

Outsiders behind Gargi College incident, HRD Minister tells LS

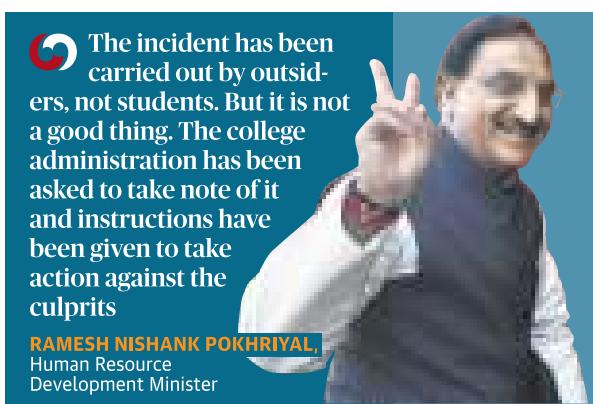
Investigation is under way and college has been told to take action, says Pokhriyal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The culprits in the alleged sexual harassment of students at Gargi College were "outsiders", Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Nishank Pokhriyal told the Lok Sabha on Monday. He said the college administration has been told to take action.

All India Mahila Congress president Sushmita Dev pulled up Mr. Pokhriyal for "inaction" with regard to violence in educational institutions, noting that it was not enough to say that outsiders were involved as the ones behind the attacks are those with right-wing ideology.

'Painful episode'
Mr. Pokhriyal made his statement on the incident in response to a supplementary question from Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi during the Lok Sabha Question Hour. Mr. Gogoi noted that one of the reasons for high-levels of stress in educational institutions is cases of sexual harassment and bullying, and referred specifically to the "painful episode" of men entering a women's college fe-



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RAMESH NISHANK POKHRIAL,
Human Resource Development Minister

tival and harassing them.

"What instructions the Ministry has given to institutions of higher education with respect to monitoring, supervision and resolution of sexual harassment and bullying cases? What steps will the Ministry take so that the girls of Gargi College feel safe and reassured?" asked Mr. Gogoi.

The Minister responded, saying that the alleged harassment was being investigated. "The incident has been carried out by outsiders, not students. But it is not a good thing. The college administration has been asked to take note of it and instructions have been given to take action against the culprits,"

She noted that the college

administration had blamed the victims for being unable to ensure their own safety, while the police and security watched as goons barged into the college and molested the students. Ms. Dev also pointed to the recent attacks against students and teachers of the Jawaharlal Nehru University as another instance of police and government inaction although there is "insurmountable evidence" showing who is to blame.

The All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), a Left-affiliated group, also criticised the attitude of authorities to the harassment at Gargi College, allegedly by a group of pro CAA protesters...who were drunk and shouted Jai Shri Ram slogans."

"AIDWA is appalled to learn that the college authorities to no notice of the complaints of the girls. AIDWA demands that the police takes cognisance of the incident and immediately bring the culprits to book. It also demands that the university look into the insensitive and irresponsible behaviour of the Gargi college authorities," it added.

She said. In a letter addressed to the Minister, Ms. Dev said the HRD Ministry has only responded with silence or mere lip service. "It is not enough to say attackers came from outside. Evidence has also come to light that the people responsible for this attack are from a particular ideology which points to a right-wing mindset but no action has been forthcoming to prevent these incidents or take action against the administration or the authorities, which not only disheartens us but also casts serious aspersions on the independence of the functioning of your Ministry," she wrote.

She noted that the college



Women students protesting inside the Gargi College campus on Monday. • PTI

Gargi College students protest inside campus, seek principal's resignation

They claim auto drivers were part of mob that entered premises

KASHISH VIKRAM SINGH
NEW DELHI

Scores of students of the all-women Gargi College on Monday held a protest against the alleged molestation of girls by a group of men who had gatecrashed a cultural festival, demanding strict action against the intruders.

The incident had happened on February 6.

Raising slogans of "Halla Bol", the students said they were harassed "at a place which was meant to feel safe". A student said: "Why were there no guards on campus when the incident took place? We demand the resignation of principal Promila

who park their vehicles outside the college gates, had entered the campus.

"There was a complete lapse of security. The students were molested and assaulted by the men who appeared to be in their mid-30s. The college had claimed to have made security arrangements. I don't think such an incident has taken place on any college campus in the country," a student added.

The students' body said they want a safe place for themselves and "this is one thing which the administration has done nothing about for the last two years".

(With PTI inputs)

Railways acts on plea in HC on medical benefits to adopted kids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Railways on Monday told the Delhi High Court it was "actively considering" the grievance raised in a PIL regarding restriction in medical benefits to adopted children of its employees and a "positive" direction was expected to be taken to address the issue.

The submission was made before a Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar by the lawyer appearing for the Railways. In view of the statement made by the Railways' lawyer, the court listed the matter for further hearing on May 1.

The Bench was hearing the plea by an NGO which has alleged that the Railways was "discriminating" against adopted children of its employees by providing medical benefits to only the first adopted child, whereas there is no such restriction in the case of biological kids.

NGO Families of Joy Foundation, in its petition, has sought a direction to the Indian Railways to extend the medical benefits to all and any number of adopted children of its employees.



Masked miscreants armed with sticks inside JNU on January 5. • FILE PHOTO: PTI

Teachers write to police over inaction in JNU violence case

No information on investigation: JNTUA

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Teachers' Association (JNTUA) on Monday wrote to Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik over inaction regarding the January 5 incident where students and teachers of the university were attacked by a masked mob.

Democratic rights
Stating that apart from the initial press conference held by the police, there was no further information on the investigation, the JNTUA wrote: "It appears to be a part of a larger pattern where the police is more proactive in restraining the exercise of democratic rights by citizens in the name of maintaining law and order than it is in protecting these rights from being threatened by lawless mobs.

"All of these have been brought to the knowledge of the police in the form of several complaints by teachers," the letter read.

Stating that a "mood of insecurity continues to prevail at JNU," it said: "It is up to the Delhi Police to alay these suspicions of JNU's teachers by taking swift action on the complaints lodged with them, convert them into FIRs and bringing the perpetrators of the mob violence and those who assisted them, to book."

The JNTUA reiterated that on January 5, several teachers were assaulted and attacked by the mob.

The court said, for the time being, examinations will be conducted in the matter as indicated in the minutes of meeting of Board of Studies of the schools and special centres having regard to the fact that the monsoon semester needs to be closed at the earliest.

Central Government Standing Counsel Monika Arora, representing JNU, argued that in various schools of the university, exams have already been conducted via regular mode and some have done it through the alternate mode.

The counsel, appearing for petitioner teachers and students, said they were willing to accept it in this semester due to the time constraints.

HC seeks JNU reply on pleas over take-home examination

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday asked the Jawaharlal Nehru University to respond to petitions challenging its decision to hold online open-book or take-home exams for the monsoon semester.

Justice Rajiv Shakher issued notice to JNU administration on two separate petitions and listed the matter for hearing on August 6.

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Police, protesters clash during march against CAA

Stand-off lasts nearly seven hours as citizens refuse to budge despite repeated appeals to disperse by police, Jamia Millia Islamia authorities

SHINJINI GHOSH
SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Hundreds of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) students and residents of nearby areas were on Monday stopped by the police from taking out a march to Parliament against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), leading to a seven-hour stand off during which scuffles broke out between protesters and security personnel.

The protesters began their march, called by the Jamia Coordination Committee, at noon from the university's Gate No. 7, which has seen anti-CAA demonstrations since the last two months. The Delhi Police has maintained that the organisers had not been granted permission to carry out the rally.

When the protesters were stopped near Holy Family Hospital, they started climbing over the police barricades. They were, however, swiftly dragged down by the security personnel.

During the seven-hour stand-off, protesters kept shouting slogans as security personnel in riot gear tried to contain the situation.

Some protesters held up banners reading: "Where is Ko-



An unconscious protester being taken to safety; police beat back students during the scuffle near Holy Family Hospital on Monday. ■ BIBEK CHETTRI, PTI



mal?". A reference to the January 5 incident that took place at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) where a masked mob attacked students and faculty members. One of the suspects is named Komal.

The protesters stood their ground despite repeated appeals from authorities, including the JMI Chief Proctor Waheed Ahmad Khan. "The message has been sent. Your

protest has been registered. I appeal to the students in the crowd to go back to the university. Respect the law and go back," Mr. Khan said.

Delhi Police officials, perched on barricades themselves, also appealed to the protesters to return to Gate No. 7, which has been the epicentre of anti-CAA protests in the area.

Towards late afternoon, the situation turned confrontational

as security personnel tried to push the protesters back, while resorting to crowd-control measures. During the scuffle, many protesters fell unconscious.

Khurshid, a middle-aged protester who was one of the people that had to be dragged out of the crowd, said: "The police tried to hit me on my legs with lathis. We will continue protesting as we will not show our documents even if we have them. We are not

ready to go anywhere."

Shivangi Bhasin, another protester, said: "I was on my way to Shaheen Bagh but came here after receiving an SOS message. It is really surprising that the police are asking protesters to be peaceful while they are the ones being brutal. It is important for us to be present here in solidarity."

Devesh Srivastava, Joint CP (Southern Range), said: "Total

nine students, including two girls, were detained and released after an hour. It all ended peacefully."

He added that the police has not used any force on protesters and were "only pushed back" by security forces and prevented from climbing on barricades.

As the crowd started swelling near Sukhdev Vihar metro station, the DMRC closed the entry and exit gates to the station.



Take action against illegal pubs, eateries in Hauz Khas: HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has said if any pubs, restaurants or bars are running illegally in south Delhi's Hauz Khas Village, action should be initiated against them by the authorities after giving hearing to the owners or occupiers.

The direction issued by an HC Bench came while disposing of a PIL by a lawyer who had alleged that over 120 restaurants and pubs were running in Hauz Khas Village without any approved building plans or no objection certificate (NOC) from authorities, including the fire department.

"We hereby direct respondent 1 to 5 [Centre, Delhi government and civic bodies] to look into the grievances ventilated in this petition and if any illegal pubs, restaurants, bars, etc. are being run in the area, action shall be initiated by respondent 1 to 5 in accordance with law, rules, regulations and government policy applicable to the facts of the present case after giving an adequate opportunity of being heard to the concerned owner/occupier of the premises in question," it said.

The action be initiated as early as possible and practicable, the court said.

Hundreds march to Jantar Mantar against citizenship law

Brother of Sharjeel Imam, arrested on sedition charges, participated in the rally that went off peacefully

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Hundreds of protesters, including students and civil society members, poured onto the streets in central Delhi on Monday to protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The protesters, carrying placards and banners, converged at Mandi House around 11 a.m. and started marching towards Jantar Mantar and reached the site around noon via Barakhambha Road and Tolstoy Road.

Walking side by side

A large number of police and paramilitary personnel walked along with them.

The protest call was given by the Welfare Party of India.

"The protesters do not have permission to take out a march, but as long as they maintain peace, we do not have a problem," a police officer said. The protesters, however, claimed that they had the permission and would march till Jantar Mantar.

Children as young as 10, senior citizens, civil society



Anti-CAA protesters march from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar on Monday. ■ PTI

members and university students took part in the rally.

Mohammad Shareef, who came from Kanpur, said his son Mohammad Rais (30) was shot dead by the police while returning home after offering namaz. "On December 20, Rais was returning home after offering namaz.

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The protesters carried the photographs of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad and social reformer Savitribai Phule, and demanded that the government revoke the

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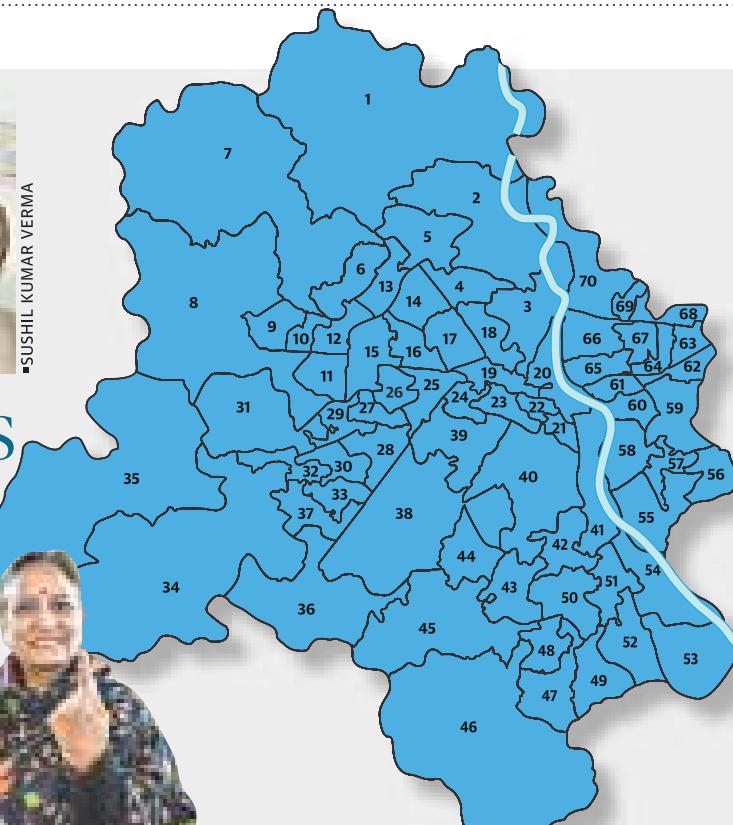
visited my house to ask how we are. The police misbehaved with us," he added.

The protesters carried the photographs of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad and social reformer Savitribai Phule, and demanded that the government revoke the

He used to sell 'papad' and also worked in a marriage hall. There was a commotion that day and Rais started running when the police shot him."

"The people from the locality took him to my house and I rushed him to a hospital. Not a single person has

visited my house to ask how we are. The police misbehaved with us," he added



The high-stakes game

The February 8 election is largely seen as a battle between the ruling Aam Aadmi Party and the BJP. As Delhi gets ready for the results to be announced today, here is a break-up of constituency-wise voter turnout during the current and the 2015 Assembly elections:

	CONSTITUENCY	2015 (IN %)	2020 (IN %)
1	Narela	66.51	64.98
2	Burari	67.76	61.12
3	Timarpur	66.83	60.77
4	Adarsh Nagar	66.68	59.64
5	Badli	63.76	63.51
6	Rithala	66.43	59.24
7	Bawana	61.81	61.60
8	Mundka	63.00	59.24
9	Kirari	65.27	63.30
10	Sultanpur Majra	67.97	63.75
11	Nangloi Jat	63.70	56.70
12	Mangolpuri	72.07	66.33
13	Rohini	68.79	63.02
14	Shalimar Bagh	68.89	61.62
15	Shakur Basti	71.90	67.66
16	Tri Nagar	71.19	66.36
17	Zazipur	68.42	60.30
18	Model Town	67.86	59.35
19	Sadar Bazar	71.90	66.70
20	Chandni Chowk	65.45	61.03
21	Matia Mahal	69.29	70.38
22	Ballimaran	67.95	71.58
23	Karol Bagh	68.44	60.44
24	Patel Nagar	68.11	60.84

	CONSTITUENCY	2015 (IN %)	2020 (IN %)
25	Moti Nagar	69.57	61.81
26	Madipur	71.30	65.59
27	Rajouri Garden	72.36	61.80
28	Hari Nagar	68.28	61.51
29	Tilak Nagar	70.63	63.76
30	Janakpuri	71.43	65.57
31	Vikaspuri	65.12	59.27
32	Uttam Nagar	71.12	63.94
33	Dwarka	67.74	61.97
34	Matiala	66.92	61.13
35	Najafgarh	68.94	64.41
36	Bijwasan	63.38	61.82
37	Palam	64.99	63.30
38	Delhi Cantt.	58.57	45.36
39	Rajinder Nagar	62.95	58.27
40	New Delhi	64.68	52.15
41	Jangpura	64.28	60.52
42	Kasturba Nagar	66.51	59.67
43	Malviya Nagar	66.51	58.71
44	R.K. Puram	64.11	56.62
45	Mehrauli	62.75	56.53
46	Chhatarpur	67.32	64.48
47	Deoli	67.58	63.43
48	Ambedkar Nagar	69.76	64.03

	CONSTITUENCY	2015 (IN %)	2020 (IN %)
49	Sangam Vihar	66.67	62.16
50	Greater Kailash	66.66	59.94
51	Kalkaji	64.84	57.44
52	Tughlakabad	66.35	60.77
53	Badarpur	65.32	59.63
54	Okhla	60.93	58.84
55	Trilokpuri	71.70	66.48
56	Kondli	70.15	67.01
57	Patparganj	65.43	61.28
58	Laxmi Nagar	67.17	61.48
59	Vishwas Nagar	68.88	62.23
60	Krishna Nagar	72.24	67.31
61	Gandhi Nagar	66.71	62.42
62	Shahdara	69.58	65.80
63	Seema Puri	73.23	68.09
64	Rohtas Nagar	70.65	67.47
65	Seelampur	71.78	71.22
66	Ghonda	66.80	63.63
67	Babarpur	66.97	65.45
68	Gokal Puri	74.19	70.51
69	Mustafabad	70.80	70.55
70	Karawal Nagar	69.82	67.36
	TOTAL	67.13	62.59

SOURCE: ECI STATISTICAL REPORT AND DATA RELEASED BY THE DELHI CEO



■ R MOORTHY

Assembly polls: tight security in place ahead of counting today

Curiosity heightened as outcome of elections to unseal fate of 672 candidates



Preparations in full swing at a counting centre in Akshardham on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

Tight security arrangements have been put in place at various centres across the national capital where the counting of votes polled in the February 8 Assembly elections will take place on Tuesday.

The curiosity among people to know the outcome of the elections to the 70-member Delhi Assembly has heightened post-exit polls, that has forecast a big win for the ruling AAP, and the delay in announcement of the final voter turnout by authorities.

The election, seen as a contest between AAP and the BJP, which went aggres-

Authorities in the Delhi CEO office are gearing up for the counting of votes and adequate arrangements have been made at the centres spread across 21 locations in the national capital, spanning 11 districts, officials said.

Exit polls on Saturday predicted an easy win for AAP, which sought to retain power on development plank, against the BJP that ran an aggressive campaign centred around the issues of anti-CAA protests and nationalism. Most exit polls also predicted that Congress is unlikely to open its account even this time in Delhi, which it ruled from 1998-2013.

Sunday announced that the final voter turnout was 62.59%, 5% less than 2015, and asserted that it followed the laid down process to compile data, after AAP questioned the "delay".

Nearly 24 hours after the polling ended in Delhi, the Election Commission on

BJP refrains from making arrangements for celebrations

Exit polls predicted a sweep by AAP, but Tiwari exudes confidence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

On the eve of Delhi Assembly election results here on Monday, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), exuded confidence of its victory though sought to maintain restraint when it came to preparations for celebrations amid exit poll results predicting a sweep by the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

Speaking on condition of anonymity, Delhi BJP leaders said that no special arrangements were made in advance for celebrations if the party wins the elections.

However, Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari asserted that his party would claim more than 45 seats in the 70-member Legislative Assembly and



Manoj Tiwari

Our confidence is based on a micro analysis of all the seats. The exit polls are rough estimates and I am confident that the BJP will form the government..

MANOJ TIWARI

Delhi BJP chief

form the next government.

"Our confidence is based on a micro analysis of all the seats. The exit polls are rough estimates and I, along with the rest of the party, am confident that the BJP will form the government in Delhi with full majority," Mr. Tiwari said.

The exit poll results aired

immediately after the voting concluded on Saturday evening predicted a defeat for the BJP while giving the maximum number of seats to AAP. According to Delhi BJP's media relations head Neelkant Bakshi, an "in-depth analysis" of all the seats showed that the party was ahead of AAP.

Plea seeks ban on tobacco products

9 years after killing man, wife and two others get life term

Court imposes ₹2 lakh fine on each of them

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday asked the Centre and the Delhi government to respond to a plea seeking a complete ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar also issued notice to the Delhi State Commission for Protection of Child Rights seeking their stand on the plea which has alleged child labour in a company engaged in tobacco products in the Capital.

The petition by one Dipesh Jha has alleged that the company was engaged in manufacture, packaging, marketing and sale of 'khaini', in violation of statutory provisions. The petitioner has contended that the alleged "illegal activities" by the company include surrogate advertisement, not paying minimum wages to its workers, child labour, tax evasion and pollution.

men in her room. One man, who had a pointed object in his hand, held her while the other restrained her husband, the complaint stated.

It further said that one of them hit her head against the wall due to which she fell unconscious. When she regained consciousness, she saw her husband lying in a pool of blood. Thereafter, some of the neighbours heard her cries for help and rescued her, the complaint added.

However, during investigation, police scrutinised Kaur's call records and found that she had planned the murder and arrested her.

Kaur, Nehra and Dixit were arrested on September 23, 2011. The couple's 13-year old daughter has been residing with her maternal grandparents since the incident and a case was pending between the maternal and paternal grandparents regarding her guardianship.

Uzbekistan craftsmen impress all at Surajkund fair

Country participates in the ongoing 34th edition of festival; artisans bring age-old secrets of their art

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

FARIDABAD

Uzbekistan has participated in the ongoing 34th edition of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela here as the 'partner nation' in a big way. A number of artisans, craftspersons and performers have come to this mega event from this country and presented a bouquet of their art and craft.

Uzbekistan has a unique position in the world of handicrafts, as the Uzbeks themselves say that their crafts are the soul of their identity and culture. Artistic crafts occupy a special place in Uzbekistan's cultural heritage. After meeting a few craftspersons one gets a feeling as to how these artisans have passed down the age old secrets of their art through generations. From wood work to decorative items, the ethnic patterns have been carefully preserved by these masters of art.

The artisans have brought ceramics which can easily be considered one of the best applied arts from this central Asian country. The Oriental and Persian styled designs and bright turquoise colours reflect an infinite beauty which these ceramic decorations hold. The often used blue and white colour represent sky and water and are believed to bring happiness and prosperity.

What's on display?

Nigmatov Mirsaid from Uzbekistan is displaying his intricately designed wood work in the form of pencil boxes that secretly turn into a vanity box with its hidden features. Many other wood

crafted items are painted with scenes of everyday life, quotes from famous poets and Islamic inscriptions often appear in their art work. Their cheerful colours, fine lines and delicate forms are highly impressive.

Clay toys depict life of the countryside in Uzbekistan and often illustrate the simplicity and happiness. Each region in Uzbekistan produces its own range of toys with original motifs.

Carpet making is an age-old craft in Uzbekistan and many craftspersons have brought these masterpieces to the Suraj-

kund Mela. The high level of weaving technique, fabulous natural dyes and ethnic patterns make these Uzbekistan carpets very popular among visitors at the mela.

Seller's pride
The ancient traditions of Uzbek weavers are embodied in carpets, each of which is a real piece of art. A pride for its seller who claims that once bought, it will prove to be an indispensable piece of art for any home décor.

Alkarov Zafar specialises in fabric handicraft and is offering a number of hand-woven fabrics and dress mate-



rials from his native land. The fashion show – 'Fergana Fantasy' – directed by Ritu Beri showcased dresses made out of the same fabric that Alkarov is displaying in the mela.

<p

Timings
DELHI

TUESDAY, FEB. 11
RISE 07:04 SET 18:08
RISE 20:31 SET 08:39
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12
RISE 07:03 SET 18:09
RISE 21:38 SET 09:20
THURSDAY, FEB. 13
RISE 07:02 SET 18:10
RISE 22:42 SET 09:58

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 22 06
Safdarjung 22 06
Palam 21 07

Delhi Palam Today
23°C Moderate fog/mist is likely. Day will be pleasant with sunny sky.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
24°C Dry weather with cold and shallow fog is likely. Day will be pleasant with few clouds.

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Mehbooba's daughter reacts sharply to J&K PSA dossier

Notings described Omar Abdullah as 'radical' and Mehbooba as 'Daddy's girl'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR



The Jammu and Kashmir government's Public Safety Act dossiers against National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah and Peoples Democratic Party leader Mehbooba Mufti describe the former as a man of "radical methodology" and the latter as 14th century queen Kota Rani.

The dossier says that for her "dangerous and insidious machination and usurping nature", Ms. Mufti is referred to as "Daddy's girl" and "Kota Rani" by people. Kota Rani "rose to power by virtue of undertaking intrigues ranging from poisoning of her opponents to panyardings," it reads while mentioned her tweets opposing the Centre's moves on the issue of triple talaq.

The dossier describes her as "a hard-headed" and "scheming person". "Her ac-



NC leader Omar Abdullah

tions have been ranging from speeches glorifying militants to creating fears among the majority population based on cheap politics," it read.

Scores of tweets have been mentioned in the dossier, which the J&K police alleged was aimed at "inciting masses to create issues of disturbance in public order and demoralising security forces by making unscrupulous statements".

Omar Abdullah, who served as an External Affairs Minister in the National Democratic Alliance government under Atal Bihari Vaj-

payee, according to the dossier, removed all curtains and resorted to dirty politics by adopting a radical methodology by way of instigating and provoking the general masses against the policies of the Centre and revocation of Article 370.

"Despite being a mainstream leader, he has been planning and projecting his activities against the union of India under the guise of politics, and while enjoying the support of gullible masses, he has been successful in execution of such activities," it reads.

Surety bonds of AMU students seized by district administration

They were found to be involved in Dec. 15 campus violence'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

The Aligarh district administration has seized the surety bonds of ₹1 lakh each of two students and two former students of AMU which they had signed prior to the December 15 violence on campus, when police action inside the university left several students injured.

Meanwhile, Mr. Abdullah's sister Hinna Abdullah, reacting to the PSA, said: "What are you so scared of?"

Ms. Mufti's daughter Iltija also reacted sharply to the wording of the dossier.

"Since when has being a

present.

While Mr. Sufyan confirmed the notice has been served, Mr. Imtiaz said he was yet to receive it. "I am only an accused right now. The case is in High Court. The bond has been seized on mere apprehension."

On Monday, students condemned the police action against anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protesters in Kanpur and Delhi.

In a related development, denying a report carried in a local newspaper, the AMU administration has clarified that the Vice-Chancellor didn't participate in a video-conference with the U.P. Chief Minister on the situation in the university and the Shahjamal area.

Meanwhile, responding to the ongoing anti-CAA protests in the Shahjamal area of Aligarh, two BJP leaders have made offensive remarks.

MP Satish Gautam said social activist Sumaiyya Rana should go to Pakistan if she

was feeling suffocated in India. He was responding to her comment while addressing protesting women at the Idgah ground of Shahjamal that the Uttar Pradesh government had used coercive measures in bid to crush the anti-CAA stir. Mr. Gautam also said those students who were protesting in Aligarh Muslim University would not be seen in the next session.

Ban burqa: Minister

Earlier, Raghuraj Singh, Minister of State in the Yogi Adityanath government, said during a programme in Aligarh that "burqa should be banned". Tracing the mythology of burqa, Mr. Singh said it was an Arab practice. "Those whose nose was cut by Lakshman [in Ramayana] follow this practice. They are descendants of demons. I request the government to ban burqa because terrorists use them to their advantage," he is purportedly heard saying in a video of the programme.

Sonia's intervention sought to scrap power purchase pacts

AAP leader appeals to Cong. chief to direct Punjab CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Accusing the ruling Congress government in Punjab of not fulfilling its election promise of scrapping or reviewing the Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) with private thermal power plants, which were entered into by the previous SAD-BJP regime.

"But nothing in this direction has been done even though the government is about to complete three years in power," he said.

Govt. favouring firms
In the letter, Mr. Arora said that the AAP has been raising this issue since the formation of the Congress government but instead of acting and safeguarding the interests of the people of the

Pradesh Congress Party had in its 2017 Vidhan Sabha election manifesto promised that the party upon forming government in the State shall scrap or review the Power Purchase Agreements with 3 private thermal power plants, which were entered into by the previous SAD-BJP regime.

Mr. Arora added that even some Congress leaders have demanded scrapping of the power agreements yet the ruling government is indifferent towards the plight of people.

"I seek your intervention into the matter to prevail upon Chief Minister of Punjab to listen to at least his senior party and government colleagues...if not us at AAP, to fulfill his manifesto promise by scrapping these power agreements, else the people of the State will scrap agreement of power given to the Congress in 2022," the AAP leader said in the letter.

To run the "low-cost monitoring units", host institutes will be trained in installing and operating the equipment and in collection and analysis of the collected data.

Saluting a legend



Students paying tribute to Sikh General Sham Singh Attariwala on his 174th martyrdom day, near Amritsar on Monday. ■ PTI

U.S. to monitor air quality in N. India

Move aimed at helping local communities fight pollution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The United States will monitor air quality in multiple locations across North India to help control pollution level, its embassy said in a statement on Monday.

The initiative will cover both urban locations and rural areas and is aimed at helping local communities take remedial measures to deal with the issue of increasing air pollution.

The move came months after the U.S. mission distri-

buted 58 low-cost air-quality monitors and 14 weather stations to the Society for Indoor Environment, an Indian NGO which will be a partner in this project.

The low-cost monitoring is expected to help understand the reasons behind the recent smog-related pollution in North India that was partly blamed on stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana.

These units will be set up in educational institutions in select second and third-tier cities, as well as rural areas,

across North India. The air quality and weather data acquired from these devices will be used to analyse the trends of pollutants outside the major urban centres and build environmental awareness and capacity within smaller communities," the U.S. Embassy said in the release.

To run the "low-cost monitoring units", host institutes

will be trained in installing and operating the equipment and in collection and analysis of the collected data.

BJP fine-tunes Muslim outreach ahead of M.P. polls

Expert says the party's prospects in local body elections in the State this month remain unhurt

SIDDHARTH YADAV
BHOJPAL

The BJP's insouciant response – or the lack of it – to minority members quitting in droves over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, a unique challenge it is grappling with in Madhya Pradesh, has propelled a spiralling spate of resignations in Indore, Bhopal, Khargone, Guna and Satna districts. The biggest shocker was Jabalpur, where 700 members quit, virtually dissolving the cell.

But faced with a sturdy Congress government treadng cautiously on policy matters, recent setback in the Jhabua Assembly by-election and its inability to whip up a sustainable offensive, the BJP has at last shed its reluctance to soothe minority members, with the exigency of the local body elections this month in view.

Denial mode

During January, the BJP's State unit remained in denial mode, looking away from simmering resentment among its Muslim members –

snubbed for flagging their exclusion from awareness drives on the contentious law, communal remarks during rallies and non-addressal of complaints. A sense of betrayal gradually sank in, resulting in more than a thousand resignations in Indore, Bhopal, Khargone, Guna and Satna districts. The biggest shocker was Jabalpur, where 700 members quit, virtually dissolving the cell.

On Saturday, however, when the party's only Muslim corporator in Indore quit over the CAA, its response was different. "If not the backbone, the cell is a major wing of the party. Several leaders have called me and are ready to talk. They said all differences could be resolved amicably," Usman Patel, a member for 40 years, told *The Hindu*.

This contrasts with the party's dismissive response to the resignations of cell's State secretary Akram Khan

convince their elderly, who make decisions for the community and read Urdu," he said. From February 3, the minority cell began hearing out its grassroots workers, explaining the law to them, as "if we don't understand the law ourselves, how will we make others aware?" said the cell's vice-president Nasir Shah.

However, the Muslim retreat, would not hurt BJP's electoral prospects in the local elections, believes Yatinra Singh Sisodia, Director, Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research.

"Muslim population is concentrated in certain pockets of urban areas. The BJP didn't enjoy popular support from the community even before the CAA, which may in fact have consolidated its vote against it," he explained.

As for political dividends for the BJP owing to a possible polarisation on religious lines after the minority mem-

bers quit, he said elections to panchayats and urban bodies were fought primarily on local issues instead. "Candidates contest panchayat elections without using the symbol of a political party yet are endorsed by them. In Madhya Pradesh, the pattern largely has been that results of the Assembly elections are replicated in local elections," he said.

Incomplete loan waiver

"The smaller the electoral college, the more personality-centred the contest," said Rasheed Kidwai, Visiting Fellow, the Observer Research Foundation. "Farmers, irrespective of their religious identity, at present feel the pinch due to an incomplete loan waiver promised by the Congress in the State."

A virtual two-party system in the State however, added Mr. Kidwai, forecloses the BJP option for Muslim aspirants now.

MoU signed for capacity building

The agreement will boost e-government services in Punjab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Punjab's Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration (MGSIPA) and National Institute of Smart Government (NISG) on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding here for capacity building on e-government services in the State.

The MoU facilitates the role NISG can play in the

State's digital transformation through sharing of infrastructure, hardware, specialised personnel and proprietary software in training of civil servants and civil executives of other organisations, in utilising computer and internet-based technologies, an official statement said.

MGSIPA, director K.B.S. Sidhu, said the signing of MoU is first of its kind initiative between MGSIPA and NISG and is sure to lead to similar joint frameworks for finding innovative solutions in a collaborative manner.

Major role of IT sector

"The world today is depending on Information Technology for easier access to information and services. India's IT industry is playing a major role not only in India but all over the world's economic growth," he said.

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NOTICE is hereby given by P C FINANCIAL SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED (hereinafter referred to as "the Company"), incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act, 1956, having its Registered Office at Building RZ-2, Pole No.-3, G/F Kapashera, Near HDFC Bank, New Delhi-110037 (hereinafter referred to as "Registered Office") and having Certificate of Registration bearing no. B-14.02783 dated December 27, 2002, issued by Reserve Bank of India (hereinafter referred to as "RBI"). In pursuant to the Non-Banking Financial Companies (Approval of Acquisition or Transfer of Control) Directions, 2015, prior approval of RBI has been received vide letter dated January 30, 2020, for the proposed appointment of Mr. Raghuvar Gakhar (DIN: 08620998) as Whole-time Director of the Company and consequent change in management of the Company.

The reason for aforesaid mentioned proposed appointment and consequent change in management is to manage the Company's expanding business and to introduce more professionalism in the Company.

A copy of application and approval of RBI is available at the Registered Office of the Company for public view between 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on any working day.

If any person has any objection or concern in respect of the above mentioned proposed appointment or change in management, the same may be communicated in writing within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice to The General Manager, Department of Supervision (NBFC), Reserve Bank of India, 6 Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001, with a copy to the Company at its Registered Office.

For and on behalf of
P C Financial Services Private LimitedSd/-
Raghuvar Gakhar
Proposed Director
DIN: 08620998
Date: February 10, 2020Yash Garg
Company Secretary
Membership No.- A 54005
Place: New Delhi

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Additional Chief Executive Officer

Date: 05/02/2020

Office of the Superintending Engineer, Civil Circle, P.W.D. Devpura Haridwar

Phone/Fax No. 01334-221407, E-Mail id-sewpdharidwar@gmail.com

Letter No. 356/6C-Civil Circle/20

The Superintending Engineer, Civil Circle, PWD, Hardwar, on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites item rate tender through E-Tendering under Two Bid system. All information will be available from date 11.02.2020 and onwards on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

SI. Name of Work

Earliest Money (Rs.
in Lacs)Cost of
Tender
(Rs.)Time of
Completion of
work (in Months)Validity of
Tender
(Days)

Category of Contractor

Sr. No.

Description of Work

Quantity

Rate

Amount

Description of Work

Quantity

CM assures speedy justice in Hinganghat case

24-year-old woman lecturer, who had been critical after being set ablaze by stalker last week, succumbs at Nagpur hospital

TANVI DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has assured speedy justice to the family of the 24-year-old woman lecturer from Hinganghat in Wardha district who succumbed to burn injuries on Monday morning after being set ablaze by a stalker last week.

Addressing mediapersons, Mr. Thackeray expressed grief over the woman's death. He said, "No words are enough to describe the horrors of this incident. I appeal to people to be patient. The government will ensure that the accused is punished for murder. Such criminals have no mercy in Maharashtra, he should get the strictest punishment."

He added, "We are following up to ensure that the trial and its judgment are completed speedily. Maharashtra is a progressive State that respects women and anything that breaches this image will not be tolerated."

Mr. Thackeray said his government will study the Disha Act, enacted recently by the Andhra Pradesh government, and try to make laws stricter to prevent such incidents. The Disha Act mandates completion of investigation into cases of sexual offences within seven working days from the time of record, and trial within 14 working days from the date of filing the charge sheet.

Mr. Thackeray said, "We will see what the law is and Maharashtra will improve it to ensure that nobody dares



In grief: People gather to catch a final glimpse of the body of the lecturer at a hospital in Nagpur. (Right) The distraught father weeps in a car on Monday. ■ S. SUDARSHAN



Ujjwal Nikam named SPP

TANVI DESHPANDE
MUMBAI



Ujjwal Nikam

The State government on Monday appointed senior lawyer Ujjwal Nikam as the special public prosecutor (SPP) in the Hinganghat case.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray made the announcement on Monday. Mr. Nikam was the prosecution's main lawyer in the State's case against 26/11 terrorist Ajmal Kasab. He has also handled

several high-profile cases like the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts and film producer Gulshan Kumar's murder case.

do such a thing again. All departments will work in co-operation with each other."

The victim, Anikita Pissude, had been critical after sustaining burns on February 3 when she was set afire allegedly by Vikesh Naigrale (27) while she was on the way to her college. "She

was undergoing treatment at Orange City Hospital & Research Centre in Nagpur, where doctors declared her dead at 6.55 a.m." Hinganghat's police inspector Satyaveer Bandiwar said.

Later, some angry locals threw stones to block a road in Hinganghat when an am-

bulance carrying the woman's body was about half-a-kilometre away from her native village, Daroda. The police then brought the situation under control.

Strong reactions

The news of the victim's death led to strong political reactions from across the State. Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari tweeted, "The entire society is agitated today. The unfortunate incident has compelled each one of us to introspect. Today women are progressing in all walks of life. They are assuming newer responsibilities and tackling challenges efficiently. In order to further hasten the progress of women, society must bear a positive attitude towards them. My heartfelt condolences to her parents."

State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said the trial would be held in a fast-track court and a family member of the victim would be given

a government job.

Water Resources Minister Jayant Patil tweeted, "The accused will be given a strong punishment. The mentality behind this heinous crime needs to be tackled. That is why it is important to fast track this case."

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said to ensure that such an incident does not happen again, "the government will be more sensitive and take a tough stance in such cases". Congress Minister Ashok Chavan tweeted, "Criminals should have fear of the law. There are laws but their implementation is necessary. If the criminal is brought to justice immediately and given punishment like death sentence, it will instill people's faith on the justice system."

Leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnavis tweeted, "The criminal should be given the strictest punishment so that no woman has to go through this again."

Man held for stalking, raping teen in Pune

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PUNE

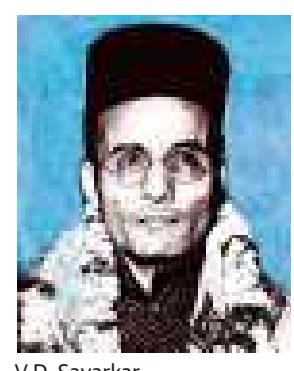
A 25-year-old man was arrested on Monday in Pune for allegedly stalking and raping a 15-year-old girl and threatening to douse her with acid if she disclosed the incident, police said.

The incident took place in Wagholi on the outskirts of the city between June and September last year. An officer said a similar case was pending against the accused in a police station in the city.

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Lashkar division, Ravindra Rasal said the accused used to stalk and harass the girl. "He told the girl that if she meets him once, he would not harass her again. He then took her to Wagholi and sexually assaulted her. He threatened to attack her with and kill her family members if she disclosed the incident," Mr. Rasal said. The accused also shot video of the act.

The girl later confided in a counsellor at her school, who then informed her family members. The police have withheld the name of the accused.

"A case was registered under Sections 376 and 354 and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act on February 8," Mr. Rasal said.



V.D. Savarkar

Mr. Mungantiwar said the BJP has proposed to introduce a resolution to honour the revolutionary work of Savarkar. He said, "February 26 is the death anniversary of Swatantryaveer Savarkar. We want the State Assembly to honour one of the greatest freedom fighters of India by passing a resolution. We have made a proposal for the purpose."

Mr. Mungantiwar said the response from the government, especially Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, has not been encouraging as it has not supported the introduction of the resolution.

According to sources, the BJP's move is aimed at causing a rift in the MVA alliance as the Sena, the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party are in disagreement over Savarkar's Hindutva politics and his letters to the British government seeking clemency while being imprisoned at the Cellular Jail in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

BJP seeks honour for Savarkar to upset MVA

Party aims to move resolution in Assembly

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

In a bid to cause friction among the alliance partners of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has moved a proposal to introduce a resolution in the upcoming budget session of the State Assembly to honour Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar with the Bharat Ratna.

The BJP plans to introduce the resolution on February 26, Savarkar's death anniversary. The Shiv Sena, however, said only a resolution congratulating the Central government would be passed, if Savarkar is indeed awarded the Bharat Ratna.

Playing it safe Transport Minister and Sena leader Anil Parab said his party's demand to honour Savarkar with the Bharat Ratna was pending for years. "We will bring a resolution congratulating the Central government if Savarkar is awarded the Bharat Ratna," he said.

The proposal was moved by Leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnavis and former finance minister Sudhir Mungantiwar at a Business Advisory Committee meeting held at Vidhan Bhawan on Monday. The meeting was convened to finalise the schedule of the budget session, which will begin on February 24. The State Budget is scheduled to be presented on March 6.

State hikes reward to stop liquor smuggling

Informers to get 5% of worth of seizure

SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

The State government has decided to increase the reward money offered to informers for providing information on the trade of illicit liquor and its smuggling across the State's borders.

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Monday reviewed the work of the Excise Department and directed that the reward amount for informers be increased from 2% to 5% of the worth of the seizure, an increase of nearly 150%. The meeting was attended by senior secretaries including those from the planning and finance departments.

By hiking the reward money, the State hope to strengthen the network of informers and curb liquor smuggling, officials said. Mr. Pawar informed officials that trade in illicit liquor and its smuggling was causing huge revenue loss to the State.

While one guard was posted at the lock-up, three others were on duty at the jail's periphery when the incident took place. A case was registered under Section 224 of the Indian Penal Code on Monday. "Special teams have been formed to nab them," said Inspector General Milind Bharambe.



He gave us directions to carry out strict inspections under the watch of senior officials. The Deputy Chief Minister also expressed the need to think seriously about preventing death from poisonous hooch," said an official of the Excise Department.

Backing green buildings Mr. Pawar also directed officials of the department to construct new checkpoints as per green building norms and with solar power facilities. He also asked the Finance Department to carry out district-wise review of expenditure on government offices functioning from rented premises.

Quiet rage



Seeking action: Students and activists stage a silent protest demanding justice for women who have been victims of violence, at Balgandharva chowk in Pune on Monday. ■ JIGNESH MISTRY

5 accused escape from Karjat jail

They removed an iron grille from a vent on the roof: police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Five people arrested for crimes like murder, rape and carrying arms escaped on Sunday evening from Karjat Jail in Raigad district, police said.

The five were identified as Dnyaneshwar Tukaram Kolhe, Akshay Ramdas Raut, Mohan Kundlik More, Chan-

drakant Mahadev Raut and Gangadar Jagtap.

"Dnyaneshwar was arrested under the Arms Act, while Akshay, Mohan and Chandrakant are murder accused, and Gangadar is charged with rape," an official said. He added, "They removed an iron grille from a vent on the roof of the district sub-jail in Karjat and es-

caped on Sunday evening.

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constitutional validity of the Act including by RJD leader Manoj Jha, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi. "Protests have been held, viewpoints have been expressed. Enough. You cannot have two parallel forums, the Supreme Court and someone else," he said.

On December 18, the apex court had agreed to examine the constitutional validity of the CAA, but refused to stay its operation. Assam was the first state where protests broke out after the CAA was passed by Parliament in December last year. The newly amended law seeks to grant citizenship to non-Muslim migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian, Jain and Parsi commun-

ities who came to the country from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014.

Referring to students' move to call off the protests in Assam, the former CJI said he had not yet seen such "constructive role" played by students. "The protests over the CAA were initiated from my state (Assam), because the problem of my state is different than the problems in the rest of the country. I had just retired and reached Guwahati. All of a sudden, there were protests.

"After five days of intense problems, the student community spearheading (the agitations) said we will call off our protests at 5 in the evening. No more protests. The law and order became all right overnight. This is the role of the students," he said. I am yet to see a more constructive role played by students, the former CJI said. "The moment they did it (called off the protests), there was no more violence, there was no law and order issues.

People were protesting, yes, but without violence. What is the moral of the story? There are elements who want to harm the integrity of the country. And the students solved it. These are the real leaders of the country," he said.

He underlined the need to have a "fearless, independent and working judiciary" in the country.

Poll affidavit case: Fadnavis gets exemption for fourth time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAGPUR

A court in Nagpur on Monday granted exemption from appearance to former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis in a complaint seeking criminal proceedings against him for non-disclosure of cases in his election affidavit in 2014. This is the fourth time Mr. Fadnavis has been granted exemption, with Chief Judicial Magistrate P.S. Ingole stating that it has been granted as "last chance".

The court was hearing an application filed by advocate Satish Uke seeking criminal proceedings against Mr. Fadnavis. Uday Dable, Mr. Fadnavis' lawyer, sought exemption on the ground that his client had to attend the Vidhan Sabha Salagaar Committee meeting on Monday. The court has set the next hearing on February 20.

2019-nCoV guidelines in place in Goa, says Rane

'In touch with health authorities at Centre'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

Goa Health Minister Vishwajit Rane on Monday said the State government was following the guidelines laid down by the World Health Organization and the Centre to tackle the novel coronavirus outbreak (2019-nCoV) and had set up isolation wards in two places.

The 2019-nCoV outbreak in China has put tremendous pressure on medical infrastructure across the world, including India which has three reported cases of the infection.

A senior Goa health department official said, currently, one person was in an isolation ward in Goa Medi-

Respecting unity, integrity of country key fundamental duty'

Ex-CJI says everyone has the right to express views on CAA, but resolution of issue must be through constitutional means

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GANDHINAGAR

Underlining that respecting the unity and integrity of the country is perhaps the "most important fundamental duty", former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi on Monday said enough protests have been held on the new citizenship law and that people should not create "two parallel forums" when the Supreme Court has seized the matter.

Addressing students of the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) here, the former CJI also said everybody has the right to express views on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), but "the resolution of the issue must be through Constitutional means".

Referring to the protests over the CAA in his home State, Assam, the former CJI said there were elements who wanted to harm the integrity of the country, but the student community there called off the violent protests within days, which improved law and order situation.

"Perhaps the most important fundamental duty is the respect of the unity and integrity of the country. There are issues in this, and why hype them. The Citizenship Amendment Act... It is an issue. You may have a view about it, I may have a view about it, and our views may not match. I have the right to express my view, you have the right to express your view. Fine. But the resolu-

tion must be through Constitutional means," he said. The former CJI further said the matter (challenge to CAA) is pending before the supreme court. "Trust your judges. They will decide, according to the Constitution."

Several petitions have been filed challenging the

constitutional validity of the Act including by RJD leader Manoj Jha, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi. "Protests have been held, viewpoints have been expressed. Enough. You cannot have two parallel forums, the Supreme Court and someone else," he said.

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IN BRIEF



Ramesh Jarkiholi gets Irrigation portfolio

KARNATAKA
Four days after inducting 10 new Ministers, Karnataka CM B.S. Yediyurappa on Monday allocated portfolios. Ramesh Jarkiholi, who took the lead in effecting defections that paved the way for the formation of the BJP government, got the Major and Medium Irrigation portfolio. S.T. Somashankar and Byrathi Basavaraj have been given Cooperation and Urban Development, respectively. The remaining Ministers have not got any major portfolios.

No power tariff hike for domestic users in A.P.

HYDERABAD
In a relief to a majority of domestic power consumers in Andhra Pradesh with a monthly consumption up to 500 units, the AP Electricity Regulatory Commission has spared them from tariff hike for 2020-21. Telescopic billing for all domestic consumers would be based on the monthly billing and not on their annual consumption during the previous year. Those using above 500 units would be charged higher at ₹9.95 per unit from the existing ₹9.05 per unit.

Telangana girl dies after taking de-worming pill

JAGTIAL
A seven-year-old girl died after consuming de-worming tablets at an anganwadi in Dharmapuri town in Telangana on Monday. Soon after taking the tablets given as part of a nationwide drive, she started vomiting and went into convulsions. The authorities said the girl was suffering from an ailment and ruled out any side-effects of the tablet. However, 10 students of various schools also developed side-effects after consuming the tablets and were hospitalised.

Special Category Status not a closed chapter, says Jagan

It may become a reality when the Centre feels our need, says A.P. Chief Minister

APPAJI REDDEM
TADEPALLI

The long-pending and much-sought-after Special Category Status (SCS) to Andhra Pradesh is not a closed chapter, says Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Speaking at his first-ever media conference after assuming office as Chief Minister, at his camp office on Monday, Mr. Reddy said, "We have been pursuing the Centre for SCS. It's not a closed chapter. It will be a possibility till the day we stop fighting for it. Some day God will soften the Prime Minister's heart so that it will be a reality. Worst case, it may not be this term. But it may be a reality when the Centre feels our need."

Besides tax breaks and other benefits, the State with SCS will get 90% of all the expenditure on Centrally sponsored schemes as Central grant. The rest of the 10%



On a confident note: A.P. CM Jagan Mohan Reddy said there was tremendous response to the new welfare schemes.

will also be given as a loan at zero per cent interest. Usually, the ratio for general category States is 70% loan and 30% grant.

Mr. Reddy had written to the Prime Minister reminding him of the bifurcation promise and 15th Finance Commission report that stated that SCS lies in

the hands of the Centre'.

For the record, the SCS was promised to Andhra Pradesh by the then Congress government at the Centre in 2014, at the time of bifurcation which resulted in the formation of Telangana. The then Opposition party BJP too agreed to it and even stated that SCS would be ex-

tended by five more years if it was voted to power.

Sounding upbeat about the ongoing welfare schemes being implemented as part of the YSR Congress Party's flagship programme *Navaratnalu*, Mr. Reddy said the State would be able to sustain the schemes.

"There is tremendous response to our schemes and we are very much equipped to sustain them financially. We also see our financial ability growing year over year, which means a better scenario," he said.

Popular among the programmes are English medium in government schools, Rythu Bharosa - payment to ₹50,000 to farmers (spread across 5 years), free healthcare through Arogyasri, ₹15,000 to mothers of school-going kids below the poverty line, pensions to the elderly, liquor ban and housing to 25 lakh poor people.

Police file final chargesheet in Koodathayi case in court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOZHIKODE

The special police team probing the Koodathayi serial murder case filed the sixth and final chargesheet before the Thamarassery judicial first class magistrate's court II in Kozhikode district on Monday.

The prime accused in the case, Jolly Joseph, is charged with murdering six persons, including her first husband, Roy Thomas, was the first of the murders Jolly had carried out to get hold of the ancestral property. The chargesheet, running into several



Jolly Joseph

Annamma, a retired schoolteacher and mother of her first husband, Roy Thomas, was the first of the murders Jolly had carried out to get hold of the ancestral property. The chargesheet, running into several

hundred pages, said Jolly had poisoned to death Annamma after lacing her mutton soup with 'Dog Kill', a poison.

Jolly Joseph allegedly finished off two branches of the Ponnammattom ancestral family after giving them poison or cyanide-laced food or drink over a period of 14 years. The chargesheet said Jolly tricked Annamma into believing that she had an MCom degree. She decided to kill Annamma when she suspected and questioned her about her educational qualifications.

Draft policy on rare diseases notified

HC judges not satisfied with the provision of ₹15 lakh for one-time treatment

MOHAMED IMRANULLAH S.
CHENNAI

After being directed by the Madras High Court on January 6 to consider the issue of providing medical care to those suffering from the rare Lysosomal Storage Disorders (LSD) as a "national emergency", the Centre on Monday informed the court of having notified a draft national policy on rare diseases.

The First Bench of Chief Justice Amreshwar Pratap Sahi and Justice Subramoni Prasad were told by Ad-

ditional Solicitor General G. Rajagopal that the government had called for public opinion on the draft policy till February 15, and that it would be finalised only after considering the views of all stakeholders.

PIL petition
The submission was made during the hearing of a public interest litigation (PIL) petition filed by the Lysosomal Storage Disorders Support Society of India, based in New Delhi, in 2017. The petitioner's counsel, V. Ra-

mash, said the draft policy envisages provision of ₹15 lakh to those suffering from certain LSDs. He said the draft policy had categorised rare disorders amenable to one-time curative treatment such as Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation and disorders that were amenable to organ transplantation into one group, and states that they could be provided with financial support.

It further added that a maximum of ₹15 lakh could be provided to each patient under the umbrella scheme

of Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi and that the beneficiaries would not be limited to families below the poverty line.

After hearing the counsel, the Judges expressed their reservations over the sufficiency of allocating just ₹15 lakh and impressed upon the Centre as well as the State government to deliberate further after taking note of efforts being made globally to address needs of those suffering from rare diseases.

The judges granted time till March 2 for the Centre to report back.

Kerala faces uphill task in making list of CRZ violations

K.S. SUDHI
KOCHI

The arduous task of refining the tentative list of over 26,000 Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) violations stares at the Kerala government with the Supreme Court cracking its whip on such violations.

The apex court has allowed the State six weeks to come up with the list.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has convened a meeting for Wednesday to discuss the verdict and decide on action plan. The government strategy will be finalised at the meeting, said an official.

The State is likely to seek more time to prepare the list as it is a time-consuming process. The State will also brief the court about the works done so far. For preparing the final list, notices will have to be issued to owners of all the buildings mentioned in the draft list to find out whether any court has regularised the violations. It also needs to be found out whether cases are pending in any court, the official said.

Alarm bells
Serving of notices to over 26,000 people is likely to trigger panic and the State needs to tackle the situation.

The Hindu had last week reported on the unprecedented socio-economic and legal crisis looming over the State following the preparation of the list in the wake of Maradu demolitions. For filtering the draft list, the State needs to segregate the buildings into residential and commercial ones and mark the distance of each building from the High Tide Line of the nearby waterbody.

The violations in each CRZ zone need to be classified separately.

Rehabilitate those evicted from Bellandur shanties: HC

State to come out with a scheme within a month

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the State government to come out with a comprehensive scheme within a month to rehabilitate people evicted from their shanties erected on a private property in Bellandur based on a notice issued by the Marathalli police to the land owner.

The court also directed the government to take steps to identify the evicted persons and make arrangements for providing immediate temporary monetary assistance or shelter within two weeks.

A Division Bench com-



The scene at Bellandur after the hutments were demolished on January 21.

pising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice Hemant Chandangoudar issued the directions while hearing a PIL petition filed by the People's Union for Civil Liberties - Karnataka, which contended that the eviction was illegal.

Meanwhile, the Bench

said it was open for the petitioner to help the affected to make proper representation, seek relief from the government, as the petitioner had submitted the names of around 130 persons evicted.

Rejects owner's stance
Though both the government and the BBMP denied having demolished shanties on the private land, the land owners claimed that the occupants left the shanties in response to polite requests made by them to vacate. However, the court declined to accept the land owners' contention.

The notice, issued by the police, had asked one of the land owners to remove the illegal structures and inform the police about any illegal immigrant from Bangladesh residing in the shanties.

Meanwhile, the Bench

It's showtime



Folk artistes getting ready to perform 'Chindu Yakshaganam', a traditional dance ballet of Telangana, at Ravindra Bharathi in Hyderabad on Monday. ■ G. RAMAKRISHNA

Matching steps with refugees

A freelance journalist joins walking campaign of UN for the noble cause

M.P. PRAVEEN
KOCHI

Riyaz Ali has been walking for the last 10 days and has covered over 190 kilometres.

He will do more of the same for another 30 days by the end of which he would have reached Chennai treading over 1,000 kilometres.

Mr. Ali, a 31-year-old freelance journalist, started his walk from Kozhikode on February 1 after signing up for Step With Refugees, a campaign being organised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as an expression of solidarity with the many travails of refugees globally.

Reading about the haunting story of Eva, a South Sudanese girl who at the age of nine had to walk



Riyaz Ali on his way to a refugee camp in Chennai. ■ H. VIBHU

12 days covering 409 kilometres to reach the safety of Ethiopia after her family was killed in the civil war, was what prompted Mr. Ali to take up the mission.

"Initially, I planned to walk exactly the 409 kilometres that Eva had to flee in search of safety but then I decided to walk all the way to the Rohingya refugee camp in Kelambakkam in Chennai," Mr. Ali said.

Trek for survival
The campaign, Step with Refugee, aims to cover 2 billion kilometres, which is the approximate distance refugees cover worldwide every year to reach the nearest point of safety for survival.

Participants could choose walking, cycling or running, and can join the movement through fitness apps Fitbit, Strava or GoogleFit and the kilometres they log will add automatically to the campaign. Mr. Ali has agreed to organise a mini marathon for them once his mission is over.

also lends the participants the assistance of an online coach.

"I cover on an average 25-30 kilometres a day walking about eight hours split between morning and evening. The campaign also facilitates setting a target as part of daily fitness and then adding those kilometres manually. But I felt that hitting the road upheld the spirit of being part of the campaign," said Mr. Ali who reached the city on Monday.

Mr. Ali's endeavour seems to have already captured the imagination of society with a college in Malappuram and a combine in Ponnani approaching him for becoming part of the campaign. Mr. Ali has agreed to organise a mini marathon for them once his mission is over.

Distraught Bidar student yearns for mother's return

Her mother, a domestic help, was arrested in sedition case

KUMAR BURADIKATTI
BIDAR

It was with the dream of better education for her 11-year-old daughter that Nazbunnisa, a 27-year-old single mother, moved from her native village to Bidar city a few months ago. She had seen a girl from her village study in Bidar's Shaheen School and later get a medical seat and this had spurred her dreams too.

She rented a small house and started work as a domestic help, while her daughter went to school. But, her dreams did not last long.

A play her daughter acted in about the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, with comments allegedly insulting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, led to the school auth-



The Shaheen School in Karnataka's Bidar, where a play on CAA was staged.

with allowed the staging of the play.

Mohammad Hafeezuddin and his wife, neighbours of Ms. Nazbunnisa, took care of her daughter for 10 days, before she was moved to a hotel run by the school. "The police questioning and her mother's arrest has left her in a state of shock. She would wake up in the middle of the night and start crying," says Mr. Hafeezuddin, a cloth merchant.

When contacted on phone, the girl had only one thing to say. "I want to see my mother. Please do something." Asma Taramum, her class teacher, said she had stopped coming to school. "Her exams started on Monday. She is not writing them."

IN BRIEF



Four suspended after Ganjam bus accident

The Odisha government suspended four engineers for negligence, a day after 10 persons died when a bus came in contact with a 11KV cable in Ganjam district. Two of them were working for SOUTHCOT Utility, a power distribution company, and the others were attached to the Rural Development Department.

Seven killed in fire at Gujarat textile factory

Police booked six officials including owners of Nandan Denim, a textiles factory where a massive fire gutted seven workers on Saturday. The fire had occurred on Saturday and continued till Sunday morning when the three-storey factory was engulfed in the flames.

Case filed against man for posing as PM's staff

NEW DELHI
The CBI has registered a case against an unknown person for allegedly impersonating as P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to PM Modi. The case has been instituted on the basis of a complaint received from the PM's Office in November 2019.

CBI-ED team in London for hearing in Mallya case

NEW DELHI
A team of officials from the CBI and the ED has reached London for a crucial hearing on an appeal filed by businessman Vijay Mallya against his extradition in the wilful loan default case involving over ₹9,000 crore. The hearing is scheduled to commence on Tuesday.

Mumbai blasts accused arrested by Gujarat ATS

AHMEDABAD
Gujarat's Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) arrested Munaf Halari Mussa, a key accused in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case, from Mumbai airport early on Monday. According to Gujarat ATS officials, Mussa was en route to Dubai via Mumbai on a Pakistani passport.

Rioting students asked to clean up

Madurai HC Bench judge orders 28 students to sweep and mop hospital ward

B. TILAK CHANDAR

MADRASI

It is not often that youth who have messed up get a chance to clean up their act.

But a novel judgment from the Madras High Court has given a group of 28 engineering students, charged with rioting and criminal intimidation, a chance to mend their ways – by actually mopping up a mess!

The order on Monday, from Justice A.D. Jagadish Chandira of the Madurai Bench of the High Court, came on a plea from the students to quash the FIR registered against them.

The judge directed the students to clean the general ward of the K.A.P. Viswanatham Government Medical College in Tiruchi.

In a case of campus violence, two groups of students of the Oxford Engineering College at Pirattiyur in Tiruchi had attacked each other with

ILLUSTRATION:
SREETHI R. KUMAR

beer bottles and wooden logs in July last year. The violence left at least five students injured.

According to the police, the violence followed a warn-

ing from fourth year students to a group of third year students to stop harassment of fellow women students. What began as a warning turned into a wordy duel and soon es-

cated into a clash, and even spilled outside the campus.

All 28 students were arrested by the police based on separate complaints filed by both groups. The E. Pudur police registered a case under IPC Sections, including 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting armed with deadly weapon), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) and 506 (ii) (criminal intimidation).

A compromise

However, the two groups, having agreed to a compromise, moved the High Court and sought the quashing of the FIR.

Justice Jagadish Chandira, who quashed the FIR, directed the students to approach the Dean of the K.A.P. Viswanatham Government Medical College and clean the general ward on February 22. He also posted the case for reporting compliance on February 26.

Pilot suspended for threatening passenger

75-year-old woman denied wheelchair

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday suspended the flying licence of an IndiGo pilot for three months for “threatening and intimidating” a woman passenger accompanying a wheelchair-bound senior citizen on January 13, 2020.

“The pilot’s attitude towards the wheelchair-bound senior citizen was intimidating, threatening and lacked compassion. His actions led to avoidable detention,” the DGCA said in a statement.

Sharing her ordeal of “harassment” on Twitter, Bengaluru resident Supriya Unni Nair said the pilot, Captain Jayakrishna stopped her and her 75-year-old mother from deplaning the aircraft after she



A woman and her mother were stopped from deplaning the aircraft.

insisted on a wheelchair for the latter. The wheelchair had been booked by her before embarking on the flight but the crew members said they had no access to it, leading to an argument.

Civil Aviation Minister of State Hardeep Singh Puri, taking note of her social media post, asked the DGCA to probe the matter.

J&K to allocate 100 acres for TTD temple

S. VIJAY KUMAR

CHENNAI

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has agreed, in principle, to allot 100 acres along the Jammu-Katra Highway to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams for constructing a replica of the Tirumala temple there.

TTD hopes to complete the construction of the temple along with a vedic school and hospital in two years, MP V. Vijaya Sai Reddy, who led the delegation of the TTD Board, said on Monday. Talking to *The Hindu* over phone from Delhi, Mr. Reddy said two sites had been identified for constructing the temple.

The delegation met J&K Lt. Governor G.C. Murmu, who agreed to allot the land free of cost for constructing the temple.

L-G cautions against CAA resolution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PUDUCHERRY

Two days ahead of the special session of the Legislative Assembly convened by the government to adopt a resolution seeking a repeal of Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Lt Governor Kiran Bedi on Monday wrote to Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy advising him not to go ahead with the legislative procedure as a law passed by Parliament was applicable to the Union Territory as well, she said.

Beyond the purview

Hours after a delegation of three nominated MLAs, V. Saminathan, K.G. Shankar and S. Selvaganapathy, belonging to the Bharatiya Janata Party – submitted a memorandum to Ms. Bedi seeking her intervention on the issue, the Lt. Governor in her letter to the Chief Mi-

nister said the legislative power of the Assembly did not extend to the subject matter of Citizenship as it fell squarely within the domain of Parliament and the Centre.

“Further, the matter of the CAA was under adjudication before the Supreme Court. As per the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of Puducherry Legislative Assembly, 1966, resolution of any matter which was under the jurisdiction of a court of law having jurisdiction in any part of India is not admissible under Rule 105 of the Rules of ibid,” Ms Bedi said, in her letter.

Opposing the move to adopt a resolution, the BJP members, in their memorandum to the Lt. Governor, said any discussion on CAA would be an infringement on the rights of Parliament.

Woman bus driver shown the door for on-duty Tiktok video

RAINA ASSAINAR

NEW DELHI
The contract of a Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport (NMMT) driver was terminated after a Tiktok video featuring her dance inside a bus went viral. The driver, who was identified as Yogita Mane, was terminated on January 31.

Yogita Mane, one of the two woman drivers for NMMT Tejaswini special buses, had reportedly danced inside the bus dur-

ing her “rest period”.

“The video was created during duty hours, in uniform and inside the bus, which is not acceptable. It is unprofessional conduct and gives out a wrong message,” Navi Mumbai Municipal Commissioner Annapoorna Misal said.

In the 18 second video, she is seen dancing to a Marathi folk song—*Aai babachi ladki mi gaura mala havay chikna navra*.

According to Ms. Mane,

“The video was not made by me. A female auto driver, with whom we often chat during break time, had made the video and uploaded using her account. None of the NMMT officers are ready to hear me out. I have been knocking on their door but no one pays attention.”

“I am done begging before them. I haven’t had a single accident in last one year and my record is clean. I am sure I won’t be jobless for long,” she added.

According to Ms. Mane,

Semi-conductor laboratory / Semi-Conductor Laboratory

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विभाग / Department of Space, Government of India, सेक्टर-72, राजधानी (महाराष्ट्र) – 410071, वैदिक पर्याप्ति के लिए दो मासों में अनंत लाइसेंस निवारण करने हेतु।

क्षेत्र -72, S.A.S. Nagar-160 071, Near Chandigarh (Punjab) India

फोन / Phone : +91-172-2296166 फैक्स: +91-172-2237410

ईमेल / Email: [https://scl.gov.in](http://scl.gov.in), website: www.scl.gov.in

दिनांक / Dated: 06.02.2020

निवारण संख्या. एसीएल/पीटी/174 / TENDER NOTICE NO. SCL/PT/174

निवारण के लिए दो मासों में अनंत लाइसेंस निवारण करने हेतु।

For and on behalf of the Director, Head-Purchase & Stores, Semi-Conductor Laboratory (SCL) invites Online TWO part Tenders for the following:

क्र. सं./ Sl. No.	निवारण संख्या/ Tender Number	विवरण/Description	संख्या/ Quantity
1	एसीएल/पीटी/3 / 2019/0164701 SCL/PS/2019E0164701	LAN की आगामी स्थानांश, परीक्षण एवं कमीशनिंग करने हेतु। Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of LAN.	01 संख्या / No.

नोट / Note: योग्य निवारणों से सम्बद्ध दस्तावेज़ को e-tender portal <https://eprocure.scl.gov.in> से देने वाले हेतु और एसीएल को वेबसाइट www.scl.gov.in / इसरो की वेबसाइट www.isro.gov.in से पोर्टल (<http://eprocure.gov.in>) से डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं।

Tender Document of above mentioned Tender can be accessed at e-tender portal <https://eprocure.scl.gov.in> and can be downloaded from SCL website (www.scl.gov.in) ISRO website (www.isro.gov.in) CPP Portal (<http://eprocure.gov.in>).

प्रमुख, क्रय एवं भौतिक प्राप्ति / Head, Purchase & Stores Division

NORTH EASTERN KARNATAKA ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION

Stores & Purchase Department, Central Offices, Sarige Sadana, Main Road, Gulbarga-585 102.

Tel. & Fax No. : 08472-260502, Mobile No. 7760686172 (COSP).

No. NEKT/CO/COSP/04/2019-20 Dated : 04-02-2020

Short term Notice Inviting Tender (through e-procurement only)

Short Term Tender through e-procurement portal is invited for Selection of any Agency for Establishment of Driver Test Track at Humnabad RTI on per candidate basis vide tender no. T-19/ 04-02-2020

Regular tender through e-procurement portal is invited for Selection of an agency for providing Internal Audit Service to NEKRTC Central Office and Division to NEKRTC vide tender no. T-20/04-02-2020.

All the details of Tender, Registration, Tender documents etc. are available at <http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> Mail to cospnekrtc@gmail.com or support@helpdesk.com for further information if required.

Sd/- Controller of Stores and Purchases
(Tender Inviting Authority)
DIP/Kalaburagi/1067/MC&/A/2019-20

TIRUMALA TRIPURATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUMALA e-TENDER NOTICE

TTD Health Office, Tirumala inviting e-Tenders for maintenance of sanitation and facilities management to the following areas Ward-IV, V, VI and Ward-VII for the years 2020-2022. Other details login to <https://tender.epprocurement.gov.in>. Click on “MORE” button search select tender details select department name as Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams select Circle / Division as Health Office, TTD, Tirumala and click on search button and download the following tender documents and other details.

Sl. No.	Ward	Tender ID	IFB Number / Tender Notice Number	Bid Document Downloading Date	Bid Document Ending Date	Last Date and Time for filing e-Tender	Pre-Bidding Meeting Date, Time & Venue
1	II	314497	01/HO/TTD/TML/2019-20	10-02-2020 from 11.00 a.m.	26-02-2020 up to 1.00 p.m.	26-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala	17-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala
2	IV	314541	03/HO/TTD/TML/2019-20	11-02-2020 from 11.00 a.m.	27-02-2020 up to 1.00 p.m.	27-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala	18-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala
3	V	314565	04/HO/TTD/TML/2019-20	11-02-2020 from 11.00 a.m.	27-02-2020 up to 1.00 p.m.	27-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala	18-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala
4	VI	314568	05/HO/TTD/TML/2019-20	12-02-2020 from 11.00 a.m.	28-02-2020 up to 1.00 p.m.	28-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala	19-02-2020 at 3.00 p.m. at Health Office, TTD, Tirumala
5	VII	314574	06/HO/TTD/TML/2019-20	12-02-2020 from 11.00 a.m.	28-02-2020 up		



Reservation as right

Ensuring adequate representation to disadvantaged sections is a state obligation

It is quite understandable that a recent Supreme Court judgment, that there is no fundamental right to claim reservation in promotions, has caused some political alarm. The received wisdom in affirmative action jurisprudence is that a series of Constitution amendments and judgments have created a sound legal framework for reservation in public employment, subject to the fulfilment of certain constitutional requirements. And that it has solidified into an entitlement for the backward classes, including the SCs and STs. However, the latest judgment is a reminder that affirmative action programmes allowed in the Constitution flow from "enabling provisions" and are not rights as such. This legal position is not new. Major judgments – these include those by Constitution Benches – note that Article 16(4), on reservation in posts, is enabling in nature. In other words, the state is not bound to provide reservations, but if it does so, it must be in favour of sections that are backward and inadequately represented in the services based on quantifiable data. Thus, the Court is not wrong in setting aside an Uttarakhand High Court order directing data collection on the adequacy or inadequacy of representation of SC/ST candidates in the State's services. Its reasoning is that once there is a decision not to extend reservation – in this case, in promotions – to the section, the question whether its representation in the services is inadequate is irrelevant.

The root of the current issue lies in the then Congress government's decision to give up SC/ST quotas in promotions in Uttarakhand. The present BJP regime also shares responsibility as it argued in the Court that there is neither a basic right to reservations nor a duty by the State government to provide it. The idea that reservation is not a right may be in consonance with the Constitution allowing it as an option, but a larger question looms: Is there no government obligation to continue with affirmative action if the social situation that keeps some sections backward and at the receiving end of discrimination persists? Reservation is no more seen by the Supreme Court as an exception to the equality rule; rather, it is a facet of equality. The terms "proportionate equality" and "substantive equality" have been used to show that the equality norm acquires completion only when the marginalised are given a legal leg-up. Some may even read into this an inescapable state obligation to extend reservation to those who need it, lest its absence render the entire system unequal. For instance, if no quotas are implemented and no study on backwardness and extent of representation is done, it may result in a perceptible imbalance in social representation in public services. Will the courts still say a direction cannot be given to gather data and provide quotas to those with inadequate representation?

Safeguarding the delta

The move for a protected agriculture zone in T.N. favours food security over energy greed

By announcing that the Cauvery delta region, Tamil Nadu's rice bowl comprising eight districts, will be declared as 'Protected Special Agricultural Zone' (PSAZ), State Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has recognised farmer concerns about hydrocarbon exploration and accorded primacy to food security. In political messaging, he also sought to deflect the perception that the AIADMK government, after Jayalalithaa's death, is subservient to the BJP-led central government and is complicit in allowing "anti-people" projects. His decision comes weeks after he protested the Centre's unilateral amendment of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2006, exempting prior environmental clearance and public consultations for oil and gas exploration. The delta, which produces 33 lakh tonnes of grains in 28 lakh acres, has seen multiple protests for a decade over methane, hydrocarbon, oil and natural gas projects, which required acquisition of fertile lands and well drilling – proposals which triggered fears of groundwater contamination. Neduvvasal in Pudukkottai and Kadaramangalam in Thanjavur have been the nerve centres of these resolute protests, led by agriculturists and backed by mainstream political parties. In July 2013, in response to sustained protests, then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa ordered suspension on coalbed methane exploration and production in Thanjavur and Tiruvarur and followed it up with a ban in 2015. But in 2017, the Centre signed contracts for hydrocarbon extraction from 31 areas of discovered small fields including from Neduvvasal. Two years later it allowed Vedanta Limited to conduct tests for 274 hydrocarbon wells in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Mr. Palaniswami has rightly sensed that the farmers' emotive and intense opposition can be ignored only at a political cost. Agricultural scientists such as M.S. Swaminathan have for long mooted such zones similar to special economic zones; Uttarakhand and Kerala have them. Tamil Nadu now has to enact legislation to protect a vast region, largely in the coastal area, from industries that would affect farming. The State has its challenges. In 2017, a government notification delineated 45 villages covering about 23,000 hectares in Cuddalore and Nagapattinam districts in the delta, as a Petroleum, Chemical and Petrochemical Investment Region, with an eye on over ₹90,000 crore in investments. The proposed PSAZ raises a question mark on this ambitious scheme. The government may have to brave central pressure and litigation from companies which pumped in money for exploration. The latest decision may have implications for the State's investment climate, what with the closure of the Sterlite Copper plant still fresh in memory. But the intent to prioritise farmer interests and food security is beyond reproach.

Liberty at the government's whim

The J&K High Court's recent ruling on preventive detention stands as an antithesis of the Constitution's basic function



SUHRITH PARTHASARATHY

Fundamental rights, we have been repeatedly been told, do not exist in silos. The values inherent in the rights to equality, freedom of expression and association, and to life and personal liberty are deeply intertwined, with each right deriving meaning from the other. Under this conception, our right to be treated with equal concern demands that we are allowed to speak freely, that our movement is unrestrained, and that any limitation placed on our personal liberty is founded on laws that are just, fair, and reasonable. But, despite the theoretical affirmation of this idea, judicial practice is permeated by cases where some laws are seen as special, as untouched by the rigours of due process. Prime among them, as a recent judgment of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in *Mian Abdul Qayoom v. State of J&K* shows us, are laws providing for preventive detention – in this case, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act of 1978 [PSA].

The background

The petitioner before the court was the 76-year-old Mian Abdul Qayoom, who is the president of the High Court's Bar Association at Srinagar. He was arrested originally in the lead-up to the Union government's decision on Article 370 of the Constitution and has since been detained for more than six months in a jail at Agra, with a view, the government says, to "preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the

maintenance of public order". Mr. Qayoom submitted in court that the grounds for his detention were not only indistinct and arbitrary but that the government's order invoked a brace of first information reports lodged way back in 2008 and 2010, for which he had already faced detention. According to him, the order also made vague references to his purported advocacy of secessionist ideology, without, in fact, specifying clearly whether there was at all any criminal charges placed against him. What is more, the detention, he submitted, did not take into account his rapidly deteriorating health: according to his family, as a report in the *Hindustan Times* states, Mr. Qayoom not only ails from diabetes and heart problems – with a doctor having advised an open heart surgery just before his detention – but he is also surviving on only one kidney.

The High Court, in its judgment, opened with the now customary panegyric on freedom. The right to personal liberty, wrote Justice Tashi Rabstan, is a "most precious right". It has been held, he added, to be "transcendental, inalienable and available to a person independent of the Constitution". And the right is not to be denied "except in accordance with procedures established under law" and that procedure, as held in *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India*, had to be "just and fair".

A 'standalone' law

A person unacquainted with the workings of our judiciary would hardly be mistaken in thinking that the court, having appealed to the powers of liberty, would then render its findings on whether the detention in question was justified as a matter of both law and fact. But the court here, in what has become an increasingly familiar rou-



tine, did no such thing. It instead held that preventive detention laws stand alone, that they are compelled by a "primordial" requirement to maintain order in society. In their absence, the court said, the right to personal liberty would lose all its meaning. And the need for such laws, the judgment added, is so intensely felt that the political executive ought to enjoy complete immunity in deciding when to invoke these powers. "The Court cannot substitute its own satisfaction for that of the authority concerned and decide whether its satisfaction was reasonable or proper," wrote Justice Rabstan, "or whether in the circumstances of the matter, the person concerned should have been detained or not." All that judges could do, he said, was to see whether the stated grounds – regardless of whether they are, in fact, credible or not – bear some nexus with the objective of the law.

Guarantees reduced to a trifle

Effectively, therefore, the judgment places liberty at the pleasure of government. It reduces the Constitution's core guarantees to a trifle. Yet, extraordinary as the verdict appears, a study of the history of the law of preventive detention in India, especially as applied in the State of J&K, would show us that we ought to have little to be surprised about. The ruling, in recognising boundless executive pre-eminence, only gives effect to

a long-standing jurisprudence.

In the litany of precedents that the judgment has cited, pride of place is occupied by India's first big constitutional case, *A.K. Gopalan v. State of Madras*. There, the Supreme Court of India found that Article 21, which guarantees a right to life and personal liberty, does not require the state to follow due process. It was therefore, in the court's belief, that Article 22 had been incorporated, stipulating a set of procedural parameters for preventive detention laws. And such laws, according to the court, were immunised from the limitations placed on the legislature by other fundamental rights.

The verdict in *Gopalan* has since been overruled. Not only has the Supreme Court held that the fundamental rights chapter comprises a network of mutually dependent promises but it has also ruled that Article 21 implicitly includes within it a guarantee of substantive due process. In other words, the clause demands that any action or law that limits liberty ought to be fair, just, and reasonable, untouched by the caprices of the state.

Executive knows best

In overruling *Gopalan*, the court's rationale was simple: the absence of a substantive promise of due process would mean that the political executive is free to use the most whimsical of motives to restrict freedom. Under such a notion, something as arbitrary as a coin toss can act as a substitute for a trial. But yet the apparent burying of the verdict in *Gopalan* has had little practical consequence. The PSA, which was introduced by the former Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah's government to purportedly keep timber smugglers "out of circulation" allows for detention of up to two years without trial, with

extensions made available for the asking.

As Haley Duschinski and Shrimoyee Nandini Ghosh have noted, in permitting detentions based on postulations that are protected from review by courts, the law "establishes a broad jurisdiction of suspicion". Even the Supreme Court, in *Jaya Mala v. Home Secretary, Government of J&K* (1982) described the legislation as a "lawless law" and warned of a looming danger in which normal criminal trials would be replaced by regimes of detention. But ever since its enactment, the PSA has served precisely this purpose. It has been used by successive governments to quell even the slightest hint of dissent. And when review of the orders is sought, courts have invariably followed the model that has now been adopted in Mr. Qayoom's case: an assumption that the executive knows best and that any decision made by it is beyond the scope of judicial enquiry.

The only thing transcendental about this approach is the omnipotent supremacy of the executive. In reducing judicial review to an irrelevance, the judgment, therefore, stands as an antithesis of the Constitution's basic function. To understand the dangers inherent in vesting unbridled power of this kind, we do not need to see J&K as exemplifying a state of exception. Nor do we need to apprehend that the model employed will likely be adopted in other States. For, as Gopalan's lawyer, M.K. Nambyar, told the Supreme Court all those years ago: no amount of fine phrasing can disguise the fact that detention without trial is repugnant to the "universal conscience of civilized mankind".

Suhirth Parthasarathy is an advocate practising at the Madras High Court

A mix Indian health care can do without

Ayushman Bharat entails diverting limited resources towards wasteful areas, ignoring productive fields in public health



SOHAM D. BHADURI

The United States has one of the most prodigal health systems, but this does not help the U.S. with the well-known reality that it is infamously poor-performing. And so does the fact that it is also one of the most intricate of health systems across the globe.

Over a century, U.S. health care has seen numerous elaborate arrangements, from organisational and regulatory structures to payment mechanisms emerge, be dismantled, and reincarnate with even greater degrees of complexity. Health care has repeatedly topped the political agenda; been an area of passionate contention among an unexampled plethora of diverse interest groups; and scarcely ever been an unpopular topic of national discourse. However, fervent attempts to reconcile its health care with traditional American values of individual freedom and consumerism have not sat well with the ideals of equity and social justice.

Piggyback route

In India, multiple policy pronouncements over the last few years have expressed an implicit intent to emulate certain features of the U.S. health system, enhance private initiative, and uphold the insu-

rance route as the way to go for health care. These are being largely envisaged while riding on the back of the Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Scheme (AB-NHPS), which aims to provide insurance cover to nearly 50 crore poor Indians. With the great razzmatazz that characterised its launch, the AB-NHPS affirmed strong mechanisms to check insurance fraud which was commonplace in its precursor programme, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY). In the scramble to succeed at this, deleterious emulation of the U.S. example appears to have already set in.

Recently, 171 hospitals were reported to have been de-empowered from the AB-NHPS on charges of fraud, which also included the issuance of fake e-cards and the manipulation of claims. A first information report was lodged against a few hospitals and multiple show cause notices were issued. This was almost within a year of the programme being launched with the promise of offering a religious check on fraudulent practices.

The response to these has been envisaged through an unprecedented bolstering of administratively-heavy and technology-driven mechanisms. Already, national- and state anti-fraud units have been established and partnerships with fraud control companies conceived. One would ask this question: what is wrong in all of this?

Let us return to the U.S. once again. Multiple layers of complex

arrangements and concomitant complex regulatory provisions have ensured that health care in the U.S. is one of the most administratively and technologically intensive systems in the world. More than 50% of health-care spending in the U.S. in 2010 went into health worker's wages, with a large chunk of the growth in health-care labour taking place in the form of non-clinical workers. What this entails is that for every penny spent on health care, very little goes into actually improving health.

Range of concerns

In India, the path of the AB-NHPS appears indistinguishable from the former, though only more menacing. It necessitates a battery of new structures, personnel cadres, data systems, and working arrangements only in order to sub-satisfactorily operate an insurance scheme that would cover less than half the population. Disregarding the death spiral that policy-driven over reliance on private health care could lead to – given India's feeble regulatory architecture –

this would entail considerable costs which would not primarily contribute to, or be indispensable for, improving health outcomes. And this is set in a context where public health spending fails to exceed a single per cent of GDP (antipodal to the U.S.) and where each rupee spent on health is highly precious. While a besottedness with cutting-edge technology and state-of-the-art systems can help garner eyes and promote businesses, each unnecessary penny incurred this way raises significant ethical concerns when basic health needs remain unmet and abject shortages of fundamental health resources and infrastructure stare square in the eye.

Gupta and Roy have shown how the allocation for the AB-NHPS for 2019-20 would have covered less than a quarter of the targeted beneficiaries. For 2020-21, there has been a paltry increase in health-care sector allocation (5.7% above 2019-20 RE), while the allocation for the AB-NHPS is unchanged. It is very possible that the AB-NHPS continues to remain insufficiently funded and incapable of extending considerable financial risk protection to the poor. However, more investment is not necessarily merited in this context. Embracing the complexities associated with robust regulation of the insurance programme and making the requisite technological and administrative investments appear attractive and commendable on the face. However, they entail diverting highly limited resources towards wasteful and dispensable high-end

areas, which could have been set aside for much more pressing and productive domains, such as public hospitals and health centres. Improvements in these areas would have strongly reflected in terms of tangibly better health outcomes. Rather, the AB-NHPS appears attuned to reinforcing a stark contradiction wherein trailblazing but unproductive high-end structures thrive alongside decrepit but potentially fruitful basic structures. In line with the suggestions of experts and critics, it becomes essential to take a fresh, hard look at the larger question of whether adopting the insurance mode for achieving universal health coverage is a felicitous path for India.

The grandiloquent fanfare with which the AB-NHPS has been rolled out and the global hype it has generated can readily abut the pressing concerns that lie underneath, while floating the mistaken impression that much is being done for health care in the country. One persistent habit that has characterised Indian health care since inception is of leaping onto the next, more aspirational position or endeavour before doing sufficient justice with the previous one, thus leaving the basics unattended. The AB-NHPS, in the presence of this vice, can only be another precarious rung in the ladder.

Dr. Soham D. Bhaduri is a Mumbai-based doctor, health-care commentator, and editor of the journal, 'The Indian Practitioner'

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.

Investor incentives

The happenings in the

country make me doubt if it is a democratic country and a welfare state. The voice of the people and the

Opposition remain stifled in

Kashmir.

And, ironically, instead of

winning the confidence and

goodwill of the people, the

government is striving to

assure businessmen of

freedoms. Opening

Kashmir to investors will no

doubt usher in job and

industrial opportunities.

But there will also be a mad

rush to exploit the natural

wealth of Kashmir. It is

doubtful if the pristine

beauty of the area would

survive such an onslaught

(Page 1, "J&K administration offers investors

'uninterrupted' Internet,

WiFi access", February 10).

T. ANAND RAJ,
Chennai

Facing up to realities

Health pandemics and economic crises cannot be masked for too long



PRAVEEN CHAKRAVARTY

As India entered the 21st century, the Net National Income of the average Indian was ₹20,000. While this figure is not the actual earnings of an individual, it is a good proxy for the average Indian's annual income. By 2015, it had grown to ₹90,000. Had it continued on the same trajectory, it should have been ₹1,65,000 today. Instead, as the recent Economic Survey shows, the Net National Income for the average Indian is ₹1,35,000. In other words, the average Indian has potentially lost ₹30,000 in net annual income. For most Indians, ₹30,000 a year is a very big amount. This is the cost of economic under-performance for the average Indian.

The POW trinity

It is well accepted by most political economists that India's economic performance is largely shaped by the 'POW' trinity – politics, oil and world economy. Political leadership and stability are critical determinants of domestic and foreign investment in India. Global oil prices play an inordinately large role in shaping India's macroeconomy. World trade and global GDP drive India's exports and industry.

In 2014, India gleamed with hope. For the first time in nearly half a century, the 'POW' trinity was perfectly aligned. Indians handed a parliamentary majority to a supposedly strong, decisive leader with a promise of economic development.

Beginning in 2014, global crude oil prices dropped precipitously from more than \$100 a barrel to \$40. It was estimated then that the steep fall in oil prices alone would add two extra percentage points to India's GDP growth rate, besides taming inflation. The global economy was also on an upward trend from 2014, recovering robustly from the devastation of the 2008 economic crisis. The period from 2014 to 2019 was among the best five years for world economic growth in the 21st century.

So, in the summer of 2014, a billion Indians glimmered in hope and excitement at the prospect of rapidly



rising income levels and prosperity under a perfectly aligned 'POW'. Six years later, not only has the average Indian's income levels not grown faster than before, it is actually ₹30,000 short of what it should have been.

Why did things go so wrong? The ongoing health catastrophe caused by the novel coronavirus in Hubei province of China offers meaningful parallels and lessons for India's economic policy climate.

The coronavirus parallel

In a recent article, *The New York Times* reconstructed the events leading up to the novel coronavirus crisis. In early December, several shopkeepers in an open meat market in Wuhan started falling ill. Doctors in the hospital treating these patients raised alarms about a mysterious illness.

The Mayor of Wuhan, however, did not want any negative news about his city. He issued summons to the doctors who raised alarm about the illness and forced them to sign statements that their warnings were unfounded. Further, Wuhan's healthcare authorities placed restrictions on discussing the illness in public. They assured the public that the disease was "entirely preventable and curable" and issued statements claiming that all was well. Ironically, at this time, the Mayor even held a "Health Expo" event to showcase Wuhan as a top healthcare destination.

Within days, there were hundreds of deaths and all hell had broken loose. It was no longer possible for

the government to suppress this bad news. Within a span of seven weeks from the doctors raising an alarm about a mysterious disease, the novel coronavirus became a global epidemic.

It is both tempting and natural to ponder about the counterfactual. Could China have been saved from the novel coronavirus epidemic had the doctors' alarms not been suppressed? What could the situation have been had the government not stifled factual reporting? Could doctors and scientists have discovered the virus sooner and ring-fenced it, had the Mayor not intimidated the doctors into silence? One will never know. But it is indisputable that drawing a veil over the ugly truth and facts made it much worse and the consequences more dire than what could have been.

The parallel with India's unfolding economic crisis is striking. India's government had dismissed, ignored, silenced or shunted all negative data, indicators, views and opinions about the economy. From the initial signs in 2015 of a banking stress to falling private investment to collapsing consumption demand to dormant exports and rising unemployment, there were ample signs and metrics of the rapidly deteriorating state of the economy. But these were either quickly buried or altered. Sure enough, India's economic growth has collapsed to a six-year low. Similar to the Wuhan situation, one is left to wonder about what could have been India's economic situation today had early alarm bells been heard

and acted upon, warnings not suppressed and expert advice not dismissed. The average Indian is paying the price for this severe folly – ₹30,000 a year.

However, there is now one major difference in the way the Wuhan novel coronavirus crisis is being handled vis-a-vis the Indian economic crisis. The Chinese government has acknowledged the enormity of the Wuhan crisis and is acting at lightning speed to salvage the situation. It built a brand new 1,000-bed hospital in just 10 days to accommodate patients and contain the virus. It is building two more hospitals. Experts from across the country are being sent to Wuhan. There is an all-out effort by the government to help China recover from this crisis.

Nonchalant Central government

On the other hand, India's Finance Minister, in delivering the longest Budget speech in history recently, did not even seem to acknowledge the enormity of the economic crisis, much less outline concrete steps to revive the economy. Beyond the numbers about fiscal deficit, taxation and expenditure, the most worrying and important takeaway from the recent Budget exercise was the government's seeming nonchalance towards the gravity of the crisis the Indian economy is facing. Any amount of analysis of the intricate details of the Budget numbers or schemes is moot unless there is confidence and trust built among economic participants that the government is seized of the gravity of the situation and is taking concrete steps to resolve it. At present, this is conspicuously missing.

Health pandemics and economic crises cannot be draped and masked for too long. India's \$3 trillion market economy cannot be dictated and bullied into appropriate behaviour. It needs careful treatment by experts. It may be a cliché that desperate measures call for desperate measures but worth repeating. While the run-up to India's economic crisis was eerily similar to the way China ignored warning calls on coronavirus, one hopes, for the sake of a billion Indians and the world, that the Indian government emulates the Chinese government in handling its crisis.

Praveen Chakravarty is a political economist and an office bearer of the Congress party

Prepared for the coronavirus

India has responded in many ways to contain the epidemic



PREETI SUDAN & BALRAM BHARGAVA

Declared by the World Health Organization as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, the novel coronavirus (nCoV) has infected more than 37,000 people and killed more than 800. The Indian government and health authorities have responded in a robust manner to contain the epidemic in various ways on the basis of available knowledge, but there are no grounds for complacency. While logistical challenges have been overcome by the Ministries, States, the military and civilians together, Indian scientists have shown their eagerness to attain world-class skills by rapidly developing diagnostics and treatment protocols.

A swift response

Swift diplomacy was at work during the Wuhan airlift. The External Affairs Ministry obtained permission and ground support from its Chinese counterparts and coordinated with Air India through the Civil Aviation Ministry. The Health and Family Welfare Ministry provided the team of medical personnel to accompany the students home, and arranged for their health check-ups and quarantine at special camps organised by the Armed Forces Medical Services in Manesar and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police facility in Delhi. Temporary visa restrictions have been put in place. All the 645 evacuees have tested negative for nCoV. They are being monitored on a regular basis and will be tested again.

India issued its first advisory on January 17. The Emergency Medical Response Unit in the Health Ministry was activated, the National Centre for Disease Control opened a 24X7 helpline, and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) worked to quickly put in place a testing facility at the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. The Joint Monitoring Group under the Chairmanship of the Directorate General of Health Services was activated to continuously assess the risk and review the preparedness to manage any case that might get imported to India.

Health entry screening of passengers from China is taking place in 21 airports. Universal screening at earmarked aerobridges for all flights from China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand is carried out. There are inflight announcements and self-declaration forms in international flights, so that passengers with any symptoms can volunteer for screening. Screening at international seaports by the Shipping Ministry and border

crossings by the Home Ministry is in place. Hospitals with isolation facilities near all international airports are prepared to meet any emergency requirements.

In Kerala, where the three people with nCoV are quarantined, the health authorities have responded in a stellar manner. Kerala has not only traced hundreds of contacts of the confirmed cases and notified them to the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme for monitoring, but also used unique community-based isolation methods, innovated while dealing with the Nipah virus outbreaks. Its model of monitoring, with the District Collector as the administrative unit, has been shared as a best practice with all States. All the States have put together a robust system of contact tracing, community surveillance with community engagement, earmarking isolation facilities, sharing information, updating surveillance data, issuing daily health bulletins, skilling health workers with new guidelines, etc. The States bordering Nepal have even held special gram sabhas to empower people with information.

Treatment

Till date no antiviral treatment for the coronavirus infection has been effective but studies among SARS-CoV patients show that the combination of lopinavir and ritonavir was associated with possible clinical benefit. Based on this research as well as its own docking studies, ICMR has obtained approval to use this combination therapy as part of a public health emergency within a research framework and restricted use. On the diagnostics front, the NIV has leveraged its considerable expertise in real-time reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction testing to develop assays for in-vitro qualitative detection of nCoV, using primer and probe sequences of the virus provided by the WHO. Scientists at NIV are also carrying out genomic sequencing of nCoV and attempting to isolate the virus in order to replicate it for further research. Fourteen Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories have been upgraded to carry out nCoV testing.

India has also offered help to other countries in the South Asia region as part of its Neighbourhood First policy. It evacuated seven Maldivian nationals from Wuhan. It has extended technical assistance to several countries to set up testing laboratories.

The public too has helped deal with the crisis, particularly by preventing the dissemination of wrong information. We should all observe good hygiene and sanitation practices to prevent infection, avoid crowding in public places and perhaps even replace the handshake with the traditional Namaste.

Preeti Sudan is Secretary, Health Ministry; Balram Bhargava is Secretary, Department of Health Research

The calumny against Gandhi

The Mahatma is not beyond criticism, but slander based on falsehoods amounts to vilification

MOHAMMED AYOOB

general Hindu electorate. Ambedkar later came to regret the decision.

Similarly, Subhas Chandra Bose was critical of Gandhi's reliance solely on non-violence to gain India's independence and the Mahatma's aversion to industrialisation. Nonetheless, the two respected, even admired, each other. In 1942, after Bose had formed the Indian National Army and despite Gandhi's aversion to violence, he called Bose a "patriot of patriots". Bose referred to Gandhi as the "father of the nation" in a broadcast from Rangoon in 1944.

Gandhi's economic ideas were criticised by the left because of his theory of trusteeship by which the wealthy would hold India's wealth in trust for the people. The socialist and communist left argued that this theory was anti-poor because it justified the concentration of wealth among landlords, feudal princes and capitalists. Those, including Jawaharlal Nehru, committed to making India a strong modern state and an industrialised nation, were critical of Gandhi's aversion to industrialisation and his belief that self-governing villages should constitute the basis of Indian polity.

Fabrication

These criticisms were based on genuine differences of opinion. Calumny is a different matter, especially since it is based on falsehood. The prime example of such fabrication is that Gandhi was responsible for Partition when the truth is absolutely the opposite. Gandhi remained a firm opponent of Partition until the very end. The Congress Working Committee accepted the Partition plan, knowing that this was the case. This is the main reason why Gandhi dissociated himself from the celebrations accompanying Indian Independence and left Delhi for Bengal to heal the wounds of communal riots. Unfortunately, slander has now become a fine art in India and electronic and social media have become the principal conduits for its propagation.

Mohammed Ayoob is University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations, Michigan State University

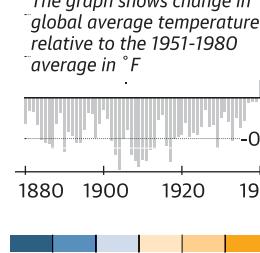


DATA POINT

Blowing hot and cold

Warmer but not warmest | The global average surface temperature in 2019 was nearly 1.7°F higher than the average temperature between 1951 and 1980. The 2019 average was lower than that of 2016, which recorded a strong El Niño.

The graph shows change in global average temperature relative to the 1951–1980 average in °F



Some exceptions | Interestingly, not all parts of the world got hotter in 2019. A few regions such as central Canada and the northern plains of the United States had cooler-than-average conditions. Notably, southern India was warmer than northern India in 2019 compared to the average.

Map shows degrees cooler or warmer in 2019 relative to the 1951–1980 average

Source: NYT Graphic Service, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Cheng et al., Advances in Atmospheric Sciences, 2020

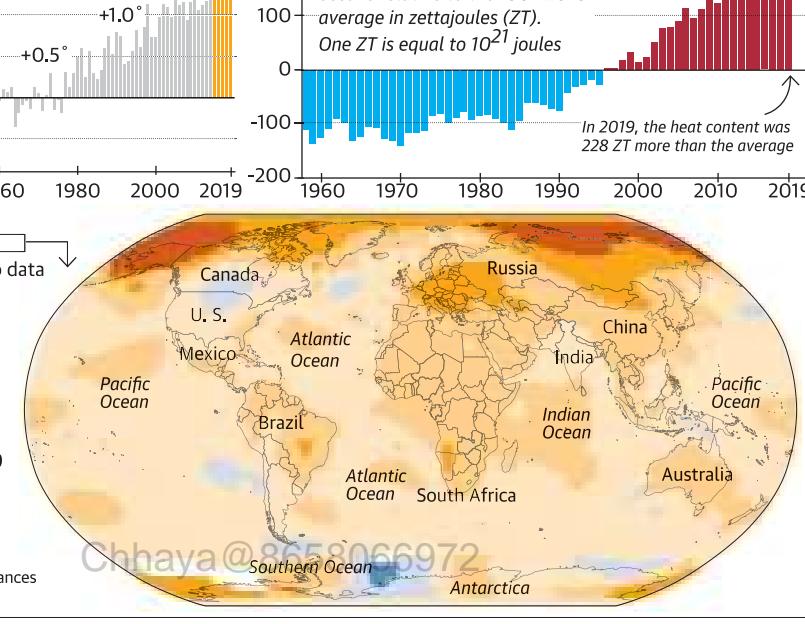
While 2019 was the second-warmest year ever, with 2016 still holding the record, the heat content in the world's oceans reached a peak. Ocean temperature is a better indicator of the climate emergency than surface temperature, according to NASA. Interestingly, not all parts of the earth are getting uniformly hotter. In fact, some are even becoming cooler.

By The Hindu Data Team

A much hotter ocean | While surface temperature can be influenced by the El Niño effect, ocean temperature gives a better idea about global warming. Last year was the hottest year on record for the world's oceans.

The graph shows change in heat content of the world's oceans relative to the 1981–2010 average in zettajoules (ZT). One ZT is equal to 10²¹ joules

In 2019, the heat content was 228 ZT more than the average



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 11, 1970

Banking Companies Act struck down

A special Bench of the Supreme Court, by a majority of ten to one, to-day [February 10] struck down as unconstitutional the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act 1969, in its entirety. This Act replaced the Ordinance under which the Government had nationalised 14 scheduled banks. The majority judgment, however, upheld the competence of Parliament to legislate on nationalisation of banks. The majority struck down the Act on the ground that it made hostile discrimination against the taken-over banks in that it prohibited these banks from carrying on "banking business" whereas other banks, Indian and foreign, were permitted to carry on banking business and even new banks may be formed, which may engage in banking business. The majority also held that the Act had violated the guarantee of compensation under Article 31 (2) in that it provided for giving certain amounts determined according to principles which were not relevant to the determination of compensation. The amounts so declared "cannot be regarded as compensation", the Court said.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEB. 11, 1920.

Comments on Amritsar Floggings.

Why the Indian poet, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, handed back to his donors the knighthood bestowed by the British Government is made plain by 'The Japan Weekly Chronicle' (Tokyo). He did it in protest against British floggings of Hindu rioters. But this is the story: "By the courtesy of an Indian reader we learn some further particulars of the surrender of his knighthood by Sir Rabindranath Tagore. It was done on account of the measures taken in the suppression of riots in the Punjab. It appears that floggings were administered to rioters; and administered in public. Military men are apparently incurable in their belief that this is the way to 'teach people a lesson'. One might have expected that after the Denshaw affair this method of dealing with a popular demonstration, even if it amounts to a bloodthirsty insurrection, would be forever discredited. The ultimate object of any sort of government must be that the people will uphold it, and it is obvious that anybody witnessing corporal chastisement will feel much more sympathy for the persons punished than for the authority thus vindicated." - "Literary Digest."

FROM PAGE ONE

SC upholds changes to SC/ST atrocities law

Despite Justice Bhat's caveat, all three judges on the Bench have upheld the constitutionality of Section 18A of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act of 2018. The sole purpose of Section 18A was to nullify a controversial March 20, 2018, judgment of the Supreme Court diluting the stringent anti-bail provisions of the original Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989.

A two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court had on March 20, 2018, held that there was no "absolute bar" on accused person obtaining anticipatory bail under Section 438 CrPC, "if no pri-

ma facie is made out or if judicial scrutiny reveals the complaint to be prima facie malafide".

The March 20, 2018, judgment was a response to the court's belief that the law was abused to file false complaints.

The verdict had led to widespread violence. Consequently, Parliament amended the 1989 law and inserted Section 18A into it. Section 18A re-affirmed the original legislative bar on pre-arrest bail.

A number of petitions were filed in the Supreme Court to declare Section 18A "arbitrary and unconstitutional". All of them were dismissed by the Bench on Monday as without merit.

'Review court can refer questions to larger Bench'

Chief Justice Bobde, who succeeded Justice Gogoi, set up the nine-judge Bench to hear the reference.

The November 2019 reference hit a bump on Monday last, with senior advocate Faali Nariman objecting to it. He argued that the court could not declare law in thin air.

"Fundamental [to judicial process] is you apply law to the facts of cases and not decide the law before looking into the facts... Never indulge in the exposition of law outside the realm of the facts of the case," he said.

The Gogoi Bench's sole task was to review the Sabarimala judgment of September 2018. The major ground for seeking a review was the finding in the judgment that Ayyappa devotees did not form a separate religious denomination, he stated. On November 14, the Review Bench recorded no errors apparent or miscarriage of justice in the 2018 verdict.

"When Ayyappa devotees were not found to be a separate denomination, these re-

ference questions on Article 25 [religious freedom] are purely an academic exercise. It was not necessary to raise these hypothetical questions in reference. The President, and not the CJI, consults the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution on questions of law and facts," Mr. Nariman had argued.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan had agreed that review jurisdiction did not include "framing a catalogue of questions randomly".

Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi had said, "But what if judges have a doubt? They refer it to a larger Bench. Are you saying the President can refer questions of law to the Supreme Court, but judges cannot?"

Senior advocate K. Parasaran had said the Supreme Court had unlimited jurisdiction. The fact that it was reviewing the Sabarimala judgment did not preclude it from referring other questions of law and cases with similar issues to a larger Bench.

Court seeks police view on Shaheen Bagh protest

When Mr. Pracha submitted that there should be a "balancing of rights", Justice Kaul said, "This is not about any balancing of rights". "Can you block a public road?" Justice Joseph asked.

The petition filed by Mr. Sahni sought directions to the police to take action to ensure smooth traffic movement on the Kalindi Kunj-Shaheen Bagh stretch, which has been closed for over a month owing to anti-CAA protests, making the public at large suffer.

The plea sought supervision of the situation in Shaheen Bagh, where several women are sitting on an indefinite protest, by a retired

Supreme Court judge or a sitting judge of the Delhi High Court to avoid any further deterioration in the situation.

"The respondents [the Delhi police] cannot be permitted to behave like mute spectators particularly in a situation now faced by persons living in the vicinity of Kalindi Kunj," said the plea.

Mr. Sahni contended that the Delhi High Court did not order the forthwith removal of traffic restrictions and observed that no direction could be issued on the methodology to handle the protest and traffic movement successfully, and left it to the discretion of the police.

Omar's sister challenges his detention under PSA

Without citing any incidents or statements, the dossier accused Mr. Abdullah of "removing his cover and resorting to dirty politics, adopting a radical methodology by way of instigating general masses against the policies of the Central government" after the abrogation of Article 370 by the BJP-led Central government on August 5. Ms. Pilot said she was shocked to learn that, just like what happened to their father, the government had imposed a fresh lease of detention under the PSA on her brother too.

The petition explained that Mr. Abdullah's detention from August 5 under Section 107 of the CrPC (security for keeping the peace) was scheduled to end on February 5, 2020. His release was imminent. He had served the maximum period of detention.

On February 5, the Executive Magistrate, instead of releasing him, ordered his further detention under Section 8 of the PSA in an "arbitrary exercise of power".

Ms. Pilot asked what was the point of detaining a man already detained through the long months of lockdown suffered across Jammu and Kashmir. In fact, she said, during the past six months there had been no effort by the authorities to verify the truth behind the "information" that Mr. Abdullah was a threat to the peace. On the other hand, there were reams of material in the form of tweets and public statements vouching for his exemplary conduct to maintain the peace.

Ms. Pilot said there was danger to her brother's life and liberty.

Oppn. walks out from Houses over quota issue

Members charge Centre with failure to defend reservation in promotions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Opposition parties on Monday staged a walkout from both Houses of Parliament after Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot said the Centre was not a party to the case in which the Supreme Court held that reservation in promotions in public posts could not be claimed as a fundamental right.

He said that though the Centre was neither asked to file an affidavit nor made a party to the case, the matter was being discussed at the "highest level" and "appropriate steps" would be taken.

The order pertained to an appeal against the Uttarakhand High Court's order on promotions to Assistant Engineers (Civil) in the Public Works Department.

When Mr. Gehlot talked about the Congress being in power in Uttarakhand then, Opposition MPs shouted "shame, shame" and walked out.

The issue was raised by

Refutes charge
Refuting the Opposition allegation, the Minister reiterated the Narendra Modi go-



Leading the charge: Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury speaking in the Lok Sabha on Monday. ■ PTI

manding two things: there be a separate judiciary service with due reservation for the SCs/STs; and the reservation clause be part of Schedule 9 of the Constitution so that it can't be tampered with."

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi urged Speaker Om Birla to expunge comments from Opposition leaders who had linked the Centre with the judgment.

In the Rajya Sabha, Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs Ramvilas Paswan said, "We have been de-

manding two things: there be a separate judiciary service with due reservation for the SCs/STs; and the reservation clause be part of Schedule 9 of the Constitution so that it can't be tampered with."

"Understand the BJP's bid to end reservation – RSS people consistently make statements against reservation. The BJP government of Uttarakhand makes an appeal in the Supreme Court to abolish the fundamental right to reservation. The Uttar Pradesh government also immediately starts tampering with the rules of reservation. The BJP first tried to weaken the law to curb atrocities on Dalits and tribals. Now, it is trying to weaken equal rights given to them by the Constitution and Babasaheb [B.R. Ambedkar]," party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said in a tweet.

BJP, RSS conspiring to end quota, says Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress accused the BJP and the RSS of conspiring to end reservation for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes after the Supreme Court held that quota in promotions could not be claimed as a fundamental right.

It also accused Minister for Social Justice Thaawarchand Gehlot of "misleading" the Lok Sabha and said it would move a privilege motion against him.

"The issue is that the RSS and the BJP cannot stand the idea that the Dalits, the tribals and the OBCs have reservation. It is in their DNA. They wake every morning and this irritates them, right! Except, it is in our Constitution and these rights are guaranteed by our Constitution," former Congress

president Rahul Gandhi told reporters in Parliament.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat might be "dreaming" of ending reservation, but the Congress would not let it happen.

"Understand the BJP's bid to end reservation – RSS people consistently make statements against reservation. The BJP government of Uttarakhand makes an appeal in the Supreme Court to abolish the fundamental right to reservation. The Uttar Pradesh government also immediately starts tampering with the rules of reservation. The BJP first tried to weaken the law to curb atrocities on Dalits and tribals. Now, it is trying to weaken equal rights given to them by the Constitution and Babasaheb [B.R. Ambedkar]," party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said in a tweet.

Govt. in denial over economic collapse: Chidambaram

Former Finance Minister says the States are being cheated of funds

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Monday led the Opposition's severe criticism of the government's economic policies, saying the economy was perilously close to collapse and, with "rising unemployment and falling consumption, India is becoming poorer."

Leading the debate on the



P. Chidambaram

Union Budget in the Rajya Sabha, he said the government was in denial and the economy had to be attended to by "competent doctors".

Revenue shortfall
The Congress leader said the States were being cheated. "In the beginning of the current year, you promised to transfer ₹8,09,133 crore in the Budget Estimate. At the end of the year, you will transfer only ₹6,56,046

give ₹784 lakh crore. I don't believe your numbers," he said.

The economy, he said, is facing demand constraints and is investment-starved. "Fear and uncertainty prevails in the country," he added. The former Minister pointed out that the government is facing a shortfall in all forms of taxes – ₹1.56 lakh crore on corporate tax, ₹10,000 crore on personal income tax, ₹30,000 crore on customs, ₹52,000 crore on excise and ₹51,000 crore on the GST. This despite "extraordinary powers" and

"all kinds of power" given to lower-level tax officials, he said.

The net tax revenue in the current fiscal was targeted at ₹16.49 lakh crore but only ₹9 lakh crore had been collected in the first nine months till December 2019, and "you want us to believe this will rise to ₹15 lakh crore by March 2020?" he said.

Similarly, the expenditure in 2019-20 was pegged at ₹27.86 lakh crore, but only ₹11.78 lakh crore was spent during April-December, and by March this is projected to rise to ₹27 lakh crore.

Mahua asked not to cast aspersions on Chair

Her remarks irked Speaker Om Birla

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday cautioned Trinamool Congress member Mahua Moitra for casting aspersions on the Chair and passing comments from her seat while the proceedings were under way.

"I am telling you that please don't keep passing comments from your seat or else I will be forced to take action," he told her.

The Speaker's comments came after Ms. Moitra made certain remarks on the Chair after she was not allowed to ask a supplementary question on the growth rate during the question hour.

In a written reply, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said bad loans of these banks had come down to ₹7.27 lakh crore at the end of September 2019 following the measures taken by the government to improve their health.

He told the House that India had also provided support to other countries in tackling the challenge posed by the nCoV disease.

"The ICMR has offered to do testing of samples for other

South East Asian Region countries. Testing of sam-

ples from Maldives has already been undertaken. Request from Afghanistan for samples testing has been agreed to. We have agreed to provide technical assistance to Bhutan in screening of passengers also," he said.

He thanked Air India, its crew and the team of doctors and the para medical staff who brought back 654 passengers also," he said.

"In our country, three positive cases have been reported so far from Kerala. All these cases have travel history from Wuhan. They have been isolated and are report-

ed to be clinically stable," Mr. Vardhan said.

The government had already constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by the Health Minister to monitor the virus. Besides, gram sabhas were being organised near the border with Nepal to create awareness.

So far, 1,510 samples had been tested of which 1,507 were found negative. Three samples had tested positive and 27 were under process.

The Minister said China had reported the outbreak on December 31. "The outbreak was initially noticed in a seafood market in Wuhan city in Hubei Province early December and in a short span has spread to all the provinces of China. As on February 9, 37,198 confirmed cases and 811 deaths had been reported there, while 354 confirmed cases had been reported from Kerala. All these cases have travel history from Wuhan. They have been isolated and are report-

ed to be clinically stable," Mr. Vardhan said.

The government had initiated screening at all integrated checkposts from Nepal in collaboration with U.P., Uttarakhand, Bengal, Sikkim and Bihar; the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and the Land Port Authorities.

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Don't make irrelevant submissions: SC

Not stifling debate, says irked CJI while hearing plea over death of infant in Shaheen Bagh protest

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday made it clear to mothers participating in the Shaheen Bagh protests that it respects motherhood and social peace but will not entertain "guilt-generating" or "irrelevant" submissions about their children being called "Pakistani, terrorists or ghadar [traitors] in school".

A visibly angry Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad A. Bobde warned lawyers that "irrelevant" arguments and pleadings would be either cut short or struck off the records.

The CJI's oral remarks came while taking suo motu cognisance of a letter from 12-year-old national bravery award winner Zen Gunaratna Sadavarte for a probe into the death of four-month-old Mohammed Jahan, who accompanied his mother to the protest site and died on January 30 morning.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the incident was "really very painful".

But advocate Shahrukh Alam, for some of the Shaheen Bagh mothers, said the reality was that it was very difficult to "sanitise the lives of our children... Our home is not what people imagine. It may be just a plastic sheet



A national bravery award winner had sought a probe into the death of a 4-month-old in Shaheen Bagh. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

covering. Our children are called 'Pakistani, terrorist, ghadar' in school".

One of the lawyers persisted that "these children live in jhuggis. They attend mela. You have to hear the mothers' voices... On the other hand, families are being separated by NRC [National Register of Citizens] and children are being detained".

But the CJI intervened, saying, "We do not want you or any people using this forum as a platform to further create problem. If somebody calls 'Pakistani' in a school,

this is not the platform to bring that... We are not here to discuss NRC, CAA, rude behaviour in school, calling 'Pakistani', climate change or the Prime Minister."

The CJI said: "We are on the death of a particular child... We respect motherhood, we respect social peace. So don't make arguments intended to generate guilt."

Advocate and mother Radhika Kolluru, who made submissions in the case, later told *The Hindu* that "as far as CAA/NRC is concerned, women are a class of stakeholders in themselves as they find it hardest to prove ancestry due to lack of documentation. Poor women have no option but to go to a protest site with their children. By disallowing women from bringing their children to protests, you are effectively rendering impossible to them to voice their dissent against a law which they are going to be directly affected by".

Another lawyer, also appearing for the mothers, argued that India had ratified the UN Convention for Protection of Child Rights. "Children have a right to protest. Don't stop that," she argued. "A four-month-old child is going there [Shaheen Bagh] to protest? Are you saying a four-month-old can protest?" the CJI asked.

Issuing notice to the government, the CJI agreed to the protesting mothers of Shaheen Bagh to intervene but warned them not to make "irrelevant" submissions. "We are not stifling arguments. Remember, this is a properly constituted proceeding of the Supreme Court of India," the CJI pointed out.

NCPCR recommending counselling is an attempt at stifling their voice, says report



Safe zone: For children, the site is secure because their parents and community is there, the report said. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

It is based on field observations of the researchers and interactions with children, women and others at Shaheen Bagh and includes views expressed by experts at a panel discussion earlier this month.

The study was submitted to the NCPCR on February 9. It asserts that the NCPCR has failed to do its job in pro-

tecting children from police atrocities in Uttar Pradesh and by remaining silent on the issue of the police questioning schoolchildren on sedition in Karnataka's Bidar as well as against rampant sexual abuse in the country.

The study also says that by ordering the South Delhi District Magistrate to identify children and ensure their

counselling on the basis of an "anonymous complaint", and without conducting its own investigation, the Commission violated its own rules. As per the NCPCR's rules, a complaint should be "clear and legible and not vague, anonymous or pseudonymous". The authors say that it is in fact the NCPCR which is subjecting the children to trauma by giving such 'harmful' directives.

"For these children the site is secure, because their parents are there, and the community is there. The children are safe, they are imbibing the best patriotic values and learning the importance of speaking out against perceived injustice. None of this can be equated to trauma. To want to take children for counselling without any kind of assessment, without any kind of discussion is in itself shocking, perhaps traumatic."

Soldiers get equipment worth ₹2.5 lakh'

Army open to giving pension for women officer litigants

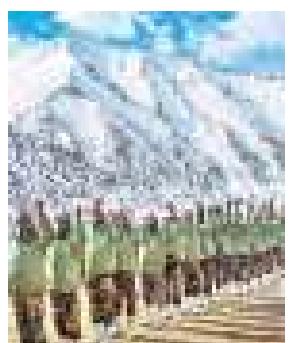
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Army is open to giving pension to women officers who have finished the pensionable service limit, defence sources said on Monday. The limit for officers is 20 years and for Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks 15 years.

On Permanent Commission (PC), sources said the Army has already opened several areas recently and prospectively but that cannot be applied retrospectively to the women officers who have taken the legal route on Permanent Commission.

"Women officers who have finished the pensionable service, Army is open to give pension," a source said adding they cannot be granted PC now as the terms of service they were recruited on were different.

Last week, the government cited 'physical' and "physiological limitations" in grant of command positions to women officers to which the Supreme Court said there is need for a "change of mindset". There are about 322 women officers who have approached the SC on the PC.



A CAG report had flagged deficiencies to troops on the Siachen glacier.

rations and housing for troops on the Siachen glacier for the audit period 2015-16 to 2017-18. According to the report, there was a critical shortage of snow goggles ranging from 62% to 98%, and troops were not issued "multi-purpose boots" from November 2015 to September 2016, leaving them to resort to recycling of available boots.

The government has authorised a special scale of rations to all troops who are deployed above 12,000 ft. It has also authorised procurement substitutes in accordance with the preference of the troops on a cost-to-cost basis," the source said, adding that till date, the supply of rations had never been delayed or denied.

All other Terms and Conditions remain unaltered. For more details please refer NIT No. VSSC/CMG/CIVIL/16/2019-20 DT 17.01.2020

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Supply, Installation, testing & Commissioning of 110 KV switchyard including 25 MVA, 110/15 KV Power Transformer for TNPL Unit-II MEP	04.03.2020
Supply of HT Cables for TNPL Unit-II MEP	04.03.2020
Supply of GI Cable Trays for TNPL Unit-II MEP	04.03.2020
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CORIGENDUM

With reference to E-bid No: 2020 AAJ 42394_1, Pertaining to the work "Job contract for providing Bush/Shrub cutting and allied services in the operational area at Chennai Airport", for which press advertisement published in English Daily: The Hindu dated 08/02/2020. In this regard, it is intimated to all prospect bidders that last date of submission of Bid may please be read as 20/02/2020 upto 1200 hours instead of 17/02/2020 upto 1800 hrs. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

भारत सरकार/ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विमान प्राविकरण

विमान साराभाई अंतर्राष्ट्रीय केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE

नियमण एवं अनुसंधान प्रयोग / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP

विल्लुवन्तपुम्/THIRUVANANTHAPURAM-22

(फोन नं. /Ph.No.: 0471 2564567 / 2564537)

ई-नियिदा सूचना सं. वीएससीसी/वीएसपीसी/विवेता/16/2019-20, दिनांक 17.01.2020 / VSSC/CMG/CIVIL/16/2019-20 Dt. 17.01.2020

ई-नियिदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संस्थानीय सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से नियन्त्रित कार्य के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा अंतर्राष्ट्रीय आमंत्रित की जाती है।

On behalf of the President of India, online item-rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for the following work.

क्र.सं. Sl.No.	विवरण / Description	व्यापर / Details
1.	कार्य का शीर्षक / Title of work	आरपीपी, वीएसपासी, तुमा में द्रव कच्ची सामग्री लोड सुविधा के लिए भवन का निर्माण (विवर तथा पोस्ट कार्य) / Construction of Building for Liquid Raw Material Weighing Facility at RPP, VSSC, Thumba (Civil & PH works)
2.	नियिदा में दी गई अनुमति लागत / Estimate cost put to tender	₹ 155.40 लाख /Lakhs
3.	कार्य पूरा होने की सीधि/ Period of completion	12 (वारह / Twelve) महीने/ months
4.	बद्याना जारा राशि (ईएमडी) / Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹ 3,10,800/-
5.	अवधि जिसके द्वारा नियिदा दस्तावेज़ को डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है/ Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	से /From: 21.01.2020, 10.00 बजे / Hrs तक / to 04.02.2020, 23.00 बजे / Hrs. Extended up to 24.02.2020
6.	बोली स्पष्टीकरण / Bid clarifications.	से /From: 21.01.2020, 10.00 बजे / Hrs तक / to 05.02.2020, 16.00 बजे / Hrs. Extended up to 25.02.2020
7.	नियिदा पास की अंतिम सिविय व समय / Last date and time for receipt of tenders.	को तारीख / Up to 06.02.2020, 14:30 बजे / Hrs. Extended up to 26.02.2020
8.	नियिदा लोड की अंतिम सिविय व समय / Due date and time of opening of tenders	को 07.02.2020, 15:00 बजे / Hrs. Extended up to 27.02.2020

All other Terms and Conditions remain unaltered. For more details please refer NIT No. VSSC/CMG/CIVIL/16/2019-20 Dt. 17.01.2020

German envoy may lead diplomats' team to J&K

Envoy from EU, Gulf, ASEAN nations to visit UT this week

SUHASINI HAIDAR
PEERZADA ASHIQ
NEW DELHI/ SRINAGAR

A month after a delegation of diplomats visited Jammu and Kashmir, the government plans to take a second batch of Ambassadors there later this week, and allow them to speak with several delegations about the ground situation six months after the amendment of Article 370.

The government has invited diplomats from the European Union, including Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and the European Union envoy himself for the two-day visit, beginning January 12, although sources said they have not received confirmations from all those who will participate.

As one of the most senior Delhi-based diplomats, Germany's Ambassador Walter Lindner is expected to lead the delegation. Other invi-

tees include the envoys from Qatar and other Gulf countries, the 10-nation ASEAN grouping as well as countries in the neighbourhood.

The Russian Ambassador, who has been invited twice, had said on January 17 that Kashmir is an "internal matter" for India and there is "no reason" for him to travel there, and is unlikely to join this batch as well.

According to sources, the visit to Srinagar was earlier planned for Tuesday, but was put off due to a call by separatist groups for a 'shutdown' on Feb. 11, anniversary of the hanging of JKLF founder Maqbool Bhatt.

Depending on the status of the shutdown, the delegation of diplomats that is expected to begin its visit to Srinagar on February 12, may be taken to other districts in North Kashmir before visiting Jammu. Officials confirmed that all logistics and security was in place

for the visit, which will be coordinated by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

As *The Hindu* reported last week, the presence of envoys from EU member countries is significant as the last time a batch had visited Kashmir in January, the EU had declined to participate unless they were taken as a group of all 27 (then 28, including the UK). Diplomatic sources had also said the envoys wanted more than a "guided tour", and had asked to meet the former chief ministers in detention, who have now all been charged under the stringent Public Safety Act.

The inclusion of EU envoys is also timed just before External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Munich and Brussels, where he is expected to engage with German and EU officials and parliamentarians over concerns on the situation in Kashmir.

U.S. nod for air defence system sale to India

It is awaiting Congress approval

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

Twenty-one persons, 11 of them women, have been booked for alleged rioting and assault during a protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) at Lucknow's Hussainabad Clock Tower.

An FIR was registered by

the Uttar Pradesh Police at the Thakurganj Police Station

against 21 persons and

hundreds of unidentified persons for allegedly raising "provocative" slogans

and holding up traffic during

the 'Lucknow chalo'

event at the protest site on

Sunday.

"The Integrated Air De-

fence Weapon System, also

known as the National Ad-

vanced Surface to Air Mis-

sile System (NASAMS), pro-

vides integrated air mis-

sile defence and is currently de-

MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	40,980	-0.39
US Dollar	71.30	0.14
Gold	41,508	0.13
Brent oil	53.85	-1.89

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	368.25	-1.30
Asian Paints	1869.50	10.80
Axis Bank	741.10	-7.05
Bajaj Auto	3103.30	-31.55
Bajaj Finance	9627.00	3.70
Bharti Airtel	538.70	-0.75
BPCL	485.45	-5.95
Britannia Ind	3155.60	-95.80
Cipla	444.75	1.55
Coal India	178.85	-6.20
Dr Reddys Lab	3149.10	-17.60
Eicher Motors	19057.25	-679.05
GAIL (India)	121.80	-1.20
Grasim Ind	757.55	-30.10
HCL Tech	604.90	-2.80
HDFC	2414.30	8.65
HDFC Bank	1240.30	-1.90
Hero MotoCorp	2385.70	-57.75
Hindustan ...	190.85	-6.55
Hind Unilever	2159.30	-0.65
ICICI Bank	533.95	-2.50
IndusInd Bank	1274.95	-23.85
Bharti Infratel	239.80	-8.00
Infosys	773.20	-4.10
Indian Oil Corp	115.80	-1.70
ITC	210.55	-2.85
JSW Steel	277.90	-1.40
Kotak Bank	1669.30	16.25
L&T	1285.30	-13.70
M&M	528.40	-40.70
Maruti Suzuki	6892.90	-78.85
Nestle India Ltd.	16172.20	-155.60
NTPC	113.50	-2.10
ONGC	106.20	-3.05
PowerGrid Corp	186.60	-3.80
Reliance Ind	1435.60	1.95
State Bank	318.50	-2.05
Sun Pharma	420.30	-10.50
Tata Motors	168.90	-4.70
Tata Steel	443.80	-27.20
TCS	2161.95	-25.40
Tech Mahindra	813.65	-10.80
Titan	1257.20	-17.80
UltraTech Cement	4413.75	-58.05
UPL	574.10	31.00
Vedanta	140.30	-4.30
Wipro	240.90	-3.05
YES Bank	37.55	-1.15
Zee Entertainment	230.45	-19.30

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.09	71.41
Euro	77.85	78.20
British Pound	91.90	92.32
Japanese Yen (100)	64.74	65.03
Chinese Yuan	10.18	10.23
Swiss Franc	72.69	73.06
Singapore Dollar	51.19	51.43
Canadian Dollar	53.48	53.73
Malaysian Ringgit	17.14	17.23

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

Retail Silver (1g)	50.1	(49.4)
22 ct gold (1g)	3891	(3837)

MRF Q3 net skids 17.18% on slowdown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI

Tyre major MRF Ltd.'s consolidated net profit from continuing operations for the third quarter ended December 2019 dived 17.18% year-on-year to ₹241 crore on economic slowdown.

Net profit in the second quarter of the current fiscal stood at ₹227 crore.

During the period under review, total income y-o-y dipped 1.68% to ₹4,150 crore. Compared with the second quarter of FY20, total income had risen by ₹46.65 crore. The company managed to bring down its expenditure for Q3 y-o-y to ₹3,779 crore from ₹3,801 crore. The board declared a second interim dividend of ₹3 per equity share. It will be paid by March 3.

Wholesale PV sales crash on rising costs

Slower GDP growth continued to pressure consumer demand, says SIAM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Continuing a downward trend, wholesale passenger vehicles sales in the country declined by 6.2% to over 2.62 lakh units in January 2020, as rising cost of vehicle ownership and slower GDP growth continued to put pressure on consumer demand, industry body SIAM said on Monday.

The domestic passenger vehicle sales, which includes sales of cars, utility vehicles and vans, stood at over 2.8 lakh units in January 2019. As per the data released by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, car sales fell 8.1% to over 1.64 lakh units in January 2020 as against over 1.79 lakh units in the same month last year.

Sales of utility vehicles were up 2.57% to 84,929 units, while that of vans fell by



27,68% to 12,992 units in the last month.

Rajan Wadhwa, president at SIAM, said, "Sales of vehicles continue to be stressed due to rising cost of vehicle ownership and slower growth in GDP."

He added that the industry was hopeful that the recent announcement of the government on infrastructure and rural economy would support growth of vehicle sales going forward, especially commercial vehicles

We hope response to the Auto Expo will help improve consumer sentiment

RAJESH MENON,
SIAM director general

and the two-wheeler segment. The total two-wheeler sales in January 2020 declined by 16.06% to over 13.41 lakh units as compared to over 15.97 lakh units in the same month last year. While sales of motorcycles declined by 15.17% to more than 8.71 lakh units, scooter sales were down 16.21% to more than 4.16 lakh units.

The data showed that wholesale sales of commercial vehicles, which are seen as one of the indicators of economic activity in the country, fell by 14.04% to 75,289 units in January 2020, as compared to 87,591 in Jan-

uary 2019. Under commercial vehicles segment, sales of medium and heavy commercial vehicles fell 34.64% to 22,534 units, while that of light commercial vehicles were down 0.68% to 52,755 units.

SIAM director general Rajesh Menon noted that wholesale sales continued to dip in all segments, barring the three-wheeler segment, which saw a growth of 12.69% to over 60,903 units.

Vehicle sales across categories registered a decline of 13.83% to over 17.39 lakh units, down from sales of more than 20.19 lakh units in January 2019. "We are hopeful that the response that we have received to the ongoing Auto Expo will help further improve consumer sentiment. Already there have been 70 unveilings and launches so far," he added.

"Union Bank of India has recently reduced its home loan interest rates for different categories of borrowers by up to 30 bps, i.e. from 8.20% to 7.90%," Union Bank said.

Royal Enfield eyes global markets for accessories business

Motorcycle manufacturer hopes to make inroads into Europe, Asia Pacific with its riding gear

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

Royal Enfield is eyeing international markets, particularly in Europe and the Asia Pacific region, to grow its nearly five-year-old apparel and accessories business, and is looking at catering to the increasing demand within India, a senior company official said.

"Royal Enfield motorcycles sell in a large number of countries and that gives us a platform to cater to the customers there and representation in those countries. The plan that we are working on right now is to build a stronger portfolio that could cater to specific international markets," Puneet Sood, head, Apparel & Accessories Business at Royal Enfield, told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Sood believes that the international market would



be one of the areas that would drive growth for the company's apparel and accessories business.

Asked about the target markets, he said, "One of our objectives is to build high impact, which means that wherever our motorcycle presence is strong, those are the markets we will start focussing on. For example, Europe

is a heritage market for us. We are a known brand there. This is one of the markets we will focus on, the UK, specifically APAC is another market, which we believe, holds huge potential for us."

While Mr. Sood did not share any numbers, he said that in the last two years, the business segment had seen a significant growth. "We are

producing products that are value for money, and are competitive in terms of pricing and suitable for the Indian terrain."

Mr. Sood pointed out that riding conditions and product certifications vary from market to market. "For example, a helmet in Thailand will require different certification vs. helmet sold in India, vs. what is sold in Europe... so that is another bit that we are working on. Plus, in an apparel business, the fit also differs from market to market...we are working on."

He added that while currently the company's range was focussed on India, most riding products met international norms, and were supplied to international markets as well. Mr. Sood said that specifically for India, the company intended to intro-

duce products that are value for money, and are competitive in terms of pricing and suitable for the Indian terrain."

Under the segment, the company sells protective gear such as helmets, riding jackets, gloves, trousers, shoes, besides products like shirts, t-shirts, key chain, mugs, belts and wallets. Mr. Sood said that the company had invested a lot of time in developing products specially for India as the weather and terrain here were different than in other markets.

"One of our objectives is that keep improving the product portfolio that we have. We are working with riding groups very closely... there are market needs that are emerging... we are currently researching products that can be offered to cater to that need," Mr. Sood said.

"We were helped by some good recoveries which came from Essar Steel, Ruchi Soya Industries and Prayagraj Power Generation Company. We recovered close to ₹2,000 crore from these three accounts," said

ded Mr. Sikka.

Meanwhile, the number of SIP folios crossed the three-crore mark, with the number of such folios pegged at 3.04 crore in January – the month that saw an addition of 12.07 lakh folios.

Further, the flows through SIPs was ₹8,531.90 crore in January with the AUM pegged at ₹3.25 lakh crore.

According to N.S. Venkatesh, chief executive, AMFI, the SIP contribution and the AUM are proof that retail investors have accepted mutual funds as a long-term wealth creation avenue.

"We expect this positive growth momentum in mutual fund AUMs to continue, driven by growth-oriented Budget and RBI stance on continuing benign interest rate cycle, resulting in 15-20% growth for the mutual fund industry this fiscal," said Mr. Venkatesh.

Chiefs of 6 banks under CBI, ED scanner: FinMin

No arrests have been made: Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) are probing cases against the managing directors or chief executive officers of six scheduled commercial banks. However, no arrests have been made, according to the Finance Ministry.

To a query in Lok Sabha, the Ministry on Monday said as per existing guidelines, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) had given

non-executive chairman and an MD & CEO," the Ministry said. A Banks Board Bureau has been created for arm's length selection of non-executive chairmen and whole-time directors (WTDs). Performance-based extensions have been instituted for WTDs.

The Ministry said comprehensive reforms to institutionalise responsible banking had been effected through codified policies and audited procedures for prudent lending, and robust data-driven risk assessment and monitoring.

The board-approved loan policies of PSBs now mandate tying up necessary clearances and linkages before disbursement, scrutiny of group balance sheet and ring-fencing of cash flows, non-fund and tail-risk appraisals in project financing.

hausted. We don't foresee any fresh slippages," he said.

NCLT accounts

Mr. Sekar also said exposure towards telecom sector was nil and slippages in retail, agriculture, MSME (RAM) sector was coming down to an average of ₹500-600 crore per quarter. He also expected to recover a huge sum from two huge NCLT accounts.

"We have a net NPA of about ₹7,000 crore and this could be provided for within three years.

"With conviction and confidence, I can say we will sustain net profit as we will be making a profit of ₹3,000 crore every year and with this, the net NPAs could be taken care off," he said.

CRR exemption for retail, MSME loans for 5 years

Loans from Jan.31 to July 31 eligible

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

State-run lender Bank of Baroda and Union Bank of India have lowered their lending rates by 5-10 bps.

BoB has reduced its one-year MCLR by 10 bps to 8.15% and one-month MCLR by 5 bps. The new rates will come into effect from February 12.

Union Bank of India has reduced its 3-month MCLR rate by 5 bps to 7.80% from 7.85%. The one-year MCLR capital stands at 8.10%. The revised rates will come into effect from February 11, 2020.



Showing his mettle (From below) Yashasvi Jaiswal with the Player of the Series trophy, in a file photo from last year; with Jwala and his family

•ICC; SUDHAKARA JAIN



'All he wanted was to play cricket'

Adjudged the Player of the Tournament in the Under-19 World Cup 2020, Yashasvi Jaiswal always had a dream, but not the resources, says his mentor, Jwala Singh

VVIJAY LOKAPALLY

Yashasvi Jaiswal, 18, was declared the Player of the Series at the controversial finish to the ICC Under-19 World Cup in South Africa. Bangladesh carried the trophy, but Jaiswal took the individual honors by scoring 400 runs overall and 88 in the final. Though the unsporting behaviour of both sides has cast a shadow over his personal gain, his mentor, Jwala Singh says that as a teenager, Jaiswal lived for cricket alone.

He speaks about his journey from Bhadohi, 50 km from Varanasi, where as a boy, as young as eight, he'd rise before the sun and practise until it became too dark to spot the ball. His parents,

given the selection challenges at the junior level in Uttar Pradesh, and the fact that Mumbai seemed to offer unbiased attention for someone starting out, Jaiswal decided to hone his skills outside his home state.

The Azad Maidan became his address as he found a 'home' in a tent, waking up to the sound of cork on wood. His world revolved around the Maidan, cricket, bat, and ball. In the beginning, he sold street food to make ends meet.

On a pitch where an established club cricketer struggled to put bat to ball, Jaiswal performed with ease, to the extent that his batting caught the attention of Jwala, a club cricketer himself and a self-

proclaimed scout. Jwala saw a bit of himself in the young prodigy. "I had come from Gorakhpur at 13 and struggled to make ends meet in Mumbai. I did not want Yashasvi to suffer the same fate."

When the two met, the boy was on the verge of giving up. "I want to go back," Jaiswal would repeatedly tell his mentor, adding that he'd faced resistance from the locals who'd called him an outsider. It took a while for Jwala to convince the teenager to stick to his resolve.

Jaiswal found shelter in Jwala's house. Jwala, who was engaged to be married,

demy (Dilip Vengsarkar Foundation) where he scored runs in almost every match," he says. Vengsarkar's friends, knowing that the boy had come from difficult financial circumstances, would give him money, to keep him in the game. "Yashasvi was a very determined player at such a young age (13) and could excel in all conditions," says Vengsarkar. Then came the IPL windfall – a 2.4 crore contract with Rajasthan Royals and a place in the India under-19 team.

Unfortunately, Jaiswal and his teammates, earned the displeasure of fans on Sun-



told his future wife about the boy, asking her to treat the boy like her own. He became part of the family, with Vandana taking care of nutrition.

Surviving it all

The hardships of surviving almost on the road in the city, gradually waned. Runs flowed and transformed into invitations to play in various tournaments. "Cricket became his driving force," said Jwala, who became his godfather since Bhupendra had returned to Bhadohi, convinced that his son's future was in safe hands.

Soon, former India captain, Dilip Vengsarkar took him under his care at Dadar Union, a cricket club. "I found him awesomely gifted. I got him to tour England (four years ago) with my aca-

day, when they almost came to blows with the players from Bangladesh. "Whatever happened wasn't good. Players can get emotional because there is so much at stake," says the India Under-19 coach Paras Mhambre, referring to the money, media, and star treatment the young players get.

"Cricket life for these U-19 kids starts now. We are not going to a war front. Let's all be responsible," said veteran player Amol Muzumdar, now a cricket coach and commentator. Authorities are now planning to guide players like Jaiswal on finance management and staying focussed on the game. The Bhadohi boy, hailed as the next big player in Indian cricket, would do well with such help.

(for which she used to play), Lady Shri Ram, Bharati, and Janki Devi Memorial, to name a few.

One of the players in the league's HFW Warriors, Dana Smith, 16, also plays centre forward in her school's football team. Originally from England, Dana has been in India for 12 years now, and says the sport has taught her togetherness and has given her the ability to socialise with different age groups. "The love and passion for the sport is amazing to see," she says.

It's still an uphill task to convince parents, whose reasons for not encouraging girls to play the sport range from getting 'tanned', scarring, bruising, to studies 'suffering' and bones breaking. Swati tries to overcome these hurdles by playing with the girls and counselling parents. She organises matches between different classes to bump up their competitive skills.

"It took two years to make a good team and now there are 50-60 girls who play football; one represents Delhi," she says.

The Kica Women's Football League, season 1 has six teams of seven players each. The women will be playing on a small turf for 50 minutes with a break. Registrations for season two will be announced after the completion of season one.

Every Sunday until March 8th; Conscient Sports Arena, Vasant Kunj; 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

PEOPLE

Spice on stage

Gaurang Shah will present a monochrome collection at the Lakme Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2020



A cursory glance and it feels like Gaurang Shah has opted for a colour detox. The Hyderabad-based designer, who also has a store in Defence Colony, Delhi, has usually showcased a mélange of weaving techniques, and colours at LFW. But his new collection for the LFW summer/resort 2020 edition, happening in Mumbai, is predominantly monochrome, comprising 24 saris and 22 ensembles.

Last year, he also brought out a special edition of khadi saris whose pallus had woven replications of Raja Ravi Varma paintings, and for this he used around 600 shades of natural dyes. "I've been wanting to do a black and white collection for a year. Winter-festive edition was not the ideal time for it, so I am doing it now," he says.

The collection is in association with Lakme Salon and the theme is Garam Masala. Actor Tabu will be the showstopper and sport a Kanjivaram lehenga teamed with a sari draped like a dupatta. "I was in Mumbai just recently and showed her the ensemble; she loved it," says Gaurang, adding that the actor will recite Urdu poetry on stage, when curtains go up on the collection on February 14.

The monochrome line is by no means less complicated than his previous ones. Yet again, he will be showcasing a spectrum of woven textiles and jamdani will be the mainstay, done on geometric single and double ikats, pathani, pinhole bandhanis from Bhuj, Banarsi silk, Patan patolas, kalamkari, Kota, Telangana's Puttapaka, uppada and Kashmir's kani.

Models will walk the stage in two rows, one sporting ivory white ensembles and the other complementing it with the blacks. All the significant hues of ingredients that go into making garam masala are in the colour palette, in addition to a splash of deep red, beige, pomegranate pinks, and blues on motifs or borders.

In his collections, Gaurang says he strives, along with weavers and craftspeople, to create heirloom worthy pieces of wearable art.

He points at a dhakai jamdani sari that uses fine count (300) khadi yarn that takes a year to be woven: "The yarn is so fine that you won't see it clearly with the naked eye," he says. It is gossamer, lightweight and bears surface techniques done with finesse.

SANGEETHA DEVI DUNDOO

PRODUCTS

Best of both worlds

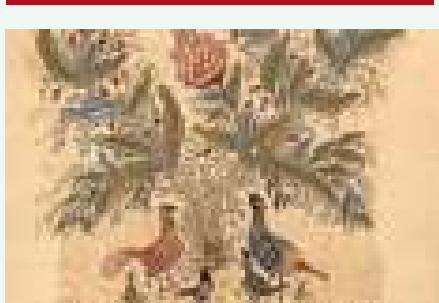


Luxury handloom brand Ekaya Banaras is launching a ready-to-wear line called Kashi in the Clouds. For this, they are collaborating with French couturiers Pierre & Daniel. Expect oversized jackets, flared pants, A-line skirts, and organza shirts, all created with handwoven textiles that have been exposed to French tailoring and pattern cutting.

Kashi in the Clouds is available by appointment at Ekaya's Delhi store, e7, Defence Colony, and the Mumbai store, Ador House, first floor; upwards of ₹10,000.

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



ART

Painted textiles

An ongoing show titled The Art of Hand Painted Textiles showcases works by Ajit Kumar Das. The artist uses *kalam*, a hand-raffted bamboo reed, and natural dyes to do his paintings. His work spans a four-decade-long exploration of textiles. The collections on display illustrate Ajit's long engagement with flora and fauna.

VENUE: Gallery Art Motif, Safdarjung Enclave

TIME: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.



DESSERTS

Valentine special

The Artful Baker has curated a month-long menu with Valentine special delicacies. This includes Strawberry Pannacotta, Raspberry Cream Cheese Brownie, Mocha Bundt Cake, and Strawberry and White Chocolate Muffins. The main course will have Creamy Chicken, Chicken Caesar Salad, Curried Potato, and Mushroom Puff.

VENUE: Khan Market and Vasant Vihar outlets

TIME: 8 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Paintings

Mapping Memories, an exhibition of paintings and silk-screen prints by Madan Meena, is currently on display at the Triveni Gallery. The collection of works explores the artist's connection with two places in Rajasthan: Ranthambore and Kota. The paintings showcase a rich language of colours and motifs.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House

TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



DINING

Food fest

MKT, a spread out, casual dining restaurant at The Chanakya has organised a 10-day Hyderabadi-Awadhi Food Festival titled *Jash-e-Nawabi*. On till 16th February and curated by chef Shaikh Arif Ahmed, it offers dishes made with spices and recipes that were used in the royal kitchens of the Nawabs.

VENUE: The Chanakya Mall, Chanakyapuri

TIME: 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.



FILM

Swedish drama

Beyond Dreams will be screened as part of the ongoing Swedish Film Festival. The 2017 film by Roja Sekersöz, is a story about Mirja who served a prison sentence for a failed robbery. On her return, she manages to get a job but is torn between looking after her sick mother and her old friends, who are to her like her real family.

VENUE: Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre

TIME: 7 p.m.

CMYK



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VENUE: Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre

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The real-time state of mind

This live-streaming app, on a fast rise in India, is mediating the lives of the creator and the consumer



Reality bytes
Screenshot from the app, (far right)
Dimple D'Souza at the BIGO Awards Gala 2020 • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT / GETTY IMAGES /ISTOCK

ASWATHI PACHA

Dimple D'Souza, a fashion designer from Chennai, cannot decide on the perfect eye shadow for her black dress. She settles on a metallic purple and starts her live broadcast. No, she is not on the news; every night, she connects with thousands of her followers on a mobile live streaming app called BIGO LIVE. "What song should I dance to first?" she asks and, messages with suggestions and virtual gifts pop up almost instantly.

At the BIGO Awards Gala 2020 held on January 15 in Singapore, Dimple bagged the third prize in the top regional host category. "I've been on this app for three years and I have nearly five million followers. They send me virtual gifts which I can encash later, as my Google Pay is connected to the app," she explains.

Dimple tells me that the app helps her earn at least five to 10 lakhs every month. To make things clearer, she asks: "Guys! Send me some gifts. Let my friend here see how it works."

WHO'S ON IT?

BIGO LIVE has over 22 million monthly active users and Nagesh Banga, deputy country manager of BIGO LIVE, explains that it is more popular in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. He adds that the users are located across the country with the exception of a few South Indian cities.

From passing time and making friends to sharing a slice of their life, each user has a different motivation for watching and participating in live streams.

"BIGO LIVE helps content creators not just become famous but also earn an income. The support given by followers to these content creators/broadcasters is tremendous. This kind of monetisation is missing on short video apps," adds Nagesh.

Dr. Manoj Sharma, who runs the SHUT Clinic, a technology de-addiction centre in Bengaluru's NIMHANS, says, "These live-streaming apps are relatively new and we don't have much empirical data to suggest if the streamers spend additional time on the app to make extra money and get a few

up spending the same amount there. Here, I sit at home and am entertained every day after my daily job."

Safety and big picture

Like most other social networks, BIGO LIVE has strict community guidelines, and much of the content flowing through the system is moderated by in-app Artificial Intelligence, which scans for obscenity, pornography, graphic images, gambling, terrorism, under-age usage.

"Individually, within each segment, there are ways to ensure that AI is compliant and in-line with the local laws and culture," explains Mike Ong, Vice President, Government Relations, BIGO, in an email to *The Hindu*.

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more followers."

In 2019, the Madras High Court briefly had TikTok pulled from app stores as it was criticised for inappropriate content and also pointed out for lack of safety to children. "Many video streaming apps feature suggestive content posted by young women to gain eyeballs. This may promote further objectification of women. However, we cannot police the choices of adult women," explains Devdutta Mukhopadhyay, associate counsel, the Internet Freedom Foundation. "To promote women's well-being, we should focus on data protection principles such as informed consent, purpose limitation and right to erasure. Further, women should be granted more control over who can view and share their content, and some social media platforms have developed technical features to facilitate this."

"Freedom of speech and expression is a fundamental right, and in as much as it does not violate others' right to privacy or is not obscene, no one can object to it. This right includes expressions through videos or such live-streaming apps. The duty of the state will have to be to protect this right as far as possible," adds advocate and women's rights activist Sudha Ramalingam.

Nagesh Banga, deputy country manager of BIGO LIVE, concludes that the company sees great potential in the future.

The writer was at the BIGO Awards Gala 2020, Singapore, at the invitation of BIGO LIVE



Hear this Blaupunkt BTW Pro True Wireless earbuds offer decent noise cancellation • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



trial and error, and only a couple of times did I randomly experience 'out of range' unpairing when it was not warranted. Also, do these not mimic the AirPods, but with a more angular look?

Blaupunkt has long been known for their high-quality yet affordable car audio systems. In the early 2000s, no one did audio systems like the German name. Last year, however, when they entered the Indian market, with consumer accessories such as earbuds and televisions, many were excited.

Now, Blaupunkt is out with their latest true wireless earbuds, the BTW Pro's.

Vanity in design is something brands need to stay attuned to, and, sadly, the BTW Pro's do not meet the benchmark here. What the company tried for in angular design, they lacked in general appeal with this device. Similar to the BTW01, the main build material is ABS which keeps the gadget light and heat-resistant, but the matte finish is not as appealing as the glossy one of the previously-tested Blaupunkt BTW01's.

One of the pet peeves I faced with the BTW01 is that to shut the case, it requires a bit of pressure. The higher-end Pro only requires a flick of the wrist to shut the case, thanks to the magnetic feature.

Power up

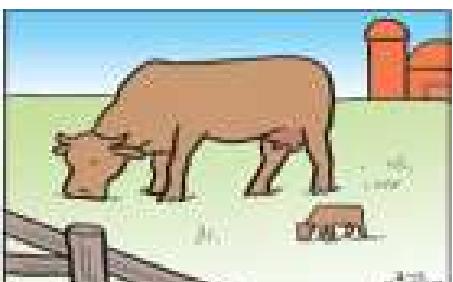
Like most budget-friendly earbuds, the BTW Pro requires wired charging via a Micro-USB cable. Charging is fairly quick and the fortnight-long battery life is probably one of my favourite pull-factors with the brand name. I use these earbuds for about five hours everyday – music, workout, calls, streaming, transcribing – so that is fairly impressive. Each earbud, however, has only 70mAh, while the BTW01 had 75mAh each. The BTW Pro's charging case has more juice with 740mAh.

That said, the fact that I used the earbuds this much says a lot, and, the BTW Pro does give good game. Initial pairing takes a bit of



The Blaupunkt BTW Pro True Wireless earbuds are available to purchase from major online retailers at ₹6,999

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



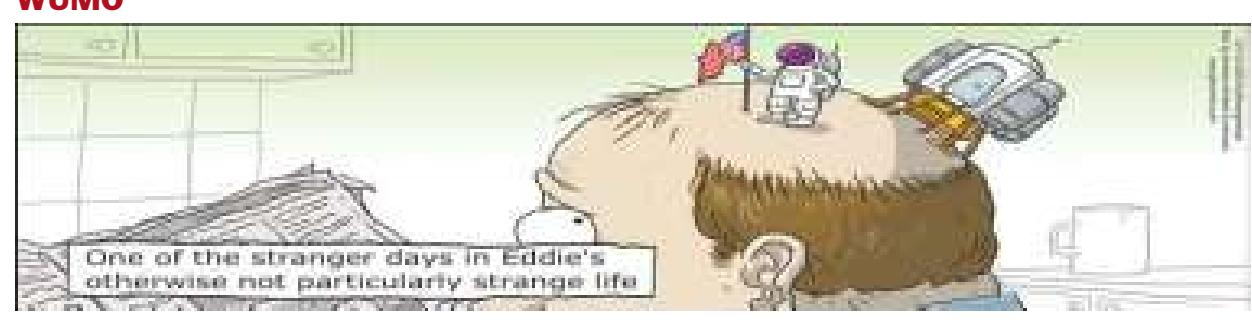
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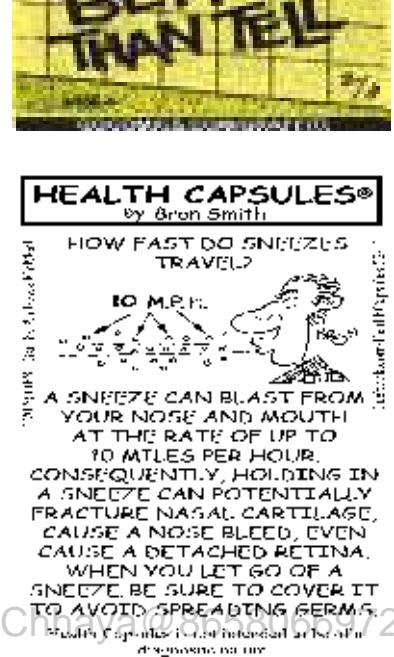
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HEALTH CAPSULES



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21 Slightly dotty (3)
22 Those allowed to sell alcoholic drinks (9)
23 Damage of anything sacred (11)
Across
1 Now (2,3,6)
9 Risky ventures (4,5)
10 Compete (for) (3)
11 Rubbed clean (5)
13 Hormone that regulates the storage of glycogen in the liver (7)
14 Illicitly distilled liquor (6)
15 Legal proceeding brought by one party against another (6)
Down
18 Farewell (7)
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Series sweep: boot is on the other foot

Indian top-order will have to fire to avoid embarrassment; Williamson set for return, hosts also add Sodhi, Tickner

INDIA IN NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MT. MAUNGANUI

India will expect its top-order to fire to avoid a series whitewash when it clashes with a high-flying New Zealand in the third and final One-Day International, here on Tuesday.

Despite missing inspirational skipper Kane Williamson in the line-up due to a shoulder injury, the hosts shrugged off the T20 series debacle to claim the ODI series.

New Zealand, though, will have the experience and leadership of Williamson for the final game as he has passed the fitness test.

Top-order impact

The major difference between the two sides has been the top-order's impact.

With Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan missing due

to injuries, Virat Kohli missing out on scoring big and K.L. Rahul batting down the order, India's traditional ODI strength was neutralised.

India's previous ODI series loss in New Zealand was 4-1 on the 2014 tour.

Shreyas Iyer, with a hundred and a half-century, has mirrored Ross Taylor's rich form in Hamilton and Auckland.

But Shreyas lacked the finishing touch as compared to Taylor's experience. He couldn't see India's chase through in Auckland like the senior Kiwi did in Hamilton.

India may also look to experiment a bit before the Test series. Rahul, Shaw, Shreyas, Kedar Jadhav and Yuzvendra Chahal did not take part in the optional practice session on Monday.

Umpires: Langton Rusere, Chris Brown; **TV umpire:** Bruce Oxenford; **Fourth umpire:** John Dempsey; **Match referee:** Chris Broad.

had a long session once again. Kiwis Tim Southee (stomach bug), Mitchell Santner (stomach bug) and Scott Kuggeleijn (viral fever) are hoping to recover in time for the match.

The teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (Capt.), Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, K.L. Rahul (wk), Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur and Navdeep Saini.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (Capt.), Tom Latham (wk), Martin Guptill, Ross Taylor, Colin de Grandhomme, Jimmy Neesham, Scott Kuggeleijn, Tom Blundell, Henry Nicholls, Mitchell Santner, Hamish Bennett, Tim Southee, Kyle Jamieson, Ish Sodhi and Blair Tickner.

Umpires: Langton Rusere, Chris Brown; **TV umpire:** Bruce Oxenford; **Fourth umpire:** John Dempsey; **Match referee:** Chris Broad.

Match starts at 7.30 a.m. IST.



Need to firm up: Shreyas Iyer has a hundred and a half-century to his name, but has lacked the finishing touch. ■ AFP

Ball in ICC's court: India manager

There was an ugly spat after Bangladesh's win in the final

U-19 WORLD CUP

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

It was anything but a gentleman's game as the scenes at the Seawise Park in Potchefstroom after the Under-19 World Cup final showed. Instead of shaking hands after an exciting summit clash, the India and Bangladesh players were involved in an ugly spat.

Losing their cool

While the host broadcaster, quite understandably, didn't show the footage, videos that surfaced on the social media indicated that there was some in-your-face celebration from the Bangladesh cricketers and also some pushing and shoving among both sides' players.

Even the customary handshake happened only just before the official presentation, almost 15 minutes after the conclusion of the match.

While India captain Priyam Garg termed his neighbours' overzealous celebration "dirty", his Bangladesh counterpart Akbar Ali apologised on behalf of his team at the post-match press conference.

India manager Anil Patel, who had told ESPNcricinfo

on Sunday that match referee Graeme Labrooy had apologised to him for the ugly scenes, confirmed that the match officials had had a long meeting with representatives of both teams on Monday morning to discuss the unfortunate incidents after the final.

Detailed account

"We were asked to present a detailed account which we have done. We have no further plan to initiate any complaint or action. Since the tournament is over, it's up to the ICC to decide how to deal with it,"

Jaiswal, Bishnoi, Tyagi in Team of the Tournament

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

Yashasvi Jaiswal, leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi and pacer Kartik Tyagi were the three Indians named in the ICC U-19 World Cup Team of the Tournament on Monday.

Jaiswal claimed the Player of the Tournament award after he played a crucial role in guiding

India to the final.

The team (in batting order): Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ibrahim Zadrana (Afg), Ravindu Rasantha (SL), Mahmudul Hasan Joy (Ban), Shahadat Hossain (Ban), Nyeem Young (WI), Akbar Ali (Ban, wk, captain), Shafiqullah Ghafari (Afg), Ravi Bishnoi, Kartik Tyagi, Jayden Seales (WI).
12th man: Akil Kumar (Can).

The real challenge starts now, says Jwala

Yashasvi Jaiswal's coach is 'satisfied' with his ward's performance at the WC



Yashasvi Jaiswal. ■ AFP

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

Yashasvi Jaiswal's face on Sunday night after accepting the Player-of-the-Tournament award minutes after the ICC Under-19 World Cup final ended, told a story.

There wasn't an iota of excitement on the teenager's face. Instead, despite finishing the final against Bangladesh, and the tournament, as the highest run-getter, a disappointed look was written large over Jaiswal's face. The pain of not holding the cup that mattered to future stars was evident on his face.

On Monday morning, however, Yashasvi was in a slightly cheerful mood, according to his mentor Jwala Singh. "When I spoke with him in the morning, he was obviously still upset with the

team's loss but he has seen so many ups and downs that I am sure he will be able to celebrate his individual achievement soon," Jwala, a maidan cricketer-turned-coach, told *The Hindu*.

At a tender age, the boy who moved from Bhadohi near Varanasi to Mumbai to realise his dream of playing cricket on the biggest stage has seen more in life than most kids his age. With little financial support from his parents, Yashasvi would sleep in a tent at Azad Maidan after training. At times, he would also sell chaat on pavements to make a quick buck and earn a meal.

Once Jwala spotted him, things changed. The coach spotted his talent, helped him get a home, and ensured he got the right support –

technical and nutritional – and most importantly, exposure.

Still, his early days are often talked about more than his exploits on the field. Even before heading to South Africa with the Under-19 team, Yashasvi had shown a glimpse of talent at the highest level when he became the youngest LIs A double centurion in the world – he tore through a Jharkhand attack comprising Varun Aaron and Shahbaz Nadeem en route a classy 203 for Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy.

Jwala said he is "satisfied" with his ward's performance – "both with the bat and the ball" – but insists it's just the beginning. "The real challenge starts now. It's the end of age-group cricket and he realises that we have to work harder to achieve the real goal (of playing for India). I am sure he has it him and we shall start working as soon as he returns on Wednesday."

Despite the disappointment of missing out on the champion's trophy, for now, Yashasvi can revel in having become the fifth Indian – all four of his predecessors went on to represent India in international cricket – to be crowned the Player-of-the-Tournament.

Vivek is FIH Rising Star of the year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAUSANNE

The Indian men's team midfielder Vivek Sagar Prasad was on Monday named as the 2019 Rising Star of the year by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).

The 19-year-old Vivek won the accolade ahead of Argentina's Maico Casella and Blake Govers of Australia, who finished second and third.



Vivek Sagar Prasad.
■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Warner claims third Allan Border Medal

Perry wins second Belinda Clark Award



Top of the heap: Ellyse Perry and David Warner at the 2020 Cricket Australia Awards. ■ GETTY IMAGES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE

Dashing opening batsman David Warner on Monday won his third Allan Border Medal, while Ellyse Perry claimed her second Belinda Clark Award at the Australian Cricket Awards here.

Warner won the prestigious medal beating Steve Smith by a solitary vote, while fast bowler and last year's winner Pat Cummins came third.

Meanwhile, Perry won the Belinda Clark Award after her teammate Alyssa Healy bagged both the T20 and ODI Player-of-the-Year awards for women's cricketers.

Australia's limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch was

Sasikumar beats Kavcic

Myneni cruises past Russian Karatsev

BENGALURU OPEN

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Sasikumar Mukund overcame an emotional roller-coaster to record a 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 win over Blaz Kavcic in the first round of the \$162,000 Bengaluru Open ATP Tennis Challenger at the KSLTA Stadium on Monday.

Sasikumar struggled to keep his mind in check in the early stages of the match, and lost the first set in quick time. It looked like he was set to throw in the towel, until he began to relax and find his groove.

Feels like a gift

"Going into the match today, my head was all over the place. I was feeling disinterested. After losing the first

set, I thought I would lose the match. I was getting ready to attend the press conference. Honestly speaking, I don't deserve the win. This feels like a gift," Sasikumar, the World No. 289, said.

"When you are playing at home, you get a huge high. And when the high wears off, you feel real low. The same thing happened in the Davis Cup last year too. The National anthem played and my adrenaline shot up. And then for the next three days, I couldn't do anything," the 23-year-old said.

He hopes to get his "head in the right place" to tackle the challenges ahead in the tournament.

Fellow Indian Saketh Myneni had an easier time, cruising past Russian Aslan Karatsev 6-3, 6-3. Myneni

was happy with the result, as he is easing his way back from injury. The 32-year-old was not in peak physical condition – laboured in his movement on court – but it was enough to get the job done on the day.

The results (first round): Mu-kund Sasikumar bt Blaz Kavcic (Slo) 2-6, 6-3, 6-4; Malek Jaziri (Tun) bt Arjun Kadhe 6-2, 7-6 (5); Saketh Myneni bt Aslan Karatsev (Rus) 6-3, 6-3; Laurent Lokoli (Fra) bt Pavlasek (Cze) 6-3, 7-6(4); Vaclav Safranek (Cze) bt Fabrizio Ornago (Ita) 7-6(5), 7-5; Vladislav Orlov (Ukr) bt Suraj Prabodh 6-2, 6-2; Khumoyun Sultanov (Uzb) bt Prajwal Dev 6-2, 6-1; Filippo Baldi (Ita) bt Evgeny Karlovskiy (Rus) 6-2, 7-5; Frederico Ferreira Silva (Por) bt Karim-Mohamed Maamoun (Egy) 6-1, 3-6, 6-0; Niki Poonacha bt Adil Kalyanpur 6-4, 6-7(5), 7-6(4).

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Messi orchestrates Barca fightback



On a high: Inter players celebrate the victory over AC Milan. ■ AP

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Lionel Messi gave a hat-trick of assists on Sunday as Barcelona ended its turbulent week with a thrilling 3-2 victory over Real Betis to stay in touch with Real Madrid at the top of La Liga.

Madrid's 4-1 win at Osasuna earlier in the day put pressure on Barca to respond, only for Betis to twice lead at the Benito Villamarín through a penalty from Sergio Canales and brilliant solo effort from Nabil Fekir.

Yet both times Barcelona hit back as Frenkie de Jong and Sergio Busquets pulled it level before Clement Lenglet headed in with 18 minutes left, all three goals tied up by Messi.

Fekir and Lenglet were then sent off in a frantic contest, by the end of which Bar-

ca had the victory so desperately needed following a difficult few days.

Messi had put himself at the heart of a political spat this week by publicly taking exception to comments made by sporting director Eric Abidal, who suggested the players were the cause of the decision to sack Ernesto Valverde last month.

Barcelona was then beaten by Athletic Bilbao and knocked out of the Copa del Rey before the semifinals for the first time in 10 years on Thursday.

Storming back

Inter Milan moved top of Serie A on Sunday after storming back from two goals down to snatch a 4-2 win over AC Milan in a pulsating derby at the San Siro.

Inter pulls level on 54 points with Juventus, which lost 2-1 at Hellas Verona on



In the nick of time: Sasikumar Mukund brought his emotions under control to rally to victory over Blaz Kavcic. ■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
New Zealand vs India: 3rd ODI, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 a.m.

IN BRIEF



Bogdanovic helps Jazz pip Rockets

LOS ANGELES
Bojan Bogdanovic shook off a frustrating shooting night by nailing a clutch three-pointer at the buzzer to lift Utah Jazz to a 114-113 win over Houston Rockets on Sunday.
The results: Boston Celtics 112 bt Oklahoma City Thunder 111; Atlanta Hawks 140 bt New York Knicks 135 (OT); Philadelphia 76ers 118 bt Chicago Bulls 111; Memphis Grizzlies 106 bt Washington Wizards 99; Utah Jazz 114 bt Houston Rockets 113; Los Angeles Clippers 133 bt Cleveland Cavaliers 92; Portland Trail Blazers 115 bt Miami Heat 109. AGENCESS



Aditya Mehta triumphs
PUNE
Aditya Mehta defeated multiple-time World champion Pankaj Advani 6-2 to win the National snooker championship here.

Mehta (PSPB) in the clash on Sunday night, started off with a bang after winning the first frame 103-17, with a break of 103.

The results: Finals: Men: Aditya Mehta bt Pankaj Advani 6-2 (103*-17, 50-58, 47-48, 70-40, 83(51)-36, 69(61)-07, 79-29, 64-28). Women: 3-2 (41-68, 57-35, 37-61, 69-50, 87-05). PTI



McDermott, Tredrea in Oz cricket Hall of Fame
MELBOURNE
Former Australian cricketers Craig McDermott and Sharon Tredrea (in pic) were inducted into the Australian cricket Hall of Fame on Monday. McDermott, who debuted in 1984, played 71 Tests and 138 ODIs and returned with 291 and 138 wickets respectively. Tredrea featured in 10 Tests and 31 ODIs and scalped 30 and 32 wickets. IANS

Tejas prevails over Pranav

SPORTS BUREAU

GURUGRAM
Tejas Ahuja fought his way past Pranav Taneja 6-7(4), 6-3, 6-4 in the boys' first round of the Asian under-14 tennis tournament at the Yellow Balls Tennis Academy at Baliawas on Monday.

The results (first round): Boys: Rushil Khosla bt Pranay Vadhera 6-1, 6-1; Raghav Harsh bt Dhruv Sachdeva 6-4, 6-3; Jason David bt Manav Sival 6-2, 6-1; Samprit Sharma bt Viraj Gohil 6-2, 6-1; Vinit Rathee bt Jash Shah 6-4, 6-1; Kandhavel Mahalingam bt Siddhant Sharma 6-1, 6-2; Manan Nath bt Parag Jain 2-6, 6-3, 6-2; Cahir Warik bt Harsh Fogat 6-4, 6-1; Tejas Ahuja bt Pranav Taneja 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-4; Jigyashman Hazarika bt Smit Patel 6-4, 6-2; Vansh Nandal bt Simardeep Sawhney 6-0, 6-0.

Girls: Joleen Sawt by Yashika 6-2, 6-0; Shruti Ahlawat bt Sonika Bhogade 6-2, 6-0; Sanjana Devi 6-3, 6-2; Saumya Ronde bt Aarushi Raval 6-1, 6-0; Samiksha Dabas bt Saumita Verma 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; Shagun Kumari bt Sunira Thappa 6-0, 6-1; Jannvi Asawa bt Siya Diganekar 6-3, 6-0; Ridhi Choudhary Poka bt Danica Fernando 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-3; Jeetesh Kumari bt Suhani Gaur 6-4, 6-2; Riya Sachdeva bt Amodini Naik 6-4, 6-2.

Rahane slams century

India-A makes 467 for five in reply to the hosts' 386 for nine

INDIA-A IN NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LINCOLN

India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane warmed up for the Test series in New Zealand with an unbeaten 101 in the drawn four-day 'Test' against New Zealand-A here on Monday.

In response to New Zealand-A's 386 for nine, India-A reached 467 for five in 109.3 overs when the game ended in a draw on the fourth and final day.

The end of the second 'Test' also marked the end of the 'A' tour.

Rahane stayed unbeaten on 101 off 148 balls and his knock comprised 15 fours and a six.

Shubman Gill, who has scored a double hundred in the first game at number four, continued his good run with the bat, making another



Groundwork: Ajinkya Rahane's preparations for the New Zealand Test series seem to be on the right track. ■ FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

hundred on day three, this time as an opener.

Resuming day four at 107, Gill, went on to make 136.

A practice game will also

be played before the series-opener.

The scores: New Zealand-A 386/9 in 131.5 overs (Daryl Mitchell 103, Glenn Phillips 65,

Sandeep Warrier 2/50) drew with India-A 467/5 in 109.3 overs (Shubman Gill 136, Cheetheshwar Pujara 53, Ajinkya Rahane 101 n.o., Ed Nutall 2/98).

Foster is KKR fielding coach

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders has drafted in former England wicketkeeper James Foster as fielding coach for the upcoming Indian Premier League season.

Foster, whose appointment was confirmed in a release by Knight Riders on Monday, will be joining in place of former Assam and Railways cricketer Subhadip Ghosh.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ST. LOUIS (USA)

India's D. Harika got the better of former world champion Alexandra Kosteniuk in the third round of the Cairns Cup chess tournament here.

Meanwhile, K. Humpy drew with reigning world champion Ju Wenjun of China in 22 moves late on Sunday, to take her tally to 1.5 points.

Harika, who is unbeaten after three rounds, is joint

Harika beats Kosteniuk

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

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The two-time IPL champion has former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum as head coach. McCullum took over the reins after the departure of South African great Jacques Kallis at the conclusion of the 12th edition of IPL last season.

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Anand, the author, is just loving it

I had this feeling of something, you know, I've done it, says the Grandmaster

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

Viswanathan Anand, the author, is just loving it. Select city-hopping to promote his book, *Mind Master* and getting a first-hand feedback on his honest effort.

So you begin by asking the Grandmaster, how does it feel to be an author?

Adding to public idea

"I would say it's very nice. But you have to do this with some enthusiasm," says Anand and elaborates, "the point of the book is to share, add to the public idea of what, who or what you are."

"I mean, most people have a certain impression of what a chess player is like, what you do and so on. And they now have something which is slightly closer to the truth."

"That's why I felt that it was important to address this book as a chance to get your story out and, you know, you have to divulge



Closer to the truth: Viswanathan Anand said that quite a few players liked his book *Mind Master*. ■ FILE PHOTO: K.V.S. GIRI

stuff. So even though that's not something I normally do liberally, over the last few years, I found that I have opened up in many ways."

Been fun "I talk more frankly. May be, it's just the sense that, now everything's in the past and I can talk about it without the pains and so on. But it's been fun for me. I had this feeling

of something, you know, I've done it. Now I can't do anything more."

Did any of the chess

players get back to you on this?

"Quite a few players said they really liked it. Many players said they couldn't get it yet. I probably expect more feedback later. (Boris) Gelfand said he loved it. He was in Chennai and he read

it on the flight back home.

"Kramnik didn't mention it. Anish (Giri) even tweeted something, you know, as usual. I'm sure if I probed he would tell me something. But I expect the few others will read it as well."

Away from the book, what does your schedule for 2020 look like?

Light year

"For the moment, I've got a tournament – Grenke Chess Open in April. Hopefully I'll get an event in May. And then it's a fairly light year because I am not playing the Grand Chess Tour. I'll play the Olympiad, maybe. And if some new tournaments turn up, I might go for that."

"After all these years of complaining that the schedule was heavy, if I spend this year complaining, it doesn't make sense. So I thought I'll just go with the flow, keep working, keep training and also enjoy more time at home."

Waqar, member of Pakistan's first Test side, passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KARACHI

Waqar Hasan (87), the last surviving member of Pakistan's first Test side that toured India in 1952, died here on Monday. Waqar featured in the Pakistan team that played its first-ever Test series in India in 1952 and also on the England and West Indies tours of 1954 and 55/56.

He played in the Tests that Pakistan won on these tours before retiring in 1959 after a 21-match career that fetched him 1,071 runs. He also served as chief selector and manager in the Pakistani Cricket Board.

Waqar scoring twice for the Manipur side.

Friday's final will thus be contested by two teams making their first appearance in the title clash.

The results (semifinals): Gokulam Kerala 3 (Manisha Kalyan 21, Sabitra Bhandari 44, 84) bt Sethu FC 0; KRYPHSA FC 3 (Ratanbala Devi 18, 38, Roja Devi 63) bt Kenkre FC 3-1 (Yotu 43).

Leudo saves NEUFC's blushes

ISL

SPORTS BUREAU

GUWAHATI

Jose Leudo's 88th-minute

strike helped NEUFC hold

Jamshedpur FC 3-3 in a

thrilling ISL match here on Monday.

The hosts had gone ahead

through Federico Gallego in

the fifth minute before JFC's David Grande made it 1-1 in the 45th minute.

Quick strikes

Redeem Tlang gave NEUFC the lead again in the 77th minute before two goals in the space of three minutes from Noe Acosta (82) and Memo Moura (85) seemed to have sealed it in JFC's favour be-

fore Leudo's goal.

NEUFC is second from bottom with 13 points from 15 matches while Jamshedpur is seventh with 17 from 16 games.

The result: NEUFC 3 (Federico Gallego

5, Redeem Tlang 77, Jose Leudo 88) drew with Jamshedpur

FC 3 (David Grande 45, Noe

Acosta 82, Memo Moura 85).

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In the other semifinal,

KRYPHSA FC overcame

Kenkre FC 3-1, with Ratanba-

la Devi scoring twice for the Manipur side.

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ance in the title clash.

South Korea's *Parasite* makes Oscar history with Best Picture

It became the first non-English feature film to win both Best Picture and International Feature, while also taking home Best Director and best Original Screenplay awards

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI Just days before the Oscars, South Korean filmmaker Bong Joon-ho had referred to the Oscars as "very local" awards. It seems to have done the trick. Or, perhaps, it was Mr. Bong's other famous quote – "once you overcome the one-inch tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films" – that made the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences look beyond the home turf, and English language, to write history. Mr. Bong's searing look at class divides – *Parasite* – became the first non-English feature film to win the Best Film Oscar at the 92nd Academy awards. Ten foreign language films are said to have been nominated previously for Best Picture but none of them could make it to the final post. These include Ingmar Bergman's *Cries and Whispers* in 1973 and Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* in 2000.

Rare feat

Not just that, *Parasite* is also a rare film to have won both International Feature and Best Picture awards. Last year, Alfonso Cuarón's *Roma* took the best international film and best director award but was overtaken by *Green Book* in the best film category. In 2013 Michael Haneke's *Amour* took the foreign language Oscar but not for the best film. In 1999 Roberto Benigni's *Life Is Beautiful* got best foreign film and best actor awards but the best film eluded it.

The firsts for *Parasite* didn't stop at that. It is the first South Korean film to get nominated and to have won the International Film Oscar. Lee Chang-dong's *Burning* couldn't make it to the list of

IN BRIEF



Solar Orbiter mission to reveal Sun's secrets

MIAMI A new probe built by NASA and the European Space Agency set off on a blazing hot journey to the sun on Sunday to take the first close-up look at the star's polar regions, a mission expected to yield insight into how solar radiant energy affects Earth. The Solar Orbiter spacecraft lifted off from Cape Canaveral and is on a 10-year voyage. REUTERS



Italian opera star Mirella Freni dies at 84

ROME One of the great stars of Italian opera Mirella Freni died on Sunday at the age of 84 following prolonged illness. Born in 1935 in the northern town of Modena, Ms. Freni was a childhood friend of tenor Luciano Pavarotti and also his partner on stage. In a career that spanned five decades, she shone in opera and was famed for roles as Mimì in Puccini's *La Bohème* and Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello*. AFP



Excess smartphone use linked to mental distress

TORONTO Using smartphone for long hours every day may do you more harm than you can probably think. Researchers have found that spending a lot of time with the device and on social media may lead to mental distress and suicidality among adolescents, says finding published in *CMAJ*. IANS



Top honours: (Clockwise from top left) Bong Joon-ho poses with the Oscars for *Parasite* in Los Angeles; Renee Zellweger (Best Actress), Joaquin Phoenix (Best Actor), Laura Dern (Best Supporting Actress) and Brad Pitt (Best Supporting Actor). ■ REUTERS

final nominees last year. *Parasite* is also the first Asian film to have grabbed the Best Screenplay award, shared by Mr. Bong with Han Jin-won.

Giving Mr. Bong company in making history was the New Zealand filmmaker Taika Waititi, who became the first Maori to enter the privileged Oscar club with Adapted Screenplay award for his Nazi satire *Jojo Rabbit*. He dedicated the award to the indigenous children all over the world.

Crazy passion for cinema

Mr. Bong grew up in the 1990s when there was crazy passion for cinema in Korea. "We would give everything up for cinema. 1990s was the most cinephile decade in Korean history, the time when we devoured films like cra-

zy," he had said in an interview to *The Hindu* on the eve of winning the Palme D'Or at Cannes Film Festival last year. No wonder his Oscar acceptance speech for Best Director was a warm and generous ode to fellow filmmakers, starting off with Martin Scorsese: "When I was young and starting in cinema there was a saying that I carved deep into my heart which is, 'The most personal is the most creative.' That quote was from our great Martin Scorsese... When I was in school, I studied Martin Scorsese's films. Just to be nominated was a huge honour. I never thought I would win."

He then went on to thank Quentin Tarantino for getting him a place in the sun: "When people in the U.S.

were not familiar with my films, Quentin [Tarantino] always put my films on his list." And then rounded it off by acknowledging Todd Phillips and Sam Mendes. "If the Academy allows, I would like to get a Texas chainsaw, split the award into five and share it with all of you," he said.

The acting Oscars went as expected. Joaquin Phoenix won Best Actor for playing a failing clown who finds fame through violence in the dark comic-book tale *Joker*.

Renee Zellweger was named Best Actress for her performance as an ageing Judy Garland in the musical biopic *Judy*.

Mr. Tarantino's sentimental ode to Tinseltown, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, brought the first acting Oscar for Brad Pitt, who played a

supporting role as a laid-back stunt man.

Laura Dern took the Supporting Actress Oscar, her first Academy Award, for playing a ruthless divorce lawyer in *Marriage Story*.

Toy Story 4 took home the Oscar for best animated film – the third golden statuette for the innovative Pixar franchise about a collection of toys, the value of friendship and accepting change.

Hildur Guðnadóttir won the Best Original Score for *Joker*. (With Reuters inputs)

Obamas' film wins best documentary

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LOS ANGELES

American Factory, a documentary produced by Barack and Michelle Obama for Netflix about a manufacturing plant in the U.S. Midwest reopened by a Chinese billionaire, won the Oscar for best documentary on Sunday.

"Working people have it harder and harder these days, and we believe that things will get better when workers of the world unite," she said.

Co-directed by Reichert and Steven Bognar, the film is a look at how both American and Chinese workers, from blue-collar to management, had their lives transformed by global economic forces that caught the eyes of none other than the Obamas.

"Our film is from Ohio

and China," director Julia Reichert said while accepting her golden statuette. "But it really could be from anywhere that people put on a uniform, punch a clock, trying to make their families have a better life."

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Bong Joon-ho: filmmaker on a wild ride

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SEOUL

South Korean filmmaker Bong Joon-ho has been on quite a wild ride this awards season. That trip reached its climax on Sunday when he secured his country's first-ever Oscars for *Parasite*.

Mr. Bong – who is known for his dark and genre-hopping thrillers – already had a series of critical and commercial hits behind him before *Parasite* and is one of South Korea's best-known faces.

Mr. Bong grew up in an elite artistic family in Seoul – his maternal grandfather was a renowned novelist while his late father and all of his siblings are university professors in fields including fashion and fine art.

He studied sociology at the South's prestigious Yonsei University and reportedly took part in street protests while enrolled there during the country's pro-democracy movement in the 1980s.

His *Memories of Murder* – a 2003 feature film based on real-life serial killings that rattled the nation in the 1980s – was seen as a metaphor for a repressive society under military rule.

His 2013 feature film *Snowpiercer* depicted a dystopian future, in which the last humans on Earth – who survived a failed attempt to stop global warming – travel endlessly on a train separated according to class, and the lower class revolts.

Afghans celebrate 'Skateistan' victory

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL

Afghans took to social media Monday to celebrate a rare piece of good news for the war-torn country, after a film about girls skateboarding took home an Oscar for best documentary short at the Academy Awards.

"Learning to Skateboard in a Warzone (If You're a Girl)" tracks international charity Skateistan's bid to teach young Afghan girls how to skateboard in the ultraconservative country, where few women are

encouraged to participate in sport.

The film follows a group of young girls enrolled at the nonprofit, who gain confidence and courage as they learn to skate on ramps and quarter pipes in Kabul amid frequent militant attacks and suicide bombings.

The film's director Carol Dysinger also highlighted the plight of Afghan women during her victory speech.

"This movie is my love letter to the brave girls of that country," Ms. Dysinger said.

India moves to include elephant, bustard in global conservation list

The proposal will be debated at the 13th Conference of Parties in Gandhinagar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India will be moving to include the Asian Elephant and the Great Indian Bustard in the list of species that merit heightened conservation measures. The list will be debated at the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).



Jumbo cause: An elephant herd searching for food in a forest near Panbari village, on the outskirts of Guwahati. ■ AP/FILE

faces risks particularly in neighbouring Bangladesh and Nepal," Soumitra Dasgupta, a senior official in the Union Environment Ministry told *The Hindu*.

India is home to several migratory species of wildlife, including the snow leopard, Amur falcons, bar-headed geese, black-necked cranes, marine turtles, dugongs and hump-backed whales.

Having the elephant and the Great Indian Bustard in

the list – more formally known as Appendix 1 – would coax countries neighbouring India, where wild animals such as tigers and elephant foray into, to direct more resources and attention to protecting them. There are now 173 species in the Appendix 1.

PM to address meet

Representatives from across the world, and conservationists and international NGOs

working in wildlife conservation, are expected to attend the COP, which will also see Prime Minister Narendra Modi address the gathering via video conference.

The Union Environment Ministry reports India as having 29,964 elephants according to the Project Elephant Census in 2017. The pachyderm merits the highest level of protection, or Schedule 1, under the Wildlife Protection Act.

India to lead

India has been designated the President of the COP for the next three years. "The government of India has been taking necessary actions to protect and conserve migratory marine species. Seven species that include Dugong, Whale Shark, Marine Turtle (two species), have been identified for preparation of Conservation and Recovery Action Plan," the Ministry said.

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Flight crosses Atlantic in less than 5 hours

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON

For the first time in years, a commercial passenger plane has flown across the Atlantic in less than five hours.

A British Airways flight landed early on Sunday morning at Heathrow Airport in London after leaving John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York in just four hours and 56 minutes.

That set a new speed record for subsonic – or slower than the speed of sound – commercial aircraft to fly between the two cities, according to Flight-radar24, which tracks global flights.

The previous record was held by a Norwegian Air flight, which flew between the two cities with a flight time of five hours and 13 minutes.

The recent average flight time between New York and London is 6 hours and 13 minutes. The wind and air currents were ideal for the flight.

Museum on Delhi's art history at Qila Rai Pithora

Virtual reality lab, exhibition planned

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI

The rise and fall of the cities of Delhi will be told through its art at a new museum being set up by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at Qila Rai Pithora, considered to be the first of the seven historical cities.

An ASI official said while the theme of the museum was yet to be finalised, a request for proposal (RFP) had been floated last week inviting ideas on the basic theme of "cities of Delhi".

The RFP floated on February 7 asked for applications to set up a "museum/interpretation centre celebrating the art of Delhi, ancient and contemporary".

Applicants were asked to send in their bids by February 17 for conceptualising, designing, layout and execution of the museum. "Just a half a mile from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Qutub Minar, in the Mehrauli area of Delhi, the exhibition should present itself as

an Ode to the Art of Delhi," the RFP read.

The document added that Delhi had seen several cities rise and fall over millennia. Over the years, artists have depicted Delhi's history and imagined its future, it said.

The plan includes a curated exhibition in a refurbished building of Qila Rai Pithora, which dates back to the 11th century, and would include paintings, sculptures, maps, posters, books and installations. A virtual reality lab may also be included.

The aim of the exhibition is to inform and educate the public while providing them a critical understanding of the Capital city's art history connecting it with its political and social history," the document read.

Apart from Qila Rai Pithora, the other historical cities of Delhi are Siri Fort, Tughlaqabad, Jahanpanah, Firozabad, Purana Qila and Shahjahanabad.

J.R.D. Tata, the 'maverick' of Indian aviation, gets a digital licence

In what might be a befitting tribute, the digitisation process of flying licences is being undertaken by Tata Consultancy Services

ADITYA ANAND

MUMBAI

In was on February 10, 1929 that India got its first pilot in Jehangir R.D. Tata, who qualified with number 1 on his flying licence, giving birth to Indian aviation.

India has come a long way since then, with digitisation process of flying licences underway, being the latest among initiatives to be undertaken by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). In what might be a befitting tribute to the legend, the digitisation process, which kicked off in December 2019 is being

undertaken by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).

'Aviators certificate' Dated February 10, 1929, J.R.D.'s licence, then called an 'aviators certificate', was issued by The Aero Club of India and Burma, an associate of the Royal Aero Club of Great Britain, which was authorised to issue licences by the British Empire's Federation Aeronautique Internationale. The Aero Club of India and Burma was recognised by Federation Aeronautique Internationale as a sporting authority.



The flying licence of J.R.D. Tata. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The certificate in itself was a beginning of Indian aviation, as many aviation historians have noted over time.

Though not the first to

register, J.R.D. was the first Indian pilot.

Born on July 29, 1904, in Paris, J.R.D. launched India's first airmail service in 1932, when he flew into Mumbai in a De Havilland Puss Moth from Karachi's Drigh Road Aerodrome to the Juhu Airstrip via Ahmedabad on the basis of this flying licence. This later became the country's national