importance, because it really is a gateway into the artist's mind right at the moment" he was working on *Women of Algiers*.

The painting bears no Delacroix signature, since it is only a study, she said but does bear a stamp at the back of the canvas reading "II8".

That matches the number listed for the study in the catalogue of paintings sold at auction in 1850 by the Count de Mornay, a diplomat who sponsored Delacroix's trip to North Africa, Mendes said. Lot II8 was bought for a private collection, and its subsequent movements aren't known.

Vespersaurus paranaensis used its claws to capture prey

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

SAO PAULO

A desert-based carnivorous dinosaur that used claws to capture small prey 90 million years ago has been unearthed in southern Brazil.

Just over a metre and a half in length, the fossil remains of the *Vespersaurus paranaensis* were found in Cruzeiro do Oeste municipality of Paraná state, a team of palaeontologists from Brazil and Argentina said in a statement.

The *Vespersaurus* was a theropod, a group of two-footed, meat-eating dinosaurs that included the better known *Tyrannosaurus* and *Velociraptor*.

Footprints now believed to belong to this new species of dinosaur were discovered in Cruzeiro do Oeste in the 1970s. "It's incredible that, nearly 50 years later, it seems that we have discovered what type of dinosaur would have produced those



Rare find: An expert working on the fossilised bones of a dinosaur in Maringá in Brazil. ■ AFP/UEM

enigmatic footprints," said Paulo Manzig of the Palaeontology Museum of Cruzeiro do Oeste. The northeastern region of Paraná was once a desert and the dinosaur's remains suggest that the *Vespersaurus* was well adapted to that type of climate.

Other dinosaur species have been found there and, according to the scientists, the latest discovery must "catapult" palaeontological investigations in the region.

"It is a rich but little explored area that would surely bring great news to the world of palaeontology," said Neurides Martins of the Palaeontology Museum of Cruzeiro do Oeste.

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