



FREE WORKSHOP IAS 2019-20

9th WEEKDAY BATCH
9th SEPTEMBER 2019

WEEKEND BATCH
14th SEPTEMBER 2019

8TH SEPTEMBER 2019
(SUNDAY)
at 4.30 PM

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WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

Discussion on changing exam pattern and preparation strategies

Special talk on Program & Policies, Recent Legislations and the Dynamic part of the syllabus

Session by eminent faculty on how to master Current Affairs by interlinking different streams

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NEARBY



Batala blast a result of multiple lapses: official

BATALA
The Batala firecracker factory incident, that has not just left the family members of the victims but also local residents furious, was a result of "multiple lapses", officials have said.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

Kashmiri youth beaten by mob in Neemrana

JAIPUR
A Kashmiri youth studying in an aeronautical engineering college was tied to an electric pole and allegedly beaten up by a mob in Neemrana town of Rajasthan's Alwar district on Wednesday night. The mob claimed that the youth, dressed in a woman's clothes, was looking suspicious.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

IGIA to try facial recognition entry

NEW DELHI
Starting today, a mere facial scan will allow Vistara passengers to zip through Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, which has commenced a three-month trial for paperless travel. Passengers need to follow some simple steps to experience this futuristic way of travelling.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 8 PAGES
(TABLOID)

Chidambaram sent to Tihar jail till Sept. 19 in INX Media case

Former Minister, son get anticipatory bail in Aircel-Maxis money laundering case

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday sent former Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram to custody in Tihar jail in the INX Media case, even as another court granted anticipatory bail to him and his son Karti in the Aircel-Maxis money laundering case.

Special judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar said: "Having considered all the facts and circumstances of the case, the nature of offences and the stage of investigation, which is still in progress, the accused is remanded in judicial custody till September 19."

"I am only worried about the economy," Mr. Chidambaram commented, when a reporter asked him if he had anything to say after the court ordered his judicial custody.

Earlier, the CBI produced him before the court and urged it to send him to judicial custody, submitting that he was an influential person in public life and wielded substantial and pervasive influence over witnesses, having the potential to tamper with evidence.

Opposing the prosecution plea, Kapil Sibal, counsel for Mr. Chidambaram, argued that the CBI had not brought anything on record to even suggest that his client had ev-



In custody: P. Chidambaram being taken to Tihar jail in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ PTI

er tried to influence the witnesses or interfere in the investigation.

Ready to surrender'

Mr. Sibal further argued that his client was ready to surrender to the Enforcement Directorate in the money laundering case since his appeal challenging the Delhi High Court order denying him protection from arrest had been dismissed.

Mr. Chidambaram also filed an application in the court seeking permission to surrender in the money laundering case connected with the INX bribery case.

The court sought the ED's reply by September 12.

Earlier, special judge O.P.

Saini granted anticipatory bail to the father-son duo in the Aircel-Maxis money laundering case. "Considering the distance of time between the commission of alleged crime and the filing of the instant application, unexplained delay in investigation, there being no possibility of the accused tampering with the evidence or threatening any witness or fleeing from justice and there being no possibility of their committing a similar crime again, I am satisfied that it is a fit case for grant of benefit of anticipatory bail," he said.

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SC DENIES RELIEF TO CHIDAMBARAM ▶ PAGE 12

A separate cell but no special facilities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

P. Chidambaram, who was brought to Tihar Jail on Thursday evening, will get no special facilities, except a separate cell and a Western toilet as specified by the court, jail officials said. Like other inmates, he will have access to the library, and can watch television for a specified period.

After the mandatory medical check-up, he was lodged in Jail No. 7, which houses those accused in Enforcement Directorate cases. His son Karti was kept in the same cell for 12 days in the same case last year.

A jail official said food is served between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., but it is kept aside for those who arrive late owing to court procedures. The usual dinner menu is roti, dal, sabji and rice.

Mr. Chidambaram will be lodged in the cell from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Breakfast will be served between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. He can drink water from a reverse osmosis plant or buy packaged water from the canteen.

SC allows Iltija Mufti to meet her mother Mehbooba

'Move local authorities for permission to go around in J&K'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed Iltija Mufti to meet her detained mother, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, in Srinagar.

But when she asked the court's permission to move around in Jammu and Kashmir was "contrary" to the government's claims. With the court's permission, he travelled to the State on August 29 to meet his party colleague M.Y. Tarigami. Mr. Tarigami told him that he was confined to his house for the past 25 days without any detention order. Mr. Yechury said he described his situation as a "de facto arrest." ▶ PAGE 13

Tarigami held without order'

A spark can set off a blaze: MP

By withdrawing Articles 370 and 35A, the Centre has added to the volatile situation in Jammu and Kashmir, and with one spark, the blaze could spread, PDP Rajya Sabha member Nazir Ahmed Laway said. "Leaders who trust the Constitution have been put behind bars. Had the government detained the separatists, no one would have shed tears. Why arrest those who worked within the Constitution?" he asked. ▶ PAGE 13

mission from the Magistrate. "Why should she [Ms. Iltija Mufti] come here now?" he asked.

Ostensible purpose'

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said there might be something more to Ms. Iltija Mufti's appeal than the "ostensible purpose" to meet her mother. But the CJI stopped him short, saying, "It is her privilege to move this forum... Are you going to prevent her from meeting her mother?"

Ms. Iltija Mufti said she was not permitted to leave her house in Srinagar from August 5 to August 22 by the authorities. "There was a

chilling effect on my movement," senior lawyer Nitya Ramakrishna for Ms. Iltija Mufti submitted.

Finally, the court gave Ms. Iltija Mufti, who is now in Chennai, permission to return to Srinagar at a time of her choice to meet her mother in private.

The court recorded the government's assurance that it would "not prevent" her from doing this. It further ordered that CPI(M) leader M.Y. Tarigami be flown to Delhi from Srinagar for treatment at AIIMS.

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YOUTH SUSTAINED FATAL PELLET INJURIES ▶ PAGE 13

Romila Thapar declines to send CV to JNU

Historian writes letter to the administration explaining what her status means

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

Historian Romila Thapar has refused to submit her curriculum vitae to the administration of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), which says it is "reviewing" her position as Professor Emerita. Instead she has written a letter explaining what her status means.

"No, I don't intend to send them my CV. They have contradicted themselves in the letter they sent to me. When the status was originally conferred, it was stated that this was a lifetime honour. They are going back on that, negating what they originally wrote. They have changed the rules, and are applying



Romila Thapar

them retrospectively," she said in a telephone interview on Wednesday.

On July 12, JNU Registrar Pramod Kumar wrote to Professor Thapar asking her to provide her latest CV by August 16 so that a committee, appointed by the University's Academic Council, could "assess [her] work and decide on [her] continuation as Pro-

fessor Emeritus". A similar letter was sent to 11 other Professors Emeritus, all of them distinguished scholars in their respective fields.

Professor Thapar herself has been awarded the Kluge Prize, known as the American Nobel, holds honorary doctorates from half a dozen of the world's top universities, and is the author of a slew of books on ancient India, which have been required reading for generations of students.

She taught at JNU for over two decades, helping to found the university's Centre for Historical Studies, and has been a Professor Emerita since 1993.

At 87, she is still actively involved in research, teaching

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Institute of Eminence tag for five

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Human Resource Development Ministry has awarded the status of Institute of Eminence to IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University and University of Hyderabad, said an official statement.

Four private universities – Vellore Institute of Technology, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Jamia Hamdard and Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology – were issued Letters of Intent to grant them the status.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Facing ₹11,000 fine, man sets bike afire

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Staring at a hefty fine for drunken driving under the amended Motor Vehicles Act that kicked in this month, a motorcyclist set ablaze his two-wheeler on Thursday, the police said. The man, Rakesh, was fined near Triveni Complex in Chirag Dilli.

While his motorcycle was being impounded, Rakesh set fire to the fuel tank and soon the vehicle was en-

Sarvodaya Enclave, for driving without a helmet. On putting him through a breathalyser test, he was found driving under the influence of alcohol – 200 mg per 100 ml of blood – the police said.

The permissible limit for drunk driving is 30 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood.

While his motorcycle was being impounded, Rakesh set fire to the fuel tank and soon the vehicle was en-

gulfed in flames. He was arrested, the police said.

"As per the amended Motor Vehicles Act, he was challan ₹10,000 for drunk driving and ₹1,000 for not wearing a helmet," said a traffic police officer.

Delhi Fire Service said it received a call around 2 p.m., but by the time its team reached the spot and doused the flames, the motorcycle was badly gutted.

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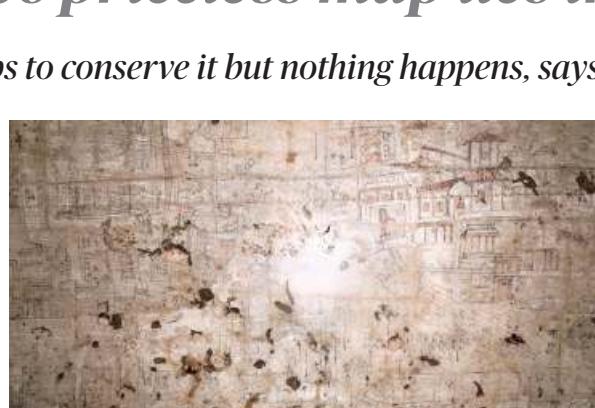
India lends \$1 billion for Russia's Far East

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VLADIVOSTOK

India on Thursday announced an "unprecedented" \$1 billion line of credit for the development of Russia's Far East, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowing that New Delhi would walk shoulder-to-shoulder with Moscow in its quest for the development of the resource-rich region.

At the plenary session of the Fifth Eastern Economic Forum here, he said it was a "unique case" of India providing such special credit line to another country. "For the development of the Far East, India will give a line of credit worth \$1 billion," he said.

RUSSIA FOR JOINT SUBMARINE DEVELOPMENT ▶ PAGE 13
ACT FAR EAST POLICY ▶ PAGE 13



No protection: The map is made on a cloth, with the lines drawn with vegetable dyes. The colour is flaking off.

Our best protection is the glass sheet," says Rafiuddin Quadri, who takes care of the institution started by his father Mohiuddin Qadri Zore. "We have scholars, government officials coming in and seeing the map, promising steps to conserve

it but nothing happens. It is a cloth map with the lines drawn with vegetable dyes. The colour flakes off when it is touched. The cloth has become brittle," says Mr. Quadri.

The map, as well as a number of artefacts, was

donated by Inayat Jung, a descendant of Mir Musa Khan known as Ruksudan Dowla, the Prime Minister of Nizam II. The map was key to the decision to move the Asaf Jahi capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad.

The Hyderabad map predates the effort by Scottish soldier Colonel Colin Mackenzie of the East India Company, who created maps for the Nizam's Dominions in 1780s. The maps were so useful for the East India Company during the Anglo-Mysore wars that he was made the Surveyor-General of India. A role which is largely forgotten as Mackenzie is remembered more for the manuscripts and oral histories he collected.

IN BRIEF

Passengers injured after falling from escalator

NEW DELHI
A couple of passengers sustained injuries after they fell down from an escalator at Mandi House metro station on Thursday, officials said. The incident took place at around 7.20 pm, they said. "Today at Mandi House metro station, 2-3 passengers fell down from an escalator, likely due to imbalance caused by one co-passenger," the DMRC said in a statement. PTI

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	95	Gurugram	76
Ghaziabad	88	Faridabad	43
Noida	86	Greater Noida	101
Good	50-100	Satisfactory	101-200
Poor	201-300	Very poor	301-400
Severe	401+	Severe	401+
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPCB			

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Jeffrey Gettleman, South Asia Bureau Chief, New York Times will deliver a lecture that proposes to look at Africa through the geopolitics of Asia at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Talk: Workshop on "Circular Economy in business: A Blueprint for action towards SDG-12" organised in collaboration with UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI). The event will feature seminars and lectures by various speakers at Auditorium, UNESCO House, 1, San Martin Marg, 9.30 a.m.- 2.45 p.m.

Music: Sitar recital by Shabana Banerjee, accompanied by Mithilesh Jha on the tabla at Amritas Hall, IHC, 7 p.m.

Music: Hindustani vocal recital by Savani Shende-Sathaye from Pune, accompanied by Vinod Lele on the tabla and Pt. Vinay Mishra on the harmonium at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Exhibition: A solo painting exhibition by Ashok Baldodia at Convention Centre Foyer, IHC, 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Urban Dwellings", a solo show of paintings by V. Ramakrishna at Triveni Gallery, Triveni Kal Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.- 8 p.m.

Exhibition: "Colourful Dreams", seventh solo show of paintings by Mohit Jaya at All India Fine Arts & Craft Society (AIFACS), 1 Rafi Marg, 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Screening: "Nabbie's Love", Japanese film screening with English subtitles at The Japan Foundation, 5A Ring Road, Lajpat Nagar IV, 6.30 p.m.

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

We want teaching to be the most sought-after profession, says CM

Kejriwal honours 87 teachers for their efforts in changing education system

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Deputy Manish Sisodia felicitated and awarded 87 teachers in various categories for their "selfless service and rigorous efforts in making qualitative changes in the education system in Delhi and shaping the future", on the occasion of Teachers' Day.

Addressing a gathering of principals and teachers at Thyagaraj Stadium, Mr. Kejriwal said, "Till 1830, before the introduction of British Education System, teaching was the most sought-after profession in India. The Delhi government plans to revive that unique system in the Capital to ensure that the creamy layer of the society will take up the profession."

The CM said that the biggest mission for the Delhi government was to fix government schools and that they have managed to do so only because of the support from teachers and principals.



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal awards Anita Singhal, a teacher of Government Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, on Thursday.

"We have reached a point where government schools are just as good, if not better than private schools. We have transformed the entire environment of government schools," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Competitive edge

He said that over the past year and a half, the government was working on providing students with a competitive edge when it comes

to entrance examinations.

"I realised that coaching for competitive exams today costs ₹1 lakh to ₹1.5 lakh. Despite government schools becoming better, when it comes to competing with children from rich families with money to pay for expensive coaching institutes, poor children often lag behind. To change this, we launched the free coaching scheme," Mr. Kejriwal said.

In his address, Mr. Sisodia said that the most important factor behind the revolution 'Delhi Education Model' is taking the teachers and the principals into confidence, in order to improve the infrastructure and the learning environment in government schools.

Consumer panel directs travel agency to pay ₹1 lakh to senior citizen

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A district consumer disputes redressal forum here has directed a city-based travel agency to compensate a senior citizen by paying over ₹1 lakh for failing to arrange air tickets to Las Vegas despite the complainant having paid a deposit amount of over ₹2.40 lakh.

Observing that the 69-year-old man had to suffer mental agony for the defunct services on part of the

travel agency, the consumer panel observed, "The sole defence is that the complainant was not provided air tickets on time because there was a delay in making the balance payment by him... However, they did not bother to place on record even a single document to substantiate the alleged delay."

The directions came when Mussoorie resident Rajinder Parkash Gupta approached the forum alleging the allegations made.

that the SOTC had "cheated" him by not delivering the services promised.

"It is the complainant's case that he made the payment as and when demanded by the travel agency. If there was delay in making payment of the tour cost, they [agency] should have refused to accept the balance payment and cancelled the tour of the complainant," the consumer panel observed while noting the allegations made.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar said the authorities should create such conditions so that public at large can use them freely and without any fear. The Bench further said that these subways and foot overbridges should be kept clean.

The court was hearing a petition by NGO Anti Corruption Council of India, which said that subways and foot overbridges in the city were being misused by miscreants due to insufficient lighting.

The counsel, representing various authorities, submitted that they would take requisite action and if there is any need of additional lights, it would be installed and proper patrolling would also be carried out.

During the medical investigation, I-care Hospital, Noida, supported the camps.

NTPC Ltd. pays Final Dividend of Rs. 2,473.64 crore for FY 2018-19



For the financial year 2018-19, NTPC Ltd. has paid final dividend of Rs. 2,473.64 crore, being 25% of the paid-up equity share capital of the Company.

The RTGS advice for the transfer of Rs. 1,348.23 crore to Government of India, being the share of Government of India in the final dividend, was presented to Shri R.K. Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and Ministry of New & Renewable Energy by Shri Gurdeep Singh, CMD, NTPC, in the presence of Shri S.C. Garg, Secretary (Power) from Ministry of Power and Shri Saptarshi Roy, Director (Human Resources).

HON'BLE PM INAUGURATES 'GARVI GUJARAT' SADAN



Shri Yash Paul Bhola has taken over as Director (Finance) in NFL on 3rd September. Prior to this, he was Executive Director (Finance) in the Company.

Indian Oil Refineries Headquarters free eye check-up camps benefits nearly 300 persons

Mr. V K Shukla, Executive Director, Refineries Headquarters, IndianOil, inaugurated the free eye check-up camps organised for the contract workers like house helps, drivers, maintenance workers, security guards, etc. at the Divisional Headquarters and in IOC Residential Colony, Noida, benefitting nearly 300 needy people. Organised under CSR, as part of 60th IndianOil Day celebrations, free spectacles, eye drops were given as per requirement. IndianOil shall also bear the cost of 8 cataract surgeries, which were prescribed

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HON

IN BRIEF

8,700 students to decide fate of 14 candidates

NEW DELHI JNU students will be voting for its students' union on Friday, with six candidates vying for the top post out of the total 14 contesting the polls. Amid slogans of 'Jai Bhim', 'Lal Salaam', 'Vande Mataram', some boozing and a minor clash, the presidential debate was held at JNU on Wednesday. The event, a sought-after affair, will be a deciding factor for the union elections. All arrangements have been made by the election authorities for the polls which will see 8,700 students casting their votes through ballot papers. PTI

NHRC issues notices to Haryana in two cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission on Thursday issued notices to the Haryana government and the police in two cases - one involving the reported suicide of a rape victim at a police station in Yamunanagar and the other about the alleged detention and beating of a woman at a Gurugram police station.

Taking suo motu cognoscere of media reports on Wednesday, the NHRC issued notices to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Haryana over the reported suicide by a complainant, alleging inaction in her rape case, at Jathlana police station. Seeking reports within six weeks, the NHRC also asked the DGP to inform it about the action taken against the police personnel involved.

According to reports, the victim was tired of repeated visits to the police station in her effort to seek justice.

In another case, the NHRC issued a notice to Gurugram Police Commissioner over reports of a 30-year-old woman, who works as a maid, being detained, stripped and beaten up by police personnel at DLF-I police station after being accused of theft on Tuesday. The police commissioner was asked for a detailed report within four weeks.

Students' bodies announce final panel for DUSU elections

Outfits promise to work towards women's safety, fighting inequality, among others

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

With promises of working towards women's safety, affordable transportation and fighting inequality, prominent students' groups - ABVP, NSUI and AISA - declared their final panel for the upcoming Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections, on Thursday.

Among candidates for the post of president fielded by the ABVP, which was in power in the previous academic year, is Akshit Dhaiya, a sportsperson and a first-year student at the Faculty of Law. Mr. Dhaiya said he hopes to cultivate an environment to encourage more university students to win medals at international competitions, such as the Olympics. The group's candidates hope to form a "trustworthy, accountable and accessible" student's union that would work towards "inclusive activism" and making the campus safer for women.

The party has also fielded Yogit Rathe, who was a leader of the Ramjas students' union when there was an incident of violence on the campus in 2017. Commenting on that incident, he said that the ABVP did not believe in violence but if he wins, he would work towards removing anti-national elements from the North Campus.

ABVP has fielded Pradeep Tanwar a first-year MA (Hindi) student to the post of vice-president and Shanti Kharwal, a first-year student in MA (Buddhist Studies) for the post of joint secretary.

The NSUI, which hopes to "fight all types of inequality on campus", has fielded a woman candidate after a long time, party leaders said.



Students campaign for upcoming DUSU elections, at Delhi University in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

For the post of secretary, the NSUI has fielded Ashish Lamba, a final-year law student and a hockey player. And for the post of joint secretary it has fielded Abhishek Chaprana, also a student of MA (Buddhist Studies).

Left-wing group AISA, which is campaigning primarily over the provision of concessionary metro passes for students, has fielded Damini Kain, an MA (Political Science) student at Hindu College. Ms. Kain has actively participated in various movements to do with social and gender justice, the group said.

For the post of vice-president, AISA has put forward Aftab (21) hailing from Lucknow, another student of MA (Buddhist Studies). Apart from these students, the group has fielded Vikash, an MA (Hindi) student who has been with the AISA for the last three years, for the post of secretary. And for the post of joint secretary, it has fielded the youngest candidate of the lot, a first-year student from Miranda House, Chetna.

Little star



A girl child showing some acrobatics move before asking money from motorists near Connaught Place in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Drowning minor rescued by two policemen in Narela

Parents said they had no idea how the six-year-old boy sneaked out of house, reached the drain; police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A six-year-old boy, who was drowning in a 10-foot-deep drain, was rescued by a team of police officers in outer-north Delhi's Narela on Wednesday.

The officers had gone to the area after receiving a tip-off regarding a supplier of illicit liquor.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said that on Wednesday, Head Constables Narendra and Yogendra and Constable Manoj received a tip-off that a supplier of illicit liquor would pass through Narela and the police had laid a trap in the area. "Suddenly, Narendra heard a child shouting

but when he looked around, he could not find anyone. Narendra and Yogendra then realised that the noise was coming from a nearby drain," the officer said.

The officers peeped inside the drain and found that the child was caught in the current of the sewer water. Narendra and Narendra

started making efforts to rescue the child. After the two policemen pulled the child out of the drain successfully, the parents were informed about the incident, Mr. Sharma said.

He said that the parents had no idea as to how the child, later identified as Vineet, had sneaked out of house and reached there.

The family had lost another child, Vineet's cousin, to a illness about a week ago, the police also said.

Liquor seized

Meanwhile, the rest of the team managed to apprehend illicit liquor supplier Kailash and 22 cartons of liquor were seized from his possession, the police said.

Plastic found in dead Cape Buffalo's stomach in Delhi zoo, probe ordered

Only 2 challans issued for littering inside the zoo in 2019

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi zoo has ordered an inquiry into the death of its last Cape Buffalo from whose stomach a piece of plastic was found. The post-mortem report has mentioned the presence of plastic as one of the four reasons that led to its death.

"An inquiry will be done by A.K. Bhowmik, who was the former joint director of National Zoological Park. Strict action will be taken against anyone found guilty," said R.A. Khan, Curator (Education) of National Zoological Park, commonly known as the Delhi zoo.

Samples of the animal, which died on August 27, has been sent to Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI)

in Bareilly to get more clarity on the cause of death.

The report of the post-mortem done by doctors at the Delhi zoo had mentioned four reasons behind the death - lung tuberculosis lesions, impact due to plastic, heavy stone affecting digestion and senility.

Mr. Khan said that plastic has been banned in the zoo since the early 1990s, but plastic bottles are allowed. Stores inside the zoo also sell water in plastic bottles. According to zoo records, two people have been fined for littering inside the zoo in 2019.

The Hindu accessed a photo of the plastic piece found inside the stomach of the animal. The photo shows an about 5-cm-long piece of a

thin plastic. Zoo officials said that it could be part of a plastic bag.

"The incident of plastic found in the stomach of a Cape Buffalo has raised many questions," said Abhijit Bhawali, who is a veterinary officer at the zoo, in a letter sent to the zoo director Renu Singh on September 1. The letter also mentions "lapses" in cleanliness around enclosures.

Commenting on the incident, animal rights activist Gauri Maulekhi said: "There is a complete mismanagement at the zoo and there is corruption too."

Though Mr. Khan said that the material could be carried to the zoo by birds, other officials said that it could have been blown by the wind.

Delhi zoo welcomes cobras, pythons, gharials

Two exchange programmes were held

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

In two exchange programmes with two other zoos, the Delhi zoo has got 19 snakes, including Indian cobras and Rock Pythons, a pair of gharial (long snout crocodile), and a pair of wolf.

The National Zoological Park, commonly known as the Delhi zoo, now has a total of 27 snakes and as it had only eight before the exchange happened, officials said.

The zoo has obtained four Indian cobras, five rock pythons, two monitor lizards, four rat snakes, two common sand boa and two red sand boa.

"We got the snakes on August 26 and in return we have given them six

red jungle fowl, six painted stork among other animals," a zoo official said.

"Though the snakes are in the enclosure, it is not put for public viewing yet," the official added.

Officials also said that the Delhi zoo had more snakes earlier and as numbers kept on decreasing, the exchange programme was conducted.

The Delhi zoo had obtained the pair of 'gharial' and the pair of wolves from Jaipur zoo and gave a pair of hippopotamus in return.

Earlier programme
In July, the Delhi zoo had got a male white tiger in another such exchange programme with the Lucknow zoo.

JNUTA wants university to apologise to professors emeriti

All 12 professors emeriti deserve retraction of Registrar's letter'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Responding to the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) administration's response to the professors emeriti issue, in which it said it was merely following university rules, the JNU Teachers' Association alleged that the university, through its response, confessed that the purpose of sending the letters was "indeed meant to weed out some or all of them for having turned 75".



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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

no cap on the number of professors emeriti at all and that no deserving professor could have missed out on being designated one because of it.

"Any professor can nominate another professor for his/her contribution to the discipline and society, to emeritus status. Thus, the JNU Registrar's insinuations about huge skew and missed opportunities for deserving retired faculty are just attempts to cover up what has always been an intent to dishonour," the teachers said.

The JNUTA added that rules formulated in 2018

cannot have retrospective effect and that it reiterates that all twelve professors emeriti deserve a retraction of the Registrar's letter and a formal apology at the earliest.

The JNUTA also said that for either past or future nominees, the conferment of emeritus status was recognition for achievements and service to the discipline and the institution during the professor's academic tenure, and cannot be retracted once given. "If the recognition is to have any meaning at all, the review clause must be deleted," the JNUTA said.

Ravidas temple issue: protesters draw dharna to a close after 7 days

Leaders underline next steps of movement against demolition

AARUSHI AGGARWAL
NEW DELHI

The seven-day dharna at Jantar Mantar against the demolition of Guru Ravidas Temple in Tughlakabad ended on Thursday with the leadership discussing the next steps of the movement.

Prominent Dalit activist Ashoka Bharti, in a briefing to the press, highlighted a four-pronged approach that the community's leaders will now pursue. He said that on September 10, a month since the demolition, there will be a march to perform a puja on the site of the demolished temple and that police disruption "will not prevent us from performing the puja wherever we are standing".

The next step, Mr. Bharti

said, was to gather one crore signatures of people belonging to the Dalit community from across the country to be submitted to the government, highlighting their disappointment.

Mr. Bharti said, "After the court hearing on September 13, we will file our petition."

He also said that it has been decided that the temple will be rebuilt at the same site and not an alternative one.

Warning of protests
He also warned of protests starting September 14, if the court decision is not in the favour of the community, saying that they "will either thank the government or protest against it".

Key organisations advo-

cating for Dalit rights have supported the call for nationwide protests.

The national head of the Akhil Bhartiya Sant Shironmani Guru Ravidas Mandir Sanyukt Sanrakshan Samiti said, "Sant Gurudas is like God to us and there has never been such an insult towards us," adding that this was a question of faith and "we are not ready to die yet, so we protest peacefully and have been praying here at Jantar Mantar in an unprecedented move".

The community had, in a previous statement, given the government time till November 26 to review its decision and said they would continue their protests adopting legal and democratic processes before that.

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IN BRIEF

Court sends Ratul Puri to six-day ED custody

NEW DELHI A court here on Thursday sent Ratul Puri, nephew of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, to 6-day ED custody in a money laundering case related to the AgustaWestland chopper scam. The court also noted that the Enforcement Directorate sought Puri's custody to confront him with "voluminous documents collected" by it and to find out the roles of the co-accused.

Civic body inspector 'harassed' by AAP MLA

NEW DELHI A North Delhi Municipal Corporation inspector was allegedly harassed by an Aam Aadmi Party MLA and his associates in northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar on Thursday, the police said. After getting information about the incident, a team went to the spot and found NDMC Inspector Ravinder Kumar Gupta injured. A case has been registered at Adarsh Nagar police station and further probe is on, the police added.

Son, grandson nabbed for killing septuagenarian

Accused wanted share in property

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 70-year-old woman was killed allegedly by her son and minor grandson over a property dispute in northeast Delhi's Jyoti Nagar on Wednesday afternoon, the police said on Thursday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North East) Atul Thakur said Maya Devi's eldest son Rajbir and his minor son have been nabbed.

The police said a PCR call was received at 3.30 p.m. regarding the incident. On reaching the spot, they found Devi dead on a charpoy with strangulation marks on her neck.



Maya Devi was found dead with strangulation marks on her neck.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Served lunch, left home The victim's younger daughter-in-law told the police that her daughter had served lunch to the victim at 12 p.m. after which they left the house for some work.

A while later, one of Devi's grandson, came home and found her lying on the charpoy. After trying to wake her up, when she did not, he informed his mother, the police said.

The family raised suspicion over the eldest son af-

Vagabond arrested for killing man

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A homeless man was arrested for allegedly killing a 32-year-old man after he was confronted with suspicion of theft, the police said on Thursday.

Saheen used to stay at night shelters, they said. On August 28, the police received information regarding stabbing of one Manoj at 7.30 p.m. inside a de-addiction centre in Kotla Mubarakpur's Bapu Park. Manoj suspected Saheen of stealing a water pump from his house and had gone there to confront him, the police said. Manoj had sustained eight stab injuries, a senior officer said.

During the investigation, it was found that the two had an altercation following which Saheen stabbed Manoj and fled the spot.

"During probe, we did not get any information about Saheen's whereabouts as he was vagabond. He used to stay at various night shelters. He was previously involved in four other criminal cases, including an attempt to murder and robbery. He was also jailed for over three years," the officer said.

"He was held following a tip-off. The knife used in commission of crime has also been recovered," he added.

Bar association demands removal of Law Department Principal Secretary

He defied Cabinet's decision to release ₹50 cr. for lawyers'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Bar Association on Thursday demanded the removal of Principal Secretary of Law Department Sanjay Kumar Aggarwal for allegedly defying Cabinet's decision to release ₹50 crore for welfare schemes for around 90,000 lawyers of Delhi," a statement issued by the Bar Association reads.

However, Mr. Aggarwal said the file regarding the matter was never put up before him since his joining on May 31, 2019. "The file was

sent to the Law Minister by the previous Principal Secretary on April 23 or 24. The file was never put up before me. I have not exchanged any opinion with the Minister on the issue," Mr. Aggarwal told *The Hindu*. The association also said if the money is not released, they will protest outside Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal's residence on September 11.

The bodies have been shifted to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital for post-mortem and further investigation is under way, the police added.

Foul smell They have not recovered any note. A senior officer said a call was received at 1 p.m. that a foul smell was coming out from a house. On reaching the spot, it was found that the house is owned by one Babu Lal who had rented the house to Ashish Kumar Deb (58)

about four months ago.

"Crime team was called to the spot and the team broke the door where the Ashish and his brother Chhote were found dead. The body had been decomposed," the officer said.

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

gesheet filed by the CBI in the case. The arguments on framing of charges against Singh are scheduled to commence on Friday.

The court had earlier framed charges against expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, his brother Atul Sengar, three former U.P. policemen and five others for allegedly framing the 19-year-old rape survivor's father in an illegal arms possession case. It had also noted that Sharadveer Singh was part of the alleged conspiracy to frame the survivor.

District Judge rejected the pre-arrest bail plea and sent accused Sharadveer Singh to the Tihar jail after he appeared in the court in response to a summons issued to him on taking cognisance of the supplementary char-

Brothers found dead inside rented house

Post-mortem report awaited

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Two brothers were found dead at their rented accommodation in west Delhi's Hari Nagar on Thursday afternoon, the police said.

They have not recovered any note. A senior officer said a call was received at 1 p.m. that a foul smell was coming out from a house.

"He was held following a tip-off. The knife used in commission of crime has also been recovered," he added.

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Unnao rape case: court rejects accused's anticipatory bail plea

He 'framed' survivor's father for possession of illegal firearms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A court here dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of an accused on Thursday in a case of an alleged conspiracy to frame the Unnao rape survivor's father for possession of illegal firearms and sent him to judicial custody.

District Judge rejected the pre-arrest bail plea and sent accused Sharadveer Singh to the Tihar jail after he appeared in the court in response to a summons issued to him on taking cognisance of the supplementary char-

gesheet filed by the CBI in the case. The arguments on framing of charges against Singh are scheduled to commence on Friday.

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District Judge

DELHI Timings	
FRIDAY, SEPT. 06	
RISE 06:01 SET 18:37	
RISE 13:06 SET 23:53	
SATURDAY, SEPT. 07	
RISE 06:02 SET 18:36	
RISE 14:03 SET 00:00	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 08	
RISE 06:02 SET 18:35	
RISE 14:57 SET 00:42	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	28
Safdarjung	36	28
Palam	37	27

Delhi Palam Today
34°C A humid and hazy morning turns warm day with cloudy sky. Spells of rain and thundershower will occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C Warm and humid weather with cloudy sky likely. Spell of rain and thunder-shower will occur.

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THE HINDU

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Kashmiri youth beaten by mob in Neemrana

Locals claim he was in women's clothes, looked suspicious

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

A Kashmiri youth studying in an aeronautical engineering college was tied to an electric pole and allegedly beaten up by a mob in Neemrana town of Rajasthan's Alwar district on Wednesday night. The mob claimed that the youth, dressed in a woman's clothes, was looking suspicious.

The youth, identified as Mir Faiz, 25, belonging to Jammu and Kashmir's Barwala district, has lodged a complaint with the police for assault by the mob. Though the police have launched an investigation in the matter, they were also checking the youth's credentials.

Based on Mr. Faiz's complaint, a First Information Report under Sections 323

We are checking the student's mobile phone, laptop and social media accounts and have searched his rented accommodation

AMANDEEP SINGH KAPOOR
Superintendent of Police, Bhiwadi

phone, laptop and social media shot themselves dead here, streaming their death live on social media, police said on Thursday.

The alleged incident took place at Gujran village, about four kilometres away from Dirba town of Sangrur district, on Wednesday night, police said.

Their bodies were found in the fields, police said.

The cause for the extreme step is not clear.

Both were unmarried and their families denied having information about any possible relationship between them, police said.

The woman was a student of BA (final year) while the man was a Class XII passout.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone:

OII-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.

No person has been arrested so far on the complaint lodged by the student and nothing suspicious found from the latter, according to police sources.

Mr. Faiz is a final-year student of BTech (Aeronautical Engineering).

Jaipur violence



Nine persons, most of them policemen, were injured in Jaipur on Thursday during violence triggered by a fatal axe attack on a hawker. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Haryana protester breathes last

Rajesh had immolated himself as his sons were jobless

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CHANDIGARH

A man, who set himself afire in Rathdhana village of Sonipat district last month when Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra' was passing through the area, died at a Rohtak hospital on Thursday, said officials.

Rajesh succumbed to his injuries at the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS), Rohtak, they said.

After setting himself

afame on August 26, Rajesh had told reporters that he took the extreme step because his son was jobless despite having been "assured" of employment when he had met the Chief Minister earlier.

The yatra was nearing a halt in Sonipat district when the man doused himself with some inflammable material nearby and set himself on fire, police had said.

Haryana Minister and BJP MLA from Sonipat, Kavita

Jain had said that when the yatra reached the village, they saw a man engulfed in flames after which security officials were asked to rush to his help.

Referred to PGIMS
The seriously injured person was referred to PGIMS hospital, police said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had flagged off the Jan Ashirwad Yatra for the Assembly polls in Haryana, from Kalka on August 18.

Three of family held for 'honour killing' in UP.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GAZIABAD

In a suspected case of honour killing, three members of a family were arrested in Jalalabad Dehat village of Shamli on Wednesday for killing a woman, whose body was found in the bushes on September 2.

The police said Niyamat Ali, his son Sharafat and his son-in-law Sharafat were arrested for murdering Gulshafa, 20, as she was in love with a boy against the fami-

2 live-stream death on social media

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SANGRUR

A young man and a woman shot themselves dead here, streaming their death live on social media, police said on Thursday.

The alleged incident took place at Gujran village, about four kilometres away from Dirba town of Sangrur district, on Wednesday night, police said.

Their bodies were found in the fields, police said.

The cause for the extreme step is not clear. Both were unmarried and their families denied having information about any possible relationship between them, police said.

The woman was a student of BA (final year) while the man was a Class XII passout.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone:

OII-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.

Batala blast was a result of cumulative faults: official

VIKAS VASUDEV

BATALA

Inconsolable family members of those who died in the blast at the Batala firecracker factory started pouring in at the crematorium on Thursday even as the anger against the local administration was palpable.

The incident, which according to officials was a result of "multiple lapses", has not just left the family members of the victims but also local residents furious.

Since morning, Manjeet Singh has been running from one hospital to another with the hope of finding the body of his 50-year-old elder brother Satnam Singh, who was killed in the blast.

"I saw the picture of (the dead body) of my brother in a newspaper and on WhatsApp. He came from Amritsar only yesterday to work here at the factory. Since morning I have been trying



Grief stricken: Kin of those killed being consoled by relatives during the last rites of the blast victims. • AKHILESH KUMAR

is a result of cumulative faults and not because of the involvement of any single person... Multiple lapses at multiple levels over a prolonged period of time... So now we have to go out and find out who are these multiple stakeholders."

As many as 23 people died in the deadly explosion at the fireworks factory on Thursday.

Man beaten to death over ₹180 food bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BAHDOI (U.P.)

A 25-year-old man was beaten to death by a hotel owner and its waiters following a dispute over a bill of ₹180 in Uttar Pradesh's Bahdoi district, police said on Thursday.

Suraj Singh and Vishal Dubey were beaten up with rods on Wednesday after they got into an argument with Gurmail Singh over their dinner bill, Superintendent of Police Ram Badan Singh said.

Though Mr. Dubey managed to flee, Mr. Singh was caught and thrashed. He succumbed to his injuries, the SP said. The incident took place at Sardar Dhabha near Mahrajganj.

The hotel's owner, Gurmail Singh, and his son Surendra Singh have been arrested, while two waiters of the hotel are at large, police said.

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Man stumbles upon treasure while digging

But police say he can't keep it

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

HARDOI (U.P.)

A man digging the foundations for his home here on Thursday stumbled upon a treasure trove of jewellery worth atleast ₹25 lakh, but the police say he can't keep it.

The police seized the jewellery – 650 gm of gold and 4.53 kg of silver ornaments – as it appeared to be over 100 years old and could be of archaeological significance, Hardoi Superintendent of Police Alok Priyadarshi said.

'No relevant papers'
"It was seized as the person in whose possession it was found had no relevant papers," said Mr. Priyadarshi.

The police learn about the jewellery after informa-

NGO works with govt. to alleviate anaemia among kids

Swades Foundation tests children for anaemia in six blocks in Raigad district, starts them on supplements

JYOTI SHELAR
MUMBAI

In a unique initiative, a non-profit organisation is helping the State government identify anaemic children and start them on the required supplements. Swades Foundation has been working in this area in six blocks of Raigad district over the past few years. With a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the State, the foundation is all set to expand its work in other areas.

Anaemia is a condition wherein one lacks healthy red blood cells to carry adequate oxygen to the body's tissues. Anaemic children, therefore, are weak, fatigued and unable to grow to their full potential. While iron deficiency is one of the major triggers, the government already has a preventive programme under



Check-up: A volunteer tests the haemoglobin levels of a child at a school. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

which iron supplements are distributed in schools every week. "But despite these supplements, many children continue to be anaemic. The main reason is they don't eat wholesome, nutritious meals at home. Their diet largely consists of rice and dried fish in this region, and there is no intake of leafy vegetables and other nu-

trient-rich vegetables. Ragi is widely grown in the area but they don't consume it," Neeta Harmalkar, general manager, health, Swades Foundation, said.

To plug this gap, the foundation has been testing haemoglobin levels of all schoolchildren once a year. "Children with severely low haemoglobin are referred to

the rural hospital where they are put on injections and are also given blood transfusions. They are monitored until the levels are normal. Children with mild and moderate haemoglobin levels are put on a daily dose of 45 mg iron supplements for 60 to 90 days," Ms. Harmalkar said.

While the government provides the medication, the foundation provides the testing machine, kits and training, and helps create awareness among parents and teachers, which is crucial. The therapeutic management of anaemia is focused on schoolchildren in the age group of five to 16. Till August, the foundation has tested 43,578 children, of whom 16,129 were found to be anaemic. Of the 5,518 children who have completed treatment so far, 75% have been cured of anaemia

and nearly 10% have shown progress in their haemoglobin levels. At present nearly 2,000 children are under treatment.

Collaborative approach

Founded by Ronnie and Zaria Screwvala in 2013, Swades Foundation looks at a problem with a 360-degree view. "When we talk about health, we have to look at clean drinking water, access to toilets and all other such issues in the backdrop," Ms. Screwvala said. Problems in rural Maharashtra are complex and need a collaborative effort, she said. "One cannot work in isolation. We are working strategically with the government to create sustainable solutions and eco-systems that can function on their own."

The MoU, signed on August 27, enables the foundation to work across the

State. "We have already expanded our work to the seventh block, which is Sudhagad," Ms. Screwvala said. The six blocks that the foundation has been working in covered 2,000 villages in Mangaon, Mahad, Mhasla, Poladpur, Shrivardhan and Tala. Besides anaemia, the foundation works in the field of eye care and paediatric cardiac care. It has carried out over 14,500 cataract surgeries and distributed over 78,800 spectacles till date.

Mr. Anup Yadav of the Directorate of Health Services, Maharashtra, said the government realises the potential of public-private partnerships to offer holistic health services. "With the aim of taking this forward and encouraging NGOs' participation, we have signed an MoU with Swades Foundation," he said.

political rivalry with the Mahadik clan. After winning the Kolhapur South seat twice in 2004 and 2009, Mr. Patil was defeated by Mr. Mahadik's cousin, Amal. However, the Congressman managed to win the Legislative Council seat in 2015 by defeating Amal's father, Mahadevrao.

Mr. Patil refused to campaign for Mr. Mahadik in the general election, campaigning for Mr. Mandlik instead. This resulted in the NCP leader losing to Mr. Mandlik.

"In return, Mr. Mandlik is endorsing Rituraj's candidacy for Kolhapur South. Mr. Patil and Mr. Mandlik are motivated by a common desire to defeat Amal Mahadik [sitting BJP MLA from Kolhapur South]," a Kolhapur-based analyst said.

Meanwhile, former State minister Prakash Awade quit as the Kolhapur Congress president, allegedly unhappy at the party's stand on the abrogation of Article 370. Mr. Patil's name is doing the rounds for the post.

Patil suggests nephew for Kolhapur South

Sena MP Mandlik backs Congressman

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Senior Congress leader and former minister Satej 'Bunty' Patil said on Thursday his nephew Rituraj would be the Congress's candidate for the Kolhapur South Assembly seat.

Mr. Patil, an MLC and the son of educationist and politician D.Y. Patil, made the announcement at a meeting of his supporters in Kolhapur.

"There is no need to worry about leaders leaving the Congress and the NCP. The common people are still with us," Mr. Patil said.

Interestingly, Sanjay Mandlik, the newly elected Shiv Sena MP of Kolhapur, was also present at the meeting, emphatically voicing his support for Rituraj.

Mr. Patil and Mr. Mandlik are both avowed adversaries of the powerful Mahadik family and especially Dhananjay Mahadik, the former Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP from Kolhapur who recently joined the BJP.

Mr. Patil has a history of

UPS Madan takes over as State Election Commissioner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Retired bureaucrat UPS Madan on Thursday took over as the 6th State Election Commissioner of Maharashtra.

Mr. Madan replaces J.S. Saharia, who has completed his five-year tenure in the top post at the State Election Commission. Mr. Madan, a 1983-batch IAS officer, has held various important posts during his decades-long career, including that of Maharashtra Chief Secretary.

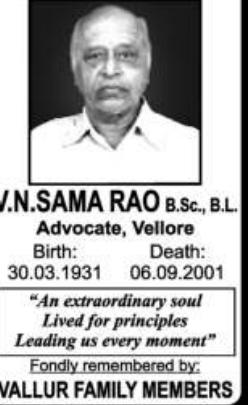
The former bureaucrat has a long experience in the administration having worked as a zilla parishad CEO, district collector, additional chief secretary, State electoral officer, MMRDA commissioner and MHADA CEO before becoming the Chief Secretary.

Mr. Madan retired earlier this year. Mr. Saharia's term ended on September 4, a SEC statement said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

18TH ANNIVERSARY



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NOTIFICATION 03/2019

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Last date for the receipt of application/Nomination is 30 days from the date of Notification and should be reach by 5.30 pm on the last day.

(3801809/D3/2019/I&PR) Executive Vice President

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Tender No.4/CE/CS/OT/2019 Dt: 22.08.2019

CORRIGENDUM NO.1:

Tender for Manufacture and supply of PSC sleepers to DRG No: RDSO/T-2495 & 2496 with closing date as 14.00 Hrs on 25.09.2019, treated as cancelled.

Tender No.5/CE/CS/OT/2019 Dt: 22.08.2019

Principal Chief Engineer for and on behalf of President of India invites ONLINE tenders for manufacture and supply of PSC Line sleepers to DRG No: RDSO/T-2495 & 2496 with closing date as 14.00 Hrs on 04.10.2019.

Further details are available in the detailed tender notice on website <http://www.irps.gov.in>.

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MNS on silent mode over campaign against EVMs

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

A month after announcing a door-to-door campaign against EVMs, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) seems to have gone silent on the issue.

Party members have denied that its silence has anything to do with MNS chief Raj Thackeray being questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on August 22. Mr. Thackeray has said the ED grilling him would not stop him from speaking out against the government.

When asked about the campaign, senior MNS leader Anil Shidore said, "We have not let go of it. Yes, the door-to-door campaign which Mr. Thackeray had originally thought has not been launched yet, but it won't be appropriate to link this with the ED probe," he said.

On Thursday, MNS leader and former MLA Nitin Sardesai was called for questioning by the ED in the ongoing probe into money laundering charges in the IL&FS case. Mr. Sardesai is Mr. Thackeray's partner in Matoshri construction company.

While Mr. Shidore blamed floods and the need for planning as causes for the delay, sources in the party said they are awaiting instructions from their leader. "There have been no instructions on how to go forward with the campaign since the probe," said one leader from Mumbai. He said the ED is being used by the ruling party to silence the opposition.

Mr. Thackeray had also said he would address party workers about the ED's questioning, but for the last 12 days there has been no communication with party workers.

State gets first electric bus, Shivaee, for intercity services

Foundation stone laid for MSRTC's ambitious redevelopment plan for Mumbai Central depot

AJEET MAHALA
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) inducted its first electric bus on Thursday called Shivaee. Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray, who inaugurated the bus, said it was a matter of pride that Maharashtra was the first State to have an electric bus on intercity routes.

The bus can run for 300 km on one charge and takes between one and five hours for a full charge. The fare will be between that charged for the Shivshahi service and the premium Shivaeni.

MSRTC vice chairman and managing director Ranjeet Singh Deol said they haven't



Shivaee enters Mumbai Central depot after being inaugurated by Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

finalised the routes. "Fifty buses will come soon. All will be procured on wet lease. We will discuss with the operator on the routes they can play," he said.

Mr. Thackeray also laid the foundation stone for the ambitious redevelopment of the Mumbai Central depot and MSRTC's head offices. MSRTC plans to build a 49-

storey building and redesign the depot. The first eight floors will be used for parking, while administrative offices will be housed between floors nine and 14. The rest will be rented to other government departments.

Mr. Deol said the design is as per the FSI they have. "We will not lease the extra space to private entities. We will give it only to government departments and agencies," he said.

The project will be built by the MSRTC and the transport department and will not involve any private players. The estimated cost of the building will be around ₹468.12 crore and the corporation expects around

₹16.17 crore as rent from the 35 floors. "We are working on the tender specifications. The tenders will soon be floated," he said.

MSRTC also unveiled a plan to redevelop a 10-acre plot in Kurla, which houses some administrative offices and a workshop.

The redevelopment is being done through a public-private partnership with Eduspark International Private Limited. The latter will redevelop the offices and workshop, and build two 12-storey buildings for staff quarters. The remaining land will be used for a school, where 50 seats will be reserved for children of MSRTC employees.

IN BRIEF



Provide security to Muthoot staff, says HC

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday directed the police to ensure that willing staff of Muthoot Finance Limited's various branches in Kottayam and Ernakulam districts were allowed to enter the branch offices and work. The Non-banking and Private Finance Employees' Association (CITU) and the CITU State unit were stopping them from entering their offices by use of force, Muthoot branch managers said in a petition.

Lookout notices issued for UNA office-bearers

The Crime Branch of the Kerala police has declared United Nurses Association president Jasmin Shah a fugitive from the law it has issued a lookout notice for Mr. Shah and three associates in connection with a case relating to large-scale misappropriation and illegal diversion of funds collected for trade union purposes from nurses. Mr. Shah had successfully spearheaded a series of agitations to better the working conditions and wages of nurses.

Court to hear Navayuga plea on September 12

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday adjourned to September 12 the hearing on a petition filed by Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NECL) director Y. Ramesh against the cancellation of the Machilipatnam port concession agreement. NECL advocates told the court that the government was not supposed to cancel the agreement after the company had incurred a huge expenditure and was not given possession of the land.

Shivakumar's aides asked to appear for questioning by ED

Agency assures Karnataka HC that they will not be arrested till September 17

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday assured a Division Bench of the High Court of Karnataka that it will not arrest till September 17, the three associates of former Minister D.K. Shivakumar if they appear before the investigation officer for questioning as per the summons issued to them.

The assurance was given to the Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice Mohammad Nawaz during the hearing of the appeals – filed by Sunil Kumar Sharma, Sachin Narayan, and Anjaneya Hanumanthaia – challenging the single judge order of August 29, 2019, that had rejected their plea against ED summons issued in January.

The ED contended that the appeals were not maintainable before a Division Bench while counsel for the appellants argued that the appeals were maintainable, upon which the Bench said it



Unfazed: Supporters of former Minister D.K. Shivakumar staging a protest in Ramanagaram. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

would have to decide the issue of jurisdiction to hear the appeals.

Noting that the appellants were not summoned during the pendency of their petitions, the Bench asked the ED what it proposed to do during the pendency of the appeals, as counsel for the appellants said fresh summons were issued after the dismissal of their petitions.

ED's counsel then sought 20

minutes to get instructions from officials, and told the Bench that the appellants would not be arrested for a week or 10 days if they appeared before the ED.

Advocates for the appellants said their interests would be prejudiced if they were to appear before the ED, which was likely to question them along with Mr. Shivakumar, who is in the agency's custody. The Bench said

Ramanagaram shuts down

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANDYA

Ramanagaram district came to a standstill for the second day on Thursday in response to a bandh called by supporters of Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar against his arrest. They staged protests at around 50 places. All educational institutions remained shut. Buses remained off roads.

such an apprehension was uncalled for as their appeals were pending before the court. The hearing was adjourned till September 16.

The appellants face a criminal case filed by the Income Tax Department for evasion of IT, submission of false tax statement, and alleged transport of unaccounted money belonging to Mr. Shivakumar through hawala channels.

VIP darshan ticket may cost ₹20,000

TTD likely to open exclusive counter

G.P. SHUKLA
TIRUMALA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is likely to peg the cost of each VIP darshan ticket at ₹20,000, which devotees can buy without any recommendation from any VIP.

The main intention behind the proposal is to mobilise funds for the newly floated Sri Venkateswara Alaya Nirvana (SRIVANI) Trust under which the TTD desires to take up construction of temples of Lord Venkateswara at all important cities and towns across the country.

Open to all

Highly informed sources have confirmed that a counter will be exclusively set up for the issue of VIP tickets and devotees will be free to avail any number of tickets of their choice by tendering the cost.

It will be an open-to-all facility and no kind of recommendation will be entertained in the process.

Devotees purchasing the

VIP tickets across the counters will be extended all courtesies which include priority in the darshan, accommodation and laddus.

They will be allowed ahead of the normal VIPs and will be permitted to have the darshan of the presiding deity from the closest quarters (from Kulasekhara Azhwari padi) inside the sanctum sanctorum, apart from a 'harathi' on a par with protocol dignitaries.

Checking middlemen
Though it was earlier thought to fix the cost of each ticket at ₹10,000, the management had second thoughts given the popularity of VIP darshan coupled with the fear of touts.

The TTD is confident that the new proposal is sure to check the rampant middlemen system atop the sacred town and usher in more transparency in the issue of darshan tickets.

The TTD expects an initial sales of 200 and 300 tickets on average every day.



Paul Muthoot George

HC sets aside life term of eight in Paul Muthoot case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday set aside the Thiruvananthapuram CBI Special Court's order convicting eight accused and awarding them life imprisonment in the Paul Muthoot George murder case.

Paul Muthoot George, 32, scion of the Muthoot group, was stabbed to death in a road rage incident at Ponga on the Alappuzha-Changanassery road on the night of August 21, 2009.

Nine accused were awarded life term and asked to pay a fine of ₹50,000 each by the special court. The court did not consider the case of second accused Sathesh Kumar, alias 'Kari' Sathesh, who stabbed Paul George, as he did not file an appeal.

The Bench of Justices A.M. Shaffique and N. Anilkumar passed the verdict while partially allowing the appeal filed by the eight accused against the sentences awarded to them by the lower court.

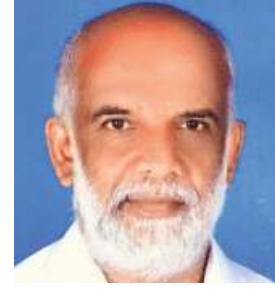
However, the sentence and conviction imposed on the accused on charges of unlawful assembly and voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means and other charges would remain in force.

Jose Tom cannot contest under KC(M) symbol

He will have to fight Pala bypoll as an independent

STAFF REPORTER
KOTTAYAM

The crisis in the Kerala Congress (M) ahead of its all-important Pala byelection precipitated further with the election authorities here on Thursday rejecting the nomination of Jose Tom Pulikkunel, who sought to contest under the party symbol.



Jose Tom Pulikkunel chairman P.J. Joseph to the Election Commission as well as the Returning officer against allotting the party

With this, Mr. Pulikkunel will be contesting the byelection here on September 23 as an independent candidate of the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Returning Officer and Deputy Collector S. Sivaprasad rejected Mr. Pulikkunel's nomination after taking into consideration an order by the Idukki munisipal court, which prevented Jose K. Mani from officiating as the chairman of the regional party. Further, a letter handed over by the KC(M) working

symbol to Mr. Pulikkunel, also proved crucial in taking the decision.

"The acting chairman also informed us that Stephen George, who endorsed the 'B' form of Mr. Pulikkunel as an office secretary, was under suspension. He will now be allotted a symbol as demanded in the second set of nomination on a priority basis," Mr. Sivaprasad said.

Soon after the decision came out, Joseph Kandathil, the rebel candidate fielded by the Joseph faction, with

drew his nomination.

Earlier in the day, the scrutiny of nomination by the election authority witnessed a fierce battle between the rival factions over the party symbol.

The issue, which had been on the boil since the naming of Mr. Pulikkunel as the UDF candidate in Pala, snowballed into a major crisis first with the Joseph faction requesting the authority to declare his nomination invalid citing the absence of a consent letter from the party

working chairman.

The group feels that Mr. George, who had endorsed Mr. Pulikkunel's candidacy in the nomination papers, held no official position in the party while the nomination also failed to elaborate on the legal battles in the party.

"We agreed on the candidature of Mr. Pulikkunel on the condition of not allotting him the party symbol," Mr. Joseph said.

In all, the nominations of 14 candidates were accepted.

Andhra youth drowns in U.S.

He left for higher studies 3 weeks ago

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE

Kedarnath Reddy, 22, a native of Nippin Centre here in Andhra Pradesh who had gone to the U.S. to pursue MS Computer Science course in the University of Texas, died when he drowned in the Turner Falls in Oklahoma on Tuesday.

He was reportedly not wearing a life jacket, reports reaching his family here suggest.

A pall of gloom descended on the house of Kedarnath Reddy here on Thursday as his mother Umamaheswari and sister Vaishnavi were inconsolable. Only three weeks ago, Reddy, who had graduated from Siriram College of Engineering, Chennai, went to the U.S. for higher studies.

Vaishnavi, who also got admission in a foreign un-

iversity, preferred to continue in the job she had landed recently.

Reddy's body was expected to be brought here by Saturday, sources said.

Dies of cardiac arrest

Staff Reporter in Vijayawada writes:

The body of a techie, Anand Rao Dudala, who died of cardiac arrest at San Ramon, California, U.S., would be brought to Hyderabad where his family resides by the early hours of September 7. Later, the body would be taken to Rajamahendravaram for cremation.

Anand was working for TechM on deputation for the last 18 months and died on September 1. Anand is survived by wife Lakshmi, son Pranav and daughter Annika.

Rain lashes interior Karnataka

Bhagamandala, a pilgrim centre in Kodagu, gets a record 260 mm in 24 hours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU/CHIKKAMAGALUR

After a brief lull, monsoon is active again in south interior Karnataka with Kodagu, Hassan and Chikmagalur districts witnessing heavy downpour since Wednesday, raising fears of another deluge.

Torrential showers have been hammering Kodagu with heavy to very-heavy rains recorded at most places. Bhagamandala, a pilgrim centre, recorded highest rainfall of 260 mm in 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m. on Thursday. Heavy rains pounded Talacauvery, the birthplace of Cauvery River.

Schools and colleges remained closed on Thursday with the district administration declaring holiday as safety measure with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing "red alert" (indicating extremely heavy rainfall) for the district. The

district administration had requested the people to be on alert.

In the last 24 hours, Kodagu recorded an average of 99.16 mm rainfall. The water level at Bethri near Murnad has risen substantially.

Landslips have been re-

ported on Gaalibeedu-Paati-Kaloor Road and traffic, barring light motor vehicles, have been banned until further orders. With heavy rain lashing its catchment areas, the inflow in Harangi dam has been rising since Wednesday. Several parts of

Chikmagalur and Hassan districts have been receiving moderate to heavy rain in the last two days. The people, who were affected by the recent landslips caused due to heavy rains in August, are worried about their safety once again.

Water level in the Krishna rises again

Residents told to move to safer places

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI

The Belagavi district administration in Karnataka has issued advisories to people living in villages on the banks of the Krishna, its tributaries and the Malaprabha not to venture into the river, canals or streams. They have been advised to move to safer places.

Following heavy rains in the Western Ghats, Maharashtra has released water into the Krishna and its tributaries, Koyna and Panchanga. The water release clocked 1.33 lakh cusecs in Kalol barrage in Karnataka on Thursday. It is likely to increase to two lakh cusecs. It may also increase to three lakh cusecs in the next two days, officials said.

Deputy Commissioner S.B. Bommanahalli has asked officials to alert the re-

sidents to shift to towns and villages at an higher altitude. The government will provide assistance to families that want to shift to safer places. It will also begin evacuation of families.

Scientific practices

Instructions have been given to irrigation and revenue authorities to take up scientific practices to ensure that dams are not burdened.

This follows a letter from Daulat Desai, Deputy Commissioner of Kolhapur, requesting DCs of Belagavi and Bagalkot not to impound the additional inflow, as it could cause flooding in Kolhapur district.

The district administration will shift 666 persons from six villages if the inflow crosses one lakh cusecs, 6,776 people from 12 villages if it crosses two lakh cusecs.

74-year-old woman from A.P. gives birth to twins

Team of doctors at IVF clinic in Guntur helps elderly couple realise their dream

P. SAMUEL JONATHAN
GUNTUR

In a miracle of sorts in modern medicine, a 74-year-old woman gave birth to twin daughters at a private hospital in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, on Thursday. Yerramatti Mangayamma realised her dream after doctors at an In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) clinic performed a Caesarean section operation under the supervision of specialists.

Her husband Rajarao and her close relatives were present at the hospital when the surgery was performed. The couple are from Draksharam in the East Godavari district. In 2016, 72-year-old



Rajarao and Yerramatti Mangayamma. ■ T. VIJAYA KUMAR

preparing the woman under the close supervision of three teams of doctors, including a nutrition specialist, cardiologist and pulmonologist. We also

assessed her vital body signs, including blood pressure and sugar, through 20 weeks. It has been a planned procedure throughout the preparatory

period and finally today, we performed the C-section and delivered the twin baby girls," said Dr. Umashankar.

The girls weighed 1.5 kg each and were put under observation for six hours.

Long wait

The couple were married on March 22, 1962, and had since then been making rounds of hospitals. They were already into their 70s when a neighbour told them about the clinic in Guntur.

A team of doctors, including cardiologist P.V. Manohar, paediatricians Ramesh and Radha Madhavi, anaesthetist Ramesh, and gynaecologists Neelima and Keerthi, assisted during the surgery.

Farmer dies while waiting in queue for urea in Telangana

He had waited in vain for two days for the fertilizer

R. AVADHANI
SIDDIPET

A 60-year-old farmer collapsed and died of cardiac arrest while standing in a queue to collect urea at the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society's (PACS) counter in Dubbik town here in Telangana on Thursday. The incident comes amidst reports of urea shortage in the State.

Sources said Chervapur Yellaiah from the Achamayapalli village in the Dubbik mandal, along with other farmers, had arrived from his village to collect urea for his farm. He had reportedly

done this on Tuesday and Wednesday as well, but had to return empty-handed on both days.

After waiting for about an hour in the queue on Thursday, Yellaiah collapsed. Fellow farmers shifted him to the government hospital

where he was declared brought dead.

Yellaiah is survived by wife and four daughters. The marriage of one of his daughters, who is differently abled, is yet to be performed. He owned two acres of land, and had



Interesting, but risky

RBI's diktat to banks could spur borrowing but may pressure lenders' margins

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has finally decided that it needs to address the problem of inadequate interest rate transmission head on. In a circular to banks on Wednesday, it directed lenders to link all new floating rate loans given to borrowers in the personal, retail and micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) categories to external benchmarks, including the repo rate, with effect from October 1. While giving banks the relative freedom to choose the specific external benchmark, including yields on the 3-month and 6-month Treasury Bills published by the Financial Benchmarks India Pvt. Ltd., the central bank made it clear that lenders would need to adopt a uniform benchmark within a loan category. Banks have also, crucially, been given the leeway to determine their spread over the benchmark rate with a caveat that changes to the credit risk premium can only be made when the borrower's credit assessment undergoes a substantial change. That the inadequate transmission of policy rate moves has been an abiding conundrum for the RBI is well known. In 2015, then Governor Raghuram Rajan decided that the system used by banks to price their loans needed to be changed and so introduced the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR) regime. In October 2017, an internal study group of the RBI recommended the adoption of external benchmarks to ensure effective policy transmission, after observing that the MCLR too had failed to deliver.

Policymakers, in fact, have been so vexed with poor transmission – against a total of 75 basis points (bps) reduction in the RBI's repo rate between February and June, the weighted average lending rate on fresh rupee loans at banks eased only by 29 bps – that Monetary Policy Committee member Chetan Ghate in August cited the issue as reason to oppose the proposed 35-bps cut and instead voted for a 25-bps reduction. "By a large cut (35 bps) I feel we will be burning through monetary policy space without much to show for it. While the real economy needs some support, we should wait for more transmission to happen," he said at the MPC's rate setting meeting, the minutes show. Though the latest move will surely lower the interest cost on new floating rate loans availed by borrowers to buy cars or homes, it may force banks to start cutting the interest rate they pay deposit holders or risk seeing their margins shrink. And while the RBI wants to try and nudge an uptick in credit for beleaguered MSMEs, the success of the measure will ultimately be determined by a regaining of confidence by consumers to spend and a conviction by industry to invest.

A weak chase

Controlling the hepatitis B virus calls for universal vaccination of newborns

On September 3, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Thailand became the first four countries in the World Health Organization's southeast Asia region to have successfully controlled hepatitis B. The virus is said to be controlled when the disease prevalence is reduced to less than 1% among children less than five years of age. Despite the introduction of hepatitis B vaccine in the Universal Immunisation Programme in 2002 and scaling-up nationwide in 2011, about one million people in India become chronically infected with the virus every year. According to the Health Ministry, as on February 2019, an estimated 40 million people in India were infected. Hepatitis B infection at a young age turns chronic, causing over 1,00,000 premature deaths annually from liver cirrhosis or liver cancer. A study published in 2013 found lower coverage of hepatitis B vaccine in eight of the 10 districts surveyed. But the coverage has witnessed an increase with the introduction of a pentavalent vaccine on a pilot basis in Kerala and Tamil Nadu in December 2011 and national roll-out in 2014-2015. According to the WHO, the coverage of hepatitis B third dose had reached 86% in 2015. However, despite the high vaccination coverage, disease prevalence in children aged less than five years has not dropped below 1%. One of the reasons for this is the sub-optimal coverage of birth dose in all infants within 24 hours of birth.

Hepatitis B birth dose, given in the first 24 hours, helps prevent vertical transmission from the mother to child. The compulsion to increase birth dose to cut vertical transmission arises from two important reasons – about 70-90% newborns infected this way become chronic carriers of hepatitis B, and about 20-30% carriers in India are due to vertical transmission. But even seven years after the Health Ministry approved the birth dose in 2008, its coverage remained low – 45% in 2015 and 60% in 2016 – according to a 2019 Health Ministry report. What is indeed puzzling is that even in the case of institutional delivery, the birth dose vaccine coverage is low – 76.36% in 2017. Incidentally, institutional delivery accounts for about 80% of all deliveries in the country. The birth dose coverage when delivery takes place outside health-care institutions is not known. One of the reasons for the low coverage is the fear of wastage of vaccine when a 10-dose vial is used. Unfortunately, health-care workers are very often unaware of the WHO recommendation that allows hepatitis B open-vial policy. Opened vials of hepatitis B vaccine can be kept for a maximum duration of 28 days for use in other children if the vaccine meets certain conditions. There is also a need to increase public awareness about the merits of the birth dose.

Teaching in the time of consumerism

Changes in social ethos and state policy have pushed the once-venerated Indian teacher to the margins of public life



KRISHNA KUMAR

Like many other topics, teaching and those who earn a living by teaching are subjects of a highly polarised debate in our country. Public perception of schoolteachers is quite negative in many parts of the country. If you ask a young urban audience: 'Who wants to be a schoolteacher?', the answer will come with so much hesitation that you will be right to summarise it as: 'No one, really.' You can verify this by asking freshly enrolled students at a teacher-training course: 'Was training your first preference?' Very few will say, 'yes.' Among young men, there will probably be no one answering in the affirmative.

This low popularity of school teaching can be linked to several changes that social ethos and state policy have gone through over the last three decades or so. In a consumption-oriented environment, the kind of idealism school teaching requires is not easy for a young person to cultivate and sustain. The working conditions and ethos at their respective schools erode the stamina of the few who start with a sense of dedication.

I hardly need to add that this macro picture conceals the tales of several thousand teachers who battle on and remain committed to their duty against all odds. Some of them do get appreciation from parents of the students, but more often than not, parents remain dissatisfied. Many parents now treat their progeny's school life as an 'investment' for which they demand the best 'value', often by relentlessly criticising the teacher and the principal. They don't know the burden teachers carry on their fragile, ill-equipped pro-

fessional shoulders. This burden includes the weight of family and community life, and the pressure coming from officialdom.

On their part, children bring to schools the psychological bruises incurred at home where the adults are too preoccupied with their own lives. Further, as recent surveys in both urban and rural habitations show, technology is a dominant player in child upbringing. A schoolteacher must cope with the impact that these drastic changes have made on the inner world of children.

Weak professional training
Speaking of training, the vast majority of teachers being hired today have had their professional training in poorly equipped institutions. Weak professional preparation is not a recent woe, but it has certainly worsened under the 'licensing raj' of the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE). There was a time when teacher training had no licensing authority. The NCTE was an advisory body then, with no statutory powers. It acquired legal teeth as a result of the NCTE Act, 1993. The new, empowered NCTE came into being two years later.

The mid-1990s marked a period of tumultuous change in the landscape of public education. The impact of market-friendly policies was spreading across the system, but it was the most palpable in professional education. Private enterprise in medical, engineering and management education had already set in. Compared to these areas, teacher training was both cheap and highly profitable.

Demand for qualified teachers rode the wave of rapid growth in primary education. In response to this demand, teacher-education institutes and correspondence courses mushroomed. The NCTE had a difficult mandate to fulfil and had to maintain standards by regulating a bullish market of enrol-

ment providers. Initially, it seemed as if the NCTE's regulatory role would succeed in imposing quality norms. However, before long, the body's failure to control the flood of commercial private interests started looking inevitable.

Teacher training was, of course, not the only area of professional education to be corrupted by the new licensing regime. The system of education was in general battling hard to find ways to regulate the swelling, strong current of privatisation.

The teacher-training sector became so afflicted by fraudulent institutions and practices that internal mechanisms of correction proved inadequate. Hundreds of cases against bogus institutions reached the Supreme Court, which appointed a commission chaired by late Justice J.S. Verma. For a few years after 2012, when its report was published, an attempt was made to implement its recommendations, but the momentum slowed down before long. Several recommendations required substantial state funding, but the NCTE had already taken the self-financing route. Its institutional capacity to provide academic leadership to teacher training was already limited. Its further decline coincided with the rise of technological gimmickry. However, it would be wrong to hold the NCTE alone responsible. The wider pro-

blems of higher education have also made their contribution to the decline of teacher training. This is not hard to explain. Graduates whose college education is of poor quality cannot be expected to overcome their learning backlog at a training institute. Faculty shortage exacerbates this deprivation.

The government recently came up with a policy decision favouring four-year courses that integrate undergraduate learning with pedagogic training. This model is not new, and its success depends on investment in institutional infrastructure. But with commercialisation fully entrenched in teacher education, one cannot expect generous spending on faculty and infrastructure.

Impact on school education

Problems of teacher training have had a pervasive impact on school education as a whole. Governments have been aware of this, both at the Centre and in the States. One of the steps they have taken to fill the quality gap is to introduce a teacher-eligibility test. This has only made a marginal difference, as the proportion of trained teachers who get through the test is low, creating a vast backlog in recruitment. On the other hand, para-professionals have been growing in number and influence. They are known by various names in different States,

but they also exist in vast numbers outside the system – as providers of home tuition and coaching. This underbelly of the education system suffers no interference from state norms. In the world of coaching, we see the utopia of free enterprise and the demise of teaching as noble work.

It is hard to date the beginning of the current, ongoing decline in the status of teachers. A conversation with a senior official in Madhya Pradesh comes to mind. During a visit to Bhopal more than two decades ago, I asked him if it was correct to say that school teaching was no longer considered a career in M.P. He readily agreed. We discussed the new realities that had emerged. We agreed that a major shift in culture, pushed by economic changes, had occurred, and it had marginalised the teacher.

The Indian teacher, once a foot soldier in the freedom struggle and a contributor to nation building in the early years after Independence, now stands relegated to the margins of public life. This marginalisation is reflective of the social change that has taken place in the country and flags the diminishing importance of intellect. This is also evident from the news about our greatest historian being insulted by her university. Our collective vulnerability to the power of propaganda and rumour is not new; disrespect for the teacher's dedication to a life of intellect is.

Nonetheless, no matter what the subject and howsoever limited his or her own knowledge, every teacher tries to nudge his students towards reality and truth. Children want their teacher to verify and appreciate their efforts. Having faith in his/her teacher is a part of being a child, a blow to which will disturb the foundations of social living.

Krishna Kumar is a former director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)



Putting the pedal to the metal

The government should consider dropping GST rates for BS-IV vehicles to revive the automobile industry



RAGHUVIR SRINIVASAN

The automobile industry is notoriously cyclical. It is also a lead indicator for economic growth. And it has been in a tizzy since this time last year when the signs of an impending slowdown were first seen. Sure enough, the decline began in the last quarter of calendar year 2018 and intensified with the passage of every month in 2019.

So, if the industry goes through cycles of ups and downs, is the current slowdown something to worry about seriously? Yes, indeed. Are auto manufacturers heading towards an apocalypse? No, certainly not. So, why do we need to worry about this slowdown? Simply because the current downturn is like nothing that the industry has seen in a long, long time in terms of depth, scale and character.

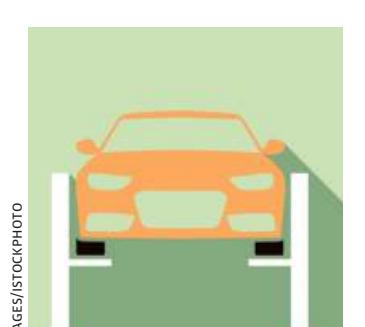
So, what's different this time? First, every segment of the auto industry, beginning from two-wheelers to passenger cars, light commercial vehicles and heavy commercial vehicles, and even tractors, has been hit. The downturn this time is all-encompassing.

Second, what was a natural, cyclical downturn has been amplified by extraordinary circumstances unleashed by reform measures that may have been well-meaning but have come back to bite the government.

Finally, an unthinking approach to a critical policymaking area such as electric vehicles has only intensified and prolonged the slowdown. Yes, key Ministers are now scrambling to contain the damage by retracting some of their earlier statements and reassuring the industry that the electric motor will not be privileged over the internal combustion engine but it has come too late.

Revision in axle-load norms
Let's take the case of the commercial vehicles (CV) industry. In July 2018, the government revised axle-load norms (for the first time since 1983) for cargo carriers by between 12% and 25%. The idea was to legalise over-loading, which is common practice, and help reduce freight costs for both consignors and consignees.

But by applying the higher cargo rules to all trucks on the roads, instead of only trucks to be produced after a given date, the government, in one stroke, raised existing carrying capacity by up to a quarter, forcing per-tonne freight rates down. This at a time when carrying capacity was already increasing due to the introduction of



the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which helped in quicker turnaround of trucks. Operators were able to keep the trucks gainfully deployed for 25% more days in a month than before.

These two reform measures only served to advance the cyclical slowdown which was on its way. The CV industry has a well-earned reputation for sharp practices such as steep-price discounting and dealer dumping by vehicle manufacturers. Like elephants that spray their own heads with sand, vehicle manufacturers – CVs and cars – have honed into a fine art the practice of clogging the pipeline by over-producing vehicles without a care for demand, and dumping them on dealers to sell.

This became a particularly painful issue because of the approaching deadline for the transition to BS-VI norms from April 1, 2020. Dealers are saddled with invento-

ry of BS-IV vehicles that they need to clear out before the deadline. For the manufacturers, the problem is that they're unable to plan their production schedules for BS-VI vehicles as freight operators are watching the fun from the sidelines. They're waiting for the steep discounts that are bound to come by as the deadline nears and are not in a hurry anyway to add new trucks given the slowdown in goods movement.

Model fatigue

If it was a deadly cocktail that consumed the CV industry, in the case of cars, it appears to be one of model fatigue. Between Maruti and Hyundai, the two big players that account for two-thirds of the industry, there have been hardly any exciting new launches in the last one year. There have been facelifts and limited editions of existing models but the two biggies have not ventured into launching fresh models, at least until very recently.

The model-fatigue theory is proved by the response that two new kids on the block – the Kia Seltos and the MG Hector – received. Though they're not mass-market cars and are priced considerably higher than the median range, the two models have attracted bookings in excess of 30,000 units each in what is supposedly a depressed market. Maruti and Hyundai have clearly been caught sleeping at the wheel.

The onset of festival season sales and the impact of recent measures by the government may help the cycle play itself out soon but is there something that the government can do to quicken the turnaround? Of course, yes. Should it reduce GST on automobiles from 28% to 18% as per the demand of the industry? Yes, it should, but not for all vehicles.

The government should consider dropping GST only for BS-IV vehicles – CVs, cars and two-wheelers – that are now idling in stockyards of vehicle manufacturers and dealers. It should consider a scheme where all BS-IV vehicles sold until March 31 will suffer only an 18% GST. For the industry, this will help clear the clogged pipeline and for the government, it will help contain the fallout on its revenue as the lower rate will apply only on a limited stock and until a specified time.

A quick GST Council meeting by video conference should be called right away instead of waiting for September 20 when it's slated to next meet. Prospective buyers, of cars as much as CVs, are delaying their decision as the word is out that the government may consider a tax cut. If rates are to be cut anyway, it makes sense to do it immediately. Two weeks can make a huge difference to an industry writhing in agony.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

A trusted partner

In view of the emergence of China as a superpower, the Indo-Pacific region has turned into a theatre of conflicting interests (Editorial page, "Steaming back into the Indo-Pacific," Sept. 5). The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between U.S., Japan, India and Australia has not made any progress towards the stated objective of securing the Indo-Pacific. Though it created a lot of enthusiasm in the beginning, it has not been pursued by its members with the required energy. Hence, it would be in the interest of India if Russia plays a bigger role in the region. Russia has been a time-tested friend of India

and continues to be its largest defence partner. If this relationship expands into a strategic partnership, it would help secure India's interests and will infuse the required dynamism and balance in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit will help sow the seeds for such a partnership.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

Political machetes
By now, it has become quite clear that the Narendra Modi government is not averse to misusing the central agencies to take revenge on 'political enemies'. It is naive to

suppose that agencies like the Enforcement Directorate and CBI are 'politically neutral' and act independent of government control. The charge or perception that they are tools in the hands of the government to go after political adversaries is not without substance. The cases of Congress leaders P. Chidambaram and D.K. Shivakumar spring to mind. On the other hand, cases against members or supporters of the ruling party are not pursued with the same vigour. The law must take its own course and not the one paved by political machetes.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Shrill rhetoric
Even in normal times, Pakistani generals and politicians have nothing to lose but everything to gain by indulging in shrill warmongering because the theocratic military state's identity is tied to a perpetually adversarial relationship with India (Editorial, "Irresponsible rhetoric," Sept. 3). Pakistan's elites dread nothing more than a public perception that they have been outmanoeuvred by their arch-rival. The dilution of Article 370 has dealt a severe blow to their prestige and self-respect. It is no wonder that some of them have taken to brinkmanship to impress

upon the people their determination to confront the 'permanent adversary'. The Indian political leadership has demonstrated the maturity to nonchalantly ignore this provocative behaviour.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,
Thiruvananthapuram

Remembering Massoud
As observed by the American journalist Steve Coll, in his work, *Ghost Wars*, "Afghanistan after 1979 was a laboratory for geopolitical and military visions" that were conceived abroad and imposed by force". Amidst this, Ahmad Shah Massoud, the 'Lion of Panjshir', emerged as the country's

own nationalist visionary. Even though his Northern Alliance (NA) was no match for the ISI-backed Taliban in terms of resources and finances, his military genius helped NA present a formidable challenge to the ISI-Taliban duo in those turbulent years (Front page, "How India secretly armed Afghanistan's Northern Alliance," Sept. 1). Assisting Afghanistan to secure the elusive peace without placing troops on the ground would be the greatest tribute that India can pay to Massoud.

ABHILASH THIMMAIAH,
Bengaluru

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Will PSB mergers alter the banking scenario?

PARLEY

Consolidation will cause disruption in the short run, but could lead to speedier decision-making in future

Last week, the Centre announced a sweeping consolidation that would see 10 public sector banks being merged into four. While the government has touted the move as one that will enhance credit capacity, there are concerns that more large banks could make the banking system vulnerable. In a conversation moderated by Suresh Seshadri, T. Ram Mohan and V. Srinivasan look at the challenges to successful integration. Excerpts:

How does this merger benefit the economy?

T.T. Ram Mohan: How it benefits the economy remains to be seen. Because I think the case for the merger has not been articulated properly enough. We have some reference to Indian banks becoming global in size. But that sort of talk needs to be discounted. Because, even if you take the largest of the mergers that have been proposed, which is PNB combining with two other entities, it's going to give you a bank which is about one third the size of the 50th largest bank in the world, which is not saying much.

Second, the correlation between size and efficiency is suspect beyond a certain minimum size. And that size is quite low: say \$10 billion in assets or so you get the necessary scale of economy. Beyond that, the empirical evidence does not suggest there are many great advantages to simply growing bigger. And we have seen this in the Indian context where the large public sector banks underperform in relation to private banks, which are much smaller. And of course, the classic comparison is between HDFC Bank and the consolidated State Bank of India, which is many times its size. The price to book value ratio of HDFC Bank is close to 4, whereas the price to book value of SBI is around 1.25. Therefore, the suggestion that getting bigger is going to, in itself, give you some benefits is not validated by experience, either internationally or within India.

Srinivasan, as someone who is from within the industry, is integration going to be something which ends up in

some way impacting the so-called benefit that the integration move aims to provide? Is the timing going to end up getting the management of these banks to focus on integration itself rather than on using the balance sheet to lend to the economy, especially when investment pickup is crucially required?

V. Srinivasan: I would agree with the argument that, from a timing point of view, this does not seem an ideal time for going ahead with these mergers. Because, as all of us are aware, the economy is clearly going through a major slowdown. And it requires all hands on the deck. And whenever a merger of such scale happens, I think the senior management gets distracted in terms of trying to make sure who gets what. I think there's a lot of work to be done. Even though that may be done by several teams, ultimately human emotion will come into play here, where people are going to be looking at saying, "What's in it for me? Where am I headed as far as this action is concerned?"

And therefore, in the short term, I think there is going to be some amount of disruption. That is something which you could have avoided in this sort of time. Consolidation is good, because from an administrative perspective, as people retire, you would see some economies of scale getting through, but just sort of putting banks together is not going to solve the problem as far as the credit flow is concerned.

There's also this other issue, that from a structural perspective, fewer larger banks might increase the risks to the banking industry.

TTR: The way to look at that question is to see the share of the top three or the top five banks in assets. And if that share is very large, then you have a concentrated banking system. If the share is too low, then you have a highly fragmented banking system. And I think it's fair to say that in India we were tending towards a high degree of fragmentation rather than concentration. So, I



REUTERS

think so far as the increase in systemic risk is concerned, it's not going to be an immediate problem. Because if you look at the share of the top three or four banks in assets it was about 30-32%. That is not a very high degree of concentration.

But I do know that regarding the point that Srinivasan made, which is that in order to make a success of a merger, you need two conditions to be satisfied – you need a very high degree of managerial ability, and at least one of the entities in the merger must be financially strong – I'm afraid I can't see either condition being satisfied in the mergers that are being proposed. If you're not able to make a success of your operations and deliver the performance of your existing level of assets, how does the management propose to make a success of a much bigger and more complex entity? The question is not answered simply by citing the theoretical scale economy. Making a success of merger is a huge challenge.

Another concern is that as earlier mergers haven't yet given the benefits, why then this rush to announce a whole host of mergers.

VS: As far as Bank of Baroda (BOB), Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank are concerned, it's still very early days... I don't think the merger integration is complete. And clearly we have not seen much in terms of how exactly they have put things together and gone to the market, with a single value proposition. The way I look at it, this was something which has been on the table for a long time. I think they tried out BOB and just decided to go ahead.

The feedback from the BOB expe-

C The most important rationale for the mergers is that the multiplicity of banks was making enormous demands on the bandwidth of the Finance Ministry

riment was that things were not falling apart. And things seemed to be broadly business as usual, not very different from what was happening in the past. And they decided that this is something which we can go ahead with and do the rest of the previous plan, which was actually already, I think, part of the blueprint. I think that's how they have gone ahead with these mergers. The only thing here is, I don't think there's any identity which they have tried to create for each of these merged entities in terms of trying to say, one will be focusing on Corporate, one will be on Small and Medium Enterprises, one will be Retail. There's been no thinking in terms of any or each of these banks' focus on a particular theme, particular skill-set and developing expertise in a space which is important as far as the overall economy is concerned. Basically, I think they've said, every bank falls broadly in the same template, and there's not much to choose from in terms of who goes with whom.

From an underlying logic perspective, there are those who fear that bank NPAs could worsen, at least in the interim, while this process of integration is on.

TTR: In terms of resolution of NPAs there is some merit in having the merger because there are coordina-

tion problems involved when you have multiple banks trying to resolve NPAs which are common to all of them. So, you have the middle and senior management deputed for meetings, where they have discussions with their counterparts from other banks. And then they have to go back to the top management for a decision, come back again for a meeting, and it goes on and on. Therefore, the resolution of NPAs becomes difficult when you have so many banks trying to arrive at an understanding amongst themselves. So, to the extent that the discussion is happening among fewer banks, I think the resolution of NPAs will be facilitated. That could be one argument for the merger.

But I think the most important rationale is that the multiplicity of banks was making enormous demands on the bandwidth of the Finance Ministry in terms of appointments of chairmen, managing directors, executive directors, independent directors. Even though they have the banks board bureau to advise them on appointments, the process is extremely time-consuming. There were long delays in making the senior appointments, as a result of which these banks have been incurring substantial costs. When you don't have a person at the top or persons at the top, or even directors in play, it exacts its own cost on the bank. And so, collapsing the number of banks makes it easier for the Ministry to monitor the banks on its watch. I think that is probably one argument for the merger which I can sort of relate to.

The other argument is that having bigger entities enables people to make bigger loans, which would give them a degree of pricing power vis-a-vis corporates because corporates have been playing one bank off against the other under the multiple banking system. To the extent that you combine banks and they do a bigger amount of funding, it does improve the bargaining position of the bank. Again, fee income that the banks get from selling mutual funds and insurance products can go up, because now the banks can command a much larger network and therefore demand a bigger commission from the people whose products they're selling.

The fundamental issue is a managerial issue with making a success of the merger, which is a challenge

even in a developed economy, where you have a lot of flexibility in terms of laying off people, rationalising branches. Here, even if you rationalise the branches, a commitment has been given that people will not be laid off. That is one of the assurances given by the Ministry. And therefore, it's not clear how any cost economies will be effected... if people are to be retained and yet be redeployed for other purposes.

There are those who say "we were comfortable with a small bank, are we going to be lost in the larger scheme of things once this bank becomes owned by some bank from Mumbai?" How does this really pan out for the customers?

VS: I would think it is more the lending side which can get impacted on account of this rather than the customer on the deposit side. The deposit side, however weak the government-owned banks, they didn't face any risk of deposits sort of unwinding and they continued to have reasonably decent deposit growth, irrespective of whether they were figuring in the top quartile or the bottom quartile because the sovereign guarantee was clearly there. It will be business as usual. I don't think things will change as far as these banks are concerned. From a lending perspective, the impact will be felt more for the SMEs and small businesses, who have a lot to gain from the personal contact they have with a local person. And as that becomes a lot weaker, that can impact... That is something which we will know only as we go along. But there would be some amount of transition issues as things change.

Is this announcement going to make a large difference to the banking industry?

VS: Clearly, a lesser number of banks means, hopefully, speedier decision-making across banks. That's the upside one can hope for. And the other thing which it can trigger is some consolidation in private sector banks. Because the private sector banks would now be falling behind in terms of scale compared to some of these banks. And therefore, to some extent, this can force the private sector banks to think of a similar consolidation.



T.T. Ram Mohan
is a professor of finance and accounting at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad



V. Srinivasan
is a banker who was formerly deputy managing director at Axis Bank



Scan the QR code to listen to the full interview online

Re-engaging the Iran regime

Unless hardliners are isolated in the U.S. and Iran, the nuclear deal cannot be revisited

GARIMELLA SUBRAMANIAM

During the G7 summit in Biarritz, U.S. President Donald Trump told French President Emmanuel Macron that the U.S. is not looking for leadership change in Iran. "This country has been through that many times before; that doesn't work," he said. This is a hopeful sign for the proposed dialogue between Washington and Tehran, after months of increasing tensions. The U.S. President, who had once sought to cut Iran's exports or some credit as incentive for reaching a new nuclear deal.

Reaching out
These overtures signal a marked departure from Mr. Trump's position on Iran in the past. In May 2018, the U.S. withdrew from the 2015 nuclear agreement reached between the P5+1 countries, the European Union, and Iran, which Mr. Trump once derided as the "worst ever deal". That move was in disregard of the opinions of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Mr. Trump's own top advisers that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action had proved effective. If followed through with action, Mr. Trump's recent comments could strengthen the efforts of the U.K., France and Germany to secure relief for Iran from U.S. sanctions and prevail upon Tehran to desist from its recently revived uranium enrichment activity.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was not impressed by Mr. Trump's remarks. He ruled out talks with the U.S. until all sanctions were lifted, though he has immense stakes in re-building the agreement and reasserting his moderate position at home. He added that he was not interested in photo opportunities, an apparent swipe at Mr. Trump's high-profile summits with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, which yielded few concrete outcomes.

His condition for talks is understandable, however. Iran has had no relief on the sanctions front, despite opposition from the European Union, Russia and China to the punitive measures. The European payments channel, Instex, launched after much

delay to circumvent U.S. sanctions, serves a limited purpose, as the system does not include oil sales, a major source of Iran's foreign exchange earnings. Tehran's crude exports are said to have plummeted to 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) or less since April 2018 levels (more than 2.5 million bpd), according to estimates. Corporations that continue to do business with Iran face the risk of being cut off from the dollar system.

There has not been any let-up from the U.S. strategy of exerting "maximum pressure" on Iran so far. Earlier this month, the administration imposed sanctions against Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. In June, Iran reacted to sanctions against Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Tehran's Supreme Leader, as "outrageous and idiotic". And in April, the country's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was designated a terrorist organisation.

In retaliation to these measures, Iran demonstrated its ability to paralyse Western maritime operations by seizing oil tankers off the Gulf of Hormuz. While Mr. Trump held back from a counter-offensive following the downing of a U.S. drone, the missile attack amplified the risk of conflict in the region.

Moving forward
Neither Secretary of State Mike Pompeo nor National Security Adviser John Bolton would easily reconcile to Mr. Trump's remark that regime change in Iran is off the table. But Mr. Trump, not for the first time, has come close to pushing back against the hardliners in his administration.

Following through on his proposal, France has confirmed the finalisation of a \$15 billion credit line backed by France, Germany and the U.K., subject to Washington's approval. While this initiative will boost Iran's confidence in the West's intentions, the ultimate goal must be to revive the 2015 nuclear deal. President Rouhani's position has weakened in Iran as hardliners have become more assertive in the country. Unless he is also able to isolate them, moving forward on the deal will not be possible.

Girimella Subramanian is a Deputy Editor with The Hindu



NOTEBOOK

A matter of recording

Reporters are caught in a bind when officials request them not to be quoted

DENNIS S. JESUDASAN

"Don't quote me." These are the three words that journalists dread the most and also hear frequently. While reporting the statements of people in public service is only one aspect of journalism, it is a crucial and challenging one.

Reporters are always keen to know what those in charge of administration and public policy think. They are eager to report the statements and opinions of officers, but they are bound by the ethics of reporting – such views can be published only with the consent of the persons in question. Sometimes, there is a grey area that is difficult to negotiate, and we grapple with many dilemmas: Should we report the news or not? And if yes, how? And therein lies the rub.

A senior officer, who was in charge of disaster man-

agement in a northern State, was once invited to a research institute in Chennai as the chief guest for a function. During his speech, the official let it slip that the India Meteorological Department's weather alerts were reaching him late. He said he would rather prefer tracking weather updates from Western countries than wait for the IMD's alerts.

Now, this was a big admission and was definitely worth a report. However, it turned out that the officer was not informed that there were journalists in the audience who were recording his comments. Once he was informed of this, he requested every reporter at the event to refrain from publishing or broadcasting these comments. An important story was, therefore, automatically killed. Even though the comments were made before a gathering, we

could not write about this as we had to honour the officer's request.

Sometimes, even diplomats, who are careful with their words, tend to be candid. A few years ago, a diplomat from a South Asian country launched a tirade against China at an event in Chennai. He said his country disagreed with the Asian power on sea traffic in the South China Sea. Again, on realising that there were reporters in the audience, he requested us not to quote him.

In yet another incident, one of the country's top scientists, who was involved in the preparation of a report on the protection of a well-known mountain range in south India, said that a religious body was wielding a lot of influence in the region. This, he said, was affecting the report. When we asked if he could be quoted, he refused.

Those holding important positions understand and recognise the hurdles in their jobs, but they refuse to let the media and the people know about these issues, which are of public interest. Sadly, they also do little to resolve these issues, given their limitations. One wonders if the extra caution in seeking the non-publication of public statements is due to the burgeoning of outlets in the media space or simply denotes the keenness of the officials to secure their careers.

The journalist then is forced to accept the source's request, or argue and reason with him, or request the source to be quoted anonymously. This is a compromise of sorts, but does not serve the purpose of public interest in a substantive way as this avoids mention of the position and post that the source holds.

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 6, 1969

Suggestion to shift capital

Mr. C. Chatterjee, Director-General of the Geological Survey of India, suggested here [Tenughat (Bihar)] yesterday [September 4] that the capital of India should be shifted from Delhi to some other place. Delivering his presidential address at the fourth annual general meeting of the Indian Society of Engineering Geology here, Mr. Chatterjee said the growing population and mounting pressure of urbanisation would be an ever-increasing phenomenon in the capital of India. "We must consider," he said, whether Delhi as seat of capital will be able to cope with the future demands of urbanisation and development. He said this approach of the question had attracted the attention of the Government of India immediately after independence. In fact, even some sites had been examined in central India but for some reason or other the preliminary investigations were not followed up. Mr. Chatterjee said that he felt that a centrally located place like the Betul plateau in Madhya Pradesh should be considered as a site for the capital.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 6, 1919.

Mr. Gandhi's Birthday.

Sir – Some time ago I saw a letter in your journal from Mrs. Arantika Gokhale regarding the proposal to present a purse to Mahatma Gandhi on his birthday which comes on the second of October. I learn that Bombay is trying to celebrate the event in a fitting manner and I know that Bombay can present a lac of rupees and more to the Mahatma. But I wonder whether Madras will respond to an appeal, if one such is made by the public leaders of this place. Here an appeal has already been made on behalf of the forlorn families in the Punjab. I would humbly request the public to read again the moving speech of Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar at the Madras Provincial Conference held recently at Trichinopoly. The appeal on behalf of the suffering people in that Province has been made by Swami Shraddananda, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mahatma Gandhi himself. Let us not therefore be slow in responding to the cries of the poor mothers and children in Punjab. Our contributions, however small it be, if done quickly will please Mahatma Gandhi's heart very much, and I am sure he will value more the help to such a cause just now than to presenting a purse.

V.A. Sundaram.
Triplicane, September, 3.

AN-ND-E

FROM PAGE ONE

Congress leader sent to judicial custody

Mr. Saini said that in the event of their arrest, Mr. Chidambaram and Mr. Karti shall be released on bail on their furnishing personal bond for ₹1,00,000 each with one surety of like amount to the satisfaction of investigating officer/arresting officer/Duty Magistrate.

"Moreover, the allegations against the applicants/accused are also not of a grave magnitude as the amount of bribe/laundered money is only ₹1,13,61,125 which is a paltry amount in comparison to the allegations against Sh. Dayanidhi Maran and others, where the bribe/laundered amount was ₹749 crore, but he was not arrested," the judge stated.

In both cases, the agencies alleged that the former Minister received bribe in lieu of giving approvals for foreign direct investments and laundered it.

Romila Thapar declines to send her CV to JNU

On Monday, the University defended itself by claiming that it was only following rules – which were amended in August 2018 – and that the letters were written to Professors Emeritus "not for discontinuation", but to "know their availability and their willingness to continue their association with the

university."

Professor Thapar pointed out that the letter sent to her has the following subject line: 'Assessment of past work of "Professor Emeritus" in Jawaharlal Nehru University for the Committee to decide on Continuation', thus exposing the administration's defence as baseless.

Institute of Eminence tag for five

The new greenfield Bharti Institute, a project of Airtel's Satya Bharti Foundation, has also been issued the letter.

The Ministry took the action on Wednesday, following a recommendation from the University Grants Commission (UGC) last month. Each university will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry, laying out its plan to achieve the objective of becoming a world-class institution. The public institutions on the list will then be eligible for a government grant of ₹1,000 crore.

Four other institutions, which had also been recommended by the UGC, require the State governments to act before they can be awarded the status. The Ta-

mil Nadu and West Bengal governments must commit themselves to contributing half of the funds required for Anna University and Jadavpur University. The Uttar Pradesh and Haryana Assemblies must pass legislation to end the private university status of Shiv Nadar University and OP Jindal University, so that they could receive the new status of IoE Deemed Universities.

UGC inspections

These institutions will not be subject to UGC inspections, and are free to set their own courses and curriculum, fee structure and merit-based admission systems. They will have complete academic, administrative and financial autonomy, the statement said.

SC allows Iltija Mufti to meet her mother

The order follows a petition filed by party general secretary Sitaram Yechury, who visited Mr. Tarigami, also under detention, in his home town in the Valley. Mr. Yechury, however, said he would still pursue his case against the curfew and restrictions in the Supreme Court. The court issued notice to the government in this regard and asked the latter to respond in a week.

The court heard Anuradha Bhasin, executive editor of *Kashmir Times*, who said the communication blockade continued unabated even after 31 days.

Senior lawyer Vrinda Grover, for Ms. Bhasin, demanded the government to produce the order or notifi-

cation by which it had shut down mobile and Internet services.

"What are journalists and the media supposed to do here to report on Kashmir with freedom and fairness?" Ms. Grover argued in an impassioned manner.

She referred to an incident of how a doctor was detained for seeking better medical amenities.

Mr. Mehta immediately countered that this was "factually incorrect".

The court issued notice to the government and asked it to file its response in a week. It said all the petitions challenging the curfew and restrictions imposed in the Valley would be heard on September 16.

Bihar MLA's voice sample tests positive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

The voice sample report of imprisoned Bihar MLA Anant Singh on Thursday has tested positive. The independent MLA from Mokama had given his voice sample on August 1 to the Patna police in connection with a telephonic conversation with an alleged contract killer.

Mr. Singh was, later,

found missing from his official residence in Patna and declared an absconder after an AK-47 rifle, 26 cartridges and two hand grenades were recovered from his ancestral home at Ladma, under the Barh Police Station in Patna.

After five days, the MLA surprised everyone by surrendering at a local court at Saket in Delhi. The MLA was booked and sent to jail.

SC denies relief to Chidambaram

Supreme Court judgment clears path for ED to arrest him in INX Media money laundering case

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday denied former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram protection from arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is investigating charges of money laundering against the senior Congress leader in the INX Media case.

A Bench of Justices R. Banumathi and A.S. Bopanna said anticipatory bail (bail in the pre-arrest stage) was an extraordinary remedy, which an accused in an economic offence is usually not entitled to.

Anticipatory bail is given by court sparingly, especially in economic offence cases. "Economic offences stand as a different class as they affect the economic fabric of society," Justice Banumathi, who wrote the 57-page judgment, observed.

The Bench said anticipatory bail at the stage of investi-



Karti Chidambaram arriving at the Rouse Avenue court in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

gation frustrated the interrogation and collection of "useful information" and concealed materials. The interrogation may not succeed as the accused knew that he was protected by the bail or-

der. In economic offences, the accused may use his liberty to "definitely hamper effective investigation".

The court completely agreed with Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta's submis-

CBI may file chargesheet in INX Media case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

After questioning Congress leader P. Chidambaram in custody, the CBI may file a chargesheet this month in the INX Media case related to ₹305 crore of foreign investment clearance given to the company in alleged violation of norms, sources said. Some 11 entities may be charged in the first chargesheet in the case, the sources said.

sions for the ED that this was not a fit case for anticipatory bail.

"A case of money laundering involves many stages of 'placement', 'layering' i.e. funds moved to other institu-

tions to conceal origin' and 'interrogation i.e. funds used to acquire various assets', it requires systematic and analytical investigation, which would be of great advantage," the court agreed with Mr. Mehta.

The court held that an accused cannot insist that he be first confronted with the evidence placed in court to deny him anticipatory bail. It said this may run the risk of exposing evidence collected by it "with huge efforts using their men and resources".

Knowledge of evidence would prod the accused to tamper with it or influence witnesses. The court found no substance in Mr. Chidambaram's argument that the ED had to prove from the transcripts of the questions and answers exchanged during interrogation that his answers were evasive. Justice Banumathi said this was like asking the court to conduct a "mini trial."

Pak. moved troops close to LoC, says India

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL
NEW DELHI

Amid tensions over the Kashmir issue, Pakistan has moved almost a brigade-size force in the Bagh and Kotli sector close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The troops moved are from a peace location and for now have been stationed around 30 km from the Line of Control, Indian Army sources said here.

"At present, they have not been deployed in offensive posturing. However, the Indian Army is closely watching their movements," the sources informed.

The sources said the movement of the Pakistan troops had come at a time when it had already activated its terrorist infrastructure and terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed had started recruiting locals and Afghans in a big way.

It added that the troops moved by the Pakistan Army were close to a brigade-size and their numbers would be more than 2,000.

The Pakistan Army has moved troops closer to the LoC at a time when Islamabad has been trying to fuel terrorism in the Valley.

International attention

It has also been attempting to draw international attention by terming the prevailing situation between the two countries very tense.

Since the removal of Article 370 which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan deployed more than 100 SSG commandos along the LoC to push terrorists and incite violence.

New CBI unit to help investigators share info

Jitendra Singh says it will allow real-time communication during probes across the country

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh on Thursday said a Centralised Technology Vertical (CTV) would be set up under the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at a cost of ₹99 crore to facilitate real-time information sharing with investigators across the country.

The CTV would be functional by next year, said the Minister at the first national conference on cyber-crime investigation and forensics organised by the CBI.



Jitendra Singh

Dr. Singh said after the abrogation of special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution, "cyber manipula-

tors" were posing risk to the country by circulating fake videos on social media, which needed to be addressed.

Cyber offences

The Minister highlighted the importance of studying cyber offences, given that India has the second largest users of Internet in the world. He said non-government organisations and activists should also join the fight against cyber crime.

He said under the leadership of Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi, the Central government had given thrust to the optimum use of technology, quoting examples of Digital India, Government e-Marketplace, Aadhaar and Jandhan schemes.

Dr. Singh praised the CBI for having gained a "high degree of credibility" over the years in terms of the quality of investigations.

Stating that India was still evolving as a nation, he said organisations like the CBI had helped enhance the credibility of Indian democracy.

CBI Director R.K. Shukla said the conference was a platform for the State police and enforcement agencies to share their best practices and replicate them.

The two-day conference, which concluded on Thursday, was attended by Directors-General of Police and other senior officers of various States, officers of Central agencies, Union Home Ministry, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, other government departments and also cyber experts.

3 'declared foreigners' in NRC, says NGO

Foreigners' Tribunal had ruled against the woman and her two children in June 2016

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

An Assam-based NGO has lodged a complaint against three "declared foreigners" who were reportedly included in the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) released on August 31.

The NGO named Assam Public Works (APW), the first litigant in the Supreme Court seeking the updating of the NRC, said that a Foreigners' Tribunal in central Assam's Morigaon had declared Jubeda Begum, wife of Dil Maum, her son Md. Jahur Ali and daughter Sahida Begum as foreigners under clause 2(s) of the Foreigners' Act of 1946 for entering Assam illegally after March 24, 1971, which is the NRC cut-off date.

"We stand w/ #India & commend it for utilizing new legal authorities to designate 4 notorious terrorists: Maulana Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi & Dawood Ibrahim.

This new law expands possibilities for joint #USIndia efforts to combat scourge of terrorism," the Acting Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia, Alice G. Wells, tweeted on Wednesday.

The decision to declare all four of them as terrorists has been taken nearly a month after Parliament approved a crucial amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment (UAPA) Act, 1967.

The law is in conformity with United Nations conventions as well as international standards, the government said.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks mastermind, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, and the US, since 2012, has offered a USD 10 million reward for information that brings the JuD chief to justice.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly asked Pakistan to abide by its UN Security Council commitments to deny terrorists safe haven and block their access to funds.

A resolution to eliminate the diseases was adopted at the 72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in Delhi.

Measles is particularly dangerous for the poor, as it attacks malnourished children and those with reduced immunity. It can cause se-



Loud and clear: Members of Social Unity Centre of India protesting against the NRC in New Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

"The NRC authorities should not have included their names. I request you to investigate how they managed to get into the NRC and whether the NRC officials were involved in such inclusions," the organisation's Dhrubajyoti Taladar said in

an FIR filed in Guwahati's Geetanagar police station on Wednesday.

Mr. Taladar also wanted to know if there were any monetary transactions between the NRC officials and the trio, and whether there was any long-term agenda

behind the inclusion, "which may be a threat to the internal security and sovereignty of India".

The Foreigners' Tribunal had stated that Jubeda and her two children had entered India (Assam) from Bangladesh. It had ordered the deletion of their names from the voters' list, and any other list where they were beneficiaries of a government scheme or schemes, family ration card, voter ID, driving licence, etc., and confiscation of all such documents.

Citizenship activist out

Shajahan Ali Ahmed, an activist whose group helped poor people in western Assam file claims for inclusion in the NRC, has been excluded from the final list along with his family.

Mr. Ahmed said he could have been deliberately excluded as his group – Association for Protection of Indian Citizenship Rights – had facilitated the inclusion of thousands of poor and illiterate people from the minority communities.

"We had included our family tree along with other documents while filing for inclusion in 2016. Our names were included in the part-draft published on December 31, 2017, but put in the exclusion list on July 30, 2018, with 'family tree reject' as the reason.

During the claims process, we included the 1965 voters' list containing the name of our grandfather Moksed Ali. This was not accepted," he said.

Ministry rolls out 25 new mobile science museums

They will cover 115 aspirational districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Aiming to take science education to students in areas without access to such services, the Union Culture Ministry on Thursday rolled out 25 new mobile science museums, including one for Ladakh.

Union Culture and Tourism Minister of State (Independent charge) Prahlad Singh Patel flagged off the science museum bus in Leh. These museums-on-wheels will travel to schools in the 115 "aspirational districts", as named by the Centre.

Speaking at the launch in Leh, Mr. Patel said the programme has been successful in supplementing formal education and creating scientific awareness since its inception in 1965. Till now, the programme had 23 such buses or vans.

The exhibitions cover topics like measurement, machines in everyday life, food and health, chemistry and life with focus on water, energy, hygiene and sanitation and space science for human welfare, the statement said.



and will aim to create a scientific awareness among the rural children. Each specially designed bus contains 20 interactive exhibits and 20 demonstration-related to children and rural life," a statement released by the Ministry said.

The exhibitions cover topics like measurement, machines in everyday life, food and health, chemistry and life with focus on water, energy, hygiene and sanitation and space science for human welfare, the statement said.



Poonam Khetrapal Singh

rious complications, including blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhoea, ear infection and pneumonia, while rubella/congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) causes irreversible birth defects.

"Eliminating measles will prevent 500,000 deaths a year in the region, while eliminating rubella/CRS would avert about 55,000 cases of rubella and promote health and well-being of pregnant women and infants," Dr. Singh said.

Measles elimination and rubella control has been a regional flagship priority since 2014. Bhutan, North Korea, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste have eliminated measles. Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste

SC orders shifting of Tarigami to AIIMS

Yechury's comment on J&K situation invites court's ire

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury informed the Supreme Court in a nine-page affidavit that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, as far as he could see, was "completely contrary" to claims made by the government.

Mr. Yechury travelled to Jammu and Kashmir on August 29 after the Supreme Court gave him permission to meet his ailing party colleague M.Y. Tarigami there. Mr. Yechury had filed a *habeas corpus* petition to know the whereabouts of Mr. Tarigami, who was not to be seen since the clampdown on August 5, following the dilution of Article 370.

'Quite contrary'

"The situation on the ground to the extent he [Yechury] saw was completely contrary to what the government is indicating," said the affidavit filed by Mr. Yechury, represented by senior advocate Raju Ramachandran and advocate Shadan Farasat.



son. He said that he had asked the Senior Superintendent of Police, Security, in J&K, who was present "uninvited" at the meeting between the two party leaders, about the charges and provisions of law under which Mr. Tarigami was being detained in his house.

The senior police official, Mr. Yechury said, told him that there was no legal charges against Mr. Tarigami. The Kashmiri party leader was not being detained and he was "free".

On the other hand, Mr. Tarigami countered the police version, saying that no order of detention was shown to him.

His Z-plus security vehicles had been withdrawn and he and his family members had not been allowed out of their house for the past 25 days.

Mr. Yechury said his party colleague described their situation as a "*de facto* arrest". The affidavit also narrated how Mr. Yechury was accompanied by the police from the moment he set foot on the tarmac to his return to Delhi the next day.

The comment invited the ire of the court during a hearing on Thursday. Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi pointed out that Mr. Yechury was allowed to visit curfew-hit Jammu and Kashmir only to enquire about his colleague and nothing else. He said the comment in the affidavit seemed to have exceeded the purpose of his visit. The court asked the government for its response.

Meanwhile, the court ordered shifting of Mr. Tarigami to Delhi for treatment at the AIIMS.

In his affidavit, Mr. Yechury showed how the official version contradicted the version of the "detained" per-

PM unveils 'Act Far East' policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VLADIVOSTOK

In the presence of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the 'Act Far East' policy to boost India's engagement with the Russian region.

"Let us deepen the bond between India and Russia even further... India is proud of the achievements of the Indian diaspora. I am sure here in the Russian Far East, too, the Indian diaspora will make an active contribution towards the region's progress," he said at the plenary session of the Fifth Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) here.

"India is a proud and active participant in the various activities of the Eastern Economic Forum. Participation has come from top levels of government and industry," he said.

India concluded around 50 agreements worth \$5 billion at the EEF-2019. "We concluded 50 agreements worth \$5 billion at this forum," he was quoted as saying by the Russian news agency TASS.

Mr. Modi appreciated Mr. Putin's vision for the welfare for Russia's Far East, saying the President had opened up investment opportunities for India in the region.

The Prime Minister also emphasised India's commitment to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024.

Modi raises Zakir Naik's extradition with Mahathir

Malaysian PM advises India and Pak. utmost restraint

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VLADIVOSTOK

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday urged Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to get controversial televangelist Zakir Naik extradited for allegedly fuelling terrorism.

The two leaders met on the sidelines of the fifth meeting of the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) held here in the Russian Far East Region.

"Both the parties have decided that our officials will stay in contact regarding the matter and it is an important issue for us," Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said on Naik's extradition.

Mr. Modi discussed with Mr. Mohamad the "reorganisation" and developments related to Jammu and Kashmir.



Bilateral issues: Narendra Modi with Mahathir Mohamad at Vladivostok in Russia on Thursday. ■ PTI

"PM Modi explained to Mahathir the rationale behind the reorganisation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, in terms of both giving effective governance and delivering socio-economic justice. And in that context, the two leaders discussed the focus was on terrorism, on how to combat the growing

threat of terrorism," Mr. Gokhale said.

Hours after India's move, Prime Minister Imran Khan called up Mr. Mohamad and sought support on the issue. Prime Minister Mahathir expressed hope that India and Pakistan would exercise "utmost restraint" to prevent further escalation.

DEHLI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (C) DR-XII MU BLOCK, PITAM PURA: DELHI 110034 NIT No.01/EE(C)DR-XII (2019-20)				
Press Notice Tender				
Sl. No.	Name of work	Amount put to Tender	Earnest Money / Tender Fee	Date of release of tender procurement solution/ID. No.
1.	"P/L/J 700 mm dia Treated Effluent Rising main from 900 mm dia Twin-Rising main Bawana PPCL to Haravali Minor along Western Yamuna Canal."	Rs. 112418524/-	Rs. 21,24,500/- Rs. 1500/-	02.09.2019 - 2019_DJB_179374_1
Last date/time of receipt of bid through e-procurement solution: 15.10.2019 3:00 PM				

Further details in this regards are available on web site <http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

Issued by P.R.O(Water)
Advt. no. J.S.V / 333/2019-20

(Satyaveer Singh)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (C) DR-XII

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD. (Department of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Kerala) THYCAUD P.O., THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695014 Tele:0471-2455646, 2945600 Fax: 2945647 website: www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in , e-mail: stenders_ep@kmscl.kerala.gov.in CIN No: U2423KL2007SGC021616				
No. KMSCL/EP/898/2019 Dated: 05.09.2019				
e-TENDER NOTICE (Running Contract)				
Equipment division has invited online bids for the supply and installation of various equipments to be installed at various Government healthcare institutions across Kerala under Tender No. 335/2019 (Pre Bid Meeting on 19.09.2019, 11.00 a.m.), Tender No. 336/2019 (Pre Bid Meeting on 20.09.2019, 11.00 a.m.) and Tender No. 337(R)/2019. The pre-bid meeting will be held at KMSCL Head Office. Tender documents and all other information related to tender and bidding process can be downloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in . Sd/- Managing Director(Tender Inviting Authority)				

ENTERTAINMENT SOCIETY OF GOA
Maquinez Palace, old GMC Precinct, Campal, Panaji-Goa.
Refno: ESG/19-20/Tech-II/IFI/EMA/748 Date: 04/09/2019

TENDER NOTICE (E-tender Mode Only)

The Entertainment Society of Goa, Panaji-Goa invites E-Tender for the below mentioned work:

Appointment of Agency for Event Management and Public Relations for 50th International Film Festival of India (IFI), 2019 to be held from 20th to 28th November 2019 in Goa.

For detailed Advertisement visit: www.esg.co.in

Sd/-, Chief Executive Officer,
Entertainment Society of Goa.

DI/ADVT/701/2019

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CENTRAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**
No : 69(1) / BCD-II/2019-20/875 Dated : 03.09.2019

NOTICE INVITING SEALED QUOTATIONS

The Executive Engineer, Bengaluru Central Division-II, CPWD, 12th floor, Sir Visvesvaraya Kendriya Bhawan, Near Domlur Flyover, Domlur, Bengaluru-560071 e-mail: bcd2cpwd1@gmail.com, Telephone No. 080-25502466, 080-25507733 invites sealed quotations from the authorized Kannada Translators, as approved by the Government of Karnataka and who had already sent their Expression of Interest for translation of following CPWD Publications from English to Kannada.

Last date and time of submission of bid **18.09.2019 upto 15.00 hours**.

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from website: www.tenderwizard.com / CPWD or www.cpwd.gov.in or at division office free of cost.

A spark can set off a blaze: PDP MP

Nazir Laway says Centre has added more fuel to volatile situation in Kashmir

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

By withdrawing the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, the government has thrown more fuel on an already volatile situation, and with one spark, the blaze could spread, says Nazir Ahmed Laway, Rajya Sabha member of the Peoples Democratic Party.

Mr. Laway spoke to *The Hindu* as the clampdown in Jammu and Kashmir completed a month. It has also been a month since Mr. Laway and his party colleague Mir Mohammad Fayaz walked out of Parliament tearing a copy of the Constitution.

The senior police official, Mr. Yechury said, told him that there was no legal charges against Mr. Tarigami. The Kashmiri party leader was not being detained and he was "free".

On the other hand, Mr. Tarigami countered the police version, saying that no order of detention was shown to him.

His Z-plus security vehicles had been withdrawn and he and his family members had not been allowed out of their house for the past 25 days.

Mr. Yechury said his party colleague described their situation as a "*de facto* arrest". The affidavit also narrated how Mr. Yechury was accompanied by the police from the moment he set foot on the tarmac to his return to Delhi the next day.

Meanwhile, the court ordered shifting of Mr. Tarigami to Delhi for treatment at the AIIMS.

In his affidavit, Mr. Yechury showed how the official version contradicted the version of the "detained" per-



A woman makes a call after landlines were restored in Lal Chowk and other areas in Srinagar. ■ PTI

He said the PDP had never supported violence. "Mufti saab [Mufti Mohammad Sayeed] used to say that Kashmiri's children should be saved. We have never supported violence. Our slogan has always been '*dharne se nahi, goli se nahi; baat ba-negi sirf boli se*' ('Neither protest, nor bullets; Kashmiris can be saved only through talks')," he said

Mr. Laway said the man on the street did not adequately know Kashmir's history. "We were free long before India won its freedom," he said.

Leaders who trust the Indian Constitution and democracy – they have been

liament member, but even I can't call anyone in Kashmir," he said.

'Help Kashmiris'

From August 5, he has not tried to travel to Kashmir, saying he would be detained just like any other political leader. "I am able to help Kashmiris staying outside it [the State]," Mr. Laway said.

Mr. Laway said the man on the street did not adequately know Kashmir's history. "We were free long before India won its freedom," he said.

His decision to stay on in Parliament is contrary to the directions given by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti.

put behind bars. If the government has detained separatists, no one would have shed tears. Why arrest those who worked within the Constitution," Mr. Laway asked.

Mr. Laway and Mr. Fayaz's Rajya Sabha terms are scheduled to end in February 2021. "My trust in the Indian Constitution is firm and I will continue as a parliamentarian till my term ends. It is an important platform to raise the grievances of Kashmiris, and I shall continue to do so," Mr. Laway said.

His decision to stay on in Parliament is contrary to the directions given by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti.

'Srinagar youth sustained fatal pellet injuries'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The medical records at the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) on a deceased Srinagar youth, who the police claimed had succumbed to stone injuries sustained during a clash, show that he had suffered "multiple pellet perforations on the head and eye".

The hospital's records showed that Asrar Ahmad, a Class II student from Elahibagh, was admitted to the hospital at 6.46 p.m. on August 6, a day after the Centre revoked J&K's special status. The X-ray report showed multiple pellets lodged inside the skull and eye socket.

The patient registration card showed that the patient was admitted as a surgical emergency and that the doctors examined him for all possibilities of injuries, including tear-smoke shell and pellets. The final report, which has mentioned the exact cause of death, could not be accessed immediately.

In another incident, a non-local labourer was shot at by unknown gunmen in Sopore on Wednesday evening.

Rubin Design Bureau of Russia, ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems of Germany and Saab group of Sweden.

India has signed a series of mega defence deals with Russia in the past few years through the IGA route. "Last year and today saw the emergence of a tremendous portfolio of contracts in contrast to all previous years, \$14.5 billion. This is an impressive figure, it's a real breakthrough," Dmitry Shugaev, Director-General of Federal Service of Military-Technical Cooperation of Russia, was quoted by Russian news agency TASS.

However, the Russian fifth generation fighter aircraft, Su-57, was not offered to India, the sources added.

For the P-751, Russia has pitched a modified Amur 1650 conventional submarine to suit Indian requirements. The contenders in the P-751 are Naval Group of France, Rosoboronexport

Strategic Partnership (SP) model and valued at over ₹40,000 crore.

The indigenous AIP being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) could be incorporated in the submarine, the source said.

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MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	36,644	-0.22
US Dollar	71.84	0.38
Gold	39,271	0.21
Brent oil	62.14	2.76

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	366.55	2.20
Asian Paints	1519.75	-15.40
Axius Bank	649.60	2.30
Bajaj Auto	2759.20	23.50
Bajaj Finance	7001.05	-22.05
Bharti Airtel	347.70	2.00
BPLC	380.80	17.25
Britannia Ind	2678.65	43.20
Cipla	478.40	7.00
Coal India	194.85	12.70
Dr Reddys Lab	2682.45	79.75
Eicher Motors	15754.20	111.80
GAIL (India)	130.95	3.65
Gasim Ind	697.10	3.05
HCL Tech.	1111.95	-13.70
HDFC	2044.15	-55.95
HDFC Bank	2235.15	-12.60
Hero MotoCorp	2605.90	39.80
Hindalco	184.60	2.95
Hind Unilever	1829.75	-16.85
Indiabulls HFL	447.95	-10.35
ICICI Bank	389.00	-8.50
IndusInd Bank	1308.10	-9.50
Bharti Infralet	248.20	0.15
Infosys	834.05	12.75
Indian Oil Corp	124.70	4.35
ITC	244.25	1.00
JSW Steel	216.25	1.45
Kotak Bank	1410.15	-16.30
L&T	1320.30	12.25
M&M	517.00	11.30
Maruti Suzuki	5968.65	137.90
NTPC	123.45	4.00
ONGC	125.15	6.15
PowerGrid Corp	199.35	2.45
Reliance Ind	1198.60	-2.55
State Bank	273.30	-1.80
Sun Pharma	431.80	5.35
Tata Motors	118.05	8.55
Tata Steel	345.15	5.90
TCS	2215.30	-30.10
Tech Mahindra	695.45	-7.80
Titan	1048.65	11.45
UltraTech Cement	3888.80	12.30
UPL	569.65	8.60
Vedanta	139.30	2.60
Wipro	255.60	-0.45
YES Bank	61.95	2.50
Zee Entertainment	360.80	5.30

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.64	71.96
Euro	79.28	79.64
British Pound	88.37	88.77
Japanese Yen (100)	67.17	67.48
Chinese Yuan	10.03	10.07
Swiss Franc	72.95	73.28
Singapore Dollar	51.80	52.03
Canadian Dollar	54.26	54.53
Malaysian Ringgit	17.10	17.18

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

Retail Silver (1g)	54.8... (54.8)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3741... (3741)

PNB board approves amalgamation with OBC, UBI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Board of Punjab National Bank has approved the amalgamation of Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India into Punjab National Bank, the company informed stock exchanges in a regulatory filing on Thursday.

It has also approved the government's capital infusion of ₹18,000 crore, pending shareholder approval.

"In continuation to our intimation dated August 31, 2019, the exchange is hereby informed that the board of directors of the bank in its meeting held on September 5, 2019, has considered and decided to give its 'in-principle approval' for amalgamation of the Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India into Punjab National Bank and commence the amalgamation process for the same, subject to all applicable approvals," the filing said.

The bank's board met on Thursday following a letter from the government on August 30 advising the board to consider the amalgamation of the three banks.

Nod for capital infusion The bank's board has also approved a capital infusion of ₹18,000 crore by Government of India for preferential allotment of equity shares of Bank at a price determined in terms of SEBI (ICDR) Regulations and holding of Extra General Meeting (EGM) on Tuesday, October 22... for obtaining approval of shareholders," the filing added.

"Further, in the meeting today the Board has also approved the capital infusion of up to ₹18,000 crore by Government of India for preferential allotment of equity shares of Bank at a price determined in terms of SEBI (ICDR) Regulations and holding of Extra General Meeting (EGM) on Tuesday, October 22... for obtaining approval of shareholders," the filing added.

'Govt. looking at export sops, GST incentives for auto sector'

Gadkari promises to take up industry's plea for cut in GST with Finance Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Offering some solace to the crisis-hit auto industry, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday assured 'full' support from the government to help overcome the free fall in vehicle sales. He said the Centre was looking at steps, including export sops and GST incentives, to help create demand in the sector.

"As far as the present economic data is concerned, automobile sector is facing a slowdown because of the global economy... because of demand and supply. The government is with the automobile sector," the Minister said at the 59th SIAM annual convention.

The Minister also clarified that the government did not intend to ban ICE (internal combustion engine) powered vehicles.

He, however, added that the government would promote the use of alternative fuels and electric vehicles to



Offering hope: Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari speaking at the SIAM convention. ■ KAMAL NARANG

tackle issues of a high crude oil import bill and pollution. Thursday's statement comes as a relief for the industry, given that it was Mr. Gadkari who had in 2017 asked car makers to move to electric or they would be "bulldozed" into doing it.

Mr. Gadkari also promised to take up the industry's request for a GST cut with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. "The industry's demand for reduction in

GST is understandable. I will take your suggestion [to reduce GST] to the finance minister... even if it can be done for a limited period of time, will follow this up. This sector needs help at this time and that help should be in such a manner that it helps increase sales," he said. Noting that the GST on electric vehicles had been reduced to 5% from 12% earlier, he said the government was mulling to extend the

same benefit to hybrid vehicles.

Any decision on GST on automobiles would be taken up for discussion at the upcoming meeting of the GST Council on September 20. However, the industry is seeking an early solution as they fear that customers would defer purchases anticipating further reduction in prices.

Mr. Gadkari also said that his Ministry would award 68 road projects worth about ₹5 lakh crore in the next three months, which, in turn, would help generate demand for commercial vehicles.

SIAM president Rajan Wadhura sought introduction of a scrappage policy and a nodal Ministry for the industry, in addition to GST cuts. CII president designate and MD and CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank Uday Kotak said that there was enough liquidity in the banking system to finance any form of vehicle.

Slowdown effect: M&M defers ₹1,000 crore of planned capex

At current production levels, every carmaker is overstaffed

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI



Pawan Goenka

gether to get us out of the current situation," he said.

Stating that it was "unkind" to say that the industry was not doing anything, he said it was only after attempting everything from product launches to price incentives, the industry had turned to the government.

On layoffs in the company and the sector, he said M&M has had to lay off about 1,500 temporary workers, of a total of 30,000.

"That is like 5% reduction when volume is down by 20%. We are not removing people just because volumes are down, but if it continues beyond a certain point then the industry would be unable to carry the extra people."

He also said it would be more difficult for commercial vehicles to turnaround than the passenger vehicles, as the latter was a discretionary purchase, while CVs were purchased based on the demand. "For CVs, just a reduction in GST may not help; you need more of an economic turnaround."

Jio starts fibre-to-home service

Tariff plans start at ₹699 a month and go up to ₹8,499

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Reliance Jio on Thursday announced the commencement of JioFiber, its fibre-to-home service, across 1,600 cities in India with the basic pre-paid 'Bronze' plan starting at ₹699 per month and going up to ₹8,499 a month for its 'Titanium' pre-paid plan.

Under the Jio Welcome offer, the basic plan offers 100 GB of data (with 50GB extra), free voice calls to anywhere in India, TV video calling, conferencing, gaming, home networking (content sharing at home and outside) and device security for up to five devices.

On payment of ₹2,500 for installation, which includes a security deposit of ₹1,500, the subscriber will get Jio home gateway worth ₹5000, 4K set-top box worth ₹6,400 and bluetooth speaker worth ₹2,999 and annual subscription for Jio content.

"With JioFiber, Jio continues to deliver on its promise of connecting the unconnected while bringing



about transformational changes to Indian homes, that it started with its mobility service three years ago, on September 5, 2016," said in a statement.

Television sets will be available to customers committing to long-term plans starting at ₹1,299 per month.

43-inch TV set

Under the Jio Titanium offer with a monthly rental plan of ₹8,499, users will get a 43-inch 4K TV worth ₹44,990 and an annual subscription of leading OTT apps along with Jio home gateway worth ₹5,000, along with the 4K set-top box. Titanium subscribers will get 5,000 GB of data at a speed of 1 Gbps.

Commenting on the launch of JioFiber, Akash Ambani, director, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., said, "Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and all of JioFiber has been designed with the sole purpose of giving you a delightful experience."

Interestingly, the first trading session after the government announcement - August 26 - saw the Sensex surging 793 points but FPIs remained net sellers at ₹670 crore.

Market participants believe that while the government has acknowledged the issue and rolled back the tax surcharge, there are larger macroeconomic concerns - both domestic and global - gripping the markets that

Asset quality may remain unchanged

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The consolidation of 10 public sector banks into four will be credit positive due to increased operational scale and capital, and improved corporate governance in the long run, rating agency Moody's said on Thursday.

"The consolidated banks will have larger operating scale, which will result in improved competitiveness in corporate banking and retail lending, where their market share is low," Moody's said.

Last week, the government announced the consolidation of 10 banks into four. The process is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Tech investments

"A larger scale will also enable PSU banks to increase technology investment, which is an area where they have lagged private sector peers," the rating agency said, adding that these benefits would not be realised until the medium term.

"Based on the announced allocations, all rated PSU banks, after consolidation, will have a pro forma Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio of more than 9%," Moody's said.

As most of these banks have higher bad loans, Moody's said.

dy's expects no significant change in asset quality and profitability, post merger.

Asset quality and profitability will remain broadly unchanged after consolidation. PSU banks already score poorly on these two factors, and there is no reason to assume that the merged entities will make significant improvements in these metrics," it said.

"While boards have been given more power, their roles and responsibilities will remain significantly circumscribed compared with boards of private sector companies, including private sector banks," it said.

HR challenges

Moody's added that flexibility in PSBs' human resources practices, compared with private sector peers, remained limited.

"There is little latitude to provide incentives, which tends to stifle work performance. This is compounded by the rigidity of recruitment, compensation and career progression, which makes it very difficult to set goals for employees," Moody's said.

IN BRIEF



Rakesh Srivastava

named Nissan Motor MD

CHENNAI
Rakesh Srivastava has been appointed as managing director, Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd (NMIPL). He will report to Sinan Ozkok, president, Nissan India Operations, according to a company statement. Previously, he worked as director in charge of electric vehicle development in JSW Group. Prior to that, Mr. Srivastava held senior positions in Hyundai Motor India and Maruti Suzuki.

Dr. Reddy's launches generic of Zyban tablets

HYDERABAD
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories said it had launched in the U.S. Bupropion Hydrochloride Extended-Release tablets, a therapeutically equivalent generic version of Zyban that is indicated as an aid to smoking cessation. The Zyban brand and generic had U.S. sales of approximately \$5.4 million moving annual total (MAT) for the twelve months ended June 2019, Dr. Reddy's said, citing IQVIA Health numbers.

Eveready Industries to sell land in Hyderabad

KOLKATA
Eveready Industries India Ltd. is planning to sell a land parcel of 25 acres at Hyderabad for ₹100 crore. The land had become surplus after the battery unit, which it housed, was closed down in 2010 due to uneconomic operations. An agreement for sale has already been executed with Nuland Technologies for sale of this land situated at Moula Ali Industrial Development Area, Hyderabad, the company said in a regulatory filing.

NCLT okays JSW Steel's ₹19,700-cr. BPSL bid

Company likely to appeal against the order seeking various reliefs from statutory authorities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Thursday approved JSW Steel's ₹19,700 crore bid for Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL).

However, the company is likely to appeal against the order as NCLT had disposed of JSW Steel's petition seeking various reliefs from statutory authorities under the Income Tax Act 1961, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Department of Registration of Stamps and Reserve Bank of India (RBI), said sources in the know of the development.

Filing application

"We do not feel persuaded to accept the prayer made in the resolution plan yet the



Ray of hope: BPSL's profit during insolvency period must be distributed to creditors, says NCLT. ■ B.M. SIDDALINGASWAMY

resolution plan applicant may file appropriate applications before competent authorities which would be considered in accordance with law because it would not compete for adjudicating authority— NCLT — to enter into any such area for grant-

ing relaxation, concession or waiver, which is wholly within the domain of competent authorities," said the order.

A JSW official told *The Hindu*, "Our bid for BPSL has been approved by NCLT today. We are going through the fine print of the order

and as per our legal input, we will take a call tomorrow."

The NCLT ruled that the profit made by BPSL during the insolvency period must be distributed to creditors, in accordance with a ruling by a higher tribunal in a case involving ArcelorMittal-Essar Steel India.

"National Company Law Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, has today, in its pronouncement approved the resolution plan submitted by JSW Steel Limited in respect of the corporate insolvency resolution process of Bhushan Power and Steel Limited.

"The written order containing the details and terms of such approval, if any, are awaited," said the company in filing to the exchanges.

A two-member principal bench of the NCLT, headed by Justice M. M. Kumar, also said the criminal cases against the promoters of BPSL for siphoning of the funds from the company would not impact JSW Steel as it was a new promoter.

Rejects objections

The NCLT rejected the objections raised by Tata Steel over the bids submitted by JSW and its erstwhile BPSL promoters.

Tata Steel had objected to the improved financial offer of JSW Steel before the resolution professional and the committee of creditors of Bhushan Power and Steel.

JSW Steel shares on the BSE rose 0.77% to close at ₹216.25 in a weak Mumbai market on Thursday.



Looking up: The company is exporting to 105 countries and has only had to ramp up its exports, says Rajiv Prasad.

Replacement market, exports rescue JK Tyres

Outbound shipments grew 50% in Q1

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

JK Tyres & Industries Ltd., a major player in the Indian tyre industry, has seen around 30% fall in its sales to Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) in line with the ongoing slump in the auto industry. But the company has managed to cut the risk by focussing on replacement and exports markets, a top executive added.

"Due to anti-dumping duty on Chinese products in the U.S. market, we could manage to capitalise on that as well. And that's why I am talking about a huge 50% jump in exports in the current situation," he added.

He said currently the replacement market was doing fairly well and the company reported 16% growth in this segment in the first quarter.

"On the overall number, we were able to maintain growth levels which is creditable. We are ensuring that at least our company doesn't go down in terms of volumes [in the current situation]," he added.

Now that the impact of the 15% increase in axle lead on the OEMs is expected to extinguish shortly, the current inventory pileup is posing a new challenge, he said.

"The inventory pile-up is happening because of the slowness in the industry and due to the implementation of BS VI from April 1, 2020," he said.

Aditya Birla Capital to raise ₹2,100 crore

Firm to repay debt, fund growth

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL) will raise ₹2,100 crore equity capital through a preferential allotment to investors and the promoters.

The equity capital will be raised at ₹100 per share, which is at a 10.62% premium to the ABCL closing price of ₹90.40 as of September 4, the company said in a statement.

The promoter and promoter group entities will hold about 70.54% in ABCL after the issue.

The money will be used to fund the future growth of the company's businesses as well as repay outstanding debt, ABCL said.

'Ahead of festive season, auto makers in wait and watch mode'

Firms expect footfalls at showrooms to convert into sales

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

With festive season around the corner, the automobile industry is seeing a slight upturn in footfalls at showrooms, leading to hopes of an uplift from the deep decline in sales over the past few months.

"In the upcoming festive season, I am quite hopeful that there will be enough demand. I am basing it entirely on the fact that enquiry levels have gone up 5-7% for our petrol vehicles," Shashank Srivastava, executive director (marketing and sales), Maruti Suzuki India, told *The Hindu*.

The company is hopeful that they would be able to convert these footfalls to retail sales. Asked if this festive season could kick-start the reversal of the slowdown for the industry, he said, "I do see light at the end of the tunnel, but I am not able to gauge how far the light is. We will have a better outlook after a couple of months."

An industry representative said while the industry was hopeful that the second half of the year would be better than the first, things were dicey as consumer sentiment remained low.

SIAM president Rajan Wadhera, who is also the president, Automotive Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra, echoed similar sentiments. "We always have light at the end of the tunnel, but everything depends on how long the tunnel is," he said.

Asked about the upcoming festive season, he said these 2-2.5 months typically accounted for 20-25% of sales for all manufacturers.

Deep discounts

In order to woo customers, carmakers are pushing deep discounts on vehicles, averaging around 5%.

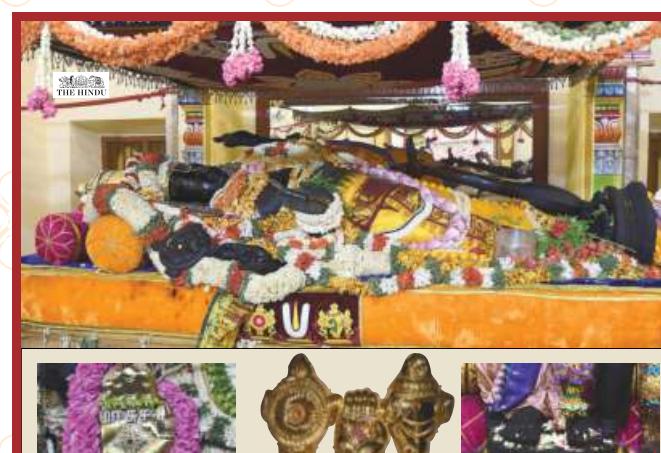
In Maruti Suzuki, for example, the discounts range from ₹30,000 to ₹1 lakh.

"The discounts are almost at an all-time high for most models. It is the best time for a consumer to buy," an industry representative added.

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP



A feast of articles and pictures on the just concluded, once-in-40-years, 48-day exposition of Athi Varadar and the fascinating history of Varadaraja Swamy Temple in Kanchipuram.



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DEEPA ALEXANDER

There is a 1936 classic by Norman Rockwell, legendary illustrator of American life, of four men hitting the perfect note. A portrait of a barber shop in the 1890s, it has the men holding a razor, comb, shaving brush and mug, eyes closed, singing in harmony, even as one has his face covered in foam. The painting that first graced *The Saturday Evening Post* has been immortalised as a mural at the Barbershop Harmony Society in Nashville, USA.

Halfway around the globe, a century later, four men in their 30s gather on the steps of St Andrew's Kirk in Chennai. The church steeple lances a grey sky, and a sudden sharp downpour sends them dashing into its magnificent interiors. Under the swirling cosmos painted on the dome, Joseph P George, Ashish Ittyerah, Roshan Santosham and Alfred Pramod break into song – blending voices so well that they weave in and out of each other's vocal orbits before ending in a triumphant 'tag', a dramatic variation.

Joseph, who sings lead, is an engineer; Ashish, a journalist, sings tenor; Roshan, a pulmonologist and critical care doctor, sings baritone; and Pramod, an airline business development manager, sings bass. They first sang in college and church choirs and continue to be associated with them, but came together as Organised Chaos, a rock band founded a decade ago. It exchanged its blood-curdling snarls for the relative, soothing harmony of barbershop music, making it perhaps India's first quartet to follow this unique style of acapella singing.

A bit of history

Characterised by a four-part chord for every melody note, the genre had its origins in Europe, where patrons sang while waiting at saloons for barbers, who were then also dental practitioners. Singing in quartets was popularised in the US during the Vaudeville era of the early 1900s. It led to the founding of the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), now headquartered at Nashville, in 1938. Considered the largest all-male singing organisation with 30,000 members across continents, it has a formidable collection of sheet music, costumes and mem-

The sign of four

Chennai-based Organised Chaos, considered India's first barbershop quartet, on how it stumbled upon the genre, training at Nashville and what it sounds like when four voices become one



On cue (Clockwise from left) Ashish Ittyerah, Roshan Santosham, Alfred Pramod and Joseph P George of Organised Chaos • R RAVINDRAN

orability. It also hosts workshops to hone skills, and Organised Chaos was the first quartet from India to be part of one.

"We were all part of the Madras Musical Association, led by Augustine Paul. It was Roshan who initiated Organised Chaos, inspired by his father's Gatt Quintet. We sang church music by day, rock by night, hence the name. But the band petered out because I moved to Bangalore, Roshan moved to Pondy and Pramod got married," laughs Joseph, the conductor. "In January 2018, Roshan got us together again

and Ashish joined us. By March, I nudged Organised Chaos into singing barbershop harmony."

While Ashish and Joseph had passed Grade 8 in western classical vocal and piano respectively, and Pramod was an accomplished guitarist, Roshan says that moving to a form of singing that requires no instrumental accompaniment was a whole new world.

"We meet once a week for an hour for practice," he says, "But with our hectic schedules and distant workplaces, it's an effort."

Which is why it is remarkable

that a little more than a year since their experiments with barbershop music, they were invited on full scholarship by BHS for a week-long workshop at Harmony University. "The whole of 2018 had us unlearning the way we sing, to fit in together," says Pramod. "I had to lose my classical vibrato," adds Ashish. The quartet recorded two songs – 'Irish Blessing' and 'Jingle Bell Rock' – that were tagged to the BHS Facebook page. "Our avenues to perform also were church- and carol-related events. So, our being 'found' by BHS was a miracle," says Roshan.

The programme, held in Nashville since the 1970s, was a revelation, and went beyond the mere tropes of harmonising popular tunes and how to 'lock and ring'

and 'tag'. With no stars and no beatboxing, there were lessons in how to create the perfect blend, with no one voice dominating. "There were 21 quartets and two choruses from around the globe, and you get to choose whether you want to head to the quartet, chorus, educator or director's college. Mornings began with nearly 600 people singing together before heading out for different electives, such as rehearsal techniques, sight reading, music branding and how to be a great batonite," says Roshan.

"Everything is looked at with a magnifying glass," says Joseph, "Your individual voice, group sound, how to let go of your inhibitions..."

Competitions mark the end of the workshop and follow guidelines such as every song must end in a 'tag' – a hallmark of barbershop. For the finale, the *bandhgala*-clad Organised Chaos sang the spiritual 'It is well with my soul', although barbershop repertoire includes show classics, jazz standards and pop tunes.

Their greatest joy came from gathering in the open to singing tags with barbershop legends such as The Gashouse Gang, and other 16- to 60-year-old-men in bowler hats, followed by giant bowls of ice cream, a tradition here.

"We hope to start an association in Chennai," says Roshan. "Include secular music and develop a culture where barbershop music finds its place in the already-rich Indian music scene," adds Ashish.

They sign off with 'Thank you Lord for the music'. When it ends with Pramod's deep bass echoing through the chancel, I could not have agreed more.



AMERICAN ICON

Portrait of Nehru, a Norman Rockwell painting, appeared on a 1963 cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Rockwell's career with the magazine, spanning 47 years, ended with Portrait of John F Kennedy, the same year.

POP-UP

Celebrating South Asian contemporary

The 3rd Delhi Contemporary Art Week is underway, and younger collectors with an increased engagement with the political, drive up the popularity of the genre



This isn't just another art fair. When the Delhi Contemporary Art Week (DCAW) first started in 2017, it came together as a way to show the art of now, by identifying fresh talent in an age-agnostic way.

"A lot of people don't position [newer] artists very well – they end up selling [them] for interiors and to architects, and don't really work on their careers," explains Bhavna Kakar, founder-director of Latitude 28, one of the initiators of the DCAW. "I had an all-young roster, and wanted to work hard to present them in the best biennales and art fairs. But in large expositions, they obviously get sidelined," she says.

It is but natural. The modern masters, from M.F. Husain to S.H. Raza, have been evergreen in their appeal and value for collectors, even world over. In 2015, for example, Christie's sold Raza's *Tapovan* for \$4.45 million. It was the highest price for a work in the category of South Asian modern and contemporary.

Things are changing however, notes Kakar. In their first year, only about a couple hundred visitors, "mostly clients", had visited the DCAW, which started with only three participating galleries. Today, the expected footfall stands at about 5,000 people for the entire week, and the number of participating galleries – incidentally all women-led – has grown to seven in total.

Nature Morte, Gallery Espace, Latitude 28, Blueprint 12, Shrine Empire, Exhibit 320, and Vadhera Art Gallery are all a part of DCAW 2019, and participated in the previous edition in 2018 as well. Together, they've brought 50 artists, from various South Asian countries, including Mehreen Murtaza from Pakistan, Zimbril from Bhutan, Tayeba Begum Lipi from Bangladesh, and Gihan Karunaratne from Sri Lanka, among various others.

"The idea is to showcase contemporary art – truly and simply, art of the time. This has nothing to do with the age of the artists. It is the concept, the subject, and the application of the subject that makes a piece of art contemporary," Kakar says.

There has been a gradual but definitive change in how contemporary art is looked at, and sought out by collectors, she says. "There are young collectors now, even as young as 19, who understand that the modern masters might fetch them more in the future, but they see value in works that resonate more immediately with them, which address the political too," she adds.

Collectors with no prior family history in dealing with art, are also helping expand the appeal of contemporary work. "People in the 25-30 age bracket are also earning well. And this generation isn't going the route of getting a job, buying a car, and then a house. Older generations would think of acquiring art only after all of this is checked," she notes, adding that now it is also "cool" for this demographic, to acquire art.

On till 2 p.m. on Saturday, 7th September, Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

PRODUCT

Pocket play

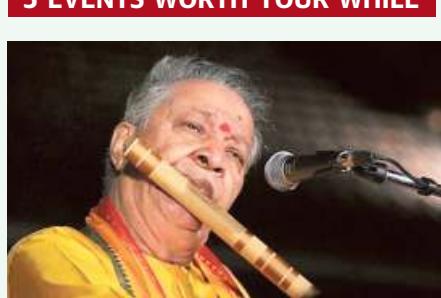
Goulian Finch is a brand dedicated to making pocket squares that seek to epitomise the qualities of a colourful passerine bird native to Australia. The handcrafted pieces, used to take suits up a notch, are hand-woven with mulberry silk and 3 grams of gold zari. The credit for weaving a 16x16 inch piece with small motifs goes to a few weaving families in Banaras, who have resisted the use of power looms.



Khazana at Taj Hotel, Epiphany at Lodhi Hotel; ₹2,000 upward

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



PERFORMANCE

Flute recital

Parichay Foundation presents the 6th edition of its Parampara series, an initiative to promote the richness of Indian classical music. In this edition, flautist and Padma Vibhushan recipient Hariprasad Chaurasia will perform with his disciple Digvijaysinh Chauhan. Ustad Rashid Mustafa Thirakwa will accompany on the tabla.

VENUE: Sri Sathy Sai International Centre

TIME: 5 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Mixed-media

Commemorating 100 years of Kala Bhavana at Santiniketan, Janus Art Gallery has organised a group art exhibition called 'Kala Bhavana: The Legacy of Ingenuity' at Shridharani Gallery. The display features works by 20 young artists from Kala Bhavana, with an aim to trace and showcase the progress of the institution's pedagogy.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg

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



CONCERT

Jugalbandi

The Raza Foundation presents Aarambh XVI, a series of classical music and dance concerts, to promote young talent. The event will showcase a jugalbandi of Hindustani vocals and the saxophone, with Shubhra Talegaonkar and Priyank Krishna. This will be followed by an Odissi dance recital by Arunima Ghosh.

VENUE: M. L. Bhartia Auditorium, Lodhi Road

TIME: 5.30 p.m.



FILM

Bohemian Rhapsody

Sunset Cinema Club will screen the English feature film, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, this evening. The biographical drama about Freddie Mercury, the lead singer of the British rock band Queen, released in 2018. Directed by Bryan Singer, it follows Mercury's life from the formation of the band up to their 1985 Live Aid performance.

VENUE: Hard Rock Cafe, DLF Place, Saket

TIME: 7 p.m.



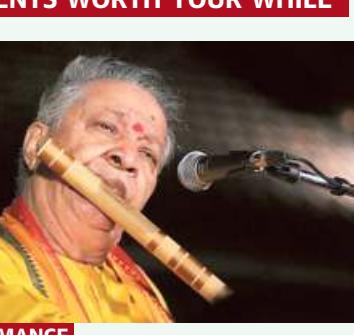
DANCE

Kathak recital

India Habitat Centre is hosting, Yagyaseni-The Ultimate Oblation, a solo Kathak dance theatre production, this evening. Conceptualised and choreographed by Sangita Chatterjee, the presentation is based on the adaptation of the novel *Yajnaseni: The Story of Draupadi*, written by Jnanpath awardee Pratibha Ray.

VENUE: The Stein Auditorium, IHC

TIME: 7 p.m.



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VENUE: The Stein Auditorium, IHC

TIME: 7 p.m.

A record of ALL THE SPINACH

Keeraikadai.com has foraged, identified and documented more than 100 varieties of healthy greens



K JESHI

encourage people to grow them," says Sriram.

Sriram, who networks with 130 farmers in and around Tamil Nadu, says the idea to revive native greens came about during a friendly chat with an elderly couple. "They asked us to get varieties like red pulicha keerai and gopuram thaangi. We were only supplying common varieties like ponnanganni, arakeerai and thandu keerai then. So we asked farmers in Aliyar, near Pollachi, and in the process realised there were many more native greens like ayyam panai and kal uruvi. The farmers also shared ways to cook them: we collected more than 100 recipes of soups, pori-

"There are said to be over 500 varieties and we are still counting. Our R&D team works with farmers to understand the medicinal values of these greens. Then, we rely on paati vaithyam, where elders share recipes and their wisdom. We collate all that information that is available online. We also sell the seeds to



yals, kootus and thovayals."

Food writer, chef, and cookbook author Mallika Badrinath, who has written 30 books on vegetarian cuisines, recommends eating at least 100 grams of greens every day. "Once you cook them with dal, they take care of your protein requirement. Chop them up and sauté them with onions and add them to your sundal, to make it healthier," she suggests.

Red pulicha keerai (red gongura)

One finds this green only in the wild now, says Sriram. The vitamins and minerals it has are said to reduce bad cholesterol. It is slightly sour in taste and can be consumed either raw or cooked as paruppu keerai, thokku, or thovayal.

"I make pickles, chutney and a tasty red pulicha keerai biryani too. Or make a keerai masiyal and have it with hot rice and a sprin-



kling of ghee," says Mallika.

Avuri (true indigo)

"It is very difficult to get avuri," admits Mallika, who often stores native greens in dry form. "I use them as garnish, in dosas, sand-

wiches and in chapathi dough." Sriram says that as it is fibrous, avuri is often made into a paste along with goat's milk. "The farmers use this paste to get rid of skin allergies. They also drink the juice extracted from boiling the

Painting dinner green Pick from a variety of green options such as keerai vadai and keerai kozhukkattai • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ram, adding that only a handful of farmers in Pollachi grow these greens now.

Ayyam panai (ayapana tea) and Thuthi (Indian mallow)

Ayyam panai, is usually consumed in liquid form. "When one of my colleagues suffered from mouth ulcer, he simply chewed on the leaves," says Sriram. Thuthi is a common green. As an experiment, Sriram tried out thuthi juice on an empty stomach (thuthi leaves are believed to be cooling, and flush out toxins). "I made a paste of thuthi leaves, extracted the juice, added coconut milk and panangkalkandu and consumed it for over a week. I felt so light and energetic."

Kal uruvi (blistering ammannia)

This grows in the wild, and its leaves have a sour taste like that of tamarind leaves. "As the name suggests, it dissolves kidney stones," says Sriram. Mallika says the sourness can easily be offset when cooking. "For example, in-

Dried avuri is also used along with yellow and white karisilanganni, and hibiscus flowers to make hair oil

stead of toor dal, try channa dal. Or combine two varieties of greens and cook it with two dal varieties to get a new taste."

Gopuram thaangi (false water willow)

It is believed to purify the blood, remove bad cholesterol, and improve the health of the urinary tract. Sriram shares a tip: "An 85-year-old farmer in Pollachi attributes his good health to the greens. He drinks juice extracted from gopuram thaangi and vilva leaves along with panangkalkandu, every morning, without fail."

AS OLD AS TIME

Indigo was being used in India as early as 5,000 years ago to make deep blue dye. The word Indigo means 'the Indian' or 'from India'.

POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



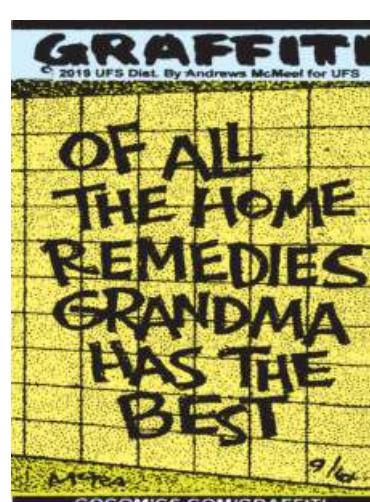
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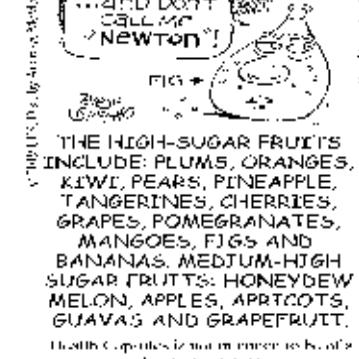
- 6 Lugubrious (6)
- 11 Leader of the slave revolt against Rome, 73BC (9)
- 13 Greek girl who unwisely challenged Athena and ended up as a spider (7)
- 14 Salon service (7)
- 15 Disease caused by vitamin D deficiency (7)
- 16 Take away by force (6)
- 18 Brilliant display – conspicuous success (5)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated September 7, 2019.
Solution No. 13166



HEALTH CAPSULES

By Bron Smith
WHAT FRUITS ARE HIGHEST IN SUGAR?



- (4) Across
- 1 Stopped briefly (6)
- 2 Demand as a right (5)
- 3 Chinese martial art (4,2)
- 4 Befitting (6)
- 5 Colliery (but not yours!) (4)
- 6 Volcano near Naples (8)
- 7 Uninvited guest (11)
- 8 Jewellery worn around the wrist (8)
- 9 Inform (7)
- (4) Down
- 10 Tilted in a particular direction (6)
- 11 Special delight (5)
- 12 In the existing circumstances (2,2,2)
- 13 Ambiguous (9)
- 14 Ionian holiday island (5)
- 15 Move by slow degrees (5)

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CM YK

Berrettini prevails over Monfils in a thrilling five-setter

To meet Nadal, who grinds out a win over Schwartzman; teenager Andreeva makes women's semifinals

US OPEN

REUTERS
NEW YORK

Big-serving Italian Matteo Berrettini took another step in his breakthrough season as he beat Frenchman Gael Monfils 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (5) at the U.S. Open on Wednesday to reach his first career Grand Slam semifinal.

In the other men's quarterfinals, Diego Schwartzman, the smallest player in 25 years to reach the last eight, gave Rafa Nadal a big fight and forced the second-seeded Spaniard to grind out a 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

Putting away the 13th-seeded Frenchman took everything that Berrettini had as Monfils, who struggled mightily with his serve late in the match, managed to see off four pressure-packed match points until the Italian finally prevailed.

"Right now I don't remember any points. Just the match point," Berrettini said on

court. "While I was playing I thought, this is one of the best matches I ever saw. I was playing, but I was watching also."

Big serves

Berrettini used booming serves and stinging forehands to overwhelm Monfils, who struggled with humid conditions in Arthur Ashe Stadium until shortly after the roof closed during the third set and brought in cooler temperatures.

In the decider, Berrettini broke twice for a 4-2 lead but a rejuvenated Monfils, who despite being bent over in exhaustion after many points, dug deep and raced around the court to fight off three match points to force a final-set tiebreak.

But Monfils ran out of tricks and it was Berrettini who leaned on his powerful serve to prevail and become the fourth Italian man to reach a Grand Slam semifinal in the Open Era.

Monfils was very efficient



Yesss! Matteo Berrettini gives vent to his feelings after thwarting Gael Monfils' comeback on Wednesday. ■ AP

in the first set and had an early 2-0 lead in the second but Berrettini took over and broke the fatigued Frenchman twice before ultimately firing down an ace to seal a

hold to love that levelled the match at 1-1.

Berrettini, the 24th seed, broke twice for a 5-2 lead and served out the third set, which was interrupted for

about five minutes when rain forced the closure of the roof.

Monfils, with his back firmly against the wall to start the fourth, suddenly looked full of energy and was bouncing

on his feet between points as he got a crucial break and won 88% of his first-serve points to force the decider.

For Berrettini, it marked the latest triumph in a season

in which the 23-year-old Italian won titles in Budapest and Stuttgart en route to a career-high ranking of 20th in June.

Staying on course

With Roger Federer and 2018 champion Novak Djokovic having already exited, Nadal's path to a fourth Open trophy has been cleared of familiar hurdles.

But Schwartzman reminded Nadal that danger can lurk everywhere, even from an opponent he had beaten in all seven previous meetings and only lost two sets.

That caution was well placed as Schwartzman made the 18-time Grand Slam winner work for every point, with the Argentine fighting back from two breaks down in the opening two sets.

In the women's section, Canadian teenager Bianca Andreescu came from behind to overpower Elise Mertens

3-6, 6-2, 6-3 and reach her first Grand Slam semifinal, against Belinda Bencic.

Match stats

Berrettini	Monfils
15	Aces 10
6	Double Faults 17
54	First Serve (%) 60
69	Net Points Won (%) 71
6/17	Break Points Won 5/15
53	Winners 41
64	Unforced Errors 51
165	Total Points Won 159
12.28	Distance Covered/pt (m) 13.35

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals:
Men: 24-Matteo Berrettini (Ita) bt 13-Gael Monfils (Fra) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6(5); 2-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt 20-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.
Women: 15-Bianca Andreescu (Can) bt 25-Elise Mertens (Bel) 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

Magnificent Smith seizes the day



England's nemesis: It was business as usual for Steve Smith on Thursday as the top-ranked Test batsman notched up his third career double ton. ■ RYAN PIERCE/GETTY IMAGES

THE ASHES

REUTERS
MANCHESTER

Steve Smith's domination of England's bowling attack in the Ashes series reached new heights on Thursday as his magnificent 211 (319b, 24x4, 2x6) led Australia to 497 for eight declared on the second day of the fourth Test at Old Trafford.

England lost opener Joe Denly for four, brilliantly caught by Matthew Wade at short leg after he fended off a rising delivery from Pat Cummins, to leave it struggling on 23 for one at the close.

But the day, in which Australia smelt again the chance of retaining the Ashes, was all about Smith and the 30-year-old's fine demonstration of the art of Test batting even as he enjoyed good fortune.

Reprises
Having made his third century of the series, Smith was on 118 when he was caught by Ben Stokes off left-arm spinner Jack Leach. Unfortu-

nately for the host, joy turned to despair when video officials deemed Leach had delivered a no-ball.

Earlier, Smith had had a lucky escape when Jofra Archer dropped a caught and bowled chance.

England had come into this match in buoyant mood but minute by minute, over by over and run by run, Smith drained away its self-belief.

His 145-run sixth-wicket stand with captain Tim Paine (58) and Mitchell Starc's blistering unbeaten 54 put Australia firmly in control.

SCOREBOARD

Australia – 1st innings: Marcus Harris lbw b Broad 13, David Warner c Bairstow b Broad 0, Marnus Labuschagne b Overton 67, Steve Smith c Denby b Root 211, Travis Head lbw b Broad 19, Matthew Wade c Root b Leach 16, Tim Paine c Bairstow b Overton 58, Pat Cummins c Stokes b Leach 4, Mitchell Starc (not out) 54, Nathan Lyon (not out) 26; Extras (b-8, lb-14, w-3, nb-4); 29; Total (for eight wkts. decl. in 126 overs) 497.

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

England bowling: Broad 25-2-97-3, Archer 27-3-97-0, Stokes 10.5-0-66-0, Leach 26.1-3-83-2, Overton 28-3-85-2, Denly 3-1-8-0, Root 6-0-39-1.

England – 1st innings: Rory Burns (batting) 15, Joe Denly c Wade b Cummins 4, Craig Overton (batting) 3; Extras (nb-1); 1; Total (for one wkt. in 10 overs) 23.

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

Australia bowling: Starc 2-2-0, Hazlewood 4-1-3-0, Cummins 3-0-10-1, Lyon 1-0-10-0.

None of England's seamers nor Leach were able to seriously trouble Smith and in the end, with the third double century of his Test career – the previous two also came against England – in the bag, he fell to the occasional spin of captain Joe Root.

As Smith headed back to the pavilion, there were still a smattering of now tiresome boos from England fans, recalling his 12-month ban for his role in a ball-tampering affair, but most at Old Trafford stood in appreciation.

SCOREBOARD

Australia – 1st innings: Marcus Harris lbw b Broad 13, David Warner c Bairstow b Broad 0, Marnus Labuschagne b Overton 67, Steve Smith c Denby b Root 211, Travis Head lbw b Broad 19, Matthew Wade c Root b Leach 16, Tim Paine c Bairstow b Overton 58, Pat Cummins c Stokes b Leach 4, Mitchell Starc (not out) 54, Nathan Lyon (not out) 26; Extras (b-8, lb-14, w-3, nb-4); 29; Total (for eight wkts. decl. in 126 overs) 497.

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

England bowling: Broad 25-2-97-3, Archer 27-3-97-0, Stokes 10.5-0-66-0, Leach 26.1-3-83-2, Overton 28-3-85-2, Denly 3-1-8-0, Root 6-0-39-1.

England – 1st innings: Rory Burns (batting) 15, Joe Denly c Wade b Cummins 4, Craig Overton (batting) 3; Extras (nb-1); 1; Total (for one wkt. in 10 overs) 23.

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

Australia bowling: Starc 2-2-0, Hazlewood 4-1-3-0, Cummins 3-0-10-1, Lyon 1-0-10-0.

Abhimanyu puts Red in command

His unbeaten hundred takes the team close to Green's total

DULEEP TROPHY

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Abhimanyu Easwaran (102 batting, 173b, 11x4, 2x6) pushed India Red close to India Green's first-innings total on the second day of their Duleep Trophy final at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Thursday.

Abhimanyu displayed a wide array of shots, dispatching the ball to all parts of the ground. The Bengal opener, who has struggled since making an exceptional 233 against Sri Lanka-A in May, came good in great style.

After reaching his 13th First Class century, Abhimanyu reached into his pocket and took out a 'Rakhi' thread. "That was dedicated to my sister, Pallavi," Easwaran said.

Abhimanyu explained that he once suffered from throwing away good starts, until he sought help. "I had a chat with (India-A coach) Rahul Dravid sir and my coach Apurva Desai. We decided that I needed to focus on the present.

"Earlier, if I was on 60, I would try to dominate and get out.

"It is important to stay focused on the present and



Back with a bang: Abhimanyu Easwaran found his touch to come up with a long innings. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

the match situation," he said.

Comfortable

Abhimanyu was comfortable against the pacers and spinners alike. He was especially strong off the back-foot, punching the quicks through the cover and point regions. When the slow bowlers came on, the 23-year-old either danced down the track or went deep into the crease.

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"Earlier, if I was on 60, I would try to dominate and get out.

"It is important to stay focused on the present and

reached his highest First Class score.

The scores:

India Green – 1st innings: Faiz Fazal lbw b Unadkat 12, Akash Reddy run out 16, Dhruv Shorey c Kishan b Warrier 23, Siddhesh Lad c Panchal b Unadkat 0, Akshdeep Nath c Panchal b Sarvate 29, Akshay Wadkar b Unadkat 6, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja c&b Avesh 15, Mayank Markande (not out) 76, Rajesh Mohanty c Kishan b Unadkat 0, Tanveer Ul-Haq b Warrier 18, Ankit Rajpoot c Sarvate b Avesh 39; Extras (nb-1, b-4, lb-1); 6; Total (in 72.1 overs): 231.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-53, 3-44, 4-65, 5-92, 6-99, 7-107, 8-112, 9-172.

India Red bowling: Unadkat 24-2-83-4, Warrier 17-3-39-2, Avesh 16.1-1-56-2, Sarvate 11-1-30-1, Wakhare 4-0-18-0.

India Red – 2nd innings: Priyank Panchal c Wadkar b Rajpoot 33, Abhimanyu Easwaran (batting) 102, Karun Nair b Markande 20, Ankit Kalsi (batting) 11; Extras (nb-7, w-2); 9; Total (for two wkts. in 52 overs): 175.

Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-126.

India Red bowling: Tanveer 12-2-35-0, Rajpoot 12-1-38-1, Mohanty 9-0-43-0, Jadeja 9-0-35-0, Markande 10-1-24-1.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG

Uncapped left-arm spinner George Linde was on Thursday named as replacement for all-rounder Jon-Jon Trevor Smuts in South Africa's squad for the three-match T20 International series against India, starting September 15.

Linde was drafted in after Smuts was pulled out of the squad for "failing to meet the required fitness stan-

dards", a CSA release said.

Linde has played 75 T20 matches so far, scoring 611 runs at a strike rate of 139.81. He also snapped up 77 wickets at a strike rate of 19.3.

The squad: Quinton de Kock (Capt.), Rassie van der Dussen (Vice-Capt.), Temba Bavuma, Junior Dala, Bjorn Fortuin, Beuran Hendricks, Reza Hendricks, David Miller, Anrich Nortje, Andile Phehlukwayo, Dwayne Pretorius, Kagiso Rabada, Tabraiz Shamsi and George Linde.

Mithali to lead in ODIs, Harmanpreet in T20s

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Mithali Raj will lead the India women's team in the ODI series at home against South Africa, the BCCI announced. Harmanpreet Kaur will lead Indian T20 squad for the first three matches in the six-match series.

The team was named by the All-India Women's Selection Committee, after a meeting at the Cricket Centre.

Harmanpreet will be Mithali's deputy in the ODIs, while Smriti Mandhana is vice-captain for the T20s.

The five T20s in the Paytm series against the tourists will be played under lights in Surat, while the 50-over format will be day

Kashish meets Preerna in last eight

Top seed Sai Samhitha wafts past Salsa Aher

ASIAN TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Kashish Bhatia, with impressive mobility and sharp strokes, overcame stiff resistance from the fifth seed Sonashe Bhatnagar for a 6-7(4), 6-3, 6-3 victory in the pre-quarterfinals of the Asian Tour women's tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex here on Thursday.

Behind her spectacles, Kashish hides her strong will. The heat and humidity did not deter her from playing a robust game right till the end, against an opponent who wilted after the energetic show in the first set, unable to match the intensity.

A student of Manav Sthali School, who trains with coach Ram Kashyap in Hari Nagar, Kashish will get a chance to gauge her game better in the quarterfinal against four-time national champion Preerna Bhambri, who has dropped only two games in her two matches so far. Preerna handled the challenge from Arthi Muniyan with poise, after having blanked Adrijja Biswas in the first round.

Top seed Sai Samhitha



Overcoming stiff resistance: Kashish Bhatia, who reached the quarterfinals on Thursday. ■ KAMESH SRINIVASAN

was fluent against the young Salsa Aher, who was hampered by a back strain. Sai will play left-hander Sara Yadav in the quarterfinals.

Second seed Vaidehi Chaudhari continued with her impressive ways and out-classed S.B. Apoorva for the loss of a solitary game. She will play Akanksha Nitture, who stopped an erratic Soha Sadiq in straight sets.

Yubarani Banerjee was

equally impressive in beating qualifier Ananya Bharava for the loss of five games. She will play Prathiba Narayan Prasad who had a tough outing against Vanashita Pathania.

With no umpires and ball boys, it has been rough for the players in the taxing weather. Some of the blatant line calls, which even shocked the roving umpires, did unsettle some players to

a great extent.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Sai Samhitha bt Salsa Aher 6-4, 6-0; Sara Yadav bt Priyanka Rodricks 6-3, 6-3; Preerna Bhambri bt Arthi Muniyan 6-0, 6-2; Kashish Bhatia bt Sonashe Bhatnagar 6-7(4), 6-3, 6-3; Prathiba Narayan Prasad bt Vanashita Pathania 7-5, 7-6(1).

Yubarani Banerjee bt Ananya Bharava 6-4, 6-1; Akanksha Nitture bt Soha Sadiq 6-4, 6-2; Vaidehi Chaudhari bt SB Apoorva 6-1, 6-0.

Eetee and her second innings

Former top-five player finds her calling in coaching

ANANT KAUR
NEW DELHI

Despite hailing from a small town, Patan, near Ahmedabad, and training on cement courts, Eetee Maheta was able to reach the top-5 of Indian women's tennis by sheer will power. However, a recurring knee injury ended her playing career early. As destiny closed one door, it opened another. Eetee is thrilled to stay connected with the game by becoming a coach at the age of 23 last year.

She plays her part in one of the best tennis centres in India, Altevol Academy in Ahmedabad, that has a tie up with the Alexander Waske Tennis University in Germany.

Eetee had been trained by coach Jignesh Raval, who has joined another prominent coach in Ahmedabad, Shrimil Bhatt, for the collaboration.

Right early in her coaching career, Eetee had the advantage of being part of a 15-member team that was based in Offenberg, Germany, for three months, which proved an eye opener.

In Delhi for the Asian Women's tennis tournament, and guiding one of the best players in the country Vaidehi Chaudhari, Eetee spoke to



Eetee Maheta.

The Hindu about the possibility of Indian women being regulars in the Grand Slam circuit in the next five to ten years.

"I used to see my brother Sameep, who later accompanied me as coach, play tennis and gradually developed interest. I used to practice on cement courts in MK Gymkhana.

"They made two synthetic courts in 2015," Eetee recalled.

Even though she reached the finals of singles and doubles in the international circuit, a title eluded Eetee.

She is confident that her players will win a number of titles, and take Indian women's tennis forward in the international arena.

CI used to see my brother Sameep, who later accompanied me as coach, play tennis and gradually developed interest

and mental toughness is the key to last in any sport. The players have the advantage these days with better financial support, world class coaches and fitness trainers. The training in Germany helped me understand that while we focus on rehab after injury, there are experts who prevent injury with strength and conditioning," Eetee said.

On asked why the breakthrough performance is late for Indian players, Eetee said, "the grassroots development of the Europeans are much stronger than us and physically they are better than us. We are working on it and soon we will see the results. Karman Kaur Thandi and Ankita Raina are doing well."

"I used to see my brother Sameep, who later accompanied me as coach, play tennis and gradually developed interest. I used to practice on cement courts in MK Gymkhana.

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the finals of singles and doubles in the international circuit, a title eluded Eetee.

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Tickets gone in a jiffy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JOHANNESBURG

South African tennis fans bought 48,000 tickets in under 10 minutes on Wednesday for a exhibition match next February between world superstars Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. The game at the Cape Town Stadium, built for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, is set to break the attendance record of 35,681 for a tennis match set by Kim Clijsters and Serena Williams in Brussels, 2010.

A spokeswoman for the organisers said the tickets were snapped up online and at ticket outlets. "We are overwhelmed by the enthusiastic reaction on our ticket sales and we sincerely thank you for the overwhelming support," said Janine Handel, chief executive of the Roger Federer Foundation.

"Lines were opened up by (online ticket sellers) Computicket at 0900 and within 10 minutes the tickets were sold."

Another crucial test awaits

National selection trials from today

SHOOTING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The strength of Indian shooting is in its vibrant domestic system. It may be hard on the rifle and pistol shooters, who have helped India top the medals table in all the four World Cups this season in Delhi, Beijing, Munich and Rifle, to be constantly kept under scrutiny but the system has invariably delivered.

It will be another crucial test for the shooters when the sixth and seventh national selection trials are conducted at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, from Friday, starting with men's air rifle.

While the trials, followed by the national training

camps for the shooters in Delhi and Bhopal, may keep them sharp for the Asian championship in Doha in November, which offers the last set of Olympic quota places for Tokyo 2020, it will also give chance for the rest to stake claim in to the national squad.

The best of shooters can retain their place in the national team only with constant good scores, and that has driven Indian shooting to greater heights this season, past the formidable Chinese.

To add to the interesting scenario, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has also announced that there would be a revised selection policy for next year. It would mean that the sixth and seventh trials scores will

form the basis for national selection, as against the regular practice of the National championship scores forming the base.

To this effect, the NRAI had even stretched the closing date of entries till the end of August, to ensure everyone eligible gets into the fold and stays in the race for national selection.

The men's air rifle, will be followed by women's air rifle, rapid fire pistol and the men's rifle 3-position events. It will be to the advantage of the shooters that they shoot the two trials back to back, and be done with it.

Women's sports pistol, men's air pistol and women's rifle 3-position events follow, before the conclusion with women's air pistol on September 17.

Raju – a force behind Manasi's triumph

The physio was instrumental in bringing the shuttler up to speed physically

BADMINTON

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

It was also a dream come true for the 32-year-old L. Raju, who played a significant role in the emergence Manasi Joshi – the specially challenged shuttler – as the 2019 Para World badminton women's singles champion in Basel (Switzerland) recently.

Himself a six-time gold medalist in the under-20 age group in 400m and relay events in junior National meets, Raju is a qualified physio – with degrees in Physical Education, NIS and yoga – and joined the Gopi Chand Academy four years ago.

"It was a different kind of challenge to train Manasi for

the last four months at the academy unlike regular athletes. Even the slightest mistake from my side can lead to serious complications," he said in a chat with *The Hindu*.

"Because of the accident, which saw her left leg amputated and a rod [placed] in her left fore-arm, I had to study her body structure for four weeks. I had to study her [physical] demands and how to go ahead with the conditioning.

Complex conditioning

"It was a complex conditioning programme even as badminton coach J. Rajendra Kumar took care of the skills part. To her credit, Manasi never complained though she suffered a lot of pain regularly. The best part was she

CIt was a different kind of challenge to train Manasi for the last four months at the academy unlike regular athletes

never gave up," said the trainer, who has also worked with the Hyderabad under-23 cricket team and is currently the team physio for the national badminton team too.

Raju could also empathise with Manasi as his sister is physically challenged and could accordingly programme a schedule with which she was happy during the two-hour grinding sessions.

"Since she didn't have knee support, we had to work a lot on strengthening to ensure proper balance in

The Kadapa-born physio couldn't go to the Worlds but he was on the job daily, prescribing the training programme depending on the opponent Manasi was scheduled to face.

"With Gopi sir there, it was easier for us," he added.

'Delighted'

"Though we didn't think about the gold, I always felt if she gave her best, she could come back with a medal.

"I am delighted with her gold," said Raju, who had to quit his athletics career for want of support.

"For me it is a dream phase to be associated with the academy and I am grateful to them for being so supportive to my ideas," he added.



Manasi Joshi with L. Raju. ■ V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

the whole body. It was never easy for her," said Raju.

Noah Lyles eyes Diamond League double

Would be the ideal preparation for the World championships

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

US sprint sensation Noah Lyles will look to bag a second Diamond League trophy when he competes in the 200 metres in the Brussels final on Friday.

The 22-year-old went to last week's first final in Zurich and pipped American teammate and current world champion Justin Gatlin to win the 100m.

A shot at a second discipline victory offers Lyles a perfect chance to notch up a psychological booster ahead of the September 27-October 6 World Championships in Doha.

Lyles will go into the 200m as favourite, having clocked 19.50sec in Lausanne last month, a time

that made him the fourth fastest of all time over the half-lap race.

The meet record of 19.26sec was set in 2011 by Jamaican Yohan Blake. It remains the fastest time ever run over the 200m after Usain Bolt's World record of 19.19sec set in 2009.

Bolt went to last week's first final in Zurich and pipped American Walter Dix ran 19.53sec behind Blake in 2011 and Bolt himself has clocked a 19.57sec at the stadium, where there have been an impressive 23 sub-20sec performances in the 200m.

The field for the 200m also features World and European champion Ramil Guliyev of Turkey, as well as Canada's Andre De Grasse and Ecuador's Alex Quinonez.



Looking ahead: Kagiso Rabada reckons that having played in India would help him in tough situations. ■ AFP

Uzbekistan prevents India's 'golden sweep'

Host bags 15 out of 16 titles

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

As expected, the Indian domination swept 15 out of 16 gold medals at stake in the rapid section of the inaugural Western Asian Youth chess championship here on Thursday.

In all, out of the 48 medals, India claimed 43.

The only gold that eluded the host was in the under-18 open section where Uzbekistan's Mukhammadali Durakmonov's effort prevented a 'golden sweep' for India.

Even as the host collected 15 gold, and 14 silver and bronze medals, Uzbekistan was second with a lone gold, followed by Bangladesh and Tajikistan with a silver each.

Under-10: 1. Daaevik Wadhwani (6), 2. Krupal Wanjar (5.5), 3. Arun Daakshin (5).

Under-12: 1. Gaurang Bagwe (6.5), 2. Sahib Singh (5.5), 3. Shaik Sumer Arsh (5).

Under-14: 1. R. Abhinandan (6), 2. Aditya Gampa (5), 3. Nikhil Magizhnan (5).

Under-16: 1. V. Jayachandra (5.5), 2. Anees Mohammad (5.5), 3. Abilmansur Abdulkhair (Kaz), 5.

Under-18: 1. Mukhammadali Abdurakhmonov (Uzb), 5.5, 2. Srijit Paul (5), Arjun Gupta (5);

Under-20: 1. Sankalp Gupta (6), 2. Rahul Srivastav (5.5), 3. Any Shrivastav (5.5).

Girls: **Under-6:** 1. Diya Sawal (7), 2. Geethika Ramadugu (6), 3. Srijita Das (5).

Under-8: 1. Meenakshi Kolagatla (6.5), 2. Khusbu Warsia (Ban), 3. Tasha Agarwal (5)

Under-10: 1. Sachi Jain (6.5), 2. Hiya Panchal (6.5), 3. Suguna Kukreja (5).

Under-12: 1. G. Tejaswini (6), 2. K. Rathnapiya (5.5), 3. Cera Dagarla (5.5).

Under-14: 1. Shivika Rohilla (6), 2. Sabrina Abrorova (Tjk), 5.5, 3. Sarayu Valpula (5.5).

Under-16: 1. Bristy Mukherjee (6), 2. Vyshnavi Chinnam (5.5), 3. Deewethme Dhampariya (Sri), 5.

Under-18: 1. K. Priyanka (6.5), 2. L. Jyothsna (5.5), 3. Srishti Pandey (5).

Under-20:</b

TV PICKS

India-A vs South Africa-A: Fifth unofficial ODI, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
Bangladesh vs Afghanistan: Only Test, Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Duleep Trophy: (final), Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
The Ashes: 4th Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
Sri Lanka vs New Zealand: Third T20I, Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
US Open: Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m.

Mysuru races cancelled

MYSURU: The Stewards of the Mysore Race Club decided to cancel Thursday's (Sept. 5) races due to overnight rains rendering the race track not conducive for racing.

Only the postponed H.M. Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar Memorial Trophy will be held on September 11 (Wednesday). The declaration for this race shall hold good.

TN boys stun Uttar Pradesh

SPORTS BUREAU
CUTTACK

Tamil Nadu boys came back from behind to upset defending champion Uttar Pradesh 77-69 in the sub-junior national basketball championship here on Thursday.

Important results (league):

Boys: Punjab 64 (Akhil Kumar 17) bt Andhra Pradesh 45 (Yuvraj Singh 16); Chandigarh 58 (Ajay 13) bt Kerala 56 (V. Vishnu 12, Aswin Krishna 12); Chhattisgarh 61 (Sanju 23, Sujal Yadav 14) bt Karnataka 48 (Melinid Sahoo 16); Madhya Pradesh 45 (Goutam Pal 12, Chiragh Singh Rathore 10) bt Himachal Pradesh 15; Mizoram 58 (E.M. Easter 12, Johan Lal 12) bt Delhi 18; Rajasthan 62 (Anurag Singh 16, Harsh Sharma 16) bt Punjab 50 (Rupansh Garg 19, Jaadu Maan 17); Tamil Nadu 77 (Abhymanyu 23, Ravikiran 13, Harsh Aravind 12) bt Uttar Pradesh 69 (Deepanshu Yadav 17, Himeshnu 13); Odisha 94 (Sreyansh Panda 28, Upasak Mohanty 11) bt Puducherry 26.

Girls: Tamil Nadu 84 (J. Anitha 25) bt Delhi 45 (Reha 10); Uttar Pradesh 86 (Anushka Rathore 27, Deepika Nayak 10) bt Rajasthan 44 (Anita Banjara 19); Chandigarh 31 (Mandira 14) bt Utarkhand 14; Karnataka 38 (Yashaswini 13) bt Haryana 24; Himachal Pradesh 32 bt Bihar 8; West Bengal 53 (Juhu 10) bt Puducherry 18.

Prajnesh in quarterfinals

SPORTS BUREAU

JINAN (CHINA)

Top seed Prajnesh Gunneswaran set up a quarterfinal against the seventh seed go Soeda of Japan, with a 6-4, 7-6(3) victory over Tung-Lin Wu of Chinese Taipei in the \$162,480 Challenger tennis tournament here on Thursday.

Other results:

\$162,480 Challenger, Jinan, China: **Doubles (quarterfinals):** Matthew Ebden (Aus) & Divij Sharan bt Pedja Krstic (Srb) & Aira Santilan (Aus) 6-1, 6-4; Saketh Myneni & Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan bt Hiroki Oriya (Jpn) & Goncalo Oliveira (Por) 7-5, 6-2.

€46,600 Challenger, Cassis, France: Doubles (quarterfinals): Quentin Halys & Tristan Lamasine (Fra) bt Evgeny Karlovskiy (Rus) & Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-3, 6-2.

\$15,000 ITF men, Hua Hin, Thailand: **Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Sidharth Rawat bt Kelsey Stevenson (Can) 6-3, 7-5; Nitin Kumar Sinha bt Cheng-Yu Yu (Tpe) 3-6, 6-4, 5-2 (retd.).

\$60,000 ITF women, Changsha, China: **Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Nina Stojanovic (Srb) bt Rutuja Bhosale 7-6(2), 6-2. **Doubles (quarterfinals):** Jessy Rompies (Ina) & Prarthana Thombare bt Hanyu Guo (Chn) & Aldila Sutjiadi (Ina) 6-4, 6-3; Erika Sema (Jpn) & Rutuja Bhosale w/o Fatima Al Nabhan (Oma) & Angelina Gabueva (Rus).

\$15,000 ITF women, Tabarka, Tunisia: **Doubles (quarterfinals):** Nadia Echeverria Alam (Ven) & Anna Popescu (GBR) bt Coralie Garrigues (Fra) & Likhitha Kalava 6-3, 6-3.

Disappointing day at Indian GP

Most disciplines barely had enough participants to even qualify for competition

ATHLETICS

UTHRA GANESAN
PATIALA

Arpinder Singh was unrecognisable to even his coach, Dutee Chand ran a three-legged race and Archana Sudrendran had a false start. The three were among those the Athletics Federation of India was banking on to increase the size of its contingent for the World Championships at the final qualifying event here on Thursday.

The sixth leg of the Indian Grand Prix, though, was even more disappointing than last week. Except for the men's javelin throw, most disciplines barely had enough participants to even qualify for competition. The women's 200m had four – two did not start and Archana fouled, leaving Anjali Devi to run a solo race!

The women's 100m had five, with two DNS. In 400m, Sarita Ben Gayakwad pulled up halfway through in a field of four. Javelin had only two.

In triple jump, coach Anthony Yaiach was blunt enough to say he didn't recognise Arpinder. "In testing through the weekend, he was fantastic. Yesterday and today, he was horrible. I have no idea what happened."

Arpinder's best was a 16.35m, almost half a metre short of even his performance (16.83m) last week!

Murali Sreeshankar though stayed true to his recent form with a 7.79m jump but the surprise was Sahil



True to form: Murali Sreeshankar won the long jump with 7.79m.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mahabali from Haryana, who jumped the same but had two fouls to push him to second spot.

Focus on relay

In the process, the entire focus was on the men's 4x400m relay side that had made a mockery the process last week. With Alex Anthony yet to recover from a pulled hamstring, K.S. Jeevan replaced him in the squad but was the weakest link in the quartet.

The team clocked 3:03.68 but stayed on course for the Worlds. However, what would concern the AFI would be the individual timings of the side with the ride of relay squad composition nowhere near

resolution when the AFI selection committee meets on September 9.

The results: Men: **100m:** 1. Kush Kumar (11.48s), 2. Abhishek Chaudhary (11.67s), 3. Nikhil Rahangdale (12.19s); **200m:** Anjali Devi (23.44s), 2. Archana Sudrendran (FS); **400m:** 1. Revathi (53.63s), 2. Aishwarya Mishra (54.72s), 3. Payal Vohra (57.51s); **1500m:** 1. Lili Das (4:19.77), 2. W.K.L. Arachchi Ni-mali (4:25.86), 3. K.M. Deeksha (4:46.89); **3000m steeple-chase:** 1. Sudha Singh (10:00.66), 2. Chinta Yadav (11:11.67), 3. Preenu Yadav (11:32.63); **Long jump:** 1. M. Sreeshankar (7.79m), 2. Sahil Mahabali (7.79m), 3. Samit Singh (7.51m); **Pole vault:** 1. Prashant Kumar Kanhaiya (4.90m), 2. Dhirendra Kumar (4.60m), 3. Gourav (4.50m); **Triple jump:** 1. U. Karthik (16.69m), 2. Arpinder Singh (16.35m), 3. Mohd. Salahuddin (16.33m); **Javelin:** 1. Sharmila Kumari (50.40m), 2. K.M. Saloni (46.78m).

Arpinder Singh was unrecognisable to even his coach, Dutee Chand ran a three-legged race and Archana Sudrendran had a false start. The three were among those the Athletics Federation of India was banking on to increase the size of its contingent for the World Championships at the final qualifying event here on Thursday.

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Murali Sreeshankar though stayed true to his recent form with a 7.79m jump but the surprise was Sahil

played fluently to bring up their fifty-run stand for the second wicket.

Shikhar Dhawan in particular was in ominous touch and scored boundaries regularly to punish the wayward South African bowling here on Thursday.

Rut begins

The rut began when Prashant Chopra (26) flicked Lutho Sipamla straight to Anrich Nortje at fine leg. Dhawan left soon after completing his fifty, feathering a catch to wicketkeeper Siyambe Qeshile off Marco Jansen.

However, Shivam Dube (31) and captain Shreyas Iyer (26) added 51 runs briskly for the fourth wicket to put India-A in command.

But man-of-the-match Anrich Nortje in his second spell dismissed both the batsmen in the same over to give South Africa hope. Both batsmen fell to attacking shots and in the process exposed the lower order.

Strong return

Sipamla, who bore the brunt of the attack from Dube and Shreyas, came back strongly

and induced an edge from Sanju Samson (1) which was brilliantly held by Qeshile. Nitish Rana (1) also flattered to deceive and threw his wicket away.

Marco Jansen then dismissed Washington Sundar (7) and Tushar Deshpande (0)



Top notch bowling: Anrich Nortje dismissed Shivam Dube and Shreyas Iyer (26) in the same over to give South Africa hope.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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IN BRIEF



New video marks Freddie Mercury's birthday

LONDON

A new video animation featuring two white blood cells in love was released on Thursday to mark what would have been Freddie Mercury's 73rd birthday and help raise awareness of the continued global fight against AIDS. The British singer died in 1991 due to complications from AIDS. The animation features his track *Love Me Like There's No Tomorrow*. REUTERS



Crazy Rich Asians co-writer leaves sequel

LOS ANGELES

Crazy Rich Asians co-writer Adele Lim has quit the sequel of the film over a pay parity dispute, according to U.S. media reports. Ms. Lim, a veteran TV writer, who was hired to work on the screenplay of the film alongside co-writer Peter Chiaroelli of *The Proposal*, fame, did not agree with the higher fee that Mr. Chiaroelli was getting for the job, said the *Hollywood Reporter*. PTI



Larson's next book is on Nazi blitz of London

NEW YORK

Erik Larson's next book, *The Splendid and the Vile*, is set during the Nazi bombing of London in 1940-41. It is set to hit the stands in March. He is drawing upon everything from the diary of Mary Churchill, daughter of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, to intelligence reports and other materials only recently declassified. AP



Camila Cabello returns with double release

LOS ANGELES

Singer Camila Cabello of *Havana* fame says her songs from her second solo album *Romance* narrate the story of her life. Ms. Cabello came out with singles *Shameless* and *Liar* on Thursday. She also released a video directed by Henry Scholfield. IANS

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning writer Kiran Nagarkar dies at 77

His novels offered biting humour and complex insights into human nature

GAURI VIJ
MUMBAI

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning writer Kiran Nagarkar has died at the age of 77. He suffered a brain haemorrhage on September 2 and breathed his last on September 5.

Like several writers and artists of his generation, Nagarkar began his career as an educationist, a journalist and then later as a screen-play writer in the advertising industry. His advertisement campaigns with close friend and poet Arun Kolatkar were considered path-breaking.

Nagarkar wrote his first book *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* in 1974 in his mother tongue, Marathi. Its English translation (*Seven Sixes are Forty Three*) was published in 1980 and then re-released in 2017 as a paperback version by Harper Collins.

It was his second novel, *Ravan and Eddie* (1994) about two unlikely protagonists, which cemented Nagarkar's position as a post-colonial Indian writer. Now a cult classic, it is widely acknowledged as a layered, comic masterpiece about life in a city chawl and one of the best novels written about Mumbai. Later, two more books formed the *Ravan and Eddie* trilogy: *The Extras* (2012) and *Rest in Peace* (2015).

His historical fiction, *Cuckold* (1997), for which he was awarded the 2001 Sahitya Akademi Award in English firmly established Nagarkar's reputation as a novelist unafraid to tackle politics, bigotry and extremism. *Cuckold's* protagonist is the unknown spouse of the 16th century poet-saint Meera, whose love songs to the god Krishna are part of Indian folklore and musical tradition.



Kiran Nagarkar. ■ FILE PHOTO

1942 - 2019

Long literary career

Through the 45 years of his literary career, Nagarkar struggled with acceptance from Marathi audiences. In a column for *Outlook* in 2001, he wrote, "What both the English and the vernacular press share is a lack of discrimination. They dare not trust their own judgement

since they've no critical standards. For those who speak English in India and are westernised, and that includes many of our critics, the sun rises and sets in the west. If the west approves it, it must be good. In the regional languages, safety and security often lie at the other extreme; in parochialism and the bogey of safeguarding our culture."

In 2018, Nagarkar spoke out at public meetings and through newspaper columns about the importance of running a robust public transport system in regard to the beleaguered BEST. In an open letter to the then Municipal Commissioner, Ajay Mehta, the writer didn't hold back any punches when he wrote, "...almost every major city in the world public transportation has always been subsidised. That's the

only way the poorest of the poor who live in slums as well as those who belong to the lowest rungs of the middle class can afford to travel to work."

In October 2018, Nagarkar found himself part of the Indian #MeToo storm that was engulfing social media posts at the time.

Three women journalists alleged on Twitter (one of these accounts was anonymous) that he had behaved inappropriately with them on separate occasions.

Nagarkar issued a statement denying the allegations. He said, "Forgive me for not responding earlier to the women journalists who have accused me of sexual impropriety on Twitter. The news came as a complete shock to me. It took me time to try and digest the tweets. I unequivocally deny these allegations of sexual impropriety which go against the heart of my character and everything I stand for. I have never engaged in any such behaviour with anyone."

The fallout of the allegations was felt when Penguin Random House cancelled its contract for the writer's latest book about Kabir, titled *The Arsonist*. Later, Juggernaut Books stepped in as his new publisher and the book was released in June this year.

Nagarkar is survived by his partner of several decades, Tulsi Vatsal.

Off to school



Royal welcome: Helen Haslem, head of the lower school greeting Britain's Princess Charlotte as she arrives for her first day of school with her parents, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, at Thomas's Battersea in London on Thursday. ■ AARON CHOWN/GETTY IMAGES

Numbers of 400 mn FB users exposed: report

Dataset has now been taken down

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Phone numbers linked to more than 400 million Facebook accounts were listed online in the latest privacy lapse for the social media giant, U.S. media reports have said.



half of the reported 419 million.

"The data has been taken down and we have seen no evidence that Facebook accounts were compromised," a Facebook spokesperson said. Following the 2018 Cambridge Analytica scandal, when a firm used Facebook's lax privacy settings to access millions of users' personal details, the company disabled a feature that allowed users to search the platform by phone numbers.

The databases listed Facebook user IDs – unique digits attached to each account, the profiles' phone numbers, as well as the gender listed by some accounts and their geographical locations, *TechCrunch* said.

The server was not password-protected, meaning anyone could access the databases and remained online until late Wednesday.

Facebook confirmed parts of the report but downplayed the extent of the exposure, saying that the number of accounts so far confirmed was around

Tokyo 2020 organisers to test fake snow

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Tokyo 2020 Olympic chiefs have already rolled out everything from misting stations to flowerbeds to beat the heat at next year's games, and now they want to let it snow.

Organisers confirmed on Thursday that they plan to test the use of artificial snow at a canoe event later this month as they look for novel ways to keep spectators and athletes cool during Tokyo's notoriously steamy summer months.

"Artificial snow will be sprayed over spectator seating," some of which may be in direct sunlight, during a canoeing event on September 13 that will serve as a test for the Olympics, a spokeswoman for Tokyo 2020 said.

"We haven't decided definitely that we will use this system next year for the Olympics, but we want to test it to see how effective it is," she said. "We're open to trying all potentially useful ideas," she added, when asked about possible criticism of the environmental side-effects of the method.

The snow-making machines could produce a tonne of material per day.

Copy cat: China clones its first kitten

Pet owners are ready to shell out \$35,000 to \$53,000 to duplicate cats and dogs

SUI-LEE WEE
BEIJING

Garlic was dead, and there was nothing Huang Yu could do. So on a cold winter day, he buried his cat's body in a park close to his home.

Hours later, still heartbroken, the 22-year-old businessman recalled an article he had read on dog cloning in China. What if someday he could bring Garlic back to life?

"In my heart, Garlic is irreplaceable," said Mr. Huang, who dug up the cat and put it in his refrigerator in preparation for cloning him.

Mr. Huang approached Si-



Here to stay: China's first cloned kitten. ■ AFP

nogene, a commercial pet-cloning company based in Beijing. Roughly \$35,000 (R25 lakh) and seven months later, Sinogene produced

what China's official news media declared to be the country's first cloned cat – and another sign of the country's emergence as a power in cloning and genetics.

It also suggests that China could turn pet cloning into a viable business. Duplicating dogs and cats has not really

taken off in the United States and elsewhere, experts say. Pet-obsessed China might be different. The size of China's domestic pet market is expected to reach \$28.2 billion this year, up nearly one-fifth from 2018, according to Gouminwang, a pet consultancy in Beijing. The country already has 55 million pet dogs

and 44 million pet cats, and demand for cats is accelerating.

Pet cloning is not confined to China – Barbra Streisand famously declared last year that two of her dogs are clones – and people have been cloning cats for years.

But Garlic is the first cat cloned by China, solidifying its position among major cloning nations, which include the United States, Britain and South Korea.

Mr. Jidong, Sinogene's chief executive, said the company decided to start cloning pets in 2015 after conducting a survey of roughly 1,000 people that showed there was demand.

The company has cloned more than 40 dogs at a cost of about \$53,000 each (R38 lakh). NY TIMES

Fashion influencer Ferragni steals the show

Fans thronged Venice to see her

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
VENICE

The longest queues at the Venice film festival have not been to see Hollywood stars like Brad Pitt or Scarlett Johansson.

Instead the most hysterical fans were those who thronged the Lido dreaming of a selfie with Chiara Ferragni, the fashion influencer who has become rich selling clothes and her starry you-can-have-it-all lifestyle on Instagram.

Hundreds were turned away from screenings of a new Amazon Prime documentary, *Chiara Ferragni – Unposted*, about her remarkable rise.

"You will never understand our love for her," said Angela Fozzi, 24, who had made the long trip from Milan to see her and waited outside the cinema till 1 a.m. in the hope of a chance encounter.

"She is the greatest role model for women in the world," the supermarket cashier said.

"She did it all herself. All she had was her smartphone and determination. She is an inspiration for

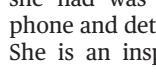


Chiara Ferragni

women and we are so proud she is Italian," she added. Ms. Ferragni told screaming fans that this "was one of the greatest days of my life" when she briefly appeared on stage late on Wednesday before a screening in a black Dior haute couture gown.

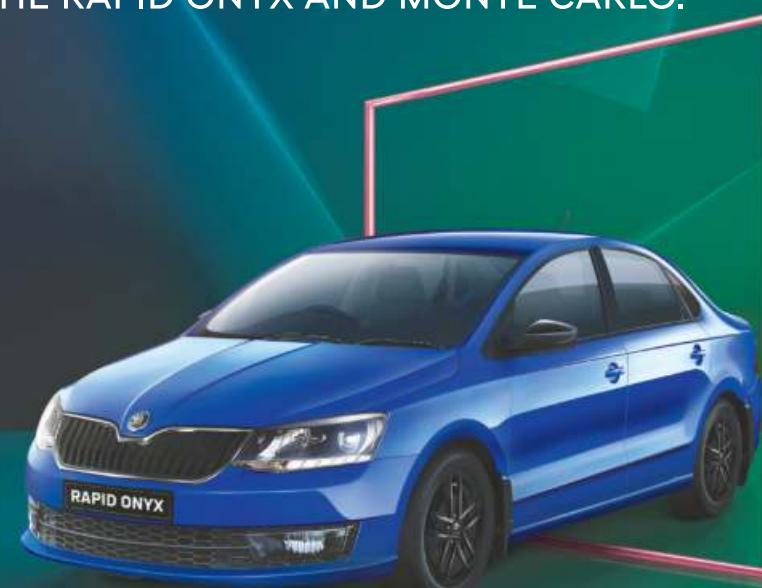
Earlier she had posted a video of herself weeping uncontrollably at the film screening to her 17.2 million Instagram followers.

Such is Ms. Ferragni's appeal that her wildly lavish three-day wedding ceremony last year in Sicily, where she tied the knot with Italian rapper Fedez, reportedly made more of a splash online than the British royal wedding of Prince Harry and American actor Meghan Markle.



DRIVE HOME YOUR REASON TO KEEP CELEBRATING.

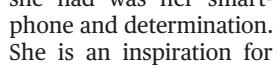
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