

## NEARBY



Vadra says ED engaging in a witch-hunt

NEW DELHI  
 Robert Vadra on Saturday said the Enforcement Directorate's action against him amounted to relentless harassment, terming the attachment of his company's assets a "witch-hunt".

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

Time is Running Out! GO FOR 10 RED BOOKLETS for GS PRE = Score Shot CLEAR GS PRELIMS 2019  
 crackIAS.com Enter your 100% For will be back.  
 9217070707 crackiasquery@gmail.com

## INSIDE

## SECTION 1

5Ws – Explainer ▶ PAGE 12

ColumnWidth ▶ PAGE 13

Science & Technology ▶ PAGE 14

Being ▶ PAGE 15

Non-Fiction ▶ PAGE 16

SECTION 2

Framed ▶ PAGE 485

Despatches ▶ PAGE 6

Business Abroad ▶ PAGE 8

Open Page ▶ PAGE 9

SECTION 2 ▶ 10 PAGES

MAGAZINE ▶ 8 PAGES

LITERARY REVIEW ▶ 4 PAGES

(IN SELECT AREAS)

CLASSIFIEDS ▶ PAGE 4 & 6

# We stand united, says all-party resolution on Pulwama attack

Meeting chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh condemns cross-border terror

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI



Hand of support: Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman consoling the relatives of a CRPF jawan in Tiruchi. ■ M. MOORTHY

Political parties at an all-party meeting, chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh, on Saturday unanimously adopted a resolution to condemn the Pulwama terror attack and asserted that the entire country not only stands in solidarity with the security forces in fighting terror but also speaks in one voice.

Opposition parties also urged the Home Minister to ensure that Kashmiri people residing elsewhere in the country were not targeted because of the terror strike.

Mr. Singh assured the leaders that the government "will not allow social harmony to be disturbed at any cost and will act even if anyone, even from his party, tries to incite people."

**'Discuss next move'**  
 Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad told the meeting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should immediately call the presidents of all major national and regional parties to discuss India's

next move on the issue. The same demand was made by Sudeep Bandopadhyay and Derek O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress and D. Raja of the CPI. "We condemn terrorism in all forms and the support being given to it from across the border. India has, during the past three decades, faced the menace of cross-border terrorism. Of late, terrorism in India is being actively encouraged by the forces from across the border," read the resolution without

mentioning Pakistan.

"India has displayed both firmness and resilience in dealing with these challenges. The entire nation speaks in one voice to express its determination to fight these challenges. Today, we stand united in solidarity with our security forces in fighting terrorism and in defending the unity and integrity of India," it added.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10  
 CENTRE MOVES TO RESTORE CALM IN JAMMU ▶ PAGE 11

CBI and asked the agency to "look into it."

**Step down: Opposition**  
 The development prompted Opposition parties to demand that Mr. Kumar resign in order to "face the probe."

Hearing a petition filed by

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

## Court tells CBI to look at plaint against Nitish Kumar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 PATNA

A special court in Bihar on Saturday sent a petition seeking a probe against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and other officials in the case of abuse of 34 minor girls in a Muzaffarpur shelter to the

police. The development prompted Opposition parties to demand that Mr. Kumar resign in order to "face the probe."

Hearing a petition filed by

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

PARLE

PLATINA

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

Ashwani Kumar, a self-

styled medical practitioner, is accused of injecting the girls of the shelter home with sedatives before they were subjected to sexual abuse. He was arrested in November 2018.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

TM

NEW

Ashwani Kumar, an accused in the case, the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Muzaffarpur directed that the petition be sent to the CBI's Superintendent of Police in Patna.

## IN BRIEF



## Hike in margin money to fair price shops cleared

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi Cabinet approved the proposed hike in margin money paid to fair price shop owners, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Imran Hussain said on Saturday. The government had earlier increased the margin money while implementing the electronic point of sale (e-POS) system in the ration shops. But, with the use of e-POS being suspended last year, the ration dealers were not getting the higher rate.

STAFF REPORTER

	Delhi	Gurugram	Ghaziabad	Faridabad	Noida	Greater Noida
Air Quality Index at 4 P.M. Yesterday (Average of Past 24 Hours)	276	180	309	266	269	302
Good	276	180	309	266	269	302
Poor	276	180	309	266	269	302
Very poor	276	180	309	266	269	302
Moderate	276	180	309	266	269	302
Severe	276	180	309	266	269	302
>400	276	180	309	266	269	302

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

## Man arrested for wife's death

NEW DELHI  
A man has been arrested for allegedly pushing his wife to end her life in north-east Delhi's Welcome, the police said on Saturday. The accused was arrested on February 15 after a case was registered based on an inquest conducted by the SDM of Shahdara, they said. PTI

STAFF REPORTER

## Those elected forced to beg in front of the defeated'

Kejriwal expresses concern over ongoing protest by Puducherry Chief Minister

## STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI  
Sharing his concern over the ongoing protest by Puducherry Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy, Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday asked why Delhi and Puducherry voters were "inferior to other States".

The Puducherry Chief Minister's dharna outside Raj Niwas continued for a fourth day, while Puducherry Lieu-

## NOCs of 27 more hotels cancelled for flouting norms

Comes a day after licences of 30 Karol Bagh hotels were revoked

## STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi government announced the cancellation of the no-objection certificates of 30 Karol Bagh hotels for flouting fire safety norms, Home Minister Satyendar Jain on Saturday said another 27 hotels' NOCs were revoked for violating rules.

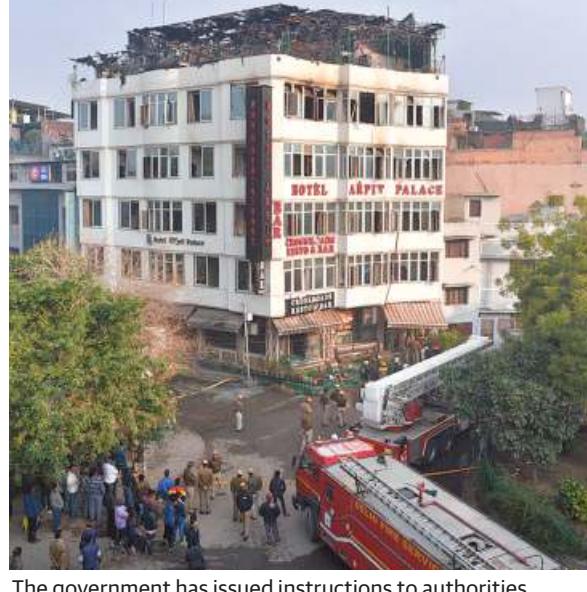
The drive, which started after a fire at Hotel Arpit Palace in Karol Bagh that killed 17 people on February 12, had led to a total of 57 hotels losing their NOCs from the fire department.

"Yesterday another 27 hotels NOC canceled. In all NOC of 57 hotels out of 80 inspected are canceled. All of them will be closed. [sic]," Mr. Jain said in a tweet on Saturday.

The fire department, during their inspection which began on Wednesday, said it found that 13 out of 23 hotels assessed by it were violating fire safety norms. The following day, 17 hotels out of 22 were found to be violating fire safety rules.

Thirty of them were found to be flouting fire safety norms in one way or another leading to the cancellation of their fire safety certification, he said.

Mr. Jain had added that the said drive, to identify er-



The government has issued instructions to authorities concerned to act against errant establishments.

R.V. MOORTHY: FILE PHOTO

Yesterday another 27 hotels NOC canceled. In all NOC of 57 hotels out of 80 inspected are canceled. All of them will be closed. [sic]

SATYENDRA JAIN  
Home Minister

rant hotels across the Capital and take action against them, would intensify and continue to prevent the recurrence of similar fire incidents.

"We have written to the municipal corporation and the police to take further action and seal the erring establishments," Mr. Jain had said.

In its report the DFS stated that the hotel management in the case of the Hotel Arpit Palace tragedy was found using carpets and having walls covered with wooden material, which fuelled the flames, the Minister said. A magisterial inquiry into the incident is ongoing, he had added.

rant hotels across the Capital and take action against them, would intensify and continue to prevent the recurrence of similar fire incidents.

"We have written to the municipal corporation and the police to take further action and seal the erring estab-

lishments," Mr. Jain had said.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob Bharadwaj said in a tweet on Saturday that if the Congress came out in support of its CM in Puducherry, then Mr. Kejriwal would be proved right. He alleged that this was the reason that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had "stopped" paying attention to the protest.

While the AAP has been at loggerheads with the L-G in Delhi, the Congress has hit out against Mr. Kejriwal over the tussle.

APB spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurob

## IN BRIEF



Fire at Delhi High Court canteen; no casualties

NEW DELHI

A minor fire broke out at the canteen of the Delhi High Court on Saturday, the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) said. A call about the blaze was received at 1.30 p.m. after which four fire tenders were rushed to the spot, a senior DFS officer said. The fire broke out in the chimney of the canteen. The blaze was brought under control by 1.50 p.m., he said, adding that no injury or death was reported. PTI

## Man shot at in Rohini, accused on the run

NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old man from Mangolpuri was shot at allegedly by another man in Rohini's Aman Vihar in the small hours of Saturday, the police said. The victim, Sanjay, who sustained an injury in the leg was attending an engagement ceremony when he entered into a quarrel with Devender Kumar. Following this, Devender shot at him. A case on charges of attempt to murder has been registered and teams are looking for the accused, the police added.

# Teenager gang-raped by friend, four others

Three, including acquaintance, held; two others on the run

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 16-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by five men in west Delhi's Rajouri Garden in the first week of January, the police said on Saturday.

Three persons, including a friend, were arrested on Friday after she approached the police, they said.

**In a park** A senior police officer said the teenager was with her friend in a park on January 3 where she allegedly forced himself on her.

"She said the friend

She [victim] said the friend raped her while four men witnessed the incident. Later, they too raped her and fled the spot

SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

raped her while four men witnessed the incident. Later, they too raped her and fled the spot," he said.

The victim, however, stayed mum because she did not want to inform her parents that she was with a male friend, the police said.

The victim is a school dropout and works as a house help, they added.

ter which she decided to take action and informed her parents about the incident. They then approached the police," the officer said.

Based on her complaint, a case under Section 376 (punishment for rape) and relevant sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act was registered.

She has been sent for medical examination.

"Teams are looking for the other two accused," the officer said.

The victim is a school dropout and works as a house help, they added.

## 17-year-old raped multiple times by neighbour in Dwarka; accused held

Victim says he had threatened her after she rejected his advances

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 17-year-old girl was allegedly raped multiple times by her neighbour, the police said on Saturday.

The incident was reported from Dwarka's Baba Haridas Nagar and the accused has been arrested, they said.

A senior police officer said the teenager, who stays in a rented accommodation in Baba Haridas Nagar, told the police on Saturday that she was raped by the 24-year-old neighbour two to three times in the last three-four months.

"She said he was pursuing her but she rejected his advances. However, he

When the victim continued to resist, the accused started showing the pictures [of the forced marriage] to her relatives to defame her

SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

started threatening to harm her if she did not give in," the officer said.

**Forcibly married her** The accused, who had come to Delhi from Nagpur to attend his sister's wedding a few months ago and decided to stay, allegedly forcibly married the minor

by putting vermillion on her forehead and also clicked pictures of the same.

**Defamed her**

"When the victim continued to resist, the accused started showing the pictures to her relatives to defame her. She then approached police on Saturday," the officer said.

The police have registered a case under Sections 376 (punishment for rape) and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code and under relevant sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act at Baba Haridas Nagar police station.

## Court discharges AAP

## + MP in molestation case

'Sanjay Singh incorrectly chargedsheeted'

NIRNIMESH KUMAR  
NEW DELHI

While discharging Aam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh in a molestation case, a Delhi court has ordered framing of charges against two workers of the party for the same offence.

Additional Solicitor-General (ASG) Sanjay Jain had also advised the police that no case, including the charge of molestation, was made against Mr. Singh.

The police had sought his advice after lodging the case against Mr. Singh and the other accused on a complaint by a worker of the party.

Discharging Mr. Singh, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Samar Vishal said: "As per opinion of the ASG no case is made out against accused Sanjay Singh."

Independent of this opinion, I am also of the view that accused Sanjay Singh has been incorrectly chargedheeted by the police in the case," the ACMM said. "In fact, he [Mr. Singh] was the victim, who was slapped by the complainant without any proof.

## Coldest Feb. 16 in 4 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

It was the coldest February 16 in Delhi in the past four years with the mercury settling at 20.2 degree Celsius on Saturday, said Meteorological Department officials.

They said the sudden change in weather was caused by western disturbances, which brought down the temperature.

Saturday's maximum temperature was four notches below the season's average.

An official said the mini-

vocation on his part as is clear from her complaint as well as her statement under 164 of the Cr.P.C." the ACMM said.

"Therefore, prosecuting him for the offence under Section 354/509 shall not be proper and will amount to prosecuting a victim himself," said the ACMM.

**Pushed complainant** As regards co-accused Ajit Tyagi and Inayatullah, there are allegations that they pushed the complainant by her chest. Let Sanjay Singh be discharged and let charge against Ajit Tyagi and Inayatullah under Section 354 [molestation] be framed," the ACMM ordered.

According to the FIR lodged at Tilak Nagar Police station in West Delhi by the victim, the two accused had pushed the woman party worker by her chest when she was trying to talk to Mr. Singh over some local issues during a road show by the party.

The complainant later slapped Mr. Singh when he threatened her, the charge sheet alleged.

mum temperature was recorded at 13 degrees Celsius, two notches above the season's average.

**Today's forecast** The weatherman has predicted partly cloudy skies and shallow to moderate fog on February 17.

"Skies will remain partly cloudy on February 17 [today]. The minimum temperature and maximum temperature are expected to settle around 11 degrees Celsius and 20 degrees Celsius respectively," the official said.

An official said the mini-

## Breath-taking view?



Two tourists, one wearing pollution mask, taking a rickshaw ride in the Walled City on Saturday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

**ANURAG BACHAN'S DROANACHARYA-IAS & E.G. CLASSES, DELHI**  
IAS MOCK INTERVIEWS & One to One Session ASSURED INCREASE IN YOUR SCORE BY 20 MARKS  
at Jaypee Siddharth Five Star Hotel, 3, Rajendra Place, New Delhi on 17th & 18th Feb. 2019 Book your slot in advance at 84270-09141, 86990-10909

**THE HINDU**  
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any publication or its representative. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD, the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or its representative. It is the responsibility of the advertiser to be responsible and liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

## POLICY HOLDER FRIENDLY



## ORIENTAL INSURANCE

Prithvi, Agni, Jal, Akash. Sab ki Suraksha Hamare Paas.

Visit us at: www.orientalinsurance.org.in

Call Toll Free No.: 1800 11 8485

Beware of spurious phone calls &amp; fictitious/fraudulent offers. IRDAI clarifies to public that IRDAI or its officials do not involve in activities like sale of any kind of insurance or financial products nor invest premiums. IRDAI does not announce any bonus. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge police complaint alongwith details of the phone calls number.

## BLAZERS SUITS &amp; JACKETS SALE Wedding &amp; Formal Collection

raymond PARK AVENUE ARROW LOUIS PHILIPPE

upto 60% off  
• Formal • Casual & Party Collection  
By Economy Sales: 40071223

- PUNCHKIAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
- WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
- JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

## MOCK INTERVIEW CSE

Learn to Score 200+ From Renowned Civil Servants &amp; Secretaries Under GOI

Chaired by: Former UPSC Interview Board Member

## PANEL MEMBERS

Vinod Zutshi - Retd. IAS

(Former Secretary / Member of UPSC-CSE Interview Board)

Kailash Agarwal - Retd. IFS

(Former Member of UPSC Civil Services Interview Board)

Rengaraj Viswanathan - Retd. IFS

(Former Member of UPSC Civil Services Interview Board)

Ram Kumar Verma - Retd. IPS

(President's Police Medal / UN Peace Keeping Mission)

## And Other Experts

Video recording of Mock Interview will be provided

More Mocks on demand — DAF Analysis

Date: Feb. 19, Feb. 21, Feb. 24 &amp; Feb. 26

YMCA Tourist Hostel, 1-11 Singh Road, New Delhi - 110001. (Near by Patel Chowk Metro Station)

Register at: 98215-53677 / 011-41417741

Email Your DAF to: upscda2019@gmail.com

Rank - 3 / 12 / 21... and many more Previous Selections in UPSC-CSE

IAS GURUKUL CHAHAL

# CLASSIFIEDS

thehinduads.com

**REGIONAL****EDUCATIONAL****EDUCATIONAL**

**IAS PRELIMS 2019**  
Those who are determined to Qualify IAS Prelims 2019 should not miss this Strategy to Boost your Score in few days.  
**HURRY !**  
Visit our website today:  
BestCurrentAffairs.com  
**9463737373**

**INTERVIEW**  
Candidates Facing Interview Must Watch YouTube Video Facing the Interview(1&2) & Seek One-to-One With VaidSir  
<http://y2u.be/px81ttxbbw>

**Civil's IAS Empowering Nation Current Affairs for PRELIMS-2019 Lectures+MCQs Test 93197 33599 9/13, Bada Bazar Road, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-60**

**Civil's IAS Empowering Nation Geography & Environment for PRELIMS-2019 Lectures+MCQs Test 93197 33599 9/13, Bada Bazar Road, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-60**

**GENERAL**

**FREE MOCK INTERVIEWS**  
First of a kind 5 - Stage programme. on 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. & 03<sup>rd</sup> March 2019.

- ◆ Stage - 1: Interactive Session with R.C.Sinha
- ◆ Stage - 2: DAF Briefing
- ◆ Stage - 3: Mock Interview followed by feedback
- ◆ Stage - 4: One-to-one interview with R.C.Sinha
- ◆ Stage - 5: More Mocks on Demand

**PANEL**  
1) Nirmal N Andrews, IAS (Retd.)  
2) Malay Neerav St.Stephens College  
3) Dr.Dalbir Bharti IPS (Retd.)  
4) M.G.Gopal IAS (Retd., Former C.S.)  
5) S.K.Mathur IFS (Retd.)  
6) Charu Malhotra Associate Professor  
7) R.C.Sinha (Renowned Civil Services Mentor/ Trainer)  
8) Y.Satyanaaryana (Ex.IFOS, Add.comm. (Retd)

**ANALOG IAS**  
Building No.5, PUSA Road, Karolbagh, New Delhi. Ph: 011-49785868, 8800283132  
Mail: [ias.analog.delhi@gmail.com](mailto:ias.analog.delhi@gmail.com) | [www.analogeducation.in](http://www.analogeducation.in)  
Our Branches: HYDERABAD, BENGALURU, VIZAG, GUNTUR.

**EDUCATIONAL****VACANCIES****SUNBEAM Schools Vellore & Chennai****Teachers wanted**  
and respected and admired and encouraged.

Join team Sunbeam

**NEET JEE FACULTY SALARY 1 LAC TO 3 LACS PER MONTH**

A/C Stay facility available

**PRINCIPAL ACADEMIC/ADMIN**

Salary : Rs. 1 Lakh + Perks

P.GT / TGT

Salary Rs.25000 to 55000 + Perks

Qualified teachers for Botany, Zoology, History, Geography, English, Tamil, Hindi, French, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Commerce, Maths, Accountancy, Economics, Counsellors, Wardens.

**VICE PRINCIPAL / SUBJECT EXPERTS**

Salary Rs.60000 to 1 Lac/month

PGTs with Managerial experience to handle CBSE syllabus

Apply immediately with Confidence to

**The Chairman Sunbeam Matric & CBSE Schools**

Katpadi, Vellore - 632 059

Phone: 0416 - 2296913, 2295242

E-Mail : [poovan2014@gmail.com](mailto:poovan2014@gmail.com)[www.sunbeamsschool.org](http://www.sunbeamsschool.org)**VACANCIES**

**Shraddha Children's Academy**  
(Affiliated to CBSE, New Delhi)  
1/10A, ECR Kolukkam, Chennai-41,  
Tamil Nadu.

**WANTED**  
PGT - Eng/Phy/Math/Acc  
TGT - SST/Hindi  
PRT - Eng/Hindi

T.A. /D will be paid for Outstation Candidates to attend the Interview Accommodation will be provided if required

Experience in CBSE / ICSE will be an added advantage

Salary is at par with Industry

Email your resume to [contact@shraddhaacademy.com](mailto:contact@shraddhaacademy.com)

Phone: 43590243 / 4385009

**GENERAL****AUTOMOTIVE****SELLING****FOREIGN CARS**

2013 / 14 Registered Jaguar "F" Type Ct: 984108855/ 988428877

Chennai

R350 PETROL 2012 done 17000Km A&amp;S 9840953737

**GENERAL****RANGE ROVER VOUGE SE**

2013 Model New Shape

4.4 Litre SDV8 Diesel,

White color, 49000 Kms

Pondy registered

Single owner for sale.

Contact: +91 98403 88866

**MERCEDES**

R350 PETROL 2012 done 17000Km A&amp;S

9840953737

**REAL ESTATE****SELLING****RESIDENTIAL HOUSE**

CHENNAI ECR Neelankarai Sundeeper Avenue 400ft house 6Bedrooms/ Servant quarters on 2 grounds. 7397317174

**SELLING****RESIDENTIAL HOUSE**

PRIME PROPERTY @House for Sale in Goa for 4.5 Crore. mrsdajai2@gmail.com

E-mail : [poovan2014@gmail.com](mailto:poovan2014@gmail.com)[www.sunbeamsschool.org](http://www.sunbeamsschool.org)

www.sunbeamsschool.org

www.sunbeamsschool.org&lt;/

# 'Abducted' DTC driver found dead, probe on

Body found in Sonipat; victim survived by wife, 3 children

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 59-year-old Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) driver was allegedly murdered after being abducted on Wednesday, the police said on Saturday.

#### Reported missing

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-West) Vijayanta Arya said the family of Pritam Singh, from Swaroop Nagar, had reported him missing on Thursday morning.

A senior officer said Singh had left Wazirpur depot after work for home in his vehicle on Wednesday.

#### Phone off

However, when he did not reach home till late night, his family tried his phone,

Teams have been formed to investigate the case from all angles and identify the accused

VIJAYANTA ARYA  
Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-West)

which was found switched off.

#### Through GPS\*

"His son Deepak said that through the GPS installed in the car, they found out that the vehicle first went to Sonipat border and then to Bakhtawarpur in Alipur. He went and informed Alipur police which asked him to inform Keshavpura police where he lodged a missing complaint," the officer said.

Meanwhile, Deepak allegedly found Singh's body with throat slit in Sonipat.

"The family informed the police after finding the body and the car," said Ms. Arya.

#### Case registered

The police have registered a case under Sections 365 (kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person), 302 (punishment for murder), and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) of the Indian Penal Code.

"Teams have been formed to investigate the case from all angles and identify the accused," Ms. Arya added.

Singh is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

# Delhi court holds man guilty of raping U.S. citizen

The incident dates back to 2013

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

A man has been held guilty of digital rape of a U.S. citizen by a Delhi court, which said her testimony could not be said to be unreliable as she came all the way from her country to depose in the case.

When someone rapes a person using their finger or fingers it is termed as digital rape.

Noting that the woman had no other interest left in India as her marriage had already broken down after the incident, Additional Sessions Judge Illa Rawat said the woman's testimony can-

not be discarded despite some discrepancies.

#### Sexually abused\*

According to the complaint, two foreign nationals of U.S. and Russia were allegedly sexually abused by their landlord's son in the small hours of June 24, 2013, while they were sleeping in their room.

A case was lodged against the accused based on the statement of the US national.

The accused had claimed that there were disputes between the woman's husband and him which had led to the lodging of this case.

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH

#### SAD DEMISE



Shri. T.K. RAMAKRISHNAN  
S/o Late T.S. Krishnaswamy  
Cremation 17.2.19  
Dasashu 24.2.19 @ residence.  
Grieved by wife Sundari,  
Hari, Malathi, & family.  
09000229967

For enquiries on  
announcements in this  
section, please contact our  
office at the following number  
between 10a.m. and 8p.m.  
New Delhi : 011- 43579797  
Rate for New Delhi:  
(Minimum Rs. 290/- 2 Lines  
Extra Line - Rs. 145/-)  
(B/W Display): Rs.50/Per Sq.cm  
(Clr Display) : Rs.60/Per Sq.cm  
Log on to  
[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)  
For Placing Advertisements  
Online

#### In memory of your loved ones

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:  
011-43579797  
from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. &  
For Placing Advertisements Online log on to  
[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)

#### DONATE EYES-GIFT SIGHT

**ON THE OCCASION OF RAISING DAY**

**CELEBRATING 72<sup>nd</sup> RAISING DAY**

# **DELHI POLICE EXHIBITION**

**EXHIBITION**  
at India Gate Lawns  
(between Man Singh Road and C-Hexagon)

**17.02.2019 to 20.02.2019**  
**11 am to 9 pm**

**MAIN ATTRACTIONS**

- Dial 100 • Traffic Park • Police Uncle Scheme • Himmat Plus App
- Performance by Delhi Police Band • Dog Show • Display of Arms & Equipment and other various activities • Prahari

DP/0080/19

# Congratulations Deoli !

## Providing & laying of Sewer line at Tigri Road starts

Inauguration ceremony

On Sunday, 17 February, 2019 at 4.00 P.M.

Venue: Tigri Colony Main Raod, Near Shitla Mata Mandir, New Delhi

Dip/Shabdarth/d/0259/18-19

"We will make Delhi the best city in the world"

- Arvind Kejriwal  
Chief Minister, Delhi



# Akalis ask Cong. to sack Sidhu for Pak. remarks

Statement advocating talks distorted, says Punjab Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CHANDIGARH  
The Shiromani Akali Dal on Saturday asked Congress president Rahul Gandhi to expel Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu from the party for calling for dialogue with Pakistan even after the Pulwama attack in which 40 CRPF jawans died.

Though Mr. Sidhu had condemned the "cowardly" attack by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed, he had also called for dialogue to find a "permanent solution" to end the bloodshed.

Mr. Sidhu had said, "For a handful of people, can you blame the entire nation and can you blame an individual?"

Akali leader Bikram Singh Majithia said if the Congress president does not sack Mr. Sidhu, it would mean his statement was "made on the direction of Rahul Gandhi". He added that the credibility of CM Amarinder Singh was also on test. "The CM should not wait for Rahul Gandhi's assent to remove Sidhu from



Navjot Singh Sidhu  
FILE PHOTO

his Cabinet."

Informed sources in the Chief Minister's Office said that there was no move to dismiss Mr. Sidhu from the Punjab Cabinet so far.

## Backlash over comments

Backlash over Mr. Sidhu's comments saw him being removed from a popular TV show. The Congress leader on Saturday defended his remarks claiming that his statement was "deliberately distorted" as people were scared of him.

"Only one line was shown. It (statement) was not shown completely be-

cause a lot of people are afraid and you also understand they are feeling insecure," he said.

Addressing the media in Ludhiana, Mr. Sidhu said the decision on Kartarpur corridor should not be scuttled. "Sikhs' Kartarpur corridor cannot stop. Do you want the decision taken by the two PMs to be scuttled? Then you will encourage them (terrorists).... Nobody can bend the country before terrorism and it is very clear," he said.

Questioning why proper security arrangements "were not" made for movement of CRPF personnel in Pulwama, he said that a permanent solution was needed to end the repeated killings of jawans.

Protesting against his remarks, activists of the BJP's youth wing – Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha – showed black flags to Mr. Sidhu on his arrival at Ludhiana on Saturday.

(With inputs from Indo-Asian News Service)

## JMB operative held from Kolkata

### Directly involved in Bodh Gaya blast case'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA  
A 22-year-old man was arrested on Saturday for alleged links to the terror outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), which was involved in the Bodh Gaya blast last year, police said.

The Special Task Force of Kolkata Police arrested Ari-

## VIP visit



Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu arriving to offer prayers at Sangam during the ongoing Kumbh Mela in Allahabad on Saturday. ■ PTI

## Police officer said.

The officer said that Arif was in contact with other JMB operatives.

In January 2018, Arif along with Adil, Hassan, Chota Kareem and Kausar went to Bodh Gaya, conducted recce and planted explosives. He was directly involved in the Bodh Gaya blast," the police officer said.

He added that after the blast, Arif absconded to Bengaluru and was involved in dacoities with other associates.

## Bengal govt. urged to stop question paper leak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA

The Students' Federation of India, the student arm of the CPI(M), on Saturday demanded immediate action by the State government to stop Madhyamik (Class X) question papers from being leaked.

SFI's State unit president Pratik Ur Rahman said photos of Madhyamik question papers have been surfacing on WhatsApp every single day but "the WBSE refuses to accept the fact".

The SFI and the CPI(M)

youth wing – Democratic Youth Federation of India – asked Education Minister Partha Chatterjee to issue a statement on the issue.

Mr. Chatterjee, however,

said on Friday that no question

papers were leaked and some people were trying to

malign the WBSE.

The SFI alleged that the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education has failed to stop circulation of photos of Madhyamik question papers on WhatsApp. The statement was issued after geography question paper was allegedly leaked on WhatsApp before the exam on Saturday. There were reports

that Bengali, English and History question papers were also leaked.

SFI's State unit president

Pratik Ur Rahman said

photos of

Madhyamik

question

papers have been

surfacing

on

WhatsApp

every

single

day

but "the WBSE refuses

to accept the fact".

The SFI and the CPI(M)

youth wing – Democratic

Youth Federation of India –

asked Education Minister

Partha Chatterjee to issue a

statement on the issue.

Mr. Chatterjee, however,

said on Friday that no question

papers were leaked and some people were trying to

malign the WBSE.

The SFI alleged that the

West Bengal Board of

Secondary

Education

has failed to

stop

circulation

of

photos

of

Madhyamik

question

papers have been

surfacing

on

WhatsApp

every

single

day

but "the WBSE refuses

to accept the fact".

The SFI and the CPI(M)

youth wing – Democratic

Youth Federation of India –

asked Education Minister

Partha Chatterjee to issue a

statement on the issue.

Mr. Chatterjee, however,

said on Friday that no question

papers were leaked and some people were trying to

malign the WBSE.

The SFI alleged that the

West Bengal Board of

Secondary

Education

has failed to

stop

circulation

of

photos

of

Madhyamik

question

papers have been

surfacing

on

WhatsApp

every

single

day

but "the WBSE refuses

to accept the fact".

The SFI and the CPI(M)

youth wing – Democratic

Youth Federation of India –

asked Education Minister

Partha Chatterjee to issue a

statement on the issue.

Mr. Chatterjee, however,

said on Friday that no question

papers were leaked and some people were trying to

malign the WBSE.

The SFI alleged that the

West Bengal Board of

Secondary

Education

has failed to

stop

circulation

of

photos

of

Madhyamik

question

papers have been

surfacing

on

WhatsApp

every

single

day

but "the WBSE refuses

to accept the fact".

The SFI and the CPI(M)

youth wing – Democratic

Youth Federation of India –

asked Education Minister

Partha Chatterjee to issue a

statement on the issue.

Mr. Chatterjee, however,

said on Friday that no question

papers were leaked and some people were trying to

malign the WBSE.

The SFI alleged that the

West Bengal Board of

Secondary

Education

has failed to

stop

circulation

of

photos

of

Madhyamik

question

papers have been

surfacing

on

</div

## IN BRIEF



KSIDC bids for airport in Thiruvananthapuram

Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC), the State-owned agency for industrial and investment promotion, and two private players have submitted bids for operating, managing and developing the Thiruvananthapuram international airport for 50 years. GMR Group, the leading airport developer and operator and Adani Group, which is behind the upcoming Vizhinjam International Deepwater Seaport Project in the State capital, are the two private players in the race.

## Nine get life term for murder of CPI(M) worker

KANNUR The Additional District Sessions Court, Thalassery, on Saturday awarded life imprisonment to nine workers of the Popular Front of India and the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) in the case of murder of Communist Party of India (Marxist) worker Naroth Dileepan in 2008. The court found them guilty on February 14. The court had acquitted seven of the 16 accused in the case. Dileepan, branch Secretary of the CPI(M) at Chakkad, was fatally attacked near Vilakkod on August 24, 2008 when he was on his way home.

## Nine-hour free power to farmers to cost A.P. dear

VIJAYAWADA

The A.P. government's decision to extend free power to the agriculture sector from the present seven to nine hours is going to impose a burden of approximately ₹1,000 crore per annum on the exchequer. This is in addition to the ₹6,000 crore subsidy being borne by the distribution companies (Discoms).

## TDP to begin election campaigning today

VIJAYAWADA

The TDP politburo here on Saturday resolved to begin campaigning for the 2019 elections on February 17 with focus on the slew of development and welfare schemes implemented in the last five years.

It authorised party's national president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu to appoint committees for preparing the manifesto and drawing up the strategy for the elections in A.P. and leave the responsibility of planning for the Lok Sabha (LS) elections in Telangana and

## Notice to parents

The prosecution said there were 38 witnesses, the majority of whom, including the victim and her parents,

## Students held in U.S. varsity sting shaken

Most of them are from A.P., Telangana

## R. RAVIKANTH REDDY HYDERABAD

Scared, drained, demoralised and psychologically affected. That is the mental state of Indian students caught in the Farmington University sting and put in detention centres far from cities, allegedly in the company of killers and drug traffickers.

The 150-odd students from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh arrested in the fake university racket, allegedly for violating student visa norms, may slip into depression if not released immediately or if the government doesn't initiate a dialogue with the U.S. authorities, says Parmesh Bheemreddy, president of America Telugu Association (ATA).

Last heard, a few students have been released on bail and 19 have been allowed to leave the States without facing charges. Those who have come out on bail have narrated horrific tales about their stay in

"Even if the government wants to come to their rescue immediately, they need to have the data in hand," says Mr. Borra.

What needs to be done by the government here is wake up at least now and collect data of students going abroad, says Nishidhar Borra, a consultant. "It is necessary to track them from day one so that they are not cheated by consultants or middlemen in the U.S."

"Even if the government wants to come to their rescue immediately, they need to have the data in hand," says Mr. Borra.

## New imaging technology to the aid of ancient scripts

Currently used to preserve rare texts in Udupi's Ashta Mutts; over 3,000 manuscript bundles digitised

## SHARATH S. SRIVATSA BENGALURU

Thousands of manuscripts scattered across India — many lying in neglect or threatened by the exposure to the vagaries of nature — could face destruction. To preserve them, a Bengaluru-based not-for-profit has procured a highly advanced multispectral imaging technology, currently being used for rare texts in the Ashta Mutts of Udupi.

Multispectral imaging can capture texts in manuscripts that are affected by pests, fungus, over-written, scribbled, blackened or

## Rape of minor: former priest gets 20 years RI

Robin Vadakkumcheril was defrocked in 2017 after his arrest

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KANNUR

The Additional District and Sessions court, Thalassery, which is the designated court for cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, on Saturday awarded 20-year rigorous imprisonment to former priest Robin Vadakkumcheril in a case of rape of a minor girl from Kottiyur in the district.

The court found Vadakkumcheril guilty under Section 3(a) of the POCSO Act read with Section 4 of the Act, Section 5(f) and 5(j)(ii), read with Section 6 of Act, and also Section 376(2) of the Indian Penal Code.

He was awarded rigorous imprisonment for 20 years each under all three counts. The three sentences would run concurrently. The court also ordered him to pay a fine of ₹4 lakh.

The court acquitted six other accused in the case citing lack of evidence.

Those acquitted were parish member Thankamma Nelliyan, Sr. Lis Mariya of Christudas Convent at Mananthavady, Sr. Aneeta of Kallumutti Convent, former chairman of the child welfare committee of Wayanad Fr. Thomas Joseph Therakam, member Sr. Betty Jose, and Sr. Ophelia, superintendent of Holy Infant Mary Mandir at Vaithiri, Wayanad.

Last year, the Supreme Court had discharged three other accused, including gynaecologist at Christu Raj Hospital Tessy Jose, hospital administrator Ancy Mathew, and paediatrician Hyderali. The case was that Robin Vadakkumcheril, 48, former priest of St. Sebastian Church, Neendunoki, near Kottiyor, raped a minor girl



Former priest Robin Vadakkumcheril being brought to the Central Prison in Kannur. ■ S.K. MOHAN

## Nun supporting protest receives warning letter

## ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Sister Lucy Kalapura, one of the nuns who had participated in the protest against rape-accused Bishop Franco Mulakkal has received a second warning letter threatening her with expulsion from Congregation unless she changes her mind.

Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC) Superior General has issued this second canonical warning letter to Sister Lucy Kalapura.

The letter states: "... invite you to change your

mind and attitude sincerely... If you don't respond positively I will be constrained to proceed with your dismissal from Congregation." In January this year, Sister Lucy was served a warning letter by the Superior General of the Congregation.

The letter said this was the first canonical warning with the threat of dismissal. A previous letter on January 1, said the nun had been leading a life that was against the principles of religious life and against the Rule and Constitution of the FCC.

in May 2016 and impregnated her. She delivered a baby at the church-run Christu Raj Hospital, Koothuparamba, on February 7, 2017. Vadakkumcheril had been defrocked following his arrest in February 2017.

## Notice to parents

The prosecution said there

were 38 witnesses, the majority of whom, including the victim and her parents,

turned hostile. The greatest challenge for the prosecution was to prove the age of the victim as she claimed that she was major at the time of the incident. The prosecution had proved that she was minor by presenting the birth record from hospital.

The court also directed that notices be served on the victim's parents for turning hostile in the case.

## Students held in U.S. varsity sting shaken

Most of them are from A.P., Telangana

## R. RAVIKANTH REDDY HYDERABAD

Scared, drained, demoralised and psychologically affected. That is the mental state of Indian students caught in the Farmington University sting and put in detention centres far from cities, allegedly in the company of killers and drug traffickers.

The 150-odd students from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh arrested in the fake university racket, allegedly for violating student visa norms, may slip into depression if not released immediately or if the government doesn't initiate a dialogue with the U.S. authorities, says Parmesh Bheemreddy, president of America Telugu Association (ATA).

Last heard, a few students have been released on bail and 19 have been allowed to leave the States without facing charges. Those who have come out on bail have narrated horrific tales about their stay in

"Even if the government wants to come to their rescue immediately, they need to have the data in hand," says Mr. Borra.

What needs to be done by the government here is wake up at least now and collect data of students going abroad, says Nishidhar Borra, a consultant. "It is necessary to track them from day one so that they are not cheated by consultants or middlemen in the U.S."

"Even if the government wants to come to their rescue immediately, they need to have the data in hand," says Mr. Borra.

## New imaging technology to the aid of ancient scripts

Currently used to preserve rare texts in Udupi's Ashta Mutts; over 3,000 manuscript bundles digitised

## SHARATH S. SRIVATSA BENGALURU

Thousands of manuscripts scattered across India — many lying in neglect or threatened by the exposure to the vagaries of nature — could face destruction. To preserve them, a Bengaluru-based not-for-profit has procured a highly advanced multispectral imaging technology, currently being used for rare texts in the Ashta Mutts of Udupi.

Multispectral imaging can capture texts in manuscripts that are affected by pests, fungus, over-written, scribbled, blackened or

## Take care of pregnant rape victim, says HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Coming to the aid of a minor rape victim, who is now 34 weeks pregnant, the High Court of Karnataka directed medical authorities to ensure safe delivery of her child as the medical board has stated that termination of pregnancy at this stage could pose a threat to her life.

Sources close to Mr. Jadhav said it was difficult for the MLA to climb the political ladder as long as the Kharge family ruled Kalaburagi district. The BJP is keen on fielding a candidate belonging to the Lambani community (to which Mr. Jadhav belongs) as it has a good number of voters in Chittapur, Gurmitkal, Kalaburagi Rural, and Sedam segments.

Moreover, former Ministers Malikayya Guttedar and Mr. Chinchansur, who quit the party on the eve of the 2018 Assembly polls and joined the BJP, are expected to support Mr. Jadhav if he contests against Mr. Kharge. While Mr. Guttedar belongs to the Idiga community, Mr. Chinchansur is from Koli Samaj. Both communities have a sizeable electorate in the constituency.

reddy Chandramohan Reddy said the selection of candidates would be based on surveys and the information with the party.

Those with high prospects of winning would obviously get the nomination.

The election strategy committee would comprise leaders who could devote the maximum time, staying in Amaravati for doing the homework.

The party would highlight the NTR Bharosa, farm loan waiver, Pasupu-Kumkuma and other welfare schemes from which families had benefited to the tune of lakhs of rupees.

## Row over sand mining at Kerala's Thottappally

Legal limits crossed, say residents

## SAM PAUL A. THOTTAPPALLY

The road leading to the Thottappally harbour is wrecked giving motorists a bumpy ride.

At the harbour, a dredger is floating on the water and a few small fishing boats are at anchor. On one side, heaps of sand and a 'sand filtering machine' bear testimony to the ongoing mineral sand mining in the area.

"The dredging, filtering and transporting of sand is happening day in and day out and there is no end to it," says J. Yogidas, a local fisherman.

A few years ago, the State government allowed 'limited' dredging in the name of Thottappally harbour development. Later, the agreement between the Harbour Engineering Department and Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL), Chavara for removal of sand was renewed several times. Recently trucks transporting sand without proper documents were blocked by local fishermen and residents.

They allege that the Harbour Engineering Department and IREL in collusion with private parties are illegally transporting sand beyond the permissible limit.

"After six years of continuous dredging, we want to know why the government has failed to develop the harbour. Other than small boats, no medium and large fishing boats can anchor there. The government is not interested in its development. They only want to loot the precious sand deposit. They are doing it in the name of dredging and at the expense of livelihood of the people of the area. We fear the people of the region will be exposed to radiation and other health hazards due to the indiscriminate mining of mineral sand," says Yogidas.

The State government has recently decided to remove sand from Thottappally 'pozhi' (estuary) and leading channel for 'ensuring smooth flow of water' from the Kuttanad region through Thottappally spillway. It directed the Irrigation Department to sell the sand either to IREL or Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd (KMML). Mr. Jayamohan says dredging the area will destroy the ecology.

Resentment is also brewing north of Thottappally, where people say they are bearing the brunt of sea erosion resulting from sand mining at the harbour. A large number of houses have been damaged or destroyed in areas such as Purrakkad, Karoor and Pazhayangi.

**Sea erosion**

Resentment is also brewing north of Thottappally, where people say they are bearing the brunt of sea erosion resulting from sand mining at the harbour. A large number of houses have been damaged or destroyed in areas such as Purrakkad, Karoor and Pazhayangi.



Professor P.R. Mukund and MegaVision president Ken Boydston with the imaging technology. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

about these manuscripts because they do not see a direct relation with them and understand the importance of what's in

them," says P.R. Mukund, professor, Electrical Engineering, Rochester Institute of Technology, and founder of Tara Prakashana. "We have brought the technology to India for the first time and the services would be offered for free. Our aim is to preserve important written scripts for posterity," he said.

Tara Prakashana acquired the technology from the U.S.-based MegaVision, a leading digital imaging company, which has worked in similar projects across the world. MegaVision's president Ken Boydston has

## Karnataka Congress MLA likely to join BJP to take on Kharge

Party has sought Umesh Jadhav's disqualification

## NAGESH PRABHU

BENGALURU

Umesh Jadhav, MLA for Chincholi, whose disqualification the Congress has sought under the Anti-Defection Law for skipping two legislature party meetings, is said to have almost made up his mind to sever ties with the party and throw his weight behind the Bharatiya Janata Party in the coming Lok Sabha election.

Though Mr. Jadhav, a two-time MLA, has claimed that he has not quit the Congress, sources in the party confirmed that the legislator, who attended the Budget session for a couple of days, may quit the party by next month.

Sources said Mr. Jadhav is tipped to be the BJP candidate from Kalaburagi (re-served) Lok Sabha segment against Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, who has never lost an election so far. His margin of victory in 2014



Umesh Jadhav

was around 75,000 votes.

Sources claimed that factors such as denial of ministerial berth during the Cabinet expansion in December, owing to the alleged interference of Mr. Kharge, and dominance in the district by Social Welfare Minister Priyank Kharge have forced Mr. Jadhav to distance himself from the party in recent days. Giving credence to the saffron party's attempts to turn him, a few days ago former Minister Baburao

Chinchansur, who had also quit the Congress and joined the BJP, said Mr. Jadhav would soon join the party.

Sources close to Mr. Jadhav said it was difficult for the MLA to climb the political ladder as long as the Kharge family ruled Kalaburagi district. The BJP is keen on fielding a candidate belonging to the Lambani community (to which Mr. Jadhav belongs) as it has a good number of voters in Chittapur, Gurmitkal, Kalaburagi Rural, and Sedam segments.

The court has also said that in case the victim and her family members inform the competent authority of their unwillingness to keep the child, authorities should make necessary arrangement for adoption of the child.

Justice Alok Aradhe passed the order while disposing of the petition filed by the minor girl, who had sought permission for termination of pregnancy, or the government's assistance for delivery and taking care of the child for a certain period, in case she has to continue her pregnancy.

## TDP to begin election campaigning today

## STAFF REPORTER

VIJAYAWADA

The TDP politburo here on Saturday resolved to begin campaigning for the 2019 elections on February 17 with focus on the slew of development and welfare schemes implemented in the last five years.

It authorised party's national president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu to appoint committees for preparing the manifesto and drawing up the strategy for the elections in A.P. and

## IN BRIEF



Poachers kill rhino in Kaziranga, flee with horn

JORHAT  
The carcass of a male rhino was recovered on Saturday at the Kaziranga National Park, officials said. The carcass, with its horn missing, was recovered in the Bokhat subdivision. PTI

## Filmmaker alleges govt. stopped film screening

KOLKATA  
Filmmaker Anik Datta on Saturday alleged that the screening of his film *Bhobishoyer Bhut* was not being allowed in a number of theatres in the city allegedly due to the intervention of the State administration. "The theatre owners are not giving us any valid reasons to why the screening was stopped," Mr. Datta said. He also alleged that the producers of the film had received calls from police authorities a few days ago asking that the film be screened before them. They expressed apprehension that the film could "hurt public sentiments", he said.

## M.P. Cabinet meeting held in Jabalpur for first time

JABALPUR  
The Madhya Pradesh government on Saturday held a Cabinet meeting in Jabalpur for the first time, an event Chief Minister Kamal Nath termed historic. Mr. Nath said Jabalpur is known as "sanskardhani" (cultural capital), a description first used for the city by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, and added that his government was committed to its overall development. PTI

## Vijayakant will announce alliance soon: Premalatha

CHENNAI  
DMK leader Vijayakant on Saturday returned to Chennai from the U.S. after undergoing medical treatment. He was welcomed by thousands of party cadre at the Chennai airport. Mr. Vijayakant was accompanied by DMK treasurer and his wife Premalatha. Speaking to reporters at the airport, she said that all the "so-called big parties" were speaking to the DMK and that the party leader would announce his decision soon.

## The last of the elusive pangolins

Demand for scales in China has made it nearly extinct

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

Obsession for its supposedly medicinal scales in China is believed to have made the ant-eating Chinese Pangolin, one of two species found in South Asia, extinct in India.

The pangolin is the most trafficked mammal in the world. Though hunted for its meat across the northeastern States and in central India, the demand for its scales in China has made it the most critically endangered animal in less than a decade.

On World Pangolin Day, wildlife experts mourned the "possible extinction" of the Chinese Pangolin in the northeast and the likelihood of the Indian Pangolin - found elsewhere in India - of being wiped out in a decade or so. The third Saturday of February is observed as the

The world needs to tell China that pangolin scales are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value

FIROZ AHMED  
Conservationist

day of the scaly nocturnal ant-eater, which activists say is an animal very few - even forest officials - know about.

"The Chinese Pangolin was officially categorised as critically endangered in 2014, but I think it is extinct today. The Indian Pangolin, marked endangered that year, is now critically endangered and disappearing fast," Ritesh Sarothiya, officer-in-charge of the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department's Special Task Force (STF), told *The Hindu*.

The STF had busted one of the biggest international gangs of wildlife body parts smugglers. It arrested 159 people across 14 States and registered 12 cases, mostly for pangolin scale smuggling.

**Northeastern gateway**  
Investigations by wildlife crime sleuths have revealed that almost 90% of smuggling of pangolin and pango-

## Under threat

The pangolin is the most trafficked mammal in the world. A look at some of its characteristics

- A pangolin's tongue is longer than its body
- It can consume 70 million ants a year
- Pangolins have no teeth; they 'chew' with gravel and keratinous spines inside the stomach
- They close their ears and nostrils to keep insects out
- The animal marks its territories with urine, faeces and stinky secretion from a special gland
- Baby pangolins are carried on their mother's back and tail

There are eight pangolin species - four each in Africa and Asia: two of them are in India



Scales, made of keratin, like human nails and hair, comprise about 20% of a pangolin's body weight

The Chinese Pangolin was officially categorised as critically endangered in 2014, but I think it is extinct today. The Indian Pangolin, marked endangered that year, is now critically endangered and disappearing fast

RITESH SAROTHIYA  
Officer-in-charge,  
Madhya Pradesh Forest Department's  
Special Task Force



## Smuggling continues unabated

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Between November 2018 and January 2019, at least five cases of pangolin smuggling were reported from West Bengal and Assam, indicating that illegal trade of the most-smuggled mammal is still going on the country.

Except in one case in which over 4.5 kg of pangolin scales was seized from Siliguri, five pangolins were seized from smugglers in all the other cases. In West Bengal, there were two instances of seizure of live pangolin; in Howrah district on December 8 and in Paschim Medinipur on November 17 last year.

lin scales is through the northeast.

"From elsewhere in India, the scales are smuggled out to China via Myanmar at Moreh in Manipur and Champa in Mizoram. But there are numerous gateways along the border with Myanmar. This is why checking the smuggling network in the northeast is crucial for the survival of the last of the pangolins," Mr. Sarothiya said.

Dev Prakash Bankhwal,

Similarly in Assam, there were at least two cases of seizures of live pangolins on November 20 and December 13.

Saket Badola, head of TRAFFIC India, said there has been a change in modus operandi of smuggling pangolin: now live pangolin is being smuggled instead of its scales. "The nature of illegal wildlife trade is so dynamic that it keeps changing. There are two concerns in respect to pangolin smuggling. One that there is trade of live pangolin and second that for smuggling of scales, courier and postal services are being used," Dr. Badola said.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

who retired a few days ago as Assam's Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), said smaller animals like pangolins get indirect benefit of the focus on larger ones such as rhino, tiger, and elephant.

**Killed cruelly**  
"Sadly, there is no survey of pangolin, which get smoked out of their burrows and killed cruelly by being thrown into boiling water. The animal used to be killed

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

for meat until people learnt there was illegal money in its scales," he said.

"We hope the Chinese Pangolin has not gone the way of the dodo. Conservation policies have to look beyond major species, but the world needs to tell China that pangolin scales - like rhino horns - are made of keratin that produces human hair and nails and has no medicinal value," said Firoz Ahmed, an Assam-based conservationist.

## FROM PAGE ONE

## All-party meet slams Pulwama terror attack

Opposition sources claimed that the draft resolution shared by the government mentioned all political parties standing with security forces and "efforts of the Central and State governments," but the words "Central and State governments" were dropped from the final copy after some parties suggested the change.

Mr. Raja's suggestion for adding the words "maintain communal harmony" to the resolution wasn't accepted.

"We asked the government to ensure the incident is not used to target Kashmiri people or minorities," he said, and added that he urged the government to find a "political solution to a political problem."

"I told the meeting that as far as I know, since 1947 and leaving aside wars, this is the first time that our security forces have so lost so many lives in one single incident," Mr. Azad told

## Court tells CBI to look at plaint against Nitish

"If the CBI investigates the Bihar Chief Minister, former Muzaffarpur District Magistrate Dharmendra Singh, Principal Secretary of the Social and Welfare Department Atul Prasad, who was also former Divisional Commissioner of Muzaffarpur and several other big officials, the facts would come to light in the shelter abuse case," contended Ashwani Kumar in his four-page petition.

"The honourable POCSO court judge... sent the petition to the CBI to look into it... which means an investigation against those named in the petition," Sudhir Kumar Ojha, advocate of the petitioner, told *The Hindu* over phone.

However, other lawyers

## Iran to promote Chabahar as curbs will hit main port

In addition, Iran is planning a second airport near Chabahar and the development of a free trade zone, while energy infrastructure of a gas pipeline has been already built up to 200 km of Chabahar.

Asked about the impact of sanctions, re-imposed in November 2018, Mr. Chegeni pointed out that the advantage of Chabahar was that it had received a waiver from the U.S.

"Firstly, there is a U.S. waiver for Chabahar, and it is not time-bound. In any case, we don't care about sanctions from third parties. This is our country and our business, and we continue to do our best to develop it," Mr. Chegeni said.

"That is why Chabahar won't be affected by these sanctions. There is now a real interest from Central Asia, countries like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan are all contacting us despite all the restrictions, and India is continuing to develop [Chabahar port]," he added.

MEA officials dealing with the Chabahar project are advising some caution in the plans, given that the U.S. waiver for Chabahar was given by the Trump administration to facilitate trade to Afghanistan.

"This exception relates to reconstruction assistance and economic development for Afghanistan. These activities are vital for the ongoing support of Afghanistan's growth and humanitarian relief," the State Department spokesman had said, announcing the waiver on November 7 last year.

As a result, India is hoping that the February 26 event does not turn into a confrontation between the U.S. and Iran, said a senior official of the MEA. "We want all countries, includ-

reporters.

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah said the Prime Minister should personally handle the sensitive situation and immediately take strong action.

Sanjay Raut, a member of BJP ally Shiv Sena, said the government should draw inspiration from former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and hit Pakistan directly.

After the meeting, he told reporters that an incident like Pulwama would not have happened if the 2016 surgical strikes had acted as a deterrent.

Union Minister and Republican Party of India leader Ramdas Athawale said the government should consider the option of war but didn't find many takers in other parties.

A senior CRPF official made a presentation on how the terror attack happened.

**SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI**

With the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha nearing the end of its term, the contentious report of the Standing Committee on Finance on the impact of demonetisation is most likely going to end up never seeing the light of day. Several of the panel's members are unhappy that the report is not being released despite the amount of time, effort and resources spent on preparing it.

Though the committee finalised a draft way back in March last year, the report could not be finalised due to objections from the BJP members who are in a majority in the committee headed by Congress leader M. Veerappa Moily. The Congress and other Opposition parties were outnumbered on the panel, with the BJP having 17 MPs in the 31-member committee. The draft re-

**Hanging fire**

The contentious report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance has got entangled in a controversy

- **March 2018:** Parliamentary Standing Committee on demonetisation finalises draft, but BJP members oppose the release of the report
- The BJP has 17 MPs in the 31-member committee
- Report concludes that demonetisation contributed to derailing the economy
- RBI Governor was called at least twice to discuss the impact of demonetisation



Hopefully we will be able to finalise it  
M. VEERAPPA MOILY,  
Panel chief

port had been critical of the government's decision and concluded that demonetisation had contributed to derailing the economy. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is among the members on the committee.

**'Very unfortunate'**

"It is very unfortunate that we spared so much of the country's resources deliberating effects of demonetisation, called the Governor [of

the RBI] and several high-ranking officials several times," Trinamool Congress MP Dinesh Trivedi told *The Hindu*. "We had the draft report also ready but unfortunately it did not see the light of day which as committee we were duty-bound to present to people through Parliament," Mr. Trivedi said. The RBI Governor had been called at least twice to discuss the impact of demonetisation.

AIADMK member T.G. Venkatesh Babu said that it was unfortunate that the report could not be tabled. "The report should have been tabled and it is sad that it could not be. But I hope the next government is able to use the work done by our committee," he added.

The day the elections are notified, the Lok Sabha is considered dissolved and with it the existing committees too. Also, even though the Lok Sabha is not sitting, the committee can send the report to the Speaker, Sumitra Mahajan, and it can be considered tabled if she accepts the report.

The panel has a few weeks before the Election Commission announces the election schedule. While sources said there was only a slim chance of the report being made public, Mr. Moily remained optimistic. "Hopefully, we will be able to finalise it," he said.

**₹3.50 a day to ryots a pittance: Rahul**

While the government waived loans worth ₹3.5 lakh crore to select industrialists

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JAGDALPUR**

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday hit out at the Modi government, saying that while it waived loans worth ₹3.5 lakh crore of select industrialists such as Anil Ambani and Vijay Mallya, it promised just ₹3.50 per day to farmers.

Mr. Gandhi was speaking at a convention of tribals at Dhuragaon village in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh.

"Lakhs and crores of rupees have been given to the people like Anil Ambani, Niranjan Modis, Mehul Choksi, Vijay Mallya and Lalit Modi,

**The decision of demonetisation made you stand in queues outside banks... If it was a fight against black money then why all the honest people had to stand in queues?**  
RAHUL GANDHI  
Congress president

but farmers will get just ₹3.50 per day," he said, referring to the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme, under which farmers cultivating up to two hectares (five acres) will get direct cash support of ₹6,000 annually.

"When the announce-

a minimum income guarantee would be provided to the poor and the money would be deposited directly into their bank accounts.

"The poll promises (made by Modi) regarding transfer of ₹15 lakh into everyone's bank account and providing two crore jobs have not been implemented," he said.

"The decision of demonetisation made you stand in queues. Have you seen Anil Ambani, Mehul Choksi, Niranjan Modis and Vijay Mallya in queues? If it was a fight against black money, then why honest people had to stand in queues?" he asked.

**Vadra says ED engaging in a witch-hunt**

Says attachment of his workplace, office and the areas that were 'sub-judiced' is unwarranted

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

Robert Vadra, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's husband, on Saturday said the Enforcement Directorate's action against him amounted to relentless harassment, terming the attachment of his company's assets a "witch-hunt".

"I have had nothing to hide, and I am surely not above the law. I have deposed for almost six days; ranging from eight to 12 hours per day with a 40-minute lunch break, and have been escorted to the washroom. I have completely cooperated and adhered to the rules whenever I was called in any part of the country," he said in a Face-



Businessman Robert Vadra arrives at Patiala house court, in New Delhi on Saturday. ■PTI

book post.

Mr. Vadra said the attachment of his workplace, office and the areas that were "sub-judiced", showed a "complete misuse of assertion of

power, a complete vindictive & vicious witch-hunt".

"When truth sustains and prevails, I suppose an apology is all that will suffice... will stay determined for justice

for me," he said.

The statement came a day after the ED provisionally attached assets worth ₹4.62 crore of Mr. Vadra's company Sky Light Hospitality (P) Limited at Delhi's Sukhdev Vihar and four individuals in the Bikaner land scam case.

The agency had recorded the statements of Mr. Vadra and his mother Maureen Vadra, as company directors, at its Jaipur office earlier this week.

The ED said its investigation was based on 18 FIRs registered, and multiple charge sheets filed, by the Rajasthan Police against main accused Jai Prakash Bagwa and 10 others. The probe relates to alleged fraudulent allotment

of land made available by the State government for relocation of people in 34 villages of Bikaner district whose land had been taken over by the Central government for establishing the Mahajan Field Firing Range.

**Fictitious beneficiaries**  
The accused persons got the plots allotted in the name of fictitious beneficiaries and sold them to individuals and companies.

Mr. Vadra's company Sky Light Hospitality (P) Limited had bought 69.55 hectare of land for ₹72 lakh and sold it for ₹5.15 crore to Allegeny Finlease (P) Limited. The ED alleges that the profit of ₹4.43 crore is proceeds of crime.

**Vadra's interim bail extended till March 2**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

A Delhi court on Saturday extended Robert Vadra's interim bail till March 2 in a money laundering case and asked him to join the probe whenever asked to. Earlier, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had alleged that he was not cooperating in the matter.

Mr. Vadra sought extension of the interim bail after the ED requested for more time to file a reply to his anticipatory bail plea. Special judge Arvind Kumar granted the relief to Mr. Vadra and said the interim orders of protection from arrest will continue till the next date of hearing i.e., March 2.

**Man held for supplying illegal arms**

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW**

A person from Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district has been arrested on charges of supplying illegal weapons to supporters of a separate Khalistan, police said on Saturday.

Identified as Guddu, alias Sanjay Rath, the accused was arrested from Budhana in a joint operation by the U.P. Anti-Terror Squad and the State Special Operation Cell, Amritsar. The 25-year-old is charged with supplying 30-35 illegal pistols to several criminals in Amritsar, said the U.P. ATS in a statement.

Rath had also supplied weapons to two alleged Khalistan supporters, Daljeet Singh and Satnam Singh, who were now in police custody.

Two .32 bore pistols were recovered from them.

**Tej Hazarika ready to accept Bharat Ratna for father**

Bhupen's son says his earlier statement was misinterpreted

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW YORK**

Tej Hazarika, son of the late Bhupen Hazarika, Assamese singer-composer, has said that he had been invited by the Union government to accept the Bharat Ratna on behalf of his late father and that it would be a "tremendous honour" to receive the country's highest civilian award.

On the controversy over his remarks made on February 11 through a Facebook post, Mr. Hazarika said: "It is unfortunate that (some) people would completely misinterpret my public February 11th statement regarding the 'Bharat Ratna' itself by sadly misrepresenting my view of it."

In the Facebook post, he had said that his father's



Bhupen Hazarika

name and words were being invoked and celebrated publicly while plans were afoot to pass a "painfully unpopular" Citizenship (Amendment) Bill that was "actually undermining his document position. It would be in reality be in direct opposition to what Bupendu believed in his heart of hearts."

Mr. Hazarika said it was a

"tremendous honour for me and my family to be invited" by the Indian government to accept the 'Bharat Ratna' on behalf of his late father.

"The Government of India has graciously extended me an invitation to accept the Bharat Ratna for my father. He sacrificed much and devoted selflessly to the cause of a united and progressive India and now he is being recognised for that with this well-deserved award," Mr. Hazarika said in a statement issued to PTI in New York.

"It will be my dreamlike privilege to receive it for my father and his fans and followers everywhere. As always, I will strive to follow in my father's footsteps to work to bring light where there is darkness," he said.

**SC moved over 'false' govt. submissions**

Plea seeks to prosecute Central officers

**STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR**

The Supreme Court's verdict and Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) report on the Rafale deal notwithstanding, Prashant Bhushan, lawyer and activist, has moved the court seeking prosecution of Central government functionaries responsible for submitting false information to the it under forgery charges.

**Prashant Bhushan**  
that the assertion was baseless," Mr. Bhushan said.

**IAF weakened**

"The deal was not a mere case of corruption. The decision has broken the backbone of the Indian Air Force (IAF). The IAF had sought seven to eight squadrons consisting of 126 fighter planes. The government, however, brought it down to 36. It was meant to benefit industrialist Anil Ambani. The government has tinkered with national security," alleged the lawyer-activist.

Stating that the set of information was full of discrepancies, the activist said, "The sovereign guarantee and bank guarantee clauses have been taken out. The escrow account has been done away with. Moreover, the integrity clause has been waived. All this information has been suppressed."

**Experts view ignored**

"The opinion of three domain experts was not taken into account. They had said the benchmark price of the Rafale fighter planes cannot be arbitrarily hiked from Euro 5 bn to Euro 8 bn, which is a 60% increase. The government has bypassed the tender route. The tender was issued for 126 planes, but not for 36 Rafale jets," he alleged.

**Argentina President's 3-day visit from today**

High-level team accompanying Macri

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

Argentina's President Mauricio Macri will arrive in India on Sunday for a three-day visit, during which he will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to enhance cooperation in key sectors such as the economy, nuclear technology and space. A high-level delegation comprising the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies Emilio Monzo, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jorge Faurie, and senior officials will be accompanying Mr. Macri, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Argentina's first lady Juliana Awada will also be accompanying Mr. Macri.

The President will arrive in Agra on February 19. The state visit of Mr. Macri is taking place on the 70th year of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Mr. Macri's visit follows Mr. Modi travelling to Argentina in late 2018 for the G20 summit, during which they had a "very productive" bilateral meeting. Mr. Macri will also meet President Ram Nath Kovind.

engagements. He will travel to Mumbai on February 19. The state visit of Mr. Macri is taking place on the 70th year of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Mr. Macri's visit follows

Mr. Modi travelling to Argentina in late 2018 for the G20 summit, during which they had a "very productive" bilateral meeting. Mr. Macri will also meet President Ram Nath Kovind.

Mr

## IN BRIEF

**Sacrifice of CRPF jawans won't go in vain: Modi**

YAVATMAL

Asserting that the sacrifice of the 40 CRPF personnel killed in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama would not go in vain, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday that security forces had been given a free hand to punish those behind the attack. He was speaking at a public function in Pandharkawada in Yavatmal district, where he launched several projects. PTI

**Rajasthan hikes ex gratia for CRPF jawans' families**

JAIPUR

The Congress government in Rajasthan on Saturday revised its ex gratia to the next of kin of five CRPF jawans from the State, who were among the 40 killed in the Pulwama terror attack, from ₹25 lakh to ₹50 lakh each. The family members of the slain CRPF personnel will also get government jobs. The bodies of the deceased were cremated with full State honours in their villages on Saturday. PTI

**Kashmiri youth booked for 'derogatory' post**

BENGALURU

Abid Malik, a Kashmiri man, was booked here on Saturday for allegedly posting derogatory remarks on Facebook in the wake of the Pulwama terror attack. A complaint was lodged by Vishwa Hindu Parishad office-bearer Girish Bharadwaj. Mr. Malik had shared some images after the attack with the caption 'The real surgical attack', police said. Facebook has since deleted the account. PTI

# Centre moves to restore calm in Jammu

Officials asked to monitor law and order, highlight Pakistan's links to Pulwama attack, and ensure safety of Kashmiris

VIJAYA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

As reports of attacks on Kashmiri students and residents emerged from various places in the country, the Union Home Ministry on Saturday asked all States to take steps to ensure their safety and security. At a security review meeting on Saturday, Home Minister Rajnath Singh asked officials to highlight the involvement of Pakistan in the Pulwama terror attack as much as possible.

After arson and violence was reported from Jammu city, Mr. Singh spoke to former Deputy Chief Minister of J&K Nirmal Singh and sought his assistance in maintaining peace.

He then called BJP State president Ravinder Raina, and cautioned him that no one from the party should be encouraged to give speeches or statements that could further fan violence.

"He was told that they should not be participants in

**In memory:** CRPF jawans pay tribute to those who died in the Pulwama terror attack, at Shaurya Smarak in Bhopal. ■ A.M. FARUQI

any untoward violence," a senior official said. "There have been some reports of students and other residents of J&K experiencing threats and intimidation in the wake of the terrorist attack in Pul-

wama. Therefore, the Ministry issued an advisory to all States and Union Territories to take necessary measures to ensure their safety and security," a senior official said, quoting the advisory.

Former J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah met Mr. Singh and requested him to take all steps to ensure Jammu remained calm.

A day ago, curfew was imposed in Jammu's Gujjar Na-

gar after protesters set on fire parked vehicles in a particular community's area during a bandh called by the Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Jammu Bar Association. A

**Army boosts its presence in Jammu**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAMMU

The curfew in Jammu continued for the second day and the Army's presence was stepped up on Saturday, a day after violent protests rocked the city over a suicide attack that killed 40 CRPF jawans in Jammu.

Nine more Army columns were deployed in the city, bringing the total to 18, and the force staged flag marches in sensitive localities.

Officials said the University of Jammu postponed all examinations scheduled for the day and mobile Internet services remained suspended across Jammu region.

"The Home Minister told the officials that all political parties were together on the issue. The officials have been asked to monitor the law and order situation and highlight Pakistani links to the attack," said a senior government official. It was also decided to scale down the security cover of individuals with suspected links to Pakistan.

# India has the right to counter terror, says U.S.

Doval and Bolton agree to deal with terror groups that have been operating from Pakistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The United States supported India's sovereign right to counter cross-border terrorism.

In a telephone conversation between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his U.S. counterpart, John Bolton, on Friday, both sides agreed to deal with the anti-India terror groups that operated from Pakistan.

"Mr. Bolton supported In-

**Pakistan must crack down on JeM and all terrorists operating from its territory. Countries should uphold UNSC responsibilities to deny safe haven and support for terrorists**

JOHN BOLTON  
U.S. National Security Adviser

dia's right to self-defence against cross-border terrorism. He offered all assistance to India to bring the perpetrators and backers of

the attack promptly to justice," said the External Affairs Ministry in a statement narrating the conversation between the two. Mr. Bolton

also offered his condolences to India.

Both the officials resolved to stop Pakistan from becoming a haven for groups that targeted India and other countries in the region.

"I expressed condolences to NSA Doval yesterday [Friday] for the reprehensible terrorist attack on India. Pakistan must crack down on JeM [Jaish-e-Mohammed] and all terrorists operating from its territory. Countries

should uphold UNSC [United Nations Security Council] responsibilities to deny safe haven and support for terrorists." Mr. Bolton said in a social media post.

The conversation came soon after Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale briefed Ambassadors of 25 countries about the security situation after the JeM claimed responsibility for the suicide attack that killed at least 40 CRPF personnel.

# Protests and panic after attack

+ Fresh violence on residential quarters of people from the Valley living in Jammu

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

Panic gripped parents in Kashmir on Saturday after they received distress calls from students living outside the State, who were allegedly receiving threats after the recent Pulwama incident.

Meanwhile, amid a curfew, fresh attacks were reported on residential quarters of people from the Valley living in Jammu.

A Kashmiri student studying in Dehradun told his relatives in the Valley that the landlords were asking them to vacate. Several traders and students in Haryana also alleged that mobs publicly threatened them.

"Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) activists issued an ultimatum to Kashmiri students in Dehradun to leave the State. I approached the Director General of Police, Uttarakhand,

**End the chaos:** Traders in Srinagar stage a protest, calling for an end to the fresh violence. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Naresh Singh, and he assured us help and cooperation," said Nasir Khuehami, a student, who is coordinating help to students facing such threats.

**Safety arrangements**

A police spokesman in Srinagar said J&K police officials spoke to the Dehradun police and "all necessary arrangements for the safety and

security of students in Dehradun were put in place."

Helplines have been set up across the Valley for students and traders living outside it. In Jammu, where curfew was imposed on Friday after rioters burnt and damaged over 40 vehicles, the situation remained tense as mobs allegedly attacked residential quarters where Kashmiris live.

Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said, "Those in charge are obliged to ensure that the safety and security of Kashmiris is not compromised at a time when anti-Kashmir rhetoric has been ratcheted up."

# Tension in Haryana village as mood turns against students

Demonstrators say rooms should not be given on rent

ASHOK KUMAR  
GURUGRAM

Tension gripped Mullan village in Haryana's Ambala on Saturday after some demonstrators told the villagers to oust Kashmiri students who were staying on rent there.

The students are pursuing courses at the Maharishi Markandeshwar University. The demonstrators are said to have told the villagers that the students' activities were "suspicious". They threatened to hold demonstrations outside the houses of villagers who did not send the students away within 24 hours.

Announcements were made on loudspeaker too. A video of the situation in Mullan began to circulate on social media.

Police have requested the university authorities to accommodate the students in a hostel on campus.

**We are speaking to the sarpanches... We have stepped up security in the village and around the campus**

ASTHA MODI  
Ambala Superintendent of Police

against the shooting of the video.

Sultan Singh, Deputy Superintendent of Police, said "We have supplied our phone numbers to students and asked them to get in touch if they face any harassment."

J.K. Sharma, the university's dean of students welfare, said around a hundred off-campus students have now been accommodated in the hostel. He said the university had adequate security arrangements and it was safe inside the campus.

Two police personnel were also deployed at the Technology Education and Research Integrated Institutions campus in Kurukshetra in Haryana. M.P. Gupta, adviser to the trust running the institutions, said there were around 15 Kashmiri students in the hostel.

## Army officer killed in blast along LoC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

An Army officer was killed and a soldier suffered injuries in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.

The IED was apparently planted by "enemy forces within Indian territory" in Naushera sector and set off when an Army officer, along with his men, was patrolling the area, officials said. The officer is from the Corps of Engineers; his name is yet to be revealed.

The IED was planted 1.5 km inside the LoC in Nowshera sector and the nature of the explosion is yet to be ascertained, police said. This is the second IED attack along the LoC this year. On January 11, two Army personnel, including a major, were killed here.

## TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS,TIRUPATI MARKETING DEPARTMENT e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

The e-tenders are invited for procurement of following commodities for a period of six months by the Marketing Department, TTD, Tirupati. For Tender Notice and tender details logon to the website <http://www.tirumala.org> and <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in>. Click on Current Tenders and Select "More" and Select "Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams - MARKETING". For further details contact Phone Numbers 0877-2264079, 2264555, Fax No.0877-2264554

S. No. Name of the Item Quantity EMD Rs. Date of Tender / Download Starting &amp; ending dates

1. Asafoetida Powder 3,500 Kgs 44,000/- 16.02.2019 / 05.03.2019

2. Mustard Seeds 28,000 Kgs 38,500/- 20.02.2019 / 07.03.2019

3. Coriander Seeds 34,000 Kgs 79,000/- 20.02.2019 / 07.03.2019

Roc. No.PR4/13903/Adv.No.519/PRO/2019, Dt: 16.02.2019 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF AP LTD

Corporate Office : H.No.19-13-65/A, Srinivaspuram, Tiruchanor Road, Tirupati - 517503  
Tender Notice No.19-13-65-A-COMP-TT-01/2018-19 Dt: 16.02.2019  
Bids through "e-procurement" are invited from the eligible bidders for the following works of 124.71 Power for All under World Bank (IBR) funding in APSPD2. The tender will be made available from 15.00 hrs on 20.02.2019 onwards in the website [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in). Name of the work

1. Supply and implementation Of Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA)- Advance Distribution Management System (ADMS) In Vijayawada Town Under Package - II 20.02.2019, 18:00 Hrs. [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in)2. Erection of 11KV alternate lines to Industrial feeders under EoD in eight districts. 20.02.2019, 18:00 Hrs. [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in)

Contact No. Ph.Fax.0877-2237052 CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER/PROJECTS &amp; IPC

## TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS,TIRUPATI MARKETING DEPARTMENT e-tender cum e-reverse Auction Notice

e-tenders e-reverse auction are invited for procurement of the following items/commodities by the Marketing Department, TTD, Tirupati. Interested bidders should submit techno-commercial documents by the date of tender closing. The tenders will be evaluated by the evaluation committee constituted by the M/S TTD. Technically Qualified bidders will be allowed to participate in the e-Reverse Auction. For further details contact Phone numbers: 0877-2264079, 2264554

S. No. Name of the Item Quantity EMD Rs. Date of Tender Downloading Starting &amp; ending dates

1. Bengal Gram Chali (Bola Varely) with Asparagi 11,00,000 kgs 17,00,600/- 15.02.2019 / 02.03.2019

2. Cow Ghee with Amarki Spices (Gr.through Tins) 82,000 kgs 6,40,00/- 18.02.2019 / 06.03.2019

detailed Auction catalogue terms can be downloaded from [www.mstcommercials.com/eprocurement.html](http://www.mstcommercials.com/eprocurement.html). M/S TTD Mobile No. 96650406077, 9441476724

Roc. No.PR4/13903/Adv.No.518/PRO/2019, Dt: 16.02.2019 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED

Kagithapuram - 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu  
Ph : 0432 - 277 001 (10 Lines) e-mail: [purchase.wood@tnpl.co.in](mailto:purchase.wood@tnpl.co.in)

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No. Scope of Work Due Date

181913 Production, Supply &amp; Maintenance of Clonal Plants / seedlings at TNPL Unit 1 Kagithapuram 28.2.2019

181913 Production, Supply &amp; Maintenance of Clonal Plants / seedlings at TNPL Unit 1 Branch Nursery at Mondipatti 27.2.2019

181913 Production, Supply &amp; Maintenance of seedlings at TNPL Unit 1 Branch Nursery at Kattukollai, Ariyalur Dist. 26.2.2019

181913 Enlistment of vendors / Contractors for Executing Plantation activities under Farm Forestry and TNPL Captive Plantation Scheme for 2019-20 01.03.2019

Terms & Conditions Qty, Tender Fee, EMD are available in tender document at our websites: [www.tnpl.com](http://www.tnpl.com) / [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)

DIPR/1168/Tender/2019 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY (CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)

E-Tender Notice No.32-CECNMS-18-19-M-544 Dated: 12.02.2019

E-Tender Notice No.33-CECNMS-18-19-PBV-404 Dated: 15.02.2019

E-Tender Notice No.34-CECNMS-18-19-MB-22-II Dated: 15.02.2019

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Chief Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and only online tenders will be accepted. The Cost of the Tender Form and the Earnest Money

## WHO

## Anand Teltumbde, rights activist

Academic and columnist Anand Teltumbde is not only one of India's foremost public intellectuals, he is also someone known for speaking truth to power. In his column 'Margin Speak' in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, he has been scathing in his criticism of the Narendra Modi government, especially over issues of social welfare, communal harmony, and the persecution of social activists.

## Why was he arrested?

On August 29 last year, Mr. Teltumbde himself became the target of state action when law enforcement officials raided his home in Goa, where he is a faculty member of the Goa Institute of Management. The raid was reportedly in connection with his alleged links to the Bhima Koregaon violence of January 1, 2018. The Maharashtra police also claimed that he was involved in a Maoist plot to assassinate Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It booked him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, a

law that makes it extremely difficult for the accused to obtain bail. Mr. Teltumbde has rubbished these allegations. He approached the Supreme Court to have the First Information Report (FIR) against him quashed. On January 14 this year, the Supreme Court refused to quash the FIR, but gave him four weeks to apply for anticipatory bail. On February 1, a Pune court rejected his application for anticipatory bail, with the additional sessions judge K.D. Vadane observing that "there is sufficient material collected by the investigating officer to show the involvement of the present accused in the commission of the offence."

Mr. Teltumbde then appealed to the Bombay High Court, and it was while he was travelling to Mumbai to meet his lawyer that the Pune police arrested him at the airport at 3.30 a.m. on February 3. The arrest sparked immediate outrage on social media as the Supreme Court's pro-

tection against arrest was in force till February 11. When he was produced in court later that day, the same judge who had rejected his bail application ordered his immediate release, noting that the Supreme Court's order "is an

umbrella protection for four weeks and [Mr.] Teltumbde can avail himself of all options available to him within this period."

## Where does he hail from?

Mr. Teltumbde was born in a small village called Rajur in Maharashtra's Yavatmal district. After a degree in Mechanical Engineering and a Ph.D. in cybernetic modelling, he enjoyed a successful career as a management professional. But alongside that, Mr. Teltumbde was a civil rights activist. In his writings, he combines an Ambedkarite perspective with a Marxist understanding of political economy. His books, most notably *Khairlanji: A Strange and Bitter Crop and Republic of Caste*, are a searing indictment of the Indian republic's failure to seriously confront the challenges of caste violence and injustice.

## Where does he stand?

On January 1, 2018, when

lakhs of Dalits gathered at the Bhima Koregaon war memorial to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the 1818 Battle of Koregaon, violence broke out, and one person was killed. The police said the violence was incited by participants of the Elgaar Parishad, held by 260 non-profit groups on December 31, 2017 in Pune's Shaniwar wada. Ten activists and intellectuals were arrested on the charges of having Maoist links, instigating the Bhima Koregaon violence and plotting to assassinate the Prime Minister. The police want to add Mr. Teltumbde to the list of arrested suspects.

## What lies in store?

On February 11, the Bombay High Court extended Mr. Teltumbde's interim protection against arrest till February 22. Mr. Teltumbde has maintained that the charges are fabricated, and represent nothing but an attempt to clamp down on dissent.

G. SAMPATH

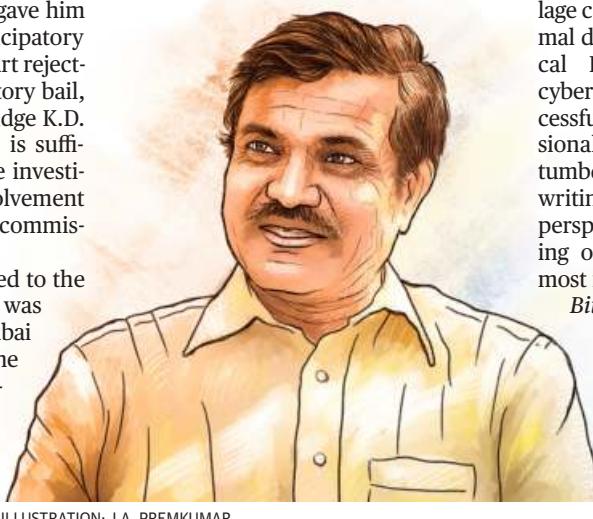


ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

## WHAT

## The lowdown on National Security Act



**WHAT IS IT?** On February 8, the Congress-led government in Madhya Pradesh invoked the National Security Act (NSA) against three men accused of killing a cow near Kharkhali village. This and a spate of recent cases, in which different State governments have invoked the stringent provisions of the NSA to detain citizens for questionable offences, have brought the focus back

on the potential abuse of the controversial law. Put simply, the NSA empowers the Centre or a State government to detain a person to prevent him from acting in any manner prejudicial to national security. The government can also detain a person to prevent him from disrupting public order or for maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community. The maximum period for which one may be detained is 12 months. But the term can be extended if the government finds fresh evidence.

**HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?** Preventive detention laws in India date back to early days of the colonial era when the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 was enacted to empower the government to arrest anyone for defence or maintenance of public order without giving the person recourse to judicial proceedings. A century later, the British government enacted the Rowlatt Acts of 1919 that allowed confinement of a suspect without trial. Post-independence India got its first preventive detention rule when the government of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru enacted the Preventive Detention Act of 1950. The NSA is a close iteration of the 1950 Act. After the Preventive Detention Act expired on December 31, 1969, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, brought in the controversial Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) in 1971 giving similar powers to the government. Though the MISA was repealed in 1977 after the Janata Party came to power, the successive government, led by Mrs. Gandhi, brought in the NSA.

**WHY DOES IT MATTER?** In the normal course, if a person is arrested, he or she is guaranteed certain basic rights. These include the right to be informed of the reason for the arrest. Section 50 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.PC) man-

dates that the person arrested has to be informed of the grounds of arrest, and the right to bail. Sections 56 and 76 of the Cr. PC also provides that a person has to be produced before a court within 24 hours of arrest. Additionally, Article 22(1) of the Constitution says an arrested person cannot be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice. But none of these rights are available to a person detained under the NSA. A person could be kept in the dark about the reasons for his arrest for up to five days, and in exceptional circumstances not later than 10 days. Even when providing the grounds for arrest, the government can withhold information which it considers to be against public interest to disclose. The arrested person is also not entitled to the aid of any legal practitioner in any matter connected with the proceedings before an advisory board, which is constituted by the government for dealing with NSA cases.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which collects and analyses crime data in the country, does not include cases under the NSA in its data as no FIRs are registered. Hence, no figures are available for the exact number of detentions under the NSA. In January, the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh arrested three persons under the NSA in connection with an alleged cow-slaughter incident in Bulandshahr. In December last year, a Manipur journalist, who had posted an alleged offensive Facebook post on the Chief Minister, was detained for 12 months under the NSA. Experts say these cases point to the fact that governments sometimes use it as an extra-judicial power. It is time to reconsider the law, they argue, because in four decades of its existence, the NSA has been in the news for all the wrong reasons.

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

## WHY

## farm sop will be hard to implement?

## What does the scheme offer?

■ The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, announced in the Budget earlier this month, aims to give ₹6,000 a year to 12 crore farmer families who own up to two hectares of cultivable land.

## What are the challenges?

■ The number of beneficiaries comes from the number of land holdings of two hectares or less, according to the last agricultural land census. However, the guidelines say a single family may hold multiple land parcels, which will be pooled to determine their eligibility for the benefit. Similarly, even landholdings bigger than two hectares, if owned by multiple families, will make them eligible for the scheme. For example, if five brothers jointly own a single 10 hectare holding, each of them will be eligible for the scheme. However, if the members of a single family unit each own three one-hectare holdings, they will not be eligible. "This is a mess," says

Vikas Rawal, a professor at JNU's Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, who specialises in agriculture economics. He says it will be difficult to use existing land records to determine beneficiaries. "Land records are held individually. How do you know which family holds how much land?" For the purposes of this scheme, family units are being defined as a husband, wife and minor children. Local administrations are more familiar with the unit of the household – which is used by most other government surveys and schemes – defined as a group living together and eating meals from a common kitchen.

## What is the status of land records?

■ States have been implementing the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme for more than a decade. While several States claim to have completed computerisation of their land records, others have not even begun the process. However, digitisation does not mean the data have been up-

dated. Experts say many land records are updated only when the land is sold and only if the transaction is legally registered. Inherited land may still be registered in a parent or grandparent's name. Multiple government departments hold the documents required to establish land ownership – the Registration Department maintains sale deeds, but maps are kept by the Survey Department, while the Revenue Department keeps property tax receipts. Verifying ownership claims is thus a daunting task. States have been asked to overhaul their land databases immediately in

preparation for the scheme, which aims to pay out its first instalment of ₹2,000 by March 31, before the Lok Sabha election.

## What happened in Telangana?

■ However, the example of Telangana shows this may be an unrealistic timeline. Despite an advanced state of progress in digitisation, the State took over three months to update its databases before implementing its own farmer income support scheme before its Assembly election last year. Since its payout was given per acre owned, rather than per family unit, it was a simpler process to identify beneficiaries on the basis of land records. Yet, researchers say almost 10 lakh beneficiaries – of a total 54 lakh – were left out of the initial instalment, as the State scrambled to update records.

## What about community farmers?

■ The scheme notes that land ownership rights are community-based in ma-

ny northeastern States and promises that an alternative method of beneficiary identification will be developed. However, many Adivasi communities in other States also cultivate land without individual rights, and may be left out of the scheme, although they are among the most vulnerable. Tenant farmers are also not included in the scheme, as they do not own the land they cultivate. With tenancy being as high as 60% in some areas, this could lead to resentment if absentee landlords receive benefits under the scheme.

## Is payment infrastructure in place?

■ The government intends to pay beneficiaries through a direct transfer to their bank accounts. From the second instalment, Aadhaar numbers will be compulsory to access benefits. Previous welfare schemes requiring Aadhaar verification have faced significant hurdles in some rural areas.

PRISCILLA JEVARAJ



## WHEN

## 14 February 2019

**Terror strikes:** At least 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed on Thursday when a convoy in which they were travelling was attacked near Awantipora on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway. A suicide bomber of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into one of the convoy's buses. It was the deadliest attack in terms of casualties in three decades of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. About 2,500 personnel of the 92, 17 and 54 battalions of the CRPF were travelling to the Valley at the time of the ambush. Home Minister Rajnath Singh blamed the "Pakistan-based, Pakistan-backed" elements for the "dastardly" attack. On Friday, the Indian government withdrew the Most Favoured Nation status given to Pakistan in 1996. Agencies said this move would hurt Pakistan's exports to India which stood at \$488.5 million in 2017-18. Pictures show the damaged CRPF bus at the site of the attack in Pulwama district, and the injured being carried to hospital. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

An environment clearance to the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed train corridor has put the spotlight on the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (TCFS) in Mumbai. The committee, chaired by Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan, has accorded wildlife clearance to the project which will encroach upon the TCFS and the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, home to leopards, in Mumbai. The pro-

posal involves diverting 3.2 hectares of forestland from the TCFS and 97.5 hectares of land close to the boundary of the forest's protected area. The high-speed train corridor or 'bullet train project' was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in Ahmedabad in September, 2017. It is expected to be ready by 2022. Ever since the project was conceived, there have been concerns about the impact of the construction, which will create enormous debris, on the sanctuary and the national park. The drilling of underground tunnels will lead to sound pollution which will disturb the tranquillity of the sanctuary. The project will entail cutting down several mangrove trees, a natural flood barrier. In the aftermath of the 2005 floods, environmentalists spoke out against the declining mangrove cover for land reclamation projects.

**How big is the sanctuary?** The TCFS consists of 896 hectares of

mangrove forests and 794 hectares of waterbodies. It is on the western bank of the creek, between the Airoli and the Vashi bridges connecting Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. It came into being in August 2015 and is Maharashtra's second marine sanctuary, after Malvan. The TCFS has been attracting flamingos in large numbers since 1994. By November every year, over 30,000 flamingos, along with their chicks, occupy the mudflats and the bordering mangroves. They stay till May, after which most of them migrate to Bhuj in Gujarat for breeding, leaving a small resident population. Besides supporting a large con-

gregation of flamingos, the area is a refuge for many resident and migratory birds. In all, 200 species have been reported, even globally threatened species such as the greater spotted eagle and others such as osprey. Other birds found here are the Pied avocet, western reef heron, black-headed ibis, common redshank, marsh sandpiper, common greenshank, curlew sandpiper, brown-headed gull, whiskered, gull-billed, Caspian and little terns. The white-bellied sea eagle and Eurasian marsh harrier have been spotted too.

**Are there any remedial measures?** While according permission, the National Board for Wildlife has laid several conditions. The project developers should provide an alternate site and funds for penal plantation of at least five times the number of mangrove plants anticipated to be lost. Because the project also encroaches upon the Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Borivali, developers have to construct under-passes

to enable smooth movement of wild animals. An existing quarry would have to be closed and a natural stormwater drainage stream, passing through the culvert system, would have to be restored and kept free of any obstruction.

## Are these steps adequate?

In general, any foray into wildlife sanctuaries is pernicious. The project plan of the corridor involves drilling a 7-km-long undersea tunnel to avoid damaging the forest and several of the mitigating measures could go a long way to encourage flamingos and other birds to continue visiting the sanctuary. However environmentalists say they aren't confident that mitigation work will be taken seriously. The ongoing Mumbai Metro Project has adversely impacted the Aarey Forest and destroyed mangroves and wetlands in Uran and the Sion-Panvel Highway, according to ecologists.

JACOB KOSHY



## In Maharashtra, protecting a sanctuary

An environment clearance to the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed train corridor has put the spotlight on the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (TCFS) in Mumbai. The committee, chaired by Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan, has accorded wildlife clearance to the project which will encroach upon the TCFS and the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, home to leopards, in Mumbai. The pro-

mangrove forests and 794 hectares of waterbodies. It is on the western bank of the creek, between the Airoli and the Vashi bridges connecting Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. It came into being in August 2015 and is Maharashtra's second marine sanctuary, after Malvan. The TCFS has been attracting flamingos in large numbers since 1994. By November every year, over 30,000 flamingos, along with their chicks, occupy the mudflats and the bordering mangroves. They stay till May, after which most of them migrate to Bhuj in Gujarat for breeding, leaving a small resident population. Besides supporting a large con-

# The need to go beyond anglophone models

The main point of a democracy is to enable the maximum number of citizens to be and feel represented



## THE CONTROVERSIAL INDIAN

**TABISH KHAIR**  
is an Indian novelist and academic  
who works in Denmark

The controversy rages in intellectual and society circles of India: do we need to replace the model of democracy that we have with the presidential model? It is a sad controversy, because it underlines the fact that the Indian thinking classes can seldom think beyond the U.K. and U.S. models. The fact remains that neither the U.K.-inspired prime ministerial model nor the U.S.-inspired presidential model pass muster. They both fail for the same reason: they do not allow the majority to have a voice. This, by definition, is a fault that any democracy cannot overlook.

### Lack of representation

In India, some people opposed to the

BJP have started promoting the idea of a U.S.-based presidential system. One of the reasons is that the U.K.-inspired winner-takes-all model basically ensures that the majority of votes is lost. These reformers are motivated by the fact that even though the BJP won only 31% of the votes in the 2014 general election, it obtained a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. The NDA won 38.5% of the votes. This indicates that 61.5% of the votes that were cast were for parties that were not part of the NDA. The 38.5% figure appears even lower when one realises that the overall turnout in the election was 66.38%.

But this was nothing unusual. In 2009, the Congress-led UPA came to power with the Congress winning only 28.55% of the votes against the BJP's 18.80%. If we consider the alliances, then too the majority of voters had voted for other parties than the UPA that came to power.

What this means is that the majority of votes cast in the last two general elections in India have been cast against the coalition or the party that came to power. This is worrying. And it has to do



with the British model of 'winner takes all'. While this model might or might not work in Britain, it is particularly problematic in India, which is a much larger nation with far more variety and differences. The fact that more than 60% of the votes cast in India in recent years are habitually disregarded is a very serious problem. It adds to feelings of resentment and lack of representation in many regions and sections of society.

To this extent, critique of the prime ministerial system is justified. But is the

U.S.-inspired presidential system the solution? Let us look at the last presidential election in the U.S. It is widely known that Hillary Clinton won 48.2% of the votes cast, while Donald Trump won only 46.1%. But Mr. Trump is today the U.S. President. If you factor in the election of senators, once again you have a scenario where the majority of voters do not find appropriate representation.

Obviously, the problem of a majority of votes being lost is bigger under the

U.K.-style winner-takes-all prime ministerial system, but the U.S.-style presidential system does not resolve the issue. Once again, the majority is not represented – and democracy is all about representation of the majority.

I think this problem of the majority of votes being wasted is more of an issue in a country like India, which has far more economic, cultural and ethnic diversity than either the U.K. or the U.S. To feel largely unrepresented in India is a greater problem than to feel largely unrepresented in those countries where economic, regional and even cultural gaps are smaller. But in any case, it is a major problem in any democracy.

### Proportional representation

Which means we return to my original complaint: that the Indian thinking classes cannot think beyond the U.K. and U.S. models. Surely, there are other options? For example, many developed European nations work with very different models, most of which ensure proportional representation. Here you do not have a winner-takes-all U.K. model or a slanted U.S. electoral college mo-

del. Instead, political parties, with a given cut-off limit, are represented in Parliament largely on the basis of the percentage of votes that they win. (Or, as in France's more problematic presidential model, there is at least a narrowing down of the choice over successive rounds of voting.)

It is not that difficult to allot a number of seats to a percentage of votes. For instance, 3% of the votes won can mean 5 or 10 or 12 seats. And this multiplies with every 3%. The only thing it requires is a graded list of politicians published by a political party in advance, so that when a party wins, say, five seats, the first five candidates listed by the party enter Parliament.

One advantage of this system is a reduction of the 'celebrity' factor, though countries like Denmark also allow for the personal popularity of individual politicians to be rewarded. I don't see why a reworking of such options would not be far better than either the U.K.- or U.S.-inspired 'anglophone' models. After all, the main point of a democracy is to enable the maximum number of citizens to be and feel represented.

# Let them eat JAM

Who said food, jobs, and money matter? This is the age of Digital India



## ALLEGEDLY

**G. SAMPATH**  
is Social Affairs Editor, The Hindu

I know a lot of people are disturbed by a report alleging that India's unemployment rate is at a 45-year high. My message to them: Relax! It's nonsense.

The only thing anyone can logically infer from this SSO-called survey is that the government doesn't have the data to show that India's unemployment rate has been declining steadily since May 2014, before plunging in December 2018 to its lowest ever since the time of Chandragupta Maurya. In other words, this is a data problem, not an employment problem.

### The Indian ocean of employment

Just because we don't have data to show 0% unemployment doesn't mean that India's unemployment is not 0%. It only means that the government has been creating so many jobs so quickly that data generation hasn't kept pace with employment generation. Only an idiot will complain if his government is more focussed on job creation than in recording data about the trillions of jobs that it is creating on a daily basis.

Also, the first sign of high unemployment is social unrest. When was the last time you saw someone protesting, or even waving a black flag at the Prime Minister? On the contrary, people are so happy with the government that they are voluntarily handing over their black underwear, black hankies, and black socks to the police every time they come in proximity to a ministerial convoy.

Look around. Do you see anyone sitting idle? I don't. Everywhere I look, people are busy on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, PayTM, Snapchat, Snap-



deal, or Snapdragon, toiling 24x7 to make India the world's largest producer of data.

Add to this the billions of Indians working as Transportation Managers for Ola and Uber, and the billion more working as Senior Delivery Executives for Swiggy, Zomato, Amazon, and Flipkart. You are practically looking at negative unemployment: meaning, not only does every Indian have a job, they actually have two or three jobs each. So, if the NSSO survey was any good, it would have shown India's unemployment rate to be around minus 200%.

Take someone like me. I already have a day job. But even I do a second shift at night for Netflix, manufacturing trillions of bytes of user-generated data without even taking a salary. Why do I do that? Because I am a hard-working Indian who knows that data is oil and every bit of data that I produce will reduce global oil prices by increasing the supply so that aggregate demand is reduced, thereby enabling our government to help the poor by hiking fuel prices only once a day.

But I am a modest drop in the Indian ocean of employment, though not a drop to be ignored. I am sorry to go public with this but I am really astonished that no one from the NSSO contacted me to ask me if I was employed or not, which goes to show how flawed its methodology is. In my entire working life, I have never been included in any NSSO survey, ever. Isn't that odd? Not just me, no one in my entire extended family has ever been a part

of an NSSO survey. In fact, I know nobody – not one person – who has been asked to fill out a questionnaire by an NSSO team. Now, I am not suggesting that NSSO, like the Abominable Snowman, doesn't really exist. But clearly, there are enough reasons to view its numbers with suspicion, before dismissing them outright.

Had the NSSO been a truly neutral institution, its unemployment survey would have reached out to the employed as well, to get their side of the story. But it did not. No wonder its report was not approved by the approved approvers.

### What truly matters

Also, a major point that's gotten lost in all the controversy is that job creation is a very minor matter. Any Tom, Dick or Rahul can do that. What's much more important, and also the biggest achievement of this government, is ensuring that every single Indian has a unique identity, and not just a unique identity, but also a Jan Dhan bank account and mobile number linked to that identity. This innovative focus on the holy trinity of Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) has been praised by Marketing Vishwaguru Sri Kotler-ji as the 'Not Jobs but JAM' approach to development.

Contrary to what common sense might tell you, it doesn't matter whether people have food, jobs, or money. These obsessions are so analog they are practically 19th century. We are in Digital India now. What people need in Digital India are the bare digital necessities for survival in the digital economy: a digital ID, a bank account to digitally convert government cash transfers into insurance premiums and channel them into equity markets, and an Internet connection accessible via mobile phone. This is the JAM that India's starving millions need today. How can anyone not be grateful to a government that has done more than any of its predecessors to deliver JAM to India's 99%?

# In the Chishti shrine in Ajmer

Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti attracted kings and peasants alike to his discourses



## WHERE STONES SPEAK

**RANA SAFVI**  
is a historian, author and blogger documenting India's syncretic culture

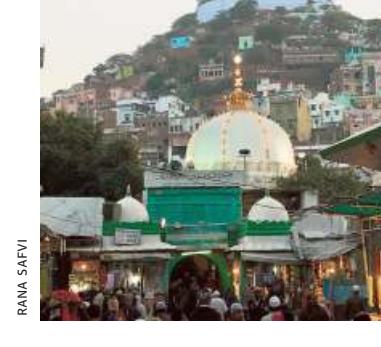
The name Ajmer immediately conjures up a vision of Khwaja Garib Nawaz and his dargah. It reminds me of the saint Moinuddin Hasan Chishti, who was generous like the sea and hospitable like the earth. Today, his dargah, with its saintly white dome and golden crown, hosts millions of devotees who soak in the generosity of his blessings. It was this affection and love for all of humanity that earned Moinuddin Hasan Chishti the name Khwaja Garib Nawaz, or cherisher of the poor.

### Devotees from far and wide

Moinuddin Hasan Chishti was born in Sijistan (modern-day Sistan) in Iran in 1141-42 CE. After receiving Khilafat at the age of 52 from Sheikh Usman Harawani, he went on Hajj to Mecca and Medina. While he was praying in the Prophet's mosque in Medina, the Khwaja is said to have heard the Prophet telling him to go to Hindustan and to the city of Ajmer.

At that time, he had no idea where Ajmer was. However, he proceeded via Baghdad and Herat to Lahore and thence to Delhi and Ajmer. Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor had already defeated Prithviraj Chauhan and established his rule in Delhi. Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti started living and preaching in Ajmer. His instructive discourses, full of spiritual insights, soon drew the local populace as well as kings and nobles and peasants and the poor from far and wide.

The shrine has been visited by Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Sher Shah Suri, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Dara Shu-



koh, Jahanara Begum and Aurangzeb, among many others. Even today, film-stars and heads of states, both the rich and the poor make a pilgrimage to the shrine.

### Construction and additions

The original dargah was made of wood, write Carl W. Ernst and Bruce B. Lawrence in *Sufi Martyrs of Love*. A stone canopy was built over it later. When Mahmud Khilji, the Sultan of Malwa, conquered Ajmer in 1455, no concrete structure had been built over the grave of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

The first concrete evidence we get of construction in the dargah complex is the cupola of the shrine that was embellished in 1532, as indicated in an inscription written in golden letters in the northern wall of the tomb. This is the beautiful dome we see today. In keeping with Indo-Islamic architecture, a lotus adorns the dome and a golden crown offered by Nawab Haidar Ali Khan of Rampur sits on top of it.

Most of the additions made to the shrine were done during the reign of Akbar, by the emperor himself. Akbar first visited the shrine in 1562 after he heard wandering minstrels singing the praise of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti as he was returning from a hunt. He decided to proceed to Ajmer immediately. Thus began his annual pilgrimage.

In 1568, Akbar offered a dagh, or brass cauldron, for cooking of langar. This was ensconced at the entrance.

Another cauldron was offered by Jahangir in 1614. It is placed opposite the first cauldron. Both cauldrons are in use today. Devotees offer sacks of rice and wheat for the gruel that is cooked in here. Only vegetarian food is cooked in this dargah.

Akbar gave instructions to build mosques and khanqahs in Ajmer in 1569. The Akbari mosque of red sandstone is probably a result of those orders. An elegant mosque was also built by Shah Jahan in 1637 and is to the west of the shrine, along with the Shah Jahan Darwaza.

### A sense of peace

I walked into the dargah through the dargah bazaar and through the well-decorated Nizami Gate, which is yellow with floral designs. This was built in 1911 by British engineers at the best of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Naqqar Khana, or drum house, is next to it. It is from here that ensembles would have once played music to greet visitors to the Khwaja's threshold. A huge silver chandelier hangs here. This was presented by the Golden Temple committee to the dargah.

From here I walked through the courtyards into the Ihaata Noorani, or Quarter of Light, where the main shrine is located. The smell of incense and flowers greeted me.

A railing around the main shrine was offered by Jahanara Begum, the Sufi princess and daughter of Shah Jahan. Jahanara Begum also built a small platform in front of the other door that is known as Begumi Chabutra after her title of Padshah Begum.

There are two doors that go into the main sanctum. Devotees enter it with baskets of flowers, chadors to be offered to the Khwaja. As we wait our turn to enter the dargah, a sense of peace prevails. This is one dargah where women are allowed. A silver and mother of pearl canopy offered by Jahangir can be seen on four silver posts above the cenotaph. The rest of it is covered in flowers and chadors.

# Should the state leave religion alone?

There is no simple yes or no answer to this question. Much depends on what we mean by the term religion



## THE PUBLIC EYE

**RAJEEV BHARGAVA**  
is Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi

The Sabarimala judgment and its aftermath have brought the issue of state intervention in religion back to the table: should governments leave religion alone, instead of interfering in it? Much depends on what one means by religion.

In one sense, religion refers to that aspect of human life where we relate to the transcendent, through personal belief or collective practice. This transcendent entity can be seen either as existing within human persons or outside them, in the highest possible realm. Religion then largely consists of spiritual exercises by which one digs deeper or goes higher. A mind-boggling variety of ways to carry out these exercises exist – god-dependent, gods and goddesses-dependent, or entirely independent of god. Let us just call this religion faith. To the question, should governments leave faith alone, the answer simply has to be

a resounding yes. Not that the government's interference is always unwarranted. For example, if collective rituals involve human sacrifice, then states should intervene. The point is that there must be a general presumption that governments must not interfere in faith.

### Intervening in organised religion

However, it is commonplace that as faith communities become large, they feel the need to be rule-bound; in order to become stable and self-sustaining, they institutionalise themselves. But institutionalisation often involves the introduction of hierarchical relations of power and status. Some people in this relation have more power and status, are 'more equal' than others. They systematise beliefs surrounding spiritual exercises into explicit doctrines. They insist on doctrinal purity and lay down strict but spurious rules that split followers into the normal and the deviant. They fix violent and exclusionary penalties for the 'deviants' and thereby manufacture gated communities with robust notions of who is inside and who is outside. Concepts of heresy and infidelity are generated and a whole society infested with persecution comes into being. In this second sense, religion refers to institutionalised faith communities, such as the those headed by a church,

math or sangha. Now, spiritual exercises cannot be undertaken without belonging to such strongly institutionalised religion. Should the state allow discrimination, exclusion, marginalisation, humiliation, oppression, or persecution by elite-controlled religious institutions, or instead ensure that those within the faith community lead a free, dignified life? My view on this is crystal clear. A government must, albeit with great care and sensitivity, intervene in organised religion to prevent any practices of domination within it. It should also inhibit any attempt on its part to dominate members of other religious

communities.

There is, however, a third sense in which the term religion is used, one that refers neither only to faith, nor to powerful institutions that order and control it, but instead to historically transmitted traditions, indeed to an entire way of life. Thus, people frequently say that Hinduism is not a religion in the conventional sense but is rather a way of life. But if religion is a whole way of life and if this entails the breakdown of the very distinction between religion and society or religion and culture, then all relations of hierarchy and domination that are found in society are

subsumed under 'religion'. In this conception of Hinduism as a way of life, caste or gender hierarchies are as religious as they are social. Caste domination or gender violence then become integral to Hinduism. How can a state that has accepted freedom and equality as one of its founding principles turn a blind eye to these oppressive practices within the Hindu way of life? In short, if religion is conceived as a way of life, then the state is duty-bound to intervene in religion. Here, the answer to the question, should the government leave religion alone, must be an even more categorical no.

### Keeping a principled distance

It is because religion is a complex and morally ambivalent phenomenon that there cannot be a single, emphatic yes or no answer to the question raised above. In my own work over decades, I have consistently maintained that a strict separation between state and religion is not desirable. The state can neither take the view that it will control all aspects of religion, nor that it will have nothing to do with it; that no matter what happens, it will always keep religion at arm's length. The state must keep, what I have called, a principled distance from all religions. What does it entail for law and public

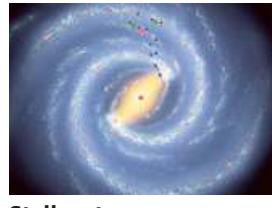
policy in relation to religion? On the principled distance view, there is absolutely no need for a state to have any law or public policy pertaining to matters of faith untainted by control, hierarchy or exclusion. A state must not interfere in what faith we have and how it is practised. Faith in god, gods and goddesses or in god-independent human qualities such as reason must remain free from interference. But equally, a just, egalitarian, and freedom-sensitive state cannot abandon its obligation to remove the residue of intra- or inter-religious domination from its society. This is why laws that prohibit triple talaq or lift restrictions on women to enter temples such as Sabarimala must be enacted. Customs that demean or humiliate women must go.

I have consistently argued that this is precisely how secularism is conceived in India: not as a political perspective that permits authoritarian control of religion by the state; nor one that encourages a libertarian hands-off approach towards it; but as one that promotes a nuanced and flexible policy of value-based political or legal decision on whether or not to intervene in religion. This principled distance variety of secularism is the unique ethical stance of the Indian Constitution

## CAPSULE



**Artificial leaf**  
Researchers from The University of Illinois at Chicago have developed a new leaf, which can take up carbon dioxide from the air, almost 10 times more than natural leaves and convert them to carbohydrates.



**Stellar stream**  
A new study published in *Astronomy & Astrophysics* has shown a stream of at least 4,000 stars moving together in space. Astronomers have planned to study them to understand more about Milky Way's gravitational field.



**Tool tactics**  
A new study published in *PLOS ONE* has shown that orangutans are capable of flexible tool use. They can make complex decisions about out-of-reach food and decide if the available tool would help do the task.

# NIIST's photoluminescent ink shows good photostability

The ink retains over 70% photoluminescence intensity at the end of one month

R. PRASAD



**Protected:** The dye is encapsulated within double-layered silica nanoparticles, say Surendran (left) and Kanakangi Nair

Using a novel approach, researchers at the National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (CSIR-NIIST), Thiruvananthapuram have formulated a fast-drying fluorescent ink that retains over 70% photoluminescence intensity even at the end of one month. There was 26% drop in emission intensity within one hour of printing using the ink containing the fluorescent dye and further drop of 2% in two hours. But no reduction in emission intensity was seen after three hours.

This has become possible with the team led by Dr. K.P. Surendran from the Materials Science and Technology Division at NIIST encapsulating the fluorescent dye – fluorescein – within double-layered silica nanospheres. Since encasing the dye using a single layer of silica did not completely prevent dye leakage, the researchers used a second layer for encapsulation. The silica nanospheres are 70-80 nanometres in size.

As a result of the double-layered encapsulation, fluorescent dye is largely protected from dispersants, solvents and binders present in the ink. So there is less likelihood of reduction in photo-

luminescence intensity through dye leakage. Encapsulation of the dye in double-layered silica nanoparticles also prevents cluster formation.

The dye used without any encapsulation lacks photostability and the fluorescence completely decays within a couple of hours. The results were published in the journal *ACS Omega*.

Fluorescent ink is used for a wide range of applications in domains such as anticounterfeiting, information storage, bioimaging, smart packaging, and nanoelectronics.

Retention of photoluminescence for prolonged periods is a major challenge in photo-

resistant inks.

"Since the fluorescent dye should not come in contact with the solvent present in the ink as this would cause decay in photoluminescence, we encapsulated it in double-layered silica nanoparticles," says Kanakangi S. Nair from NIIST and first author of the paper. "The fluorescent double-layered silica nanoparticles assemblies were synthesised through a reverse microemulsion technique."

When dye encapsulated in double-layered nanoparticles was dispersed in the solvent, it shows strong fluorescence. But when the

encapsulated dye was formulated into ink, the emission intensity reduced by 10%. "The fluorescence gets slightly reduced but is not significantly affected by other components present in the ink," says Dr. Surendran.

## Quick drying

Another advantage that the team observed is the quick drying of the ink at room temperature. "It dried in less than 20 seconds at room temperature. The formulation of the ink was meticulously designed so as to allow quick drying without using any external drying agents," Dr. Surendran notes. However, most commercial fluorescent inks are cured using ultraviolet lamps or infrared emitters, or a combination of both.

The dried ink containing the dye is cream in colour under visible light but turns green when exposed to ultraviolet light. When the UV light is cut, the dye immediately regains its original colour (cream).

The team used commercially available dye and is now working to encapsulate NIIST propriety dyes using the same procedure. The

proprietary dyes have multiple emissions and so will help in increasing the security feature of the ink.

# What drives flowering, fruiting in Sikkim's rhododendrons?

Temperature and day length play an important role

AATHIRA PERINCHERY



**In full bloom:** Rhododendron aeruginosum trees flowering in an alpine region in Sikkim • SHWETA BASNETT

Neems are in bloom and mango trees fruiting in many parts of India now, but what determines such seasonal changes? At least, in the Sikkim Himalaya temperature, day length and genetic relatedness between species determine when rhododendrons put out their first buds, flowers and fruits, finds a new study.

Interest in tree phenology

– the timing of biological events such as flowering and fruiting – has increased after climate change has been shown to alter it, especially of plants in high-altitudes. But what abiotic factors play a role in such changes, and do closely-related tree species respond similarly to them? To find out, researchers at the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment including Shweta Basnett studied rhododendron trees in sub-alpine and alpine forests between 3,400-4,230 metres above sea level in Sikkim's Kanchenjunga Alpine Sanctuary.

Between 2013 and 2015, the team monitored budding, flowering, fruiting (arrival of first fruits, immature green fruits and mature brown fruits) and fruit dehiscence (splitting open of fruit to release seeds) and the duration of phenology in 320 trees of 10 rhododendron species for every 15 days. Si-

multaneously, they collected data on temperature. Results from these, combined with data on day length in this region, reveal that the onset of budding, flowering and initial fruiting were mainly associated with a longer day length (around 13 hours) and higher temperature.

## Relatedness matters

The team also collected DNA from leaves of each species to see how genetically closely-related the 10 rhododendron species are, to analyse if this plays a role in their phenological patterns. Relatedness did indeed influence early phenology events: closely-related species put out their first buds, flowers and fruits together.

But when resources (sunshine as reflected by day length, and temperature) decreased as winter neared,

all rhododendrons experienced later phenology events – the arrival of immature green fruits, mature brown fruits and finally, fruit dehiscence – regardless of whether they were closely related or not, says Basnett. Similarly, relatedness did not play a role in phenology of rhododendrons with increasing altitude. Harsher environments at higher elevations – including lower temperatures, heavy snowfall and barren and rockier lands higher up – could be trumping over the species' common evolutionary history here, write the authors in *Ecosphere*.

"Different factors play a role in rhododendron phenology and the study contributes to baseline information about the species in India and the world," added Basnett.

## Decoding how leptospirosis bacteria interact with human proteins

35 pathogen-host protein interactions were identified

ASWATHI PACHA

By studying proteins from leptospirosis-causing bacteria and the human body, researchers have identified the key pathogen-host protein interactions that are responsible for the development of the disease.

By using a wide range of advanced bioinformatics and mathematical models, the team was able to narrow down to 35 interactions between 13 bacterial and 35 human proteins that may hold potential for vaccine development. A total of 145 well-characterized proteins from the bacteria and 493 proteins from the human body were analysed to draw the conclusion.

Leptospirosis is one of the emerging zoonotic diseases and causes almost 60,000 deaths every year as there is

currently no preventive vaccine for humans. The researchers studied the proteome (entire protein set) of *Leptospira interrogans* – the most vulnerable species – and the proteome of human beings.

### Interaction network

They analysed the inter-species and intra-species protein interactions and constructed a pathogen-host interaction network which was further studied using mathematical models to identify the key interactions.

Out of the 586 pathogen-host protein interactions, 35 were identified as key interactions. "When we get an infection, the whole protein network system in our body is disturbed. We tracked the bacterial proteins and found that they are directly attacking the proteins associated

with the immune system in our body," says Swapnil Kumar who is first author of the paper published in *Scientific Reports*.

Also, two outer membrane proteins and two periplasmic proteins of the bacteria which take part in the interactions were found conserved. These proteins target human proteins involved in functions such as signal transduction, antibacterial humoral response, cell cycle and cell division. This signifies that these proteins can be explored further for effective and novel therapeutics and vaccine development.

"Validations of the findings are under way in mice model," says Dr. Jayashankar Das, the corresponding author of the paper from the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre, Gandhinagar.

## Great Indian hornbills can adapt to modified habitat: study

The birds could adapt to plantations provided food, nesting requirements were met

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Amid a changing environment, with natural homes of birds getting depleted as natural forests make way for plantations and other such modified terrain, comes the good news of how the great Indian hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*) adapts to such change. A group of researchers from NCBS-TIFR in Bengaluru and Nature Conservation Foundation in Mysuru observed eight hornbill nests, three located in contiguous forests and five located in modified habitats such as coffee plantations. They found that the birds followed similar nesting behaviour but adapted to the changed environment. The study is published in the journal *Ornithological Science*.

The team chose to study the great Indian hornbills nesting in the Anamalai hills. For comparison, the researchers located the study in the modified habitat in the Valparai plateau and the contiguous forests in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve and the Vazhachal Reserve forests. The modified habitat included tea, coffee and cardamom plantations and tribal set-

tlements. "Most of the nests were known to us as we have been studying hornbills and monitoring them for many years now. Some of the nests were discovered during the study with the help of local tribal assistants," says T R Shankar Raman of Nature Conservation Foundation and an author of the paper, in an email to *The Hindu*. Describing the mode of observation, he says: "We started monitoring nests from the beginning of breeding season in December. After the females had entered the

nests, we conducted direct nest observations on multiple nests using standard field protocols and taking care not to disturb the birds... All observations were done manually."

### Nesting habits

Hornbills are secondary cavity nesters and choose cavities formed in large trees for nesting. Also they are monogamous, and the female, after copulation, seals herself in the hole until the initial breeding period of two-four months is over. During this

time, the female and the young ones are fed by the male bird, with fruit such as figs and animal matter. So, in principle, along with other threats such as hunting, modified land use, ensuing forest fragmentation, felling of large trees with the potential for nesting, the loss of fruit bearing trees could also affect hornbill nesting habits.

"Great hornbills may adapt to habitat modification provided that their key requirements for food and nesting are fulfilled in the habitats like coffee and forest fragments," says Pooja Pawar from NCBS-TIFR and the first author of the paper.

Considering that hornbills use same nest over years, protection of these known nest trees and retention of large trees that can be potential nests is absolutely essential. In addition, it would be necessary to have a diversity of native tree species, particularly figs, laurels and other food plants, the study concludes. "We also highlight the potential of rainforest fragments and coffee plantation for conservation of hornbills outside of protected areas," she adds.

It will help add seaweeds to our diet



### SPEAKING OF SCIENCE

D. BALASUBRAMANIAN

About 37% of the area of the entire world is agricultural land, a third of which (about 11%) is used for crops. And as the population of the world rises to 9.7 billion people in 30 years, the land available for crops will reduce. Thus, there is an immediate need to try and improve the efficiency of food production. Experts predict that agricultural yield must increase by 50% between now and 2050. How to do this is the question facing agricultural scientists across the world.

Plants use sunlight to produce energy for their metabolism and food production. This is referred to as photosynthesis (wherein sunlight is used to make energy-rich molecules needed for producing food molecules). However, the efficiency of photosynthesis is rather low, just about 5% in most land crops. The most efficient land crop with 8% average is sugarcane, which is not all that edible, except for the sugar in it. If only we can increase the efficiency of crops such as wheat, rice and other grains!



**Untapped resource:** Seaweed farmers at mandapam camp in Ramnad district.

M.J. PRABU

rial, particularly when the plant's leaves close in order to reduce water loss by evaporation. If we can find ways to reduce this photorespiration, edible food products can go up.

Many of these research attempts involve the introduction of external genes and gene products into food crops, and these are opposed by groups of people who do not want genetic engineering and genetically modified plants. This is a curious situation where science finds ways to deal with genes so as to improve yields while society opposes it based on worries about safety, as well as mo-

nopolistic control of food material through exclusive patents and other factors. A via media solution needs to be found, failing which food production may not increase all to feed the ever growing population of the world.

### Include seaweeds in our diet

It is in this context that we need to open our minds and expand our ideas about our food habits. The most efficient use of photosynthesis is actually not by land plants but by micro and macro algae, such as seaweeds. These are the champions, contributing to about

50% of all photosynthesis in the world. And many of them, notably those with dark green, red and brown colour, are edible. They are low-calorie and nutrient-dense food items and eaten by people in most parts of South East Asia – Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, China, Korea and Japan, and also in some in coastal Atlantic region. A site called "The definitive guide to edible seaweed" (foodrepublic.com) gives the details about several of these food items.

### Seaweed research

About 844 seaweed species are reported from India, a country with a coast line of 7,500 km. Peninsular India from Gujarat all the way to Odisha and West Bengal has a coast line of 5,200 km, and Andaman and Nicobar together have a coast line of 2,500 km. Thus, while we have 63% of our land area for crop agriculture, we should not forget this vast coastal area, much of which breeds seaweeds. Research in the area of edible seaweeds in India has been going on for over 40 years.

The Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCR) at Bhavnagar, Gujarat has done pioneering work in the area. Dr Amitava Das, its Director, tells us that over 20 scientists there have been involved for decades in research and propagation of seaweeds as potential of foods for people, as well as for isolating important chemicals of technological importance and crop biostimulant purposes.

Professor CRK Reddy, who was at

CSMCR for decades and currently at the Institute for Chemical Technology, Mumbai, has been an active advocate of seaweeds as food.

He points out that among the seaweeds found in plenty, Ulva, Pyropia, Porphyra and Kappaphycus are edible and that it will be good to cultivate them in large scale, as is done in countries like Japan. And Dr Arockiaraj Johnbosco points out (Times of India, 12-1-2016) that, of the 306 seaweeds in the Gulf of Mannar, 252 are edible. Thus India should embark on Mariculture as vigorously as Agriculture, given its 7,500 km-long coastal line. Further, it does not require pesticides, fertilizers and water for irrigation, which is an added advantage.

Seaweeds are rich sources of vitamins A and C, and minerals such as Ca, Mg, Zn, Se and Fe. They also have a high level of vegetable proteins and omega 3 and 6 fatty acids. Best of all, they are vegetarian, indeed vegan, and do not have any fishy smell, thus good and acceptable. For all for those who worry about this "new" introduction, let us recall that India took quickly to imports like potatoes, tea and most recently to soyabean.

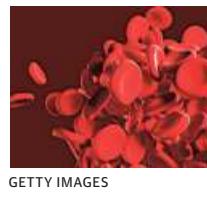
Professor Reddy has suggested that we may "break in" through the use of seaweeds as pizza seasoning, in spice sachets, so that people get used to them. After all, if the entire Eastern Asian population eats them, why not we from South Asia?

dbala@hpe.org

## AROUND THE WORLD

## Subterfuge for cancer

Scientists in the U.S. have created decoys of platelets – the body's clot-forming blood cells – that, in preclinical models, prevented the formation of dangerous blood clots in vessels (or thrombosis) and combated cancer metastasis. Their decoys – whose effects can be reversed quicker than standard antiplatelet drugs – represent a promising therapeutic strategy for treating thrombosis and cancer metastasis, which are two leading causes of death and disability worldwide. Platelets play a vital role in the human circulatory system as they protect the body from bleeding and maintain the integrity of blood vessels. However, hyperactive platelets also contribute to an array of diseases. Patients with thrombosis often have elevated platelet counts, which can also promote the spread of malignant cancer cells. The decoys displayed wide-ranging anti-cancer effects and broke up platelet-mediated aggregation of human breast cancer cells, preventing their spread in a chip model of the human vasculature, and inhibited metastatic tumour growth in mice. The findings appear in *Science Translational Medicine*.



GETTY IMAGES

## A new pill for asthma?

A team of researchers in the U.K. and Canada have found that a prospective asthma treatment in clinical trials reverses muscular abnormalities (hallmarks of the disease) in the airways of asthma patients. Their findings support the idea that the treatment could address a major gap in clinical care – the lack of approved drugs that can target airway muscle abnormalities. Their experimental approach could provide further insight into the origins and treatment of asthma in future studies. Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition that affects over 300 million people worldwide and its prevalence is projected to grow. The new candidate asthma treatment, named fevipiprant, which is currently in phase 3 clinical trials, works by targeting a receptor called DP2. The findings appear in *Science Translational Medicine*.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

## A nano painkiller

In what could be an alternative to morphine, researchers in France have made a new nano-painkiller which they have tested in rodents. In their study, three versions of their natural nanoparticle showed anti-pain effects when administered to inflamed rat paws. The new approach could open the door to treatments for intense pain without the severe side effects associated with morphine or related synthetic opioids, the authors say. Chronic pain is highly prevalent around the world, and is recognised as an important global health challenge. Small, naturally occurring peptides in the body like enkephalin, which bind to the body's opioid receptors, are an appealing option to treat pain because they activate  $\delta$ -opioid receptor ligands, which are thought to have a lower abuse potential than receptors morphine activates. In search of a better solution to control pain, the scientists created a new nano-drug using Leu-enkephalin (LENK) neuropeptides. By connecting LENK to squalene, a natural and biocompatible lipid, the authors created nanoparticles (NPs) that could be precisely delivered to the area of pain through intravenous injection. The findings appear in *Science Advances*.



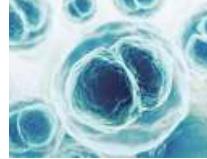
GETTY IMAGES

## Cutting an exercise risk with FODMAP

Research in the U.K. indicates that cutting out specific foods can alleviate the gastrointestinal issues some people experience when they exercise, with over two-thirds of people involved in a new study reporting an improvement. Runners in particular can be susceptible to symptoms which are similar to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Previous research has shown that a low fermentable oligosaccharide, disaccharide, monosaccharide and polyol (or FODMAP) diet can help people with IBS. A low FODMAP diet reduces some of the issues caused by exercise, such as stomach cramps and bloating, and improves a person's perceived ability to exercise. FODMAP foods include those containing lactose (milk, yogurts and cheese), fructans (found in cereals, breads and pasta), galactic-oligosaccharides (legumes and onions) and excess fructose (for example apples, pears and asparagus) and polyols (often added as a food additive). The findings appear in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*.

## Tweaks to combat damaging cell effects

Some of the damaging cell effects linked to ageing could be prevented by manipulating tiny parts of cells, a study in the U.K. shows. Scientists have shed light on how the harm caused by senescence – a vital cell process that plays a key role in diseases of ageing – could have relevance for age-related diseases including cancers and diabetes, although they caution that further research is needed. During senescence, cells stop dividing. This can be beneficial in assisting wound-healing and preventing excessive growth seen in cancers. Some aspects of senescence are also harmful and can lead to tissue damage and the deterioration of cell health as seen in diseases of older age. The researchers focused on a chain of harmful processes triggered by senescence, known as the senescence-associated secretory phenotype (SASP), a cascade of chemical signals that can promote damage to cells through inflammation. The study appears in *Genes and Development*.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

## New technique to treat Crohn's disease

A new technique using patients' own modified cells to treat Crohn's disease has been proven to be effective in experiments using human cells. The clinical trial of the treatment is expected to start in the next six months. The scientists in the U.K. have developed the technique by studying white blood cells taken from patients who have Crohn's disease, and comparing them to cells of healthy people. Their findings allowed them to develop a treatment involving taking patients' cells, and growing them in a special culture so that they behave more like cells from healthy people. The research appears in the journal *Gastroenterology*.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

## DEMYSTIFYING SCIENCE

## What is Aspergillus fumigatus?

*A. fumigatus* is a fungus that occurs virtually everywhere on earth, as a dark grey, wrinkled cushion on damp walls or in microscopically small spores that blow through the air and cling to wallpaper, mattresses and floors. Healthy people usually have no problem if the spores find their way into their body as their immune defence system will put the spores out of action. However, the fungus can threaten the lives of people with a compromised immune system such as AIDS patients or people who are immunosuppressed following an organ transplantation. – Science Daily

## Going the distance

Long travel to access diagnosis and treatment for TB often pushes patients to drop out mid-way, says a forthcoming study

JYOTI SHELAR

How far do tuberculosis (TB) patients travel in the course of treatment? Anywhere from 86 to 650 km, according to an ongoing study by the Mumbai-based Foundation for Medical Research (FMR). By understanding the long distances travelled by drug-resistant TB patients in Mumbai (from the onset of symptoms to getting the right treatment) the study seeks to delve into why patients have to travel. The key causes, it emerges, are 'doctor shopping' (a practice of seeing multiple doctors for the same illness) and India's fragmented health-care system. The study will be submitted for publication in the near future.

Says Dr. Nerges Mistry, Director, FMR: "There are various factors that force patients to travel. Many patients travel on their own will. Sometimes they are in denial and want to confirm the diagnosis and sometimes they are sent from one health provider to another for investigations and treatment. The factors, therefore, could be administrative, systemic or simply one's own will... We have so far seen that patients travel anywhere between 86 km to 650 km within city limits from the onset of symptoms to treatment."

Similar studies have shown that travel time and distance negatively impact the well-being of patients.



GETTY IMAGES

A study, in 2016, published in the *British Medical Journal*, said that the farther patients lived from the health-care facilities they needed to attend, the worse their health outcomes. Another study published in 2017, in the WHO *South-East Asia Journal of Public Health*, looked at depression and said that it was important to have a collaborative-care model and integrated management for mental health. Medical experts are now rooting for an integrated approach towards TB and other diseases, whereby there can be coordinated and comprehensive treatment under one roof.

**One-stop treatment**

Says Dr. Mistry, "Patients have various co-morbidities. Some may re-

quire consultation for their eyes while others may need a ear check-up. A one-stop design where they can get some solutions under one roof is necessary." She adds that a redesigning of the system on these lines is essential not only for TB patients but also for patients with other diseases.

In a study published last month, FMR researchers have already looked at various health-seeking pathways of patients with drug-resistant TB in Mumbai. Dr. Mistry and other authors tracked the journeys made by 46 drug-resistant patients in Mumbai's 15 high burden TB wards. The study is to delve into the journeys these patients make in terms of the distances they travel.

Says Dr. Yatin Dholakia, TB spe-

cialist and secretary of the Maharashtra State Anti-Tuberculosis Association, "It is very essential to look at the reasons in order to find solutions. The distance travelled to access diagnosis and treatment often pushes patients to drop out mid-way. This is dangerous in TB." Typically, he says, a patient first goes to the nearest provider when symptoms arise. He continues, "If the local health-care provider is not competent enough, the patient goes to another doctor. The patient travels further for diagnostics as well. A comprehensive delivery set-up where one can access diagnostics and treatment is thus very important."

Dr. Dholakia, who has been in practice for 35 years, explains: "A lot has changed over the years. Earlier, we had very few Gene Xpert machines (a diagnostic) to detect drug-resistant TB but now there are many more. There are public-private partnership models for TB diagnosis that have been rolled out. Bedaquiline, the newest anti-TB drug in 50 years, is now being given in the out-patient department (OPD) instead of hospitalisation. All these measures have brought TB treatment closer home. But if you ask me whether it's enough, I would say much more needs to be done."

TB activist Ganesh Acharya agrees. "TB patients are often tossed from one hospital to another

TB patients are often tossed from one hospital to another simply because they have TB. Many terminate treatment because they get frustrated with referrals.

GANESH ACHARYA,  
TB activist

er simply because they have TB. Many patients terminate treatment because they get frustrated with referrals," he says, citing an example of a 51-year-old transgender with TB. The person developed fever and was rushed to the civic-run Sion Hospital in Mumbai. When the doctors learned about her TB status, they shifted her to TB hospital in Sewri, which is a dedicated facility for TB. At Sewri, doctors suspected that she could have a brain condition but as a CT scan and MRI were unavailable, she was referred to the civic-run KEM hospital in Parel. There, the CT scan was clear and the doctors insisted that the patient be taken back to the TB facility.

Says Acharya, "All this happened in a span of 36 hours while the patient was critical and on oxygen support. Now one can imagine what happens to patients who are walking around and not visibly critical."

jyoti.s@thehindu.co.in

## Squeaky clean



**Cut the superbugs:** Hospitalised patients who harbour superbugs can cut their risk of developing full-blown infections if they swab medicated goo in their nose and use special soap and mouthwash for six months after going home, a study published on February 13 finds. "It's a very simple solution. You don't have to swallow a medicine, you just have to clean the outside of your body for a little while longer," says Dr. Susan Huang of the University of California Irvine School of Medicine, U.S. She led the federally funded study that has just been published by the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Think of it as decontaminating yourself. It's a low-tech approach to a big problem: about 5% of patients have MRSA – antibiotic-resistant Staph bacteria – lurking on their skin or in their noses, putting them at high risk of developing an infection while recovering from an illness or an operation. These can affect the skin, heart, brain, lungs, bones and joints, and most of them land people back in the hospital. The hygiene steps that researchers tested trimmed that risk by nearly one third. There were no serious side effects. Picture shows researcher Raheeb Saavedra demonstrating in the study how to use a medicated ointment. – Marilyn Marchione/AP • SUSAN HUANG/AP

## A plan 'C' for seniors

Very few physicians highlight 'conservative management' over dialysis

PAULA SPAN



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

John Everdell had lived most of his life with kidney disease. As a young man awaiting a transplant, he had briefly undergone dialysis. That's how he knew, when the prospect of kidney failure loomed again in his late 60s, that he would refuse dialysis this round.

"He was a very independent man, with an idea of how he was going to live his life," said Trix Oakley, his partner of 22 years.

A woodworker and furniture maker, Mr. Everdell had been in his 30s when he was first diagnosed with kidney disease. By his 60s, he had received two transplants, with kidneys donated by his siblings.

But in recent years, living in Cambridge, Mass., he and Ms. Oakley could see that his second transplanted kidney was faltering. The readings on his monthly blood tests grew troubling; he felt cold and tired; his hands and feet began to swell. His doctors again suggested dialysis.

Instead, with Ms. Oakley's help, he relied on what's often called "conservative management", which helps slow the disease's progression and treats its symptoms and complications. He followed a careful diet, controlled his blood pressure, avoided weight gain and gave him-

self hormone injections to ward off anaemia. A sister offered her kidney for a third transplant, when needed.

In the meantime, he and Ms. Oakley enjoyed road trips, particularly seeking out ferry routes from Canada to Florida. Mr. Everdell, who had once sailed across the Atlantic, was no longer strong enough to handle a boat, Ms. Oakley said. "So we took as many ferries as we could, because he loved being on the water."

**The data** Developed as a temporary measure to keep patients with kidney disease alive until they could receive transplants, dialysis instead often becomes a way of life. More than 104,000 people over age 75 were receiving dialysis in 2016, the United States Renal Data System has reported; so were more than 130,000 patients aged 65 to 74.

It's a safe bet most never learned about an alternative: managing their disease and its symptoms medically, with frequent physician

monitoring and consultation – but without dialysis.

Dialysis prolongs survival, but it also imposes burdens – like travelling to a clinic three times a week for four-hour sessions of haemodialysis, or doing multiple fluid exchanges daily for peritoneal dialysis, which can be performed at home. Conservative management can help patients avoid those routines.

Moreover, while some studies show that older patients undergoing dialysis survive longer than those using conservative management, those differences fade among people over age 75 who also contend with other serious health problems, as most do.

And survival, of course, is not the only thing patients value. Conservative management may allow greater freedom to pursue what matters to them, even if they live fewer weeks or months.

"Dialysis is a life-changing event," Dr. Susan Wong, a nephrologist at the Veterans Affairs Health Services Research and Development Center in Seattle, and lead author of a new study in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. "It's a very demanding form of treatment. It involves medical issues, spiritual issues, quality of life. It's a big decision."

Yet patients often tell re-

searchers that they don't recall making a decision, or

even discussing one. Physicians frequently present dialysis as inevitable; in a small study of nephrologists, only a third routinely informed patients about conservative management.

"Patients didn't recognise it as a choice – 'My doctor told me I'd die if I didn't do dialysis,'" said Karen Ladin, director of an ageing and ethics programme at Tufts University, who has interviewed both patients and nephrologists. "Or they'd say that it wasn't their choice, that their doctor made the choice."

Those patients might have wanted to know, for example, that at the end of life, patients using conservative management were less likely to be hospitalised than dialysis patients, less apt to undergo aggressive procedures, and less likely to die in a hospital.

For now, patients inter-

## A cover for home care



MEENA GANESH

In India, the home health-care industry has been on a rapid growth path, shifting gears in the last few years. Reportedly, the industry is projected to reach \$6.2 billion by 2020 at a cumulative

growth rate of 18%. In fact, home health care has the potential to replace unnecessary hospital visits in India by up to 65% and reduce hospital costs by 20%. However, growth in the sector must be backed by an inclusive approach towards home health care in the insurance sector.

The exclusion of insurance coverage remains a roadblock in establishing a robust ecosystem. Though the government has realised the urgency of pushing primary health-care facilities under the Ayushman Bharat Nirman, there is still great inefficiency because of poor insurance coverage. Current insurance models are heavily skewed towards tertiary and in-hospital care. In the absence of adequate primary health-care facilities and no out-of-hospital coverage, people are forced to move towards tertiary care. The convergence of health insurance and home health care can bridge the gap for post-hospitalisation and improve overall health outcomes by avoiding unnecessary readmissions.

While Denmark, England, Germany and the United States have successfully formulated policies to avoid hospital readmissions, India is yet to catch up. Germany's re-admission policy introduced Diagnostic Based Grouping (DRG)-based payments to avoid unintended consequences. Hospitals receive only DRG-based payment covering both initial and re-admissions. In Denmark, readmission rates are publicly reported while payments related to the same remain unadjusted. There is immense tracking of readmission in the West in order to minimise it; this is not the case in India. Improving home health-care facilities and coverage is one such route to constrain pre- and post-hospitalisation.

While insurance companies have adequately collaborated with hospitals in the country, they have not tapped into other aspects of health care. The process consists of extensive management of partners and networks, evaluation of hospital delivery and periodic auditing to evolve. Hence, in defence of insurance companies, these operations have already been structured at their end and allow for a rational degree of trust.

## Focus on demographics

Home health care has flourished in the last few years becoming organised in the process. The truth is that it can only benefit the stakeholders involved. For instance, a lack of adequate insurance has restricted home health-care services to the relatively prosperous urban population, resulting in minimal or no penetration as far as rural and semi-urban populations are concerned. Extending insurance to these demographics will prove beneficial for patients and insurance companies alike.

The urgency of expanding insurance coverage is critical to the industry's prospects. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), India has merely 0.9 beds for every 1,000 Indians; a number far below WHO's recommendation of 1.9 beds per 1,000 population. There is a misconception among people that home and personalised care is costlier. However, the average monthly cost of in-home care is 20% less than that incurred in other health-care facilities.

Thus insurance can cover domiciliary treatment, pre- and post-hospitalisation, and out-patient department (OPD) and day-care treatments. Domiciliary treatment refers to treatment that needs hospitalisation but is addressed at home because of unavailability of rooms or patients unable/unwilling to approach hospitals. Pre- and post-hospitalisation involve services at home in post-surgery and chronic care conditions, while medical procedures that do not require hospitalisation or patients to stay in hospital for over 24 hours, such as cataract surgeries, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or haemodialysis, fall under OPD and day-care treatments. Insurance can be a separate or an add-on service to differentiate product offerings.

Meena Ganesh is MD and CEO, Portea Medical

## 16 NON-FICTION

THE HINDU  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019

# A Dalit who stopped being a 'brahmin'

A personal story becomes a powerful social commentary against everyday casteism that often goes unchallenged

G. SAMPATH

Memoirs by Dalit writers tend to be documents of suffering. They are testaments of the atrocities heaped upon them by India's indigenously developed misery-generating machine known as the caste system. But violence and humiliation are not the only forms of caste oppression. There are other, more insidious, yet equally devastating forms of abuse that caste inflicts. One such is being forced to live your life pretending to be of another caste, terrified of your true identity being discovered.

Journalist Yashica Dutt's *Coming Out as Dalit* documents the torment of such a life, and how she worked up the courage to discard pretence and embrace her identity as a Dalit. The book is a mix of memoir – of a Dalit who pretends to be a brahmin, until she doesn't – and social commentary, interspersed with brief historical fragments about the Dalit movement. The personal narrative alternates with observations on caste, "the invisible arm that turns the gears in nearly every system in our country," in Dutt's memorable words.

**Caste aspirations**

Dutt was born in Ajmer, Rajasthan. Her father was a civil servant with the State government. Her mother, whose dream of joining the IPS was wrecked by a difficult marriage to an alcoholic, worked a series of hard, low-paying gigs to put her children through school. What stands out in Dutt's account of her childhood is her mother's determination to give her children an upper caste, middle class upbringing. An integral part of her



**■ Coming Out as Dalit: A Memoir**  
Yashica Dutt  
Aleph  
₹599

strategy to achieve that aim was to pass them off as upper caste, middle class.

This entailed, among other things, pressuring her daughter to follow, from a very young age, a regimen of personal grooming designed to make her look fairer, and unlike the stereotypically dark-skinned Dalit. Though financial hardship made it tough, Dutt became adept at living the lie. Whenever anyone asked her about her caste, she told them she was a brahmin. As for her Dalit identity, it lay "deeply buried beneath layers of convenient education, urban upbringing and a hardened resolve to avoid engaging with anything related to caste."

*Coming Out...* covers new territory by mapping a Dalit experience that hasn't received much attention except on Dalit platforms: the dislocation of the self that follows the suppression of one's caste identity, and the difficult personal journey whose starting point is shame and destination is pride. Even in urban India, where caste is supposedly not an issue anymore, 'coming out' is not an easy option for a Dalit. For



**Never easy:** Students seek action against those responsible for Dalit researcher Rohith Vemula's death at the University of Hyderabad campus. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

Dutt, as she herself admits, the decision was made somewhat easier by her location. By then based in New York, she knew that geographical distance insulated her to some extent from any toxic fallout.

**Rohit Vemula connect**  
The book opens with an account of what prompted Dutt to come out as a Dalit. Two weeks before Rohit Vemula hanged himself from a ceiling fan in January 2016, he had sent a Facebook friend request to Dutt. She had deleted it. She did so because she "deleted all unsolicited requests from people I

didn't have enough friends in common with."

As she sat reading his suicide note, thousands of miles away in New York, the irony wasn't lost on Dutt. She may not have had many friends in common with Vemula. But she did have in common with him something elemental: caste. They were both Dalits. There was, however, a big difference: while Vemula wore his caste identity as a badge of pride and paid the ultimate price for it, Dutt had spent her life hiding it from the world.

It was Vemula's political commitment to Dalit dignity that trig-

gered the chain of events which culminated in his institutional murder. On the other hand, Dutt's success at masking her Dalit identity probably protected her from the kind of abuse that overwhelmed Vemula. As she writes, "In Rohith's letter I saw this bizarre possibility that, under a slightly different set of circumstances, his short life could have been mine."

**Exposing the lie**

Vemula's death and his parting words had an electrifying effect on Dalits all over the world. It also

politised a young girl who had become "so good at pretending to be upper caste that I almost forgot I was Dalit." Until then, Dutt had lived in perpetual "fear of being caught, the fear of losing friends, respect and even my bylines." This overarching fear made her hate herself, and to want to be someone else. "I wanted to be like my colleagues who were not hiding, not scared, not Bhangi and therefore better than me." Vemula's martyrdom changed all that.

**■ Even in urban India,** where caste is supposedly not an issue anymore, 'coming out' is not an easy option for a Dalit

From being someone desperate to escape "the humiliation of being 'discovered' as Bhangi", Dutt becomes someone who "was forever taking away their power" to humiliate her – by exposing the lie herself.

"In a way, I was turning my Dalitness into a gold medal of ancestral pride and suffering. I was going to proclaim openly and proudly that I was DALIT." Dutt's Facebook post announcing her Dalit identity shocked many of her friends and acquaintances. It also changed her life in a fundamental way: "I wasn't scared of my Dalitness anymore."

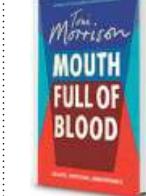
Written in lucid prose and framed by a strong commitment to Dalit rights and gender justice, *Coming Out...* is bound to resonate with victims of caste injustice. It will also, hopefully, sensitise the 'caste-blind' to the many forms of discrimination and everyday casteism that often go unchallenged.

## BOOKSHELF



**■ Indian Fiscal Federalism**  
Y.V. Reddy, G.R. Reddy  
Oxford University Press  
₹695

Likening fiscal federalism to a game between the Union and the States, the writers lay bare the complex rules of play. It examines the role of Finance Commissions and assesses momentous events since 2014, like the replacement of the Planning Commission by NITI Aayog, the emergence of the GST Council, and controversies surrounding the Fifteenth Finance Commission.



**■ Mouth Full of Blood**  
Toni Morrison  
Penguin Random House  
₹699

This collection of essays, speeches and meditations, spanning four decades, is divided into three parts: the first is introduced by a prayer for the dead of 9/11; the second by a meditation on Martin Luther King Jr., and the last by a eulogy for James Baldwin. She takes on contested social issues like the foreigner, female empowerment and black matters.



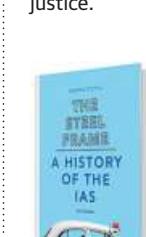
**■ The Transformative Constitution**  
Gautam Bhattacharya  
HarperCollins  
₹699

A lawyer offers a new way of reading the Constitution. The Constitution embodies a moment of profound transformation – one in which the subjects of a colonial regime became free citizens of a republic. The Indian Constitution was, however, transformative in a second sense as well: it sought a thorough reconstruction of State and society itself.



**■ A Shot of Justice: Priority-Setting for Addressing Child Mortality**  
Ali Mehdi  
Oxford University Press  
₹995

Children have been guaranteed an equal right to life, yet hundreds of them continue to die due to preventable causes. Their deaths are widely perceived as a biomedical issue, with vaccinations being presented as a life-saving intervention. This book argues that a clear and consistent pattern of preventable child deaths is primarily a problem of justice.



**■ The Steel Frame: A History of the IAS**  
Deepak Gupta  
Roli Books  
₹695

An insider traces the history of the Indian Administrative Service in India. The development of the Civil Service was one of the dominant features of British rule. It established its traditions and acquired a formidable reputation in administrating civil and criminal justice. After independence, the service continued with the basic structure despite changes.

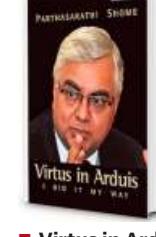
# The politics of reform

An adviser to the government, who tried to amend India's tax system, on the evolution of global policies and practices

S. MAHALINGAM



**Personal take:** The memoir mentions specific tasks Shome carried out in about 50 countries. ■ RAJEEV BHATT



**■ Virtus in Arduis: I Did It My Way**  
Partha Sarathi Shome  
Orient BlackSwan  
₹895

telligence department which provided analytic support to determine the impact of current and proposed tax measures.

**India's concerns**

His rich experience in working on missions and policy areas in IMF, in-depth knowledge of tax instruments, working in countries like Brazil, India and the U.K. and his research base moulded him into a top global expert on taxation. I watched him closely in TARC, as he led the team to come up with practical and path-breaking recommendations to create a modern, responsive and responsible tax administration system for India. The four-volume TARC report between June 2014 and February 2015 specifically warned the government against cherry picking among the recommendations. It wanted the government to implement the report in toto in order to transform the system. However, after the report was submitted to the Modi government, only some recommendations were implemented. Whether this perfunctory approach was because of politics, as TARC was set up by the UPA government, is an open question. A major effort by highly competent team led by one of the top global experts has been ignored.

Shome's memoir contains a lot of personal details. As he writes about the specific tasks he carried out in about 50 countries, we find out how this experience informed his career. A global Indian, Shome has published many books on taxation. This book knits all his work together to create a body of literature on the evolution of global taxation policies and practices.

(A longer version is available online)

**The IMF advantage**

Shome had an exceptional academic record as a student in India and in the U.S. Manmohan Singh taught him International Finance in his Masters course at the Delhi School of Economics, "with studious preparation and absolute clarity." What runs through the book is the affection Shome has for his teachers, both at school in India and universities abroad. His work in the early years at IMF gave him an extraordinary insight into the efficacy of tax measures and the political costs of implementation of these measures.

Shome advised countries in Africa, Europe and Asia before returning to India to continue research activities at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). In this stint in the late 1990s, he chaired the first Centre-State Committee to suggest reform of the Central-State Tax. He was the chairman of the 10th Five Year Plan Working Group on Tax Policy and Administration.

In 2004, at the request of then Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, he joined him as adviser, thus putting an end to his long career with the IMF. During the next three years, he looked into the introduction and implementation of State level Value

# Rich discourse

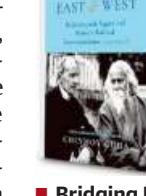
Capturing dialogues between two great minds

INDRANI DUTTA

**T**his book is dedicated to Madeleine Rolland (1872-1960), "Rolland's sister and interpreter, without whom the dialogue with India would never have been possible." Nearly five decades after, the interaction between French humanist Romain Rolland and Rabindranath Tagore springs to life in *Bridging East & West*, capturing a dialogue which has been described as one between two continents and two histories by Marc Lambron, member, Académie Française.

The relationship between the two literature Nobel laureates ran deep and according to the author, who has edited the correspondence, it was inevitable that the two contemporary thinkers should meet in a moment of chaos and anxiety. Each represented an era, its tension and its wars; each troubled by what was happening around. They exchanged some 46 letters and telegrams between 1919 and 1940.

The compendium opens with Romain Rolland's exhortation to Tagore to join the project of the



**■ Bridging East & West: Romain Rolland and Rabindranath Tagore Correspondence (1919-1940)**  
Edited by Chimoy Guha  
Oxford University Press  
₹995

Declaration of the Independence of the Spirit, which the poet readily accepted as it came at a time when his mind was clouded by the thought that the lesson of World War I was lost and people were trying to perpetuate "their hatred, anger and greed into the same organised menace for the world which threatened themselves with disaster...."

The bond, the mutual regard that these two great souls shared, is vividly portrayed. It is another thing that the tradition of 'organised menace' continues to the day.

The book is a collector's item, thanks to a rich, scholastic introduction penned by Chimoy Guha, setting the tone.

Equally enlightening and uplifting is the section on conversations between Rolland and Tagore. The letters between Kalidas Nag and distinguished Indian Communist Saumyendra Nath Tagore are the added attractions.

Devidayal makes an assumption that truly great artists need an equal they can compete with in the quest for excellence. In the case of Vilayat Khan that person would be Ravi Shankar.

If the former music was an intense personal journey, for the latter it was a way to conduct an affair with the world at large. Both charted their own course and made peace with themselves.

And lastly, it is an ode to the people behind the greats who are seldom mourned much less remembered, at best they are footnotes in time. In the case of Vilayat Khan, the credit goes to his mother Basheer Begum, who steered him away from singing to play the sitar and keep alive a tradition practised in the family. There are other men who influenced Vilayat Khan adding his bit to form the brilliant music that came out of his sitar. As for the eternal question, who is the greatest of them all, it would appear that there are many greats and there is Vilayat Khan.

Devidayal makes an assumption that truly great artists need an equal they can compete with in the quest for excellence. In the case of Vilayat Khan that person would be Ravi Shankar.

If the former music was an intense personal journey, for the latter it was a way to conduct an affair with the world at large.

Both charted their own course and made peace with themselves.

And lastly, it is an ode to the people behind the greats who are seldom mourned much less remembered, at best they are footnotes in time.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the credit goes to his mother Basheer Begum, who steered him away from singing to play the sitar and keep alive a tradition practised in the family.

There are other men who influenced Vilayat Khan adding his bit to form the brilliant music that came out of his sitar.

As for the eternal question, who is the greatest of them all, it would appear that there are many greats and there is Vilayat Khan.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the



**■ The Sixth String of Vilayat Khan**  
Namita Deviayal  
Westland Books  
₹699

reader close to an era when All India Radio was the chief patron of classical musicians after the abolition of princely states. She highlights the intense competition between artists and the role that classical music played in forging new identities in a newly independent India.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the

reader close to an era when All India Radio was the chief patron of classical musicians after the abolition of princely states. She highlights the intense competition between artists and the role that classical music played in forging new identities in a newly independent India.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the

reader close to an era when All India Radio was the chief patron of classical musicians after the abolition of princely states. She highlights the intense competition between artists and the role that classical music played in forging new identities in a newly independent India.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the

reader close to an era when All India Radio was the chief patron of classical musicians after the abolition of princely states. She highlights the intense competition between artists and the role that classical music played in forging new identities in a newly independent India.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the

reader close to an era when All India Radio was the chief patron of classical musicians after the abolition of princely states. She highlights the intense competition between artists and the role that classical music played in forging new identities in a newly independent India.

In the case of Vilayat Khan, the book is at one level a personal journey and at another, a journey through geographical spaces and time taking the reader through Calcutta, Bombay, Shimla, the U.S. and back where it all began.

Full of anecdotes and information culled from innumerable conversations, and archival material, the book brings the

# Vidarbha successfully defends its title

With Ranji champion just 11 runs away from win, captains agree to a draw

## IRANI CUP

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN  
NAGPUR

Atharva Taide, a rookie left-hander playing only his fifth First Class match, and the seasoned Ganesh Satish, combined forces to enable Vidarbha retain the Irani Cup at the VCA stadium on Saturday. Vidarbha chasing 280, was 11 runs away from victory, when both the captains agreed to a draw.

Replacing veteran Wasim Jaffer in the side for a crucial match can be a tough for any youngster, but the 19-year-old showed maturity to carve out a half-century (72) that set the foundation for the chase.

Satish scored a fluent 87 but missed out on a deserving hundred when he pulled a long hop from Vihari to substitute fielder Sandeep Warrier at midwicket.

Taide showed class and skill to play a crucial innings under pressure. He added 116 with opener R. Sanjay(42) for the second wicket.

**Chahar threat**  
Vidarbha had to negate the threat from leg-spinner Rahul Chahar, who with his variety, was Rest's trump card. Taide took over the responsibility of negating Chahar's effec-



**Two-in-a-row:** Vidarbha, thanks to its first innings lead, retained the Irani Cup. ■ S. SUDARSHAN

tiveness with his footwork.

He put away the rare loose deliveries from the leg-spinner and hit him over extra-cover for a six as he grew in confidence.

Taide's partner Sanjay held fort and scored freely against the other bowlers; his straight six off Dharmendra-sinh Jadeja stood out for its sheer timing. However, Chahar struck soon after to remove Sanjay with a straighter delivery.

Satish was aggressive from

the start but was lucky to get a reprieve on seven when he played an inside out shot against Chahar. Both Ankit Rajpoot and Tanveer Ul-Haq converged on the dipping ball at midwicket and it eluded a diving Tanveer.

Satish made ROI pay for the lapse as he played his shots on both sides of the wicket and never allowed the bowlers to settle down. Satish was severe on Chahar, driving and lofting him to pick up boundaries.

Chahar struck again in the third over after lunch when he had Taide playing back to a grubber. Satish then found an ideal partner in Mohit Kale and the two attacked the spinners to pile up the runs quickly.

As the day wore on Chahar became erratic, forcing Ajinkya Rahane to turn to his other bowlers. But they hardly made an impact.

Chahar returned with the new ball but Satish struck him for three boundaries as

he reached his fifty.

Jadeja had Kale (37) top-edging a sweep to Tanveer at square-leg. The fourth wicket stand of 83 brought Vidarbha close to victory before the captains agreed to a draw with Vidarbha at 269 for five.

**The scores:**

**Rest of India – 1st innings:** 330  
**Vidarbha – 1st innings:** 425  
**Rest of India – 2nd innings:** 374 for three decl.

**Vidarbha – 2nd innings:** F. Fa-

zal b Rajpoot 0, R. Sanjay lbw b Chahar 42, A. Taide lbw b Cha-

# Fazal praises team's fighting spirit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NAGPUR

Vidarbha captain Faiz Fazal said his team showed a lot of character and fighting spirit to retain the Irani Cup.

"It was tough to score 280 on the fifth day pitch. We learnt a lot from how (Ajinkya) Rahane and (Hanuma) Vihari played yesterday (Friday). They played risk-free cricket. "We wanted to take a cue from their performances.

"Our boys batted really well and showed lot of character. We were under pressure as I got out cheaply, but Atharva Taide played a matured innings and Ganesh Satish batted beautifully on the last day," he said.



**Mature:** The 19-year-old Atharva Taide, playing his fifth First Class match, showed great character. ■ S. SUDARSHAN

## Pat for Karnewar

The captain singled out all-rounder Akshay Karnewar for praise saying that his first Innings century was crucial

in the context of the game. Rest of India captain Rahane said the batting collapse in the first Innings was the reason for his team's defeat. "I think we should have scored more than the 330 we got in the first Innings."

## A noble gesture!

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NAGPUR

In a noble gesture, Vidarbha's captain Faiz Fazal dedicated his team's victory in the Irani Cup to the martyrs of the Pulwama terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our heart goes to victims of the terrorist

attack. As a small gesture from our side we dedicate this victory to the martyrs of Pulwama attack.

"The Vidarbha cricket team will donate the entire prize-money to the families of the victims in the attack," said Fazal after receiving the trophy.

# Superman Perera carries Lanka home

Chasing 304, the visitors were 226 for nine before pulling off an incredible win

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

DURBAN

Kusal Perera carried Sri Lanka to a sensational one-wicket win on the fourth day of the first Test against South Africa at Kingsmead on Saturday as he hit a career-best 153 not out.

Perera and Vishwa Fernando put on an unbeaten 78 in a last-wicket partnership to secure only Sri Lanka's second win in 14 Tests in South Africa.

Victory seemed unlikely when the ninth wicket fell at 226, with the tourists chasing a target of 304.

But the left-handed Perera successfully farmed the strike, with South African captain Faf du Plessis persisting with widespread fields for the in-form batsman, while Fernando only had to face 27 balls during a 96-ball partnership.

**The turnaround**  
Perera was on 86 when the ninth wicket fell but managed to keep most of the strike and to hit some telling blows in an innings of 200 balls which included 12 fours and five sixes.

"It was a Superman effort," said Du Plessis. "He (Perera) deserves all the accolades."

South Africa took the second new ball with the total on 263 but still kept most of



**78** The partnership between Perera and Vishwa Fernando, a record for the highest fourth-innings 10th-wicket stand to win a Test. The previous best was 57 (Inzamam-ul-Haq & Mushtaq Ahmed, Pakistan v Australia, Karachi, 1994)

**1** Kusal Perera's 153 n.o. puts him in top spot on the list of Sri Lanka's highest scorers in successful fourth-innings chases. Aravinda de Silva (143 n.o. v Zimbabwe, 1998) is next

**3** Perera is only the third batsman to make more than 50% of a successful fourth-innings chase of more than 300. Gordon Greenidge (214 n.o. out of 344-1, v England, 1984) and Mark Butcher (173 n.o. out of 315-4, v Australia, 2001) are the others

**13** Just 12 Tests out of 2346 had been decided by a one-wicket margin before Sri Lanka's heist on Saturday. It's Sri Lanka's second such win; the other came against South Africa, as well (Colombo, 2006)

its fielders on the boundary for Perera, who hit sixes off both Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada before slashing Rabada to third man for the winning boundary.

Perera had put on 58 for the fourth wicket with debutant Oshado Fernando (37) and 96 for the sixth wicket with Dhananjaya de Silva (48) before his extraordinary association with Vishwa Fernando. "I'm a little tired now, I don't know what to say," said Perera, the Man-of-the-Match.

**South Africa – 1st innings:** 235.  
**Sri Lanka – 1st innings:** 191.  
**South Africa – 2nd innings:** 259.

**Sri Lanka – 2nd innings:** D. Karunaratne lbw b Philander 20, L. Thirimanne c Du Plessis b Rabada 21, O. Fernando c Du Plessis b Steyn 37, K. Mendis c Du Koch b Olivier 0, K. Perera (not out) 153, N. Dickwella c and b Steyn 0, D. de Silva lbw b Maharaj 48, S. Lakmal c Du Plessis b Maharaj 0, L. Embuldeniya c Markram b Olivier 4, K. Rajitha lbw b Maharaj 1, V.

Fernando (not out) 6; Extras (b-2, lb-11, w-1) 14; Total (for nine wkts, 85.3 overs) 304.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-42, 2-42, 3-52, 4-110, 5-110, 6-206, 7-206, 8-215, 9-226.

**South Africa bowling:** Steyn 18-1-71-2, Philander 8-3-13-1, Maharaj 20-1-71-3, Rabada 22-3-3-97-1, Olivier 16-3-35-2, Markram 1-0-4-0.

**Man-of-the-match:** Kusal Perera.

**Sri Lanka won by one wicket and leads the two-match series 1-0.**

## SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA VS SRI LANKA, FIRST TEST

**South Africa – 1st innings:** 235.  
**Sri Lanka – 1st innings:** 191.

**South Africa – 2nd innings:** 259.

**Sri Lanka – 2nd innings:** D. Karunaratne lbw b Philander 20, L. Thirimanne c Du Plessis b Rabada 21, O. Fernando c Du Plessis b Steyn 37, K. Mendis c Du Koch b Olivier 0, K. Perera (not out) 153, N. Dickwella c and b Steyn 0, D. de Silva lbw b Maharaj 48, S. Lakmal c Du Plessis b Maharaj 0, L. Embuldeniya c Markram b Olivier 4, K. Rajitha lbw b Maharaj 1, V.

Fernando (not out) 6; Extras (b-2, lb-11, w-1) 14; Total (for nine wkts, 85.3 overs) 304.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-42, 2-42, 3-52, 4-110, 5-110, 6-206, 7-206, 8-215, 9-226.

**South Africa bowling:** Steyn 18-1-71-2, Philander 8-3-13-1, Maharaj 20-1-71-3, Rabada 22-3-3-97-1, Olivier 16-3-35-2, Markram 1-0-4-0.

**Man-of-the-match:** Kusal Perera.

**Sri Lanka won by one wicket and leads the two-match series 1-0.**

# Odisha is now a key sports destination

The State has hosted many big-ticket events including the hockey World Cup

Y.B. SARANGI

In the last few years, Odisha, which deservedly got the Sportstar Aces award for the Best State for Promotion of Sports, has put itself in fast forward mode to become a global sports destination.

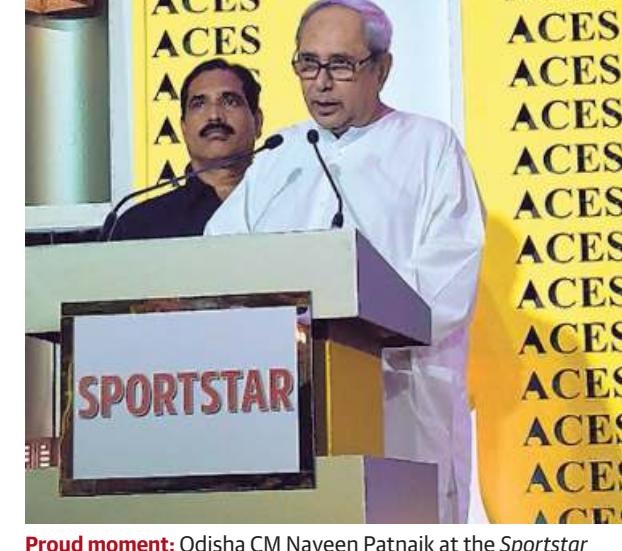
The journey started when State-owned corporations Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) and Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) joined hands to own a franchise, Kalinga Lancers, in the Hockey India League (HIL) in 2013.

It necessitated the construction of the hockey stadium inside the sprawling Kalinga Stadium complex in Bhubaneswar.

**Bigger dreams**  
The overwhelming response to the HIL gave birth to bigger dreams. The State hosted the prestigious Champions Trophy hockey tournament in 2014 and drew a lot of self-belief from it.

Three big ticket events – the Asian athletics championships and the Hockey World League in 2017 and the Hockey World Cup in 2018 – uplifted Odisha's status as a hot destination of top sporting events.

The HWC was the jewel in the crown. The State Govern-



**Proud moment:** Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik at the Sportstar Aces awards event recently. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

ment worked overtime to turn Kalinga Stadium into a world-class venue, kicked off the HWC with a magnificent opening ceremony and delivered the event with utmost perfection to win appreciation from all participating teams.

This year the State has conducted a four-nation women's football tournament. It will host the Super Cup in March-April, the Hockey Series Finals (an Olympic qualifying event) in June, the Commonwealth table tennis championships in July and the National table tennis championships this year – to underline its efficiency.

Odisha sponsoring the National men and women's hockey teams is another proof of its commitment towards sports.

While highlighting his Government's whole-hearted support for sports, Chief Mi-

nister Naveen Patnaik expected other States to follow in Odisha's footsteps and help the country achieve glory in the Olympics. "If States start adopting one or two games, it will hugely benefit the sports ecosystem in the country," said Patnaik.

Odisha is also taking care of the grassroots development by organising tribal sports meet and talent-scouting from an informal voluntary youth group (Biju Yuva Vahini) for admission of youth to 16 sports hostels covering 12 disciplines.

Infrastructure development and increase in cash award for achievers are the other areas through which the State is promoting sports comprehensively.

**Significant tie-ups**  
The State has tied up with several legendary sports persons – including Abhinav Bindra, P. Gopi Chand, Gagan Narang and Anil Kumble – to establish different high-performance centres.

The Odisha Government, which had a budget of ₹341.08 crore last year, is determined to continue its overall good work. By making the State a sports hub, the Government is aiming at building Odisha as a brand to attract investment opportunities and set a unique example in the country.

# 'Any tour of India is a great experience'

It's all about getting used to sub-continent conditions, says Andy Flower

RAYAN ROZARIO

MYSRUR

England Lions fell inside three days to India-A, but head coach Andy Flower said there were some positive stories even in the series loss.

"Any tour of India is a great experience and there were lots of learnings in those five weeks," he told *The Hindu* after the second 'Test'.

The South Africa-born former Zimbabwe cricketer said it was all about getting used to sub-continent conditions, which is a big part of touring India.

Talking about the track behaviour at the SDNRW Grounds which hosted the second 'Test' between the two teams, he said seeing a pitch like this had been a good experience.

"It turned from day two,



under foreign conditions. Like how the Indian coaching staff give their feedback to the selectors, the same goes for us," he added.

## 'A' tours invaluable

Flower pointed out that the 'A' tours are invaluable in providing the bridge bet-

ween First Class, domestic and international cricket. "It is hard to replicate a full Test or an ODI match with a big crowd but what you get to see here is peer-against-peer competition.

"Also, the best of the emerging talent from various countries go head-to-head against each other."

"I think the programmes between the 'A' sides are quite important. For the Indian youngsters who toured England last year for the 'A' series, it must have been a good experience. The more they

# Saina proves too good for Sindhu

Uses her powerful smashes to telling effect; Sourabh Verma clinches third title

## NATL BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GUWAHATI

Saina Nehwal defeated P.V. Sindhu in straight games to retain the women's singles crown at the 83rd Yonex Sunrise senior National badminton championships here on Saturday.

Three-time former champion Saina used her powerful smashes to telling effect, registering a 21-18, 21-15 win over Sindhu, a two-time winner, in the summit clash.

In a repeat of last edition's final in Nagpur, the 2012 Olympics bronze medallist Saina once again had the upper hand over Sindhu during the exciting clash which was witnessed by a capacity crowd. Saina had also defeated the 2016 Rio Olympics silver medallist Sindhu at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games summit clash last year.

Earlier, Sourabh Verma claimed the men's singles



The big one: Saina Nehwal put it across P.V. Sindhu while Sourabh Verma defeated the young Lakshya Sen. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

crown, defeating the young Lakshya Sen in straight games. It was his third title.

The 26-year-old from Madhya Pradesh, who was

crowned champion in 2011 and 2017, showed great composure and tactical brilliance to outplay the 17-year-old Lakshya, the Asian junior

champion, 21-18, 21-13 in a lop-sided contest.

It was their second meeting in the senior Nationals final, following Sourabh's tri-

ump in February 2017.

## Makeshift pair delights

In men's doubles, the second-seeded makeshift pair of Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Chirag Shetty clinched the title, beating top seeds M.R. Arjun and Shlok Ramchandran 21-13, 22-20 in 33 minutes.

It was the third national title for Pranaav after having won the men's doubles crown with Akshay Dewalkar in 2013 and 2015 and the mixed doubles title with Prajaka Sawant in 2010.

## The results (finals):

**Men:** Sourabh Verma bt Lakshya Sen 21-18, 21-13; **Doubles:** Pranaav Jerry Chopra & Chirag Shetty bt M.R. Arjun & Shlok Ramchandran 21-13, 22-20.

**Women:** Saina Nehwal bt P.V. Sindhu 21-18, 21-15; **Doubles:** Shikha Gautam & K. Ashwini Bhattacharya bt Meghana Jakkampudi & Poorvisha Ram 21-16, 22-20.

**Mixed doubles:** Manu Attri & K. Maneesha bt Rohan Kapoor & Kuhoo Garg 18-21, 21-17, 21-16.

# Ace Ace Ace fancied for feature

HYDERABAD: Ace Ace Ace has an edge over his rivals in the M.C.E.M.E. Rolling Trophy (1,400m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Sunday (Feb. 17).

**1 PLEASURE HUNT PLATE (Div. I, 1,400m)**, maiden 3-y-o (Cat. II), (Terms), 1-45 p.m.: 1. Astanga Rakshak (5) G. Naresh 55, 2. Born Greek (1) Md. Ismail 55, 3. Gusty Look (4) Akshay Kumar 55, 4. Let It Be (7) Sad Kumar 55, 5. Reno Star (8) Aneel 55, 6. Augenstein (9) Suraj Narredu 53.5, 7. Lesley (3) Dhebe 53.5, 8. Shivalik Valley (2) Nakhath Singh 53.5 and 9. Swansea (6) Kuldeep Singh 53.5. **1. SWANSEA, 2. SHIVALIK VALLEY, 3. AUGENSTERN.**

**2 SQUANDERER PLATE (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 4-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. III), (No whips), 2-15: 1. New Comer (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Dormello (2) Akshay Kumar 59, 3. Eau Claire (5) Rohit Kumar 59, 4. Fabulous Art (3) Surya Prakash 58.5, 5. Semira (4) Afroz Khan 58, 6. Lady On Turf (1) N. Rawal 57.5, 7. Kohinoor Legend (4) 54 and 8. Angels Bay (7) Rafigue Sk. 51.

**1. SEMIRA, 2. DORMELLO, 3. EAU CLAIRE.**

**3 PLEASURE HUNT PLATE (Div. III, 1,400m)**, maiden 3-y-o only (Cat. II), (Terms), 2-45: 1. King Maker (4) Md. Ismail 60, 2. Ace Ace Ace (3) Akshay Kumar 58.3, Barnabas (10) Kuldeep Singh 57.5, 4. Dunkirk (9) Suraj Narredu 57.5, 5. Lockhart (2) Deepak Singh 55.5, 6. Evon Von Brando (1) Dhebe 55, 7. Meka's (6) B.R. Kumar 54.5, 8. Shiloh (5) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 9. Kamya (8) Ashhad Asbar 53.5 and 10. Once More (7) Nakhat Singh 53.5.

**1. ACE ACE ACE, 2. KING MAKER, 3. DUNKIRK.**

**6 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. D, 1,400m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated 42 to 62, (Cat. II), 4-15: 1. Symbol Of Gold (7) Sal Kumar 60, 2. Vijay's Empire (9) B.R. Kumar 59.5, 3. Brooklyn Heights (2) Kumar 55, 3. Havelock Cruise (8) Kiran Naidu 55, 4. Red Snaper (1) Kuldeep Singh 55, 5. Star Racer (5) Nakhat Singh 55, 6. Coconut Coast (4) Ashhad Asbar 54.5, 7. Red River (7) Koushik 53.5 and 8. Shooter (6) Suraj Narredu 53.5.

**1. MIAMI, 2. MORISEIKI, 3. SEMIRA.**

**7 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**8 SQUANDERER PLATE (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 4-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. ACE ACE ACE, 2. KING MAKER, 3. CHARLIE BROWN.**

**9 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**10 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**11 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**12 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**13 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**14 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**15 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**16 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**17 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**18 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**19 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**20 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

**21 DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL CUP (Div. II, 1,600m)**, 5-y-o & over, rated upto 30 (Cat. II), (No whips), 5-15: 1. Cowboys Delight (6) Jitendra Singh 60, 2. Ajmal Birju (3) Gopal Singh 59, 3. Mossad (2) Afroz Khan 58.5, 4. Symbol Of Start's (7) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 5. Valley Ikon (4) Md. Ismail 58, 6. Golden Caballo (5) Kunal Bunde 57.5, 7. Parizaat (8) Nakhat Singh 56.5, 8. Adamant And Rising (9) G. Naresh 54.5 and 9. Yogi (1) Sai Kumar 54.5.

**1. AJMAL BIRJU, 2. ADAMANT AND RISING, VEEKEE LION.**

## TV PICKS

**I-League:** Star Sports 3, 4.45 p.m.**ISL:** Star Sports 3, 7.15 p.m.**Bundesliga:** SS Select (SD & HD), 7.15 p.m. & 10.15**NBA:** Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.**PVL:** Sony Ten 3 & Six (SD & HD), 6.45 p.m.**Rotterdam Open:** Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 8 p.m.

## Jeevan-Purav bow out

## SPORTS BUREAU

CHERBOURG (FRANCE)

Top seeds Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Purav Raja were beaten 6-4, 3-6, [10-6] by Javier Barranco Cosano and Raul Brancaccio in the doubles semifinals of the €46,600 Challenger tennis tournament here on Saturday.

## Other result:

**\$54,160 Challenger, Bangkok, Thailand: Doubles (semifinals):** Cheng-Peng Hsieh (Tpe) & Christopher Rungkat (Ina) bt Siriram Balaji & Arjun Kadhe 7-5, 7-6(3).

## Solanki and Zareen advance

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Gaurav Solanki (52kg) advanced to the men's pre-quarters, while former junior world champion Nikhat Zareen (51kg) made the women's quarter-finals of the 70th Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Zareen defeated Italy's Giovanna Marchese in her opening clash, while Solanki got the better of American Abraham Perez.

Solanki, also a gold-winner at India Open and the Chemistry Cup last year, will be up against Kazakhstan's Anvar Muzaparov in the last-16 stage.

Zareen, a multiple-time

## Arihant and Kanhav win thrillers

ISA players clinch five of the nine titles at stake

## ISA SQUASH

SPORTS BUREAU  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu players made a sweep of titles with the ISA trainees taking a lion's share of the titles at the ISA junior open squash circuit, a two-star National circuit event here on Saturday.

In all, nine finals were contested and the ISA players won five in what turned out to be a day of exciting squash.

The closest two ties were in the boys' section where top seed K.S. Arihant (under-13) and Kanhav Nanavati (under-17) won by a whisker.

K. Rajendiran, Secretary-General, SRFI, gave away the prizes.

## The results (finals):

**Boys:** Under-19: Saksham Choudhary (Del) bt Gowtham Karthick (TN) 11-5, 11-5, 11-2.

Delightful day: The champions of the ISA junior open squash circuit. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**Under-17:** Kanhav Nanavati (TN) bt S. Navaneeth Prabhu (TN) 11-7, 11-8, 5-11, 8-11, 12-10.**Under-15:** Rohan Arya Gondi (TS) bt Parthiv Yagnesh Natarajan (TN) 12-10, 13-11, 11-8.**Under-13:** K.S. Arihant (TN) bt P.R. Sandhesh (TN) 11-8, 14-12,

9-11, 5-11, 11-6.

**Under-11:** Darsheel Parasrampruria (TN) bt Rahul Sanjay Balakrishnan (Kar) 11-3, 12-10, 8-11, 8-11, 11-9.**Girls:** Under-17: Abhishek Shannon (TN) bt Trina Iris (TN) 11-9, 11-8, 11-4.**Under-15:** S. Akshaya Sri (TN) bt Vasudha Surange (Del) 11-4, 13-11, 11-5.**Under-13:** Khushboo (UP) bt N. Britthika (TN) 12-10, 11-3, 11-5.**Under-11:** Ananya Narayanan (TN) bt Sahana Kalaivanan (TN) 11-8, 11-3, 11-7.

## POLO

## Perry shines for Rajnigandha Achievers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Matthew Perry smashed eight goals in powering Rajnigandha Achievers to a 10-4 victory over LA Pegasus Polo in the semifinals of the Ji-

waji Rao Scindia Gold Cup 10-goal polo tournament at the Jaipur Polo ground on Saturday.

In the final to be played at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Rajnigandha Achievers will play Jindal Panther which subdued 61st Cavalry 7-4.

Meanwhile, in the opening league match of the Army Polo Championship, Army Service Corps (ASC) beat

Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) 9 1/2 goals to 3, at the Army Equestrian Centre, Delhi Cantonment.

## The results:

**Jiwaji Rao Scindia Gold Cup (semifinals):** Rajnigandha Achievers 10 (Matthew Perry 8, Gaurav Sahgal, Hurr Ali) bt LA Pegasus Polo 4 (Dhruvpal Godara 3, Pranav Kapur).

Jindal Panther 7 (Tom Brodie 3, Naveen Jindal 2, Simran Shergill 2) bt 61st Cavalry 4 (Ravi Rathore 3, Vishal Chauhan).

**Army polo championship (league):** ASC 9 1/2 (G.S. Pandher 4, Ravinder Mang, Sunil, handicap 3 1/2) bt RVC 3 (Vijay Singh 2, Ramvir Singh).

## Kuchar vows to make it right with caddie

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LOS ANGELES

US golfer Matt Kuchar, pilloried for his payment of \$5,000 to the Mexican caddie who carried his bag in a victory at November's Mayakoba Classic, vowed on Friday to make things right. In the run-up to this week's Genesis Open in Los Angeles, Kuchar had defended the payment to David Giral Ortiz, even though it was a fraction of what a regular PGA Tour caddie would expect when his boss collected a \$1.206 million purse.

While arrangements with caddies vary, regular caddies on the US tour typically get a 10% bonus from a winning player.

"This week, I made comments that were out of touch and insensitive, making a bad situation worse," Kuchar said.

## Renne takes the crown

SPORTS BUREAU  
POKHARA (NEPAL)

Unseeded Renne Singla beat top seed Le Yi Liu of China 6-4, 6-3 to clinch the girls' title in the ITF grade-5 junior tennis tournament on Saturday.

Renne, who trains with coach Vinod Kumar in the Capital, had dropped only nine games in the earlier four rounds.

She had lost to the same opponent in the semifinals

last week in a similar tournament in Nepal.

In the boys' final, Geni Inoue of Japan defeated Udayavir Singh 6-3, 5-7, 7-6(4). The results:

**Boys: Final:** Geni Inoue (Jpn) bt Udayavir Singh 6-3, 5-7, 7-6(4); **Semifinals:** Udayavir bt Sarthak Suden 6-0, 6-3; Geni bt Ishan Seth 6-4, 7-6(5).**Girls: Final:** Renne Singla bt Le Yi Liu (Chn) 6-4, 6-3; **Semifinals:** Liu bt Viktoriya Veleva (Bul) 6-0, 7-5; Renne bt Riya Uboveja 6-0, 6-3.

Sweet revenge: Renne Singla upstaged Le Yi Liu who had beaten her last week. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## East Bengal keen to keep up momentum

Will try to cash in on an injury-hit Churchill Brothers

## I-LEAGUE

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

East Bengal will be eager to take advantage of the absence of some key Churchill Brothers players when the two sides meet in an I-League engagement here on Sunday.

Riding the crest of its four-match winning streak, EB – third with 31 points from 15 matches and three drifts of table topper Chennai City FC – will be keen to maintain the winning momentum and strengthen its chances of winning the title.

The host is doing well in not getting excited about either playing a depleted

Churchill or tackling its erstwhile forward Willis Plaza.

"We are not playing against only Plaza, but all the players of Churchill Brothers. We are focusing on the match against Churchill and not thinking too far ahead," said EB coach Alejandro Menendez as his team took rest on Saturday.

Even as its chances for the title look bleak, the Goan outfit, which is fourth with 30 points from 17 matches, will try to put its best foot forward amidst adversity.

"Unfortunately, we lost vital points. Now it's very difficult to get back to the title race. We will find a way to deal with the challenge," said Churchill coach Petre Gigiu.

# YOU'VE GOT SCREEN TIME? WHOOPEE! LET'S GET GOING WITH

# YOUNG WORLD CLUB.COM

from THE HINDU GROUP

Presenting *The Hindu Young World Club*, a creative interactive website for children in the age group 8-15. Packed with rich content to make learning exciting, and updated every week, the website offers you new ways to discover the world.

- Science & Math**
- Art & Craft**
- Stories & Puzzles**

- Music & Theatre**
- History & Geography**
- Sports & Fitness**

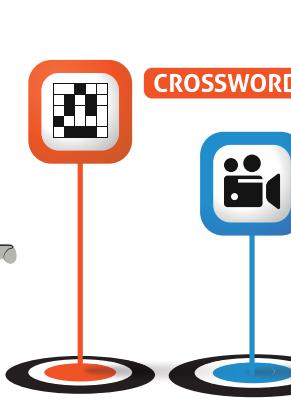
Earn points to climb the leaderboard and win exciting prizes.



Gold for Best Innovation to Engage Youth Audiences (WAN-IFRA South Asian Digital Media Awards 2017)

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Curated content
- Safe to view
- Explore on any device



- CROSSWORD
- INTERACTIVE VIDEOS
- MEMORY GAMES

- QUIZZES
- SHUFFLE PUZZLES

**ANNUAL**

**YOUNG WORLD CLUB.COM**  
from THE HINDU GROUP

~~Rs. 349~~  
**Rs. 99**

**ANNUAL COMBO OFFER**

**YOUNG WORLD CLUB.COM**  
from THE HINDU GROUP

~~Rs. 849~~  
**Rs. 449**

To subscribe [www.youngworldclub.com/plans](http://www.youngworldclub.com/plans)

Toll-free: 1800 3000 1878

# Irfan, Soumya emerge champs

Both runners were nowhere near their personal best

## NATL. RACE WALK

K. KEERTHIVASAN  
CHENNAI

Olympian race walker K.T. Irfan had the worst possible year of his career in 2018.

He was ejected from the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games village after his roommate was found with a syringe in his bag, a few days after the race. And in the subsequent Jakarta Asian Games, he was disqualified.

The 29-year-old from Kerala, who holds the National record, however, began the new season on a confident note by winning the men's 20K gold in the sixth Open National race walk championships here on Saturday in a time of one hour 26 minutes and 18 seconds.

It was a far cry from his personal best of 1:20.21 at the 2012 London Olympics.

B. Soumya (Kerala) coasted to a relatively easy victory in the women's 20K category in a time of 1:40.25. Priyanka finished second in 1:41.20.

Soumya was behind Priyanka and Karamjit Kaur in the first 1km and after that she took control of the proceedings.

Soumya couldn't come anywhere close to her National record of 1:31.28 set in Delhi last year in the same event.

### Warnings

Karamjit was handed three warnings and asked to start from the pit lane.

She did not want to continue as she thought she had already lost a lot of time.

"There was some pro-



**Walking to glory:** K.T. Irfan began the new season on a high. ■ K.V. SRINIVASAN

blem with the road. And also I missed the services of [Russian] coach Alexander Artsybashev," said Soumya.

It is learnt that Alexander will soon join the team in the camp.

In the top bunch, which included Sandeep Kumar, Chandan Singh, Devender Singh and Ganapathi Krishnan, Irfan was trailing for most part of the race.

He picked up speed in the last 1km to breast the tape

one second ahead of Deven-

der.

"It feels great but I am not happy with the timing. It was partly due to the humid weather conditions and the sloped roads," said Irfan.

Unable to make the qualifi-

cation grade for the Doha World Championships in September-October, both Irfan and Soumya said they will definitely make the grade in the Asian champion-

(Japan) next month.

Compared to the previous five editions, the Chennai event saw the poorest time recorded by the winners.

**The results: 20km, men:** 1. K.T. Irfan (Ker) 1:26.18; 2. Devender Singh (Har) 1:26.19; 3. Sandeep Kumar (Har) 1:26.19; 4. Chanand Singh (Utk) 1:26.20; 5. K. Ganapathi Krishnan 1:26.43.

**Women:** 1. B. Soumya (Ker) 1:40.25; 2. Priyanka (UP) 1:41.20; 3. Ravina (Har) 1:41.46; 4. Sonal Sukhwal (Raj) 1:42.55; 5. Bandana Patel (UP) 1:49.29.

# Minerva Punjab FC forfeits match

The team refuses to travel to Srinagar for its clash against Real Kashmir

## I-LEAGUE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Defending champion Minerva Punjab FC on Saturday forfeited its I-League match against Real Kashmir FC in Srinagar after the All India Football Federation (AIFF) turned down their request to relocate the fixture in the aftermath of the Pulwama terrorist attacks.

The match was scheduled for Sunday and Minerva said its foreign players have been advised by their respective countries' embassies to pull out. "We regret to inform you that this is not a risk that we are ready to take hence we shall not be travelling to the turbulent region," the Punjab club said in its letter to the AIFF.

Minerva also said that it

did not receive the security assurances it had sought from the AIFF following the attack on Thursday which led to the death of 40 CRPF personnel. It is being termed as the deadliest terrorist strike in three decades in Jammu and Kashmir.

Considering the extraordinary circumstances following the Pulwama attack just 20Km from Srinagar Airport, the Ministry of Home affairs need to approve the football match being held. If the CRPF convoys are not safe, then we are very soft targets for such attacks," the club stated.

"We had asked for written assurance and permission from Ministry of Home Affairs which we still haven't got from your or Home team's end. Please note that our foreign players have already received Travel Advisory warnings from their respective

embassies asking them not to travel to Srinagar till further notice," it added.

Minerva once again urged the AIFF "to delay the match for at least a fortnight till situation in the valley is settled." "...alternately we are ready to play in Delhi, Chandigarh or any other neutral venue," the club said.

Earlier, I-League CEO Sunando Dhar said local security authorities in Srinagar gave the go-ahead to hold the match. He said the AIFF was assured of all the necessary security arrangements for the players and officials by the local authorities.

"Our officials are already in Srinagar in preparation of the match. I have spoken to the match commissioner and he told me that the situation in Srinagar is currently normal. The local security in-

charge of the match has also assured full security," Dhar said on Saturday.

"We have been assured that the whole security bandobast of players' transport from the airport to the team hotel and for travelling from the team hotel to the ground and return on match day will all be provided. So we have decided to go ahead with the match," he added.

But Minerva said that the arrangements mentioned by the AIFF "are routine" for any visiting team.

Minerva owner Ranji Bajaj said his side decided to forfeit the match due to security concerns and as a mark of respect for the slain CRPF Jawans. "We are not going to play the match, we will forfeit it. We have decided it and I have no second thought in doing that," he said.

Real Kashmir will get all the three points.

# BFC keen to seal play-off spot

Will be up against Delhi Dynamos hoping to end on a high

## ISL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Bengaluru FC will be keen to put its recent disappointing run of form behind it and become the first team to qualify for the Indian Super League play-offs when it takes on laggard Delhi Dynamos here on Sunday.

The league leader needs a win on Sunday to confirm its

place among the top four and will look to do just that.

The Blues have taken their foot off the accelerator following the winter break and have stumbled a bit.

They have just one win in the last four matches and are coming off a 1-2 reverse against Chennaiyin FC.

They have not started matches well and found themselves trailing at half-time in their last two games before rallying in the second

half.

Coach Carles Cuadrat has been testing his bench strength by resting regulars and affording game time to his fringe players. Dimas Delgado, Udanta Singh, Albert Serran were all rested in Chennai last time out.

With the play-offs approaching, the Spanish coach may continue his tinkering against Delhi Dynamos as well.

"Of course, there are al-

ways problems on the pitch. You have to rotate the team. Our position on the table gives us the privilege to make some changes and afford some mistakes. We are lucky in that regard," said Cuadrat.

Delhi Dynamos will be out to gain a measure of revenge and finish the season on a high after being knocked out of the play-off race. The host is placed ninth but that would not stop it from claiming the prize scalp of Bengaluru.

Delhi Dynamos would be eager to make the most of its recent upturn in form and beat Bengaluru.

It is unbeaten in its last four ISL outings (two wins and two draws). Its defence has notably improved with the team conceding just the two goals apart from managing to keep a clean-sheet against an attack-heavy FC Goa.

"They (Bengaluru) are top



**Time to party:** The play-offs within touching distance, Bengaluru FC's stars will look to get the job done against laggards Delhi Dynamos. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

# HI names 34 probables for Azlan Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Hockey India named 34 players for the men's national camp, from Feb. 18 at Bengaluru, to prepare for the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup from March 23.

HI has retained all 18 players in the team that took part in last December's World Cup, for the month-long camp.

The list also features Sultan of Johor Cup silver-medal

winning India Colts' Shilann Lakra, Suman Beck, Mandeep Mor, Yashdeep Siwach, Vishal Antil and Gurshahjot Singh, who had figured in the 34-member camp for the World Cup.

"The team for the 28th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup will be selected from this core group of 34 players after a selection trial is held in Bengaluru in the last week of February.

"I am happy to note that

the junior players who have recently been inducted into the senior camp have shown significant improvement and that the depth in the group is strong," said David John, High Performance Director, HI.

**The list:** Goalkeepers: P.R.

Sreejesh, Suraj Karkera, Krishan Bahadur Pathak. Defenders:

Harmanpreet Singh, Gurinder Singh, Varun Kumar, Kothajit Singh Khadangbam, Surender Kumar, Amit Rohidas, Jarman-

preet Singh, Pardeep Singh, Suman Beck, Mandeep Mor, Birendra Lakra, Rupinder Pal Singh. Midfielders: Manpreet Singh, Chinglensana Singh Kangajuan, Sumit, Simranjit Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Hardik Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Vivek Sagat Prasad, Yashdeep Siwach, Vishal Antil.

Forwards: Akashdeep Singh, Ramandeep Singh, Gurjant Singh, Mandeep Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Sumit Kumar, Gursahajit Singh, Shilanand Lakra, S.V. Sunil.

# Rosberg excited about Vettel-Leclerc partnership

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MONACO

Former World champion Nico Rosberg is "done with driving" but ahead of the 2019 Formula One season, the racer in him is most excited about Ferrari fielding two "No. 1 drivers" in Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc for the first time in a decade.



Nico Rosberg.  
■ CLIVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES

ford to do a season like last year or he'll be beaten by his teammates.

"He really needs to perform now and that's going to be really, really fun," said the 33-year-old.

Rosberg, who is also a Laureus ambassador, had announced a shock retirement five days after winning his maiden title in 2016, when he pipped teammate Lewis Hamilton.



LOAN CAN BE AVAILED  
BY ELIGIBLE SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS

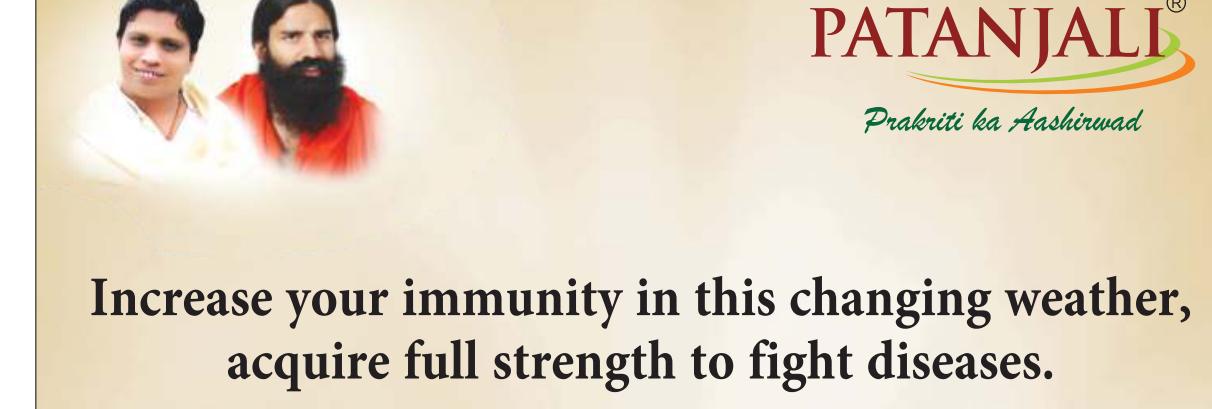
• Independent Houses • Flats / Apartments

• Factories • Land / Buildings

• Offices & Shops • Open Plots • And more...

Register and Bid here  
(Register and complete the formalities well in advance.)

<https://syndicatebank.auctiontiger.net>



Increase your immunity in this changing weather,  
acquire full strength to fight diseases.

Eat Patanjali Special Chyawanprash with the goodness of Kashmiri Kesar



This authentic Chyawanprash has been made according to the method & recipe of Charak, Sushruta, Dhanvantri and other Rishis. Old Chyawan Rishi regained his youth when he ate this. That's why Chyawanprash has received fame in the name of Chyawan Rishi.

Shop Online- [www.patanjaliayurved.net](http://www.patanjaliayurved.net) | Customer Care Number - 18001804108

Email ID - [feedback@patanjaliayurved.org](mailto:feedback@patanjaliayurved.org) | Website - [www.patanjaliayurved.org](http://www.patanjaliayurved.org)



Mike Pence chastises EU, rejects Merkel's call to work with Russia  
page 3



President Buhari upset at postponement of election in Nigeria  
page 3



Automakers brace for U.S. government report on import tariffs  
page 8

PRINTED AT : CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

## IN BRIEF



**Former U.S. Cardinal McCarrick defrocked**

VATICAN CITY  
Former U.S. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick has been expelled from the Roman Catholic priesthood after he was found guilty of sexual crimes against minors and adults, the Vatican said on Saturday. Pope Francis has decided that the ruling, which followed an appeal by the man who was a power-broker as Archbishop of Washington, D.C. from 2001 to 2006, was final. His crimes were made more serious by "the aggravating factor of the abuse of power."

WORLD • PAGE 3

## Top bureaucrat's transactions during demonetisation raise red flag

Vigilance Commission report says several high value transactions were made by K.P. Bakshi, then Additional Chief Secretary of Maharashtra

**SHARAD VYAS**  
MUMBAI

Central agencies have flagged several 'suspicious' high value transactions by a top bureaucrat of Maharashtra during the demonetisation drive that was announced on November 8, 2016.

The Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) in question was at the time in charge of Maharashtra's Home Department assigned to closely coordinate with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on fake and counterfeit currency and its periodic suspicious transactions report (STR).

This is when about ₹2.5



The report also points to a spike in volumes in a trading account of the bureaucrat.

Home department. Post-retirement, he serves as Chairman of the State Water Resources Regulatory Authority.

According to sources in

the CVC, the three transactions of ₹1.5 crore, ₹65 lakh and ₹45-50 lakh were carried out during the period between November 8, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The CVC report has pointed to a tip off from the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU-IND), a wing of the Ministry of Finance, which has been monitoring cases of money laundering, illicit financing and other economic offences post-demonetisation.

The report also points to a spike in volumes in a share trading account belonging to the senior bureaucrat.

Highly placed sources in

that Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who is also the Home Minister, has been apprised of the findings.

"We have also demanded to know from the Maharashtra government if the Indian Administrative Service (cadre) rules, 1954 - DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training) requiring intimation to the government within a period of one month after making such large volume transactions were followed," said a source in the CVC, adding that non-intimation itself amounts to a case for charsheeting.

Maharashtra Chief Secre-

tary D.K. Jain said the government was alarmed by the report, and has asked the official for an explanation.

"We have followed all due processes in the matter, which is alarming in nature owing to the large volume of cash. Once we receive an explanation, a course of action will be decided upon," Mr. Jain told *The Hindu*.

Senior officials in the Income Tax and Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) confirmed they were apprised of the report, as also previous complaints of large scale out-of-turn transfers in the State Home Department between 2016 and 2017. On

May 19, 2016, the ACB had arrested a Deputy Secretary in the State Home department for allegedly taking a bribe to recruit a candidate.

**Bakshi responds**  
Mr. Bakshi told *The Hindu* that the sums were a loan and part transaction carried out on behalf of his son's company on a temporary basis.

"My son through his company wanted to buy some bonds and since he was not able to do it from his account, we carried out the transactions from my personal account. I have forwarded my explanation to the government as well," he said.

## Bulb brings tears



**Distress sale:** Onion farmers of Jarasangam in Sangareddy district of Telangana have been forced to sell their produce at a distress price of under ₹2 per kg. They also suffered losses due to unseasonal rains in the region. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

## India, Pakistan to fight it out in UN court in espionage case

Delhi will ask for Jadhav to be taken off death row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

THE HAGUE  
India will ask the UN's top court on Monday to order Pakistan to take an alleged Indian spy off the death row in a case that could stoke fresh tensions after a deadly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kulbhushan Jadhav was arrested in the restive south-western Pakistani province of Baluchistan in March, 2016, on the charge of espionage and sentenced to



death by a military court. The International Court of Justice ordered Pakistan in 2017 to stay the execution, pending hearings on the

broader Indian case that took place this week in The Hague.

Indian lawyers will present their arguments on Monday to the court, which was set up after the Second World War to resolve international disputes, followed by Pakistan's on Tuesday.

Jadhav, a former naval officer, was accused of working for the Indian intelligence services in the province bordering Afghanistan.

## Delhi court dismisses Michel's bail petition

He was arrested in helicopter deal case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI  
A Delhi court on Saturday dismissed the bail petition of Christian Michel, arrested in connection with an alleged scam in the ₹3,600-crore AgustaWestland VVIP helicopter deal.

Special judge Arvind Kumar rejected Michel's petition in the cases filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and

the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Michel, extradited from Dubai, was arrested by the ED on December 22 last year.

On January 5, he was remanded in judicial custody in the ED case. He is also in judicial custody in the CBI case related to the scam. Michel is among the three alleged middlemen being probed. The others are Guido Haschke and Carlo Gerosa.

Tourism Minister Vishwendra Singh Bainsla, who was sitting with hundreds of his supporters on the Delhi-Mumbai section near the Malabar station in Sawai Madhopur district, asked the agitators to lift the blockades that had thrown traffic out of gear and caused inconvenience to the public.

To break the deadlock, Col. Bainsla (retired) expressed regret over the inconvenience caused to the public since February 8, when the blockades were put up. He called upon the Union government to get the new Act, recognising Gujjars as an "extremely backward class," included in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to protect it from being challenged in courts.

The three pieces of legislation enacted in the State since 2008, giving 5% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions called off their agitation Saturday after the State government gave a written assurance that it would take legal steps to safeguard the quota provided to them in a Bill passed by the Assembly on February 13.

Col. Bainsla, who led the

stir as convener of the Gujar Aarakshan Sangharsh Samiti, said the decision to call off the protest was taken "in the interest of the nation."

"We have got 5% reservation. If an issue arises at a later stage, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has promised us that he would intervene," he said.

## Raising their spirits with hard-won voter ID cards

Calcutta Pavlov Hospital helps inmates who have recovered from mental health problems get EPICs

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Somen Mondal (name changed) does not remember much of his life outside the Calcutta Pavlov Hospital (CPH). A resident of West Bengal's Howrah district, the 32-year-old said that his home was in Uluberia and his family sold land for his treatment before he was brought to the State-run mental health facility in the city.

Mr. Mondal, whose health condition has considerably improved in the past two years, is very excited these days. On January 28 this year, he, along with 15 other residents of the CPH

received their Elector's Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) after a long campaign. "All of us are very happy. Sometimes, we discuss how we will vote and for whom," he said.

Ganesh Prasad, CPH's Medical Superintendent, and Ratnaboli Ray of the Anjali Mental Health Rights Organisation (AMHRO) described the development as a "giant leap" for the inclusion of people with mental health conditions and psycho-social disorders.

"This is the first instance

where residents of a mental health facility are getting voting rights after they have

recovered. We have applied for voter ID cards for 40 others and we are likely to get the cards before the polls," Dr. Prasad said.

There is enthusiasm after some residents received their ID cards. In February, local Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Swarnakamal Saha visited, to participate in an event where residents like Mr. Mondal told him, "Ebar amara, kintu vote debo (we will vote this time)".

"It is important that politicians recognise the growing population with

mental health conditions who will exercise their franchise," Ms. Ray said.

**Right address**  
The most significant aspect, she said, is that none of the Voter IDs mention Pavlov Hospital, but use the address '18 Gobra Road, Kolkata'. "We cannot empower them by enabling them to vote and have the name of the hospital on their ID cards," Ms. Ray said.

Soumitra Pathare, psychiatrist and director, Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy at Indian Law Society, Pune, said the significance of the initiative lies in its inclusive nature.

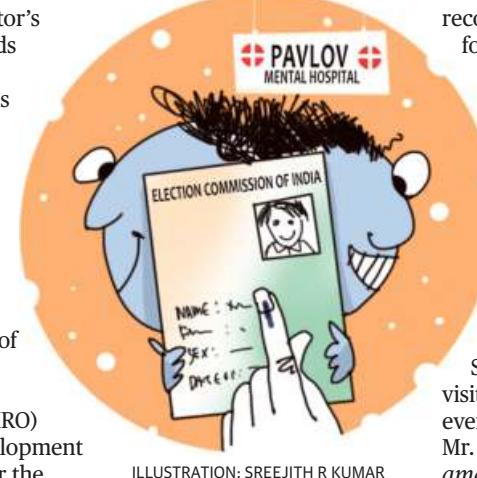


ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R KUMAR

**SPONDY AID**



**SPONDY AID**  
Homeopathic Medicine

\*Individual results and treatment duration may vary.

**INDICATIONS**

Spondy Aid with its novel formulation provides relief from pain, stiffness & soreness in muscles of the back.

**DOSAGE**

10-15 drops should be diluted with water and taken 3 times a day. In acute cases take 2 hourly 6 times a day. Once improvement starts reduce the dosage to twice a day or take as prescribed by the physician.

**ADVICE**

SPONDY AID WITH BAKSON'S RHEUM AID PLUS GIVES BETTER RESULTS.

- Exercise regularly
- Avoid sudden change of temperature.

CN-174890D1989PTC0630

**Dr. S.P.S. Bakshi**  
CMD, Bakson Group

**DOC TALKS**



**BREATHING PROBLEMS**

Tendency to frequently catch cough, cold and get sore painful throat if not treated properly gets converted into chronic Tonsillitis, Adenoiditis, Sinusitis and finally suppression with strong medicines lead to Bronchitis & Asthma.

Bakson's Homoeopathic Centre for Allergy specializes in treating allergic condition like Asthma.

Homoeopathy works at the root level & restores deviated immunity back to normalcy.



Healthy Airways



Unhealthy Airways



Asthmatic Inflamed wall with Mucus

Over 65 years of trust

**BAKSON'S HOMOEOPATHY**

For appointment, call 09582323266

Corporate E-mail: cure@bakson.net

Corporate E-mail: cure@bakson.net

For appointment, call 09582323266

Chat online with our Specialists

For free consultation log on to www.bakson.net

@Baksons

## IN BRIEF



Arunachal govt. offices to become paperless

**ITANAGAR**  
All State government offices in Arunachal Pradesh will become paperless e-office by 2021, Chief Minister Pema Khandu has said. This is the result of the big push to the use of information technology in governance, he said at the launch of Wifi hotspots for Tawang and Dirang districts at Tawang. Paperless e-office would help to curb manipulation, ensure transparency and provide the people easy access to services, he said. PTI

## Nepal-bound container train flagged off

**KOLKATA**  
The first train hauling Nepal-bound transit containers under a new simplified transhipment procedure was flagged off here on Friday. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs introduced the procedure using the Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) for transport of Nepal-bound transit containers from the Kolkata/Haldia port. ANI

## Swine flu death toll touches 126 in Rajasthan

**JAIPUR**  
One more person died of swine flu in Rajasthan on Friday, taking the death toll to 126 in the State so far this year. The patient who lost his life was from Barmer district. Seventy-four new cases have been reported in the State, taking the number of patients to 3,359 in 46 days. ANI

## Three teachers suspended in Odisha

**JAIPUR**  
Two college lecturers and a school teacher were placed under suspension for alleged dereliction of duty and failure to report for training classes for the upcoming election in Odisha's Jajpur district, officials said on Saturday. PTI



## The collapse and after

The Saradha scam unfolded in West Bengal around six years ago, sending ripples across the neighbouring States of Odisha, Tripura and Assam. A brief timeline of the case

**April 2013:** Saradha Group collapses. Chairman and managing director Sudipta Sen flees State leaving behind an 18 page letter, naming Trinamool Congress MP Kunal Ghosh and other political bigwigs

**April 16:** Agents and investors throng West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's house

**April 22:** West Bengal govt. sets up SIT

**April 23:** SIT arrests Sudipta Sen, right, from Kashmir

**Nov. 23:** Kunal Ghosh arrested

**May 9, 2014:** Supreme Court directs CBI to probe Saradha and other chit fund companies



**Sept. 9:** CBI arrests Trinamool leader and former DGP Rajat Majumder

**Oct. 22:** CBI files first chargesheet in Saradha scam

**Nov. 21:** CBI arrests Srinjoy Bose, Trinamool Rajya Sabha member and owner of a Bengali daily

**Dec. 12:** Former West Bengal Transport Minister Madan Mitra arrested

**Jan. 11, 2019:** CBI files sixth supplementary chargesheet

**Feb. 3:** CBI attempts to question Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajiv Kumar

**Feb. 3- Feb. 5:** Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stages dharna in Kolkata

**Feb. 5:** SC asks Kolkata Police chief to cooperate; puts injunction on his arrest



lost it. "The properties of Saradha and other chit fund companies are all there. The need of the hour is that both the Centre and the State governments should acquire these properties at the earliest and start the process of returning the money to the poor, who have lost their life's savings," Mr. Dey said. Scanning across documents at his office in Kolkata, Mr. Dey said that more than 200 people had committed suicide after being duped.

Nira Naskar, 58, from Buruipur Puranadarpa village, made a living by doing odd jobs. He finds it difficult to recall the dates on which he invested the money but he is sure that he had put all his life savings of ₹2 lakh in the Saradha Group's deposits. He now survives on what his two sons give him.

There are several stories like Mr. Naskar who have lost all their savings to the Saradha Group. Askar Molla, a vegetable vendor of Jalalabad in Canning, lost ₹40,000 and sees no hope of getting his money back.

Tarak Dey, secretary of the Suraksha Mancha, said 20 lakh people are victims of the Saradha scam, and with all the deposit-seeking companies put together, the number could go up to crores. With the recent developments around the questioning of the Kolkata Police Commissioner by the CBI, representatives of the forum are going to step up their movement, demanding the return of money to all the duped investors.

## 'Return money'

Subir Dey, convenor of the Amanatkar O Agent Suraksha Mancha, a platform of agents of different deposit-seeking companies, said the investigation in these scams, including Saradha, should be independent of returning money to those who have

## Six long years after Saradha scam, the wait continues

With their lives altered forever, agents and depositors have little hope left

**SHIV SAHAY SINGH**  
**KOLKATA**  
Sushmita Talukdar, a 42-year-old home-maker, switches off the television whenever she comes across a news report on the investigation into the Saradha scam. She has lost all hope that justice will be done in the scam that tore her family apart. Sitting at her home in Sonarpur, Ms. Talukdar emphasises two dates – March 17, 2013 and March 21, 2018 – that changed her life forever.

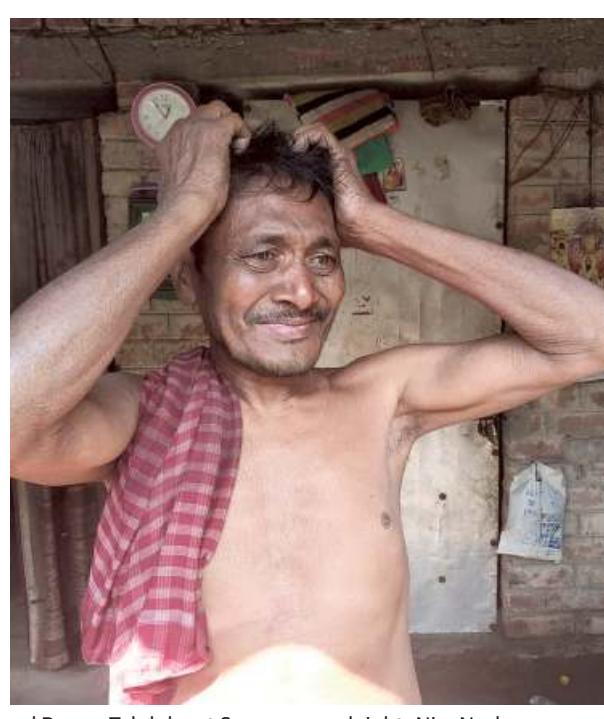
"Some are dead, some remain in hiding and others are trying every means to repay the investors. What do we have to do with the investigation on the Centre-State tussle that's going on? All we want is to redeem ourselves from the sins of collecting money from people. We never knew that we would end up like this," Mr. Mal said.

Mr. Mal also repeats one date that he thinks has significance in his life. On April 16, 2013 he, along with hundreds of investors and agents of the Saradha Group from different parts of the State, reached the residence of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata and erupted into protest. "I remember carrying a poster: 'Didi amader bahan' (Didi save us)."

**18-page letter**  
The Saradha scam came to the fore in April 2013, when company chairman and managing director Sudipta Sen fled the State, leaving behind an 18-page letter. The letter had names of the then Trinamool Congress MP Kunal Ghosh and other political bigwigs. A flurry of political and administrative activity started from the third week of April 2013, with an inquiry commission headed by Justice (Retd.) Shamal Sen and a Special Investigation Team by the West Bengal police, all being set up by the State. Sudipta Sen was arrested on April 23, 2013, from Kashmir, and Kunal Ghosh in November the same year. The collapse of the Saradha Group sent ripples across the neighbouring States of Odisha, Tripura and Assam, and in certain cases, the State governments handed the case over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).



**Shattered dreams:** Sushmita Talukdar, with a photograph of husband Pawan Talukdar at Sonarpur, and right, Nira Naskar, an investor, at his home in Buruipur. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



With the collapse of the Saradha Group, the operation of other deposit-seeking companies, including that of Rose Valley, which had allegedly raised about ₹15,000 crore (five times what the Saradha Group had raised) came under the scanner. On May 9, 2014, days before the State went to the Lok Sabha poll, the Supreme Court handed over the entire investigation into Saradha and other deposit-seeking companies that had raised money illegally from the market to the CBI.

The investigating agency filed the first chargesheet in October of the same year, accusing Sudipta Sen, his close

aide Debjani Mukherjee and suspended MP Kunal Ghosh. Since then, the agency has filed six more supplementary chargesheets, the last in January 2019 naming Nalini Chidambaram. Those arrested by the CBI in Saradha scam include former West Bengal Director General of Police and Trinamool Congress leader Rajat Majumder, former Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MP and owner of a Bengali daily Srinjoy Bose, and the then Transport Minister of West Bengal Madan Mitra. All three are out on bail.

After the CBI took over the probe, the Shamal Sen Commission, set up by the

West Bengal government to return money to the investors quickly, wound up its work. The State government has set up a corpus of ₹500 crore for returning money to the duped investors by imposing a tax on tobacco, but the commission could distribute little over ₹140 crore to duped investors.

**'Return money'**  
Subir Dey, convenor of the Amanatkar O Agent Suraksha Mancha, a platform of agents of different deposit-seeking companies, said the investigation in these scams, including Saradha, should be independent of returning money to those who have

# Want practice tests for JEE(Main) & NEET?

**EMPOWER**  
MOCK TEST SERIES

BY



THE HINDU GROUP

Register for two scheduled  
online all India mock tests to  
benchmark yourself now



To register, log on to  
<https://empower.thehindu.com>

All India Online Mock Test Series  
for JEE(Main) & NEET

Knowledge & Platform Partner



## ELSEWHERE



Mao-era Chinese official passes away at 101

BEIJING  
Mao Zedong's ex-secretary Li Rui, a critic of the ruling Communist Party who spent a lifetime near the centre of elite politics, died on Saturday at the age of 101, his family said. Mr. Li had opposed a constitutional change last year which paved the way for Xi Jinping to stay in power indefinitely. AFP

## Sacked U.S. man shoots dead five co-workers

CHICAGO  
A U.S. man, who was about to be fired from his job, shot dead five co-workers at a factory on the outskirts of Chicago and wounded five police officers before being gunned down himself, in the country's latest mass shooting. The gunfire took place at 1:24 p.m. local time at the Henry Pratt Company in Aurora, Illinois. AFP

## Iran blames Pakistan for attack on soldiers

ISFAHAN  
Iran's Revolutionary Guards accused "Pakistan's security forces" of supporting the perpetrators of a suicide bombing that killed 27 troops on Wednesday, in remarks state TV aired on Saturday hours before their funeral was held. AFP

## Saudi Prince's visit to Pakistan delayed

ISLAMABAD  
Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's arrival in Pakistan on his first official visit to the country has been delayed by a day for "unknown reasons". He was scheduled to reach Islamabad on Saturday but due to a slight change, he will arrive on Sunday, according to the Foreign Office. PTI

## Ex-Cardinal defrocked over sexual abuse

Theodore McCarrick was found guilty in January for assaulting a teenager about 50 years ago

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

VATICAN CITY

Pope Francis has defrocked a former Cardinal in a first for the Roman Catholic church over accusations that American Theodore McCarrick sexually abused a teenager about 50 years ago, a Vatican statement said on Saturday.

Cardinal McCarrick, 88, who resigned from the Vatican's College of Cardinals in July, is the first Cardinal ever to be defrocked for sex abuse.

He was found guilty in January by a Vatican court for sexually abusing a teenager, a decision confirmed by the Pope in February, with "no further recourse", according to the statement. It said Cardinal McCarrick was guilty of "sins against the Sixth Commandment with minors and with adults, with the aggravating factor of the abuse of power".

The announcement marks

a spectacular fall from grace for the once influential Cardinal and comes ahead of a Vatican conference from February 21-24 bringing together Bishops from around the world to discuss protecting children within the Church.

Sex abuse scandals around the globe, and most recently in the United States and Chile, have shaken the church, with Pope Francis promising a policy of "zero tolerance" even for high-ranking church members.

**Barred from practising**  
Cardinal McCarrick was barred from practising as a priest in July last year, after which he resigned his honorary title of Cardinal. He currently lives in Kansas.

McCarrick was known for having sex with adult seminarians before he was accused of sexually abusing at least one teenager.

Prosecutors in the U.S.



Theodore McCarrick, who resigned from Vatican's College of Cardinals in July last year. • AFP

State of Pennsylvania last year found 300 priests were involved in child sexual abuse since the 1940s, crimes that were covered up by a string of bishops. Prosecutors in half a dozen other U.S. States have announced plans for similar

investigations. The Pope accepted the resignations of several bishops in Chile last year after investigations revealed decades of sexual abuse by clergy in their dioceses.

In March 2015, Pope Francis allowed Keith O'Brien to

keep the title of Cardinal after the former Bishop of Edinburgh and former leader of the Catholic church in Scotland resigned over allegations of inappropriate sexual behaviour towards priests in the 1980s.

## One precedent

The only previous case of a cardinal resigning came in 1927, when Pope Pius XI accepted the resignation of French cardinal Louis Billot, who had himself renounced his status for political reasons. Cardinals act as close papal advisers and can attend conclaves to elect new pontiffs if they are aged below 80. McCarrick had been one of the most prominent American cardinals active on the international stage.

Although officially retired, McCarrick had continued to travel abroad regularly, including on human rights issues.



U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence. • GETTY IMAGES

Mr. Pence, who used his trip to Europe to push Mr. Trump's policy of favouring sovereign states as opposed to alliances and blocs, took aim at the European Union (EU) as a whole, saying "once more the Old World can take a strong stand in support of freedom in the New World" in Venezuela.

His speech contrasted sharply with German Chancellor Angela Merkel's robust defence of Germany's foreign trade relations and ties with Russia, urging global leaders meeting in Munich to work together to tackle the world's problems.

Speaking before Pence, Ms. Merkel questioned whether the U.S. decision to leave the Iran nuclear deal and withdraw from Syria was the best way to tackle Tehran in the region. She defended plans for a new natural gas pipeline from Russia to Germany that Mr. Pence again criticised. Mr. Trump has accused Germany of being a "captive" of Russia due to its reliance on Russian energy, but Merkel argued: "If during the Cold War... we imported large amounts of Russian gas, I don't know why times should be so much worse today that we can say: Russia remains a partner."

## V-P Pence asks EU to withdraw from 'disastrous' Iran deal

Defends Trump's 'America-first' approach

REUTERS

MUNICH

U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence rebuked European powers over Iran and Venezuela on Saturday in a renewed attack on Washington's traditional allies, rejecting a call by Germany's Chancellor to include Russia in global cooperation efforts.

Describing the results of Donald Trump's presidency as "remarkable" and "extraordinary", Mr. Pence told senior European and Asian officials the EU should follow the U.S. in quitting the Iran nuclear deal and recognising the head of Venezuela's Congress, Juan Guaidó, as the country's President.

## 'America is leading'

"America is stronger than ever before and America is leading on the world stage once again," Mr. Pence told officials at the Munich Security Conference, listing what he described as U.S. foreign policy successes from Afghanistan to North Korea.

Mr. Pence – who last week during a visit to Poland accused Britain, Germany and France of undermining U.S. sanctions on Iran – repeated his demand that European powers withdraw from the deal. "The Iranian regime openly advocates another Holocaust and it seeks the means to achieve it," Mr. Pence, who also visited the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz, told delegates.

"The time has come for our European partners to withdraw from the disastrous Iran nuclear deal and join with us as we bring the economic and diplomatic pressure," Mr. Pence said.

## Last-minute Nigeria election delay disappoints voters

President Buhari expresses disappointment; Election Commission cites logistical issues as the reason

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ABUJA



Seeking another term: An election poster featuring President Muhammadu Buhari in Daura, Nigeria. • AFP

Nigerians hoping to cast their ballots in elections set for Saturday were instead turned away from polling stations after the Electoral Commission's snap decision to delay the vote by a week.

President Muhammadu Buhari said he was "deeply disappointed" by last-gasp postponement and called for calm, as rumours swirled on both sides of a plot to rig the vote.

Leading Opposition candidate Atiku Abubakar said he was "absolutely not" comfortable with the delay, while urging his supporters to be patient. "If you want to postpone the election, then you can do so one week be-

forehand, but you can't just postpone a few hours before," he told reporters.

Both Mr. Buhari, 76, and Mr. Abubakar, 72, headed to Abuja from their home

towns in northern Nigeria for a meeting with electoral officials to discuss the postponement.

Many voters were caught unawares by the early morn-

ing announcement and arrived at polling places to find the doors barred and staff absent. "Why didn't they announce the delay earlier? Why make the announcement in the middle of the night?" asked Chidi Nwakanma, a businessman who showed up early to vote in the southern city of Port Harcourt.

## 73 candidates

Voting had been due to start nationwide at nearly 1,20,000 polling stations at 0700 GMT (12.30 p.m. IST) on Saturday, with a record 73 candidates on the ballot. Rumours began circulating late on Friday about a possible postponement after reports

of problems with the delivery of election materials, including ballot papers.

Members of the Independent National Electoral Commission held emergency talks and after examining the logistics plans concluded the timetable was "no longer feasible", its chairman, Mahmood Yakubu, said. Presidential and parliamentary elections are now set for February 23, and governorship and State Assembly elections have been pushed back to March 9, Mr. Yakubu said.

"This was a difficult decision for the commission to take but necessary for the successful delivery of elections and the consolidation of our democracy," he added.

## + Pak. school punished after students wave Indian flags

Show-cause notice issued to owner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KARACHI

Pakistani authorities last week suspended the registration of a school after some students danced to an Indian song and waved India's national flag during a cultural event.

A show-cause notice was issued to the school's owner on Wednesday to appear before the Directorate of Inspection and Registration of Private Institutions Sindh (DIRPIS).

The incident came to light after a video of the

function went viral on social media, triggering criticism, *The News International* reported.

The registration of the 'Mama Baby Care Cambridge School' has been suspended for allegedly promoting Indian culture, the report said.

According to DIRPIS registrar Rafia Javed, "promoting Indian culture in educational institutions was against Pakistan's national dignity which could not be tolerated in any circumstances".

## IS' 'caliphate' on the brink of collapse

Militants confined to a tiny enclave

REUTERS

BAGHOUZ

U.S.-backed fighters in Syria were on Saturday poised to capture Islamic State (IS)'s last, tiny enclave on the Euphrates, the battle commander said on Saturday, bringing its self-declared caliphate to the brink of total defeat.

Jiya Furat said the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) had cornered the remaining militants in a neighbourhood of Baghouz village near the Iraqi border. "In the coming few days, in a ve-

ry short time, we will spread the good tidings to the world of the military end of Daesh," he said.

He was speaking after U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday there would be "great announcements" about Syria over the next 24 hours.

Mr. Trump has sworn to pull U.S. forces from Syria after the IS's territorial defeat, raising questions over the fate of Washington's Kurdish allies and Turkish involvement in northeast Syria.

in the Tamil-majority north and east in the last decade since the war ended. In the absence of livelihood options and incomes the borrowers, mostly women heading households, were forced to resort to easy credit from microfinance companies that sold the loans at their doorsteps, charging exorbitant interest rates, at times up to 200%.

Following the Central Bank Governor Indrajit Coomaraswamy's visit to the north in 2017, the government acknowledged the widespread crisis and initiated steps to arrest the problem of mounting household debt. Further, it allocated LKR 500 million to the north in the last budget to provide alternative sources of affordable credit to rural families through the widespread network of cooperative banks in the north.

However, given the limits of credit, the Central Bank recognised the need for a broader development framework for the war-affected regions that are home to some 11 lakh people, mostly Tamils, in order to ensure the

development based on the specific needs of a war-tattered region, as a generic national plan may not address that.

## Post-war development

"Much of the development after the war was infrastructure related – mostly roads and electricity. It was important, but not enough. The projects were scattered, not integrated and did not revive the region economically," said B. Sivatheepan, chair of the Central Bank-appointed committee and a regional manager of the Bank in Kilinochchi.

Comprising professionals and academics based in the north, the team held consultations across the Northern Province to understand the requirements of the people in different districts – ranging from employment, education, health and sanitation, to market access. "Short-term measures may give immediate relief but it's crucial that we build resilience in the community through slow and stable growth," Mr. Sivatheepan told *The Hindu*.

With a partial debt write off, a cap on lending rates of microfinance companies and an imminent master plan for economic development, the Sri Lankan government has sought to revive the war-affected northern region.

Recently, Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera who was in Jaffna, along with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, announced that the government was writing off debts amounting to LKR 1,400 million, in 13 districts including in the five northern districts. The government has also passed a regulation to cap interest rates at 35% per annum.

"Whilst the drought was a major trigger factor, the unscrupulous practices of the lenders, particularly the unregulated loan sharks, played a major role in creating this debt trap," Mr. Samaraweera said at a public event.

## Microfinance loans

The loans written off are a fraction of the massive debt stifling virtually every family



Sri Lankan Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera

people do not fall into a debt trap. The Bank commissioned an economic development analysis of the north, from a team of experts based there.

Releasing a framework document recently, the committee has underscored the need to create jobs, boost income generation and local production.

The vision document, which is a precursor to a master plan for the region, also calls for a 'Northern Planning Bureau' to envision

the requirements of the people in different districts – ranging from employment, education, health and sanitation, to market access. "Short-term measures may give immediate relief but it's crucial that we build resilience in the community through slow and stable growth," Mr. Sivatheepan told *The Hindu*.

## THE GOD OF CRICKET LIES IN THE DETAILS

Presenting *The Hindu Lounge*

<https://lounge.thehindu.com>

This limited edition masterpiece is not just a stunning sketch of India's favourite cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar. Hidden in the fine lines are Sachin's 100 centuries along with the date, score and the opponent.

A befitting tribute to the God of Cricket. And a must-have memorabilia for any Sachin Tendulkar fan.

To get your hands on this limited edition Sachin Tendulkar collectible,

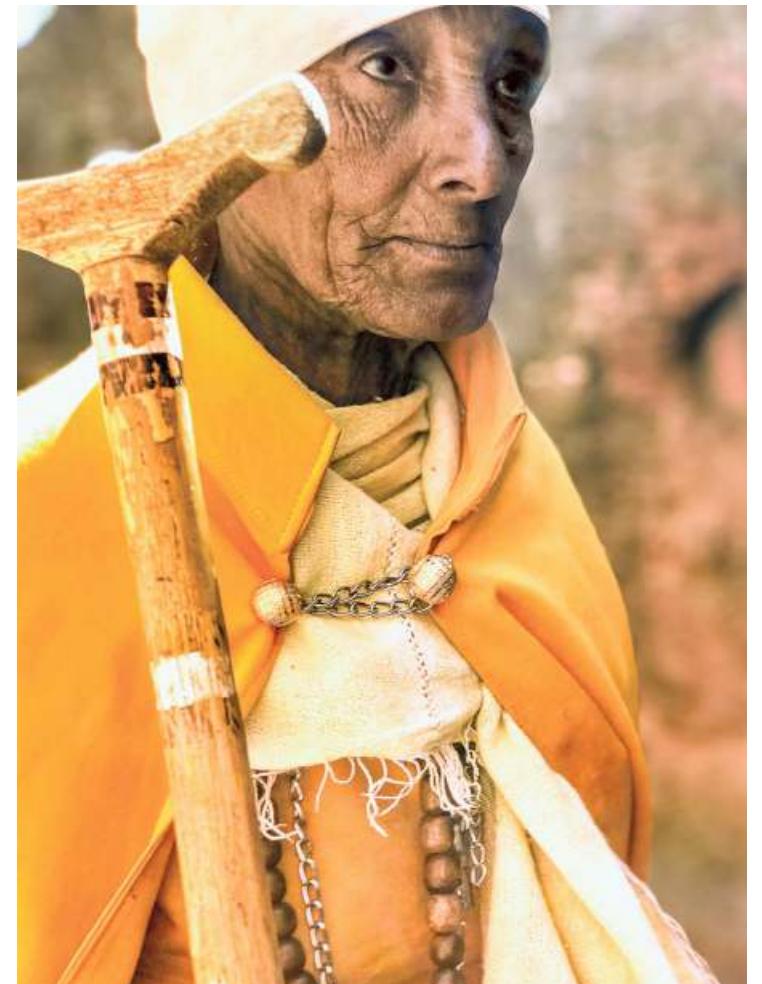
Log on to <https://lounge.thehindu.com> today.



COLLECTOR'S CHOICE  
LIMITED EDITION PRINTS



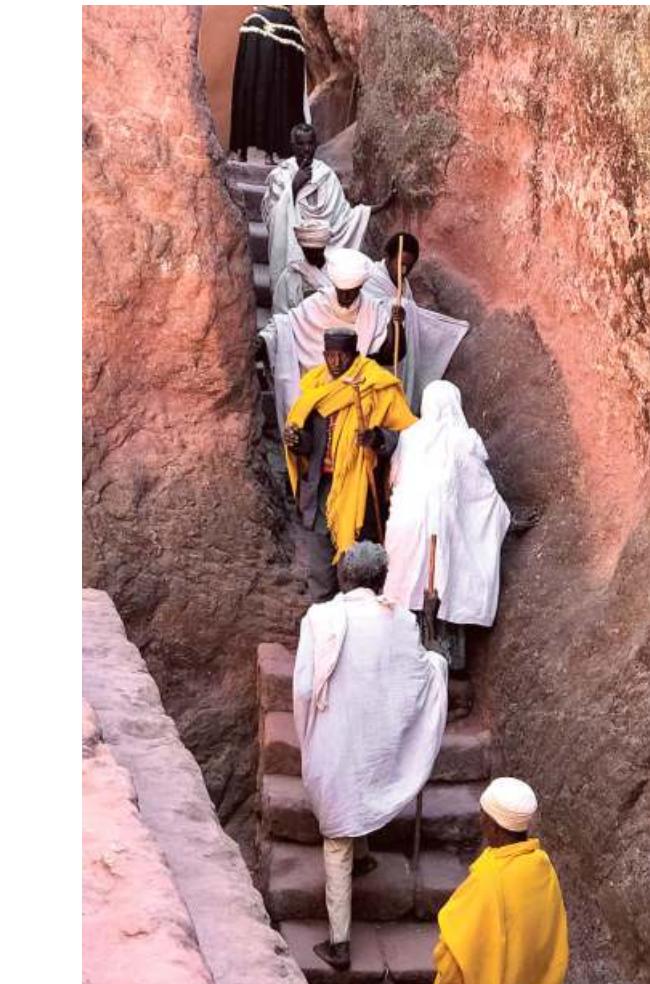
THE HINDU GROUP



**Pilgrims' progress:** During the weeks to Christmas, pilgrims throng the streets of Lalibela in Ethiopia carrying a *Mequamia*, a T-shaped prayer stick waved in rhythm to chants.



**Encased in mysticism:** The wall outside Bet Medhane Aalem, the largest of the 11 ancient churches in Lalibela. The walls have small meditating caves for monks and small windows in the shape of the Ethiopian cross.



**The road to faith:** Two-way traffic on the stairway to heaven – the 11 churches of Lalibela are connected by a maze of tunnels and stairs, some so narrow a person can barely squeeze through.



**Emperor's new clothes:** The famous Selassie cloak is still a popular wear. Haile Selassie (1892-1975), the last Ethiopian emperor, was considered God Incarnate by the Rastafarians.



**Sad state:** Women constitute the bulk of the agricultural labour force of Ethiopia, but more than half of them undergo genital mutilation and child marriage.



**Frozen time:** Pilgrims look like characters from the Old Testament: 'Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.'

## Lalibela's laps of faith

Pilgrims walk and walk in this ancient Ethiopian town ahead of Christmas

TEXT AND IMAGES BY PEARL JENIFER

If the Book of Genesis was looking for a home on earth, Lalibela, a town in the northern Ethiopian State of Amhara, might have been a good place to consider. Lalibela feels more ancient than its legible history. Everything, even people and their memories, is covered in dust here.

The Coptic Orthodox churches carved out of the subterranean volcanic rocks claim a history nearing a millennium. Lalibela, meaning "the bees recognise his sovereignty", owes its name and Christian heritage to the Zagwe king and saint, Gebre Mesqel Lalibela. After the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, King Lalibela, a pious Christian, envisaged building a "New Jerusalem" within his own Ethiopian kingdom, complete with a River Jordan and a Golgotha. Legend goes it took 24 years to build the 11 churches, in daylight by King Lalibela's men and at nightfall by the angels.

Connected by pitch black tunnels, hermit caves and catacombs, the church complexes are recognised by UNESCO as a world heritage site. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, following the Julian calendar, celebrates Christmas, or Genna, on January 7. The advent weeks witness throngs of pilgrims on the streets of Lalibela barefooted and wrapped in their white cotton *netelas*. They come from all corners of the nation and walk together for days, sleeping on plastic sheets and cooking in makeshift stoves wherever night falls. Over the days, strangers turn into friends as the white *netelas* take on the hues of the hard mountain road. Much of Lalibela's holiness is unspoken. Like the tradition of *Asmat* – the secret names of God that the pilgrims carry on their bodies enclosed in talismans. Mystery is everywhere. The blisters on the pilgrim's feet seem to disappear as you watch and the hum in your ears sounds like a swarm of bees approaching. Abuna Ammanuel (Father Immanuel) had this to say, standing outside Bet Giorgio's church: "The long road to faith is always under construction. And full of potholes. But you keep walking."

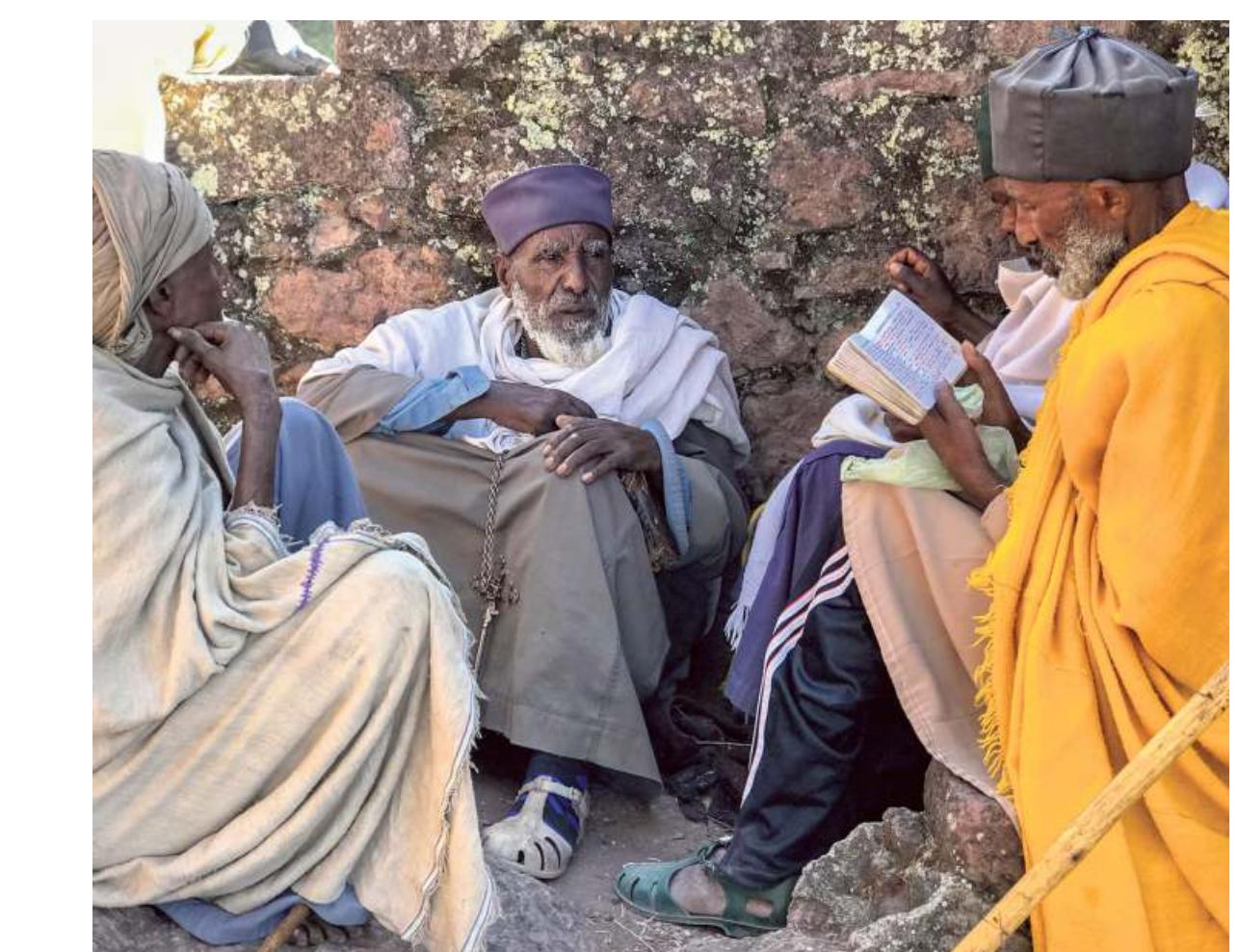
Pearl Jenifer is a teacher based in Sydney



**The liturgy:** The Copts are monophysites who believe that in the person of Jesus, human and divine nature are united.



**Rich in symbolism:** Every pilgrim centre, a market place. The elaborately designed Ethiopian cross, *Masqal*, is heavy with symbolism and ritual function, from healing and blessing to signalling political power.



**The Book:** The Ethiopian Orthodox Bible was written in the ancient language of Ge'ez, with a total of 81-88 books across the Old and the New Testaments almost 800 years before the St. James version.

## 6 DESPATCHES



LAHORE

## When Imran Khan bowed the Buzdar bouncer

 The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) won the general elections last year and formed the Central government. The PTI also won in two Provinces – Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. After a bit of an intra-party tussle, the Pervaiz Khattak group defeated the Atif Khan group and Mahmood Khan became the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

All eyes were then set on Punjab as observers heard one name after the other being considered for the much-coveted post of the Province's Chief Minister, which some consider more powerful than even that of the Prime Minister. Hence, when Prime Minister Imran Khan named Usman Buzdar to the position, it came as a huge shocker for many. This shock was not because Mr. Buzdar had previously been in the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) – a lot of 'electables' had after all jumped ship from other parties to the PTI prior to the election. What was surprising was that not much was known about the new CM.

In a video message announcing Mr. Buzdar's candidature, Mr. Khan said: "Buzdar belongs to an area of Punjab that is the most backward... he is the only MPA [Member of

 The Prime Minister's choice last year of first-time legislator Usman Buzdar as Punjab Chief Minister, a position some consider more powerful than even the PM, came as a shocker to many observers

Provincial Assembly] to not have electricity at his home." People were amazed that this was Mr. Khan's criterion for choosing a CM. Here was someone elected a Member of Punjab Assembly for the first time. How could he have been given the huge responsibility of running the country's most important Province? Mr. Buzdar may be good-hearted, honest and gentle, but was he the right person for the job?

### Opposition within the PTI

Senior analyst Hafeezullah Niazi says that there is consensus, even within PTI ranks, that Mr. Buzdar was a poor choice. "Nobody is running Punjab; it's a rudderless ship without any direction. Buzdar has no control over the bureaucracy. This is very dangerous as running Punjab without any control and command is unheard of," Mr. Niazi said. Due to Mr. Buzdar's inexperience, Punjab is said to be run by Governor Mohammad Sarwar, Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and senior Minister Aleem Khan (Mr. Aleem was recently arrested by the National Accountability Bureau).

However, Prime Minister Khan has put his weight behind Mr. Buzdar on various occasions. He has even gone to the extent of calling Mr. Buzdar 'Wasim Akram-plus'.

Analyst Benazir Shah says that the PTI's own MPAs complain of interference. Civil servants are routinely transferred and shuffled, while many positions have remained vacant. "These Ministers then leak news against their own CM to the media... Bureaucratic work is also slow due to the three power centres in Punjab. Even the Chief Secretary of Punjab is said to ignore the CM's orders and instead listen to the Speaker," said Ms. Shah.

There are many who believe that the way Punjab is currently being run will cost Mr. Khan and his party in the long run.

However, Mr. Niazi thinks that PM Khan is stuck with Mr. Buzdar because of his own ego. "Unless there is a disaster, Khan will stick to Buzdar, but if he feels that Titanic is sinking, and may lead to his own downfall, he will get rid of Buzdar." Ms. Shah says there are rumours, and strong ones, of an upcoming change of command in Punjab, possibly within a few months. "Buzdar could hand in his own resignation, citing pressure on the PTI-led government in Punjab, which could offer some face-saving to the ruling party, especially the Prime Minister who has vehemently supported his decision to nominate Buzdar."

Mr. Buzdar once admitted that he is "untrained". Maybe that is why he has not given any media interview as a Chief Minister.



TOKYO

## Welcome to the garbage-pit cocktail bar

 Narrow rectangles of burnt amber and orange form a veil of terracotta, reminiscent of falling rain, over the concrete surface of the building. Inside, an earnest guitarist croons 'Beauty and the Beast'. The space is buzzing with a smartly turned out crowd quaffing artisanal cocktails of citrus fruit and shiitake mushrooms. Carrot-walnut canapés jostle for attention with tuna and cheese hors d'oeuvres.

But this is not just another of Tokyo's multitude of hipster bars. The cocktail-sippers are watching thousands of tonnes of garbage – plastic bags, food waste, and paper – being lifted and churned by a gigantic mechanical claw. On closer investigation, it transpires that the cocktails are made of fruit and fungi that have been rejected by supermarkets due to their "unacceptable" texture or shape. The canapés are made of recently expired ingredients. This is in fact the 'Garbage Pit Bar', named for its location inside the waste disposal centre of one of Tokyo's western suburbs, Musashino.

**Change of image**  
Tsutomu Takahashi, a plant supervisor, explains that the idea of starting this bar came from the realisation that garbage was in need of a "change of image", from annoyance that no one wants to think about, to something important that everyone should think about.

The processing centre in Musashino handles about 100 trucks, each carrying some 1,40,000 kg of trash every day. The garbage is sorted into what's burnable – food waste, paper, some kinds of plastic and wood – and incombustible such as metal, glass and PET bottles. The burnable waste is incinerated. It takes up to three hours to burn 2,500 kg of trash and reduce it to ash. The flue gas released in this process is used to turn electricity-generating turbines that power all the processing centre's operations, in addition to supplying power to nearby buildings like the City Hall and district Community Centre. Excess electricity is sold to a power company.

The ash is used as a construction material, mixed into cement. Iron and other usable metals are extracted from it for reuse. PET bottles are recycled into new bottles, fabrics and sta-

 The 'Garbage Pit Bar', named because of its location inside a waste disposal centre, sells cocktails made of fruit and fungi rejected by supermarkets due to their texture or shape

tions like ballpoint pens. In fact, the jerseys of soccer teams like Arsenal, Manchester City and Barcelona have been made of recycled PET bottles from Japan for years.

Despite being separated from this entire process by glass windows alone, the clientele of the Garbage Pit Bar remain undisturbed by either the auditory or olfactory accompaniments of garbage processing. Mr. Takahashi explains that maintaining the pressure inside the mixing pit at a lower level than that of the surrounding areas contains the smell. And the glass used to encase the pit is sound-proof.

Not all garbage processing centres in Japan are as innovative as Musashino's. But Japan's handling of its refuse is exemplary. Residents must sort their trash into different categories placed in local authority-designated bags. Badly sorted garbage is returned. Businesses have to pay for recyclables to be collected.

Increasingly, the emphasis is on reduction. And it seems to be working. In 2016, Tokyo's waste totalled 2.78 million tonnes, down from a record high of 4.9 million tonnes in 1989. Of that 2016 total, only about one-eighth ended up in landfills. The rest was incinerated in centres like Musashino's. And yet, the city estimates that even after accounting for a declining population, Tokyo's landfills will be full, with no further space to expand, in about 50 years. "This gives us a lot to think about," says Ms. Kawashima, at the Gomi Pit Bar with her two children and husband. "Everyone needs to be more careful with their garbage."



LONDON

## How prepared is Britain for a no-deal Brexit?

 Among the steps the British government took in recent months to show its preparedness for a no-deal Brexit was the decision to award a contract to run additional ferry freight services between the southeast English town of Ramsgate and the Belgian city of Ostend.

The £13.8-million contract for the supply of additional freight capacity was awarded to British company Seaborne Freight to avoid "potential disruption of trade", the government contract noted, explaining that the tender opportunities for the contract had been limited because of the "extreme urgency" of the situation. It was the smallest of three freight supply contracts awarded, but quickly came under the spotlight after it emerged that Seaborne Freight, which had started operating only in 2017, had never operated a ferry route and did not own any ship.

The body representing Britain's road haulage industry expressed deep scepticism as to whether the company could be ready on time, given the vast amount of work (including staff recruitment and training) that needed to be carried out by the end of March, when Britain is due to leave the EU.

 The British government had to terminate a ferry contract it issued as part of its post-Brexit preparedness after it emerged that the company lacked experience and backing of investors

However, Britain's Transport Minister Chris Grayling remained adamant that it was the right decision. He defended the decision as support to a "new British business" on a BBC radio show. However, days later, the story continued to unwind as it emerged that Seaborne Freight's terms and conditions section on its website appeared to have been lifted from those of a takeaway/delivery service, referring to the placement of an order, and recommending that customers check goods "before agreeing to pay for any meal/order" and ensure the delivery address was correct.

While the fiasco prompted much online and offline jesting, many pointed to the worrying message it sent about Britain's 'no-deal Brexit' preparedness (currently the default scenario for 11 p.m. on March 29 if MPs fail to come behind a withdrawal agreement that can also win support of EU leaders).

Still, the government remained adamant that the contract had been appropriately awarded, pointing to its team's "extensive experience" of operating ferry services, and the backing it had got from a number of "large institutional investors". However, it emerged last week that one of those alleged backers had only been intending to invest and had now "unexpectedly" withdrawn from those plans. "In light of this and after very careful assessment, I took the decision to terminate this contract," Mr. Grayling told Parliament last week, as he faced down calls for his resignation.

However, the cancellation has not ended the scandal as Britain's National Audit Office revealed that £8,00,000 had been spent on external consultants to assess the three bids and also noted that the department had judged the bid from Seaborne as a "high risk" proposition, noting it had neither ships nor binding contracts to use the ports it was contracted to operate from. Labour's Jeremy Corbyn suggested that the controversy was symbolic of the government's "costly, shambolic and deliberately evasive" handling of Brexit.

Even beyond the symbolism, the situation raises major questions about Britain's preparedness for no-deal. According to government assessments, "severe disruption" of the normal flow of goods between Britain and the EU is expected to last up to six months. The Seaborne row will continue to haunt the government. The British and French firms responsible for operating the Channel Tunnel launched proceedings against the government over the freight service contracts. The trial is set to take place in March.



BERLIN

## Afghan cinema visits Berlin Film Festival

 Among the movies screened this year at the Berlin Film Festival were two documentaries on Afghanistan. And their importance in the context of contemporary Afghan politics could not be missed.

"We wanted to share our journey and all the things we faced," said Hassan Fazili after the premiere of his film *Midnight Traveller*. Mr. Fazili and his family members filmed the refugee trail through Europe using smartphones.

With much intimacy, the movie shows the struggle that many refugees face while trying to reach a safe place in Europe. By revealing details on the police brutalities faced by the people, the film also tells that violence and racism are present more than ever in the Western world.

Mr. Fazili's project was supported by professional filmmakers and editors. "We are still in this country as refugees and hope that our asylum requests get accepted soon," Mr. Fazili said after the screening of his film. "Germany continues to deport Afghan refugees and that's terrible," he said.

*Midnight Traveller* does not solely portray the dangers of the trail to Europe. It also underlines daily life in war-torn Afghanistan, which Mr. Fazili, who had a cafe in Kabul, was forced to leave after he faced threats from militant groups.

### The fallen revolutionaries

Another movie at the film festival ties Afghanistan's present to its past. In *What We Left Unfinished*, Afghan-American filmmaker Mariam Ghani – daughter of President Ashraf Ghani – discusses five propaganda movies from the 1980s produced by Kabul's Communist regimes. The Afghan Communists came to power in 1978 after staging a bloody coup against the government of Mohammed Daoud Khan. This event, called the 'Saur Revolution', was the topic of some of their propaganda movie efforts. "Outside Afghanistan, many people don't even know about the country's Communist history. And even among many Afghans, it's barely understood," said Ms. Ghani.

She believes that the movies from that time reflected the lives of a narrow group of people and the urban elites who referred to them-

 Two films, one on refugees finding their way to Europe and the other on propaganda cinema made by Afghan Communists, narrate stories of the nation's scarred past and its troubled present

she also pointed to Chinese President Xi Jinping's statement at the UN Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping nearly four years ago, which had set in motion China's heightened activism in the UN peacekeeping operations.

**8,000-strong force**  
During his speech, Mr. Xi had pledged setting up an 8,000-strong Chinese standby force dedicated to UN peacekeeping. It currently consists of infantry units and field hospitals, backed by engineering and transport units, to ensure a quick and robust Chinese presence in global trouble spots. He had also announced a new \$1 billion China-UN peace and development fund that would be channelled for peacekeeping operations over 10 years.

Specifically focussing on Africa, the Chinese leader had declared that in the next five years, Beijing would stream \$100 million for establishing a African standby force, which could swiftly respond to crises.

At the exhibition, Mr. Khan recounted that China has currently deployed 2,508 uniformed personnel, including 70 women, in eight of the UN's current peacekeeping missions. In Africa, Chinese peacekeepers are currently deployed in Mali, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Darfur. China's peacekeeping profile is only expected grow in the future, in tune with the Donald Trump administration's visible antipathy and steady pull back from multilateralism.

But as its heft in the peacekeeping arena grows, China is also beginning to assert its intent to rewrite the rules that define the role and conduct of the blue helmets. Rejecting the politics of "regime change" pursued by leading Western nations, the Chinese are demanding that the UN peacekeepers strictly abide by a pledge not to interfere in the internal affairs of a host country.

Analysts also say that the peacekeeping operations could be impacted by the divergent perceptions of human rights between China and Western democracies.

China's perception of human rights is based on collective rights that prioritise the improvement of material conditions and economic development of the people first. That clashes with the Western view of human rights based on an individual's civic and political rights. The divergence could come into play, especially in post-conflict situations, when new state structures and political systems that need to emerge are debated by the two camps.



BEIJING

## China's peacekeeping profile expands

 Chinese state media recently reported that an exhibition at the UN headquarters themed on Beijing's contribution to international peacekeeping operations was a big draw.

An article posted on the Chinese Defence Ministry's website cited laudatory comments by visiting UN officials from the international peacekeeping department about the professional acumen of the Chinese 'blue helmets'.

It quoted remarks by Atul Khare, the Undersecretary of Field Support, who said that Beijing shoulders three "glorious responsibilities" – those of a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the 10th largest contributor of uniformed personnel, and the second-largest funder of global peacekeeping.

Chinese officials say that Beijing has raised its share of the UN peacekeeping budget from 10.24% to a hefty 15.22%.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying also pitched in with her observations on February 13 that the exhibition, which was titled "Chinese People's Liberation Army: A Force for World Peace," was showcasing the country's "outstanding contributions" in fulfilling its international obligations.

 With a growing peacekeeping heft and more personnel, China is asserting its desire to reshape the rules that define the role and conduct of the blue helmets in various countries

tions. She also pointed to Chinese President Xi Jinping's statement at the UN Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping nearly four years ago, which had set in motion China's heightened activism in the UN peacekeeping operations.

During his speech, Mr. Xi had pledged setting up an 8,000-strong Chinese standby force dedicated to UN peacekeeping. It currently consists of infantry units and field hospitals, backed by engineering and transport units, to ensure a quick and robust Chinese presence in global trouble spots. He had also announced a new \$1 billion China-UN peace and development fund that would be channelled for peacekeeping operations over 10 years.

Specifically focussing on Africa, the Chinese leader had declared that in the next five years, Beijing would stream \$100 million for establishing a African standby force, which could swiftly respond to crises.

At the exhibition, Mr. Khan recounted that China has currently deployed 2,508 uniformed personnel, including 70 women, in eight of the UN's current peacekeeping missions. In Africa, Chinese peacekeepers are currently deployed in Mali, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Darfur. China's peacekeeping profile is only expected grow in the future, in tune with the Donald Trump administration's visible antipathy and steady pull back from multilateralism.

But as its heft in the peacekeeping arena grows, China is also beginning to assert its intent to rewrite the rules that define the role and conduct of the blue helmets. Rejecting the politics of "regime change" pursued by leading Western nations, the Chinese are demanding that the UN peacekeepers strictly abide by a pledge not to interfere in the internal affairs of a host country.

Analysts also say that the peacekeeping operations could be impacted by the divergent perceptions of human rights between China and Western democracies.

China's perception of human rights is based on collective rights that prioritise the improvement of material conditions and economic development of the people first. That clashes with the Western view of human rights based on an individual's civic and political rights. The divergence could come into play, especially in post-conflict situations, when new state structures and political systems that need to emerge are debated by the two camps.



MEHMAL SARFRAZ is a journalist based in Lahore, Pakistan



PALLAVI AIYAR is an author and journalist based in Tokyo



VIDYA RAM works for The Hindu and is based in London



EMRAN FEROZ is a freelance journalist and was recently in Berlin for the film festival



ATUL ANJEA works for The Hindu and is based in Beijing

## IN BRIEF



## AirAsia India offers up to 20% discount on fares

MUMBAI AirAsia India has announced an up to 20% discount on its ticket prices for travel across its flights as well as the AirAsia network for a limited period sale offer. The seven-day offer begins February 18 for travel between February 25 and July 31, AirAsia India said. The discounted tickets are applicable to all bookings made through the airline's website and mobile app. PTI

## Religare to raise ₹500 crore via NCDs

NEW DELHI Religare on Saturday said the company had got the board's approval for raising ₹500 crore by way of issuance of non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis. The board, at its meeting held on Saturday, gave approval for this, Religare said in a regulatory filing. The approval of shareholders for the same will be sought through a postal ballot, the firm said in the filing. PTI

## Reliance offers helping hand to martyrs' families

CHENNAI Two days after the attack on a CRPF convoy, in which 40 jawans were martyred, Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Reliance Industries Ltd., said it was ready to assume full responsibility for the education and employment of their children, and the livelihood of their families. "If necessary, our hospital would provide the best possible treatment to injured jawans," it said in a release.

# Power Ministry proposes over \$12 bn in sops to reduce pollution

Move aims to help power plants install equipment to curb emissions

REUTERS  
NEW DELHI

India has proposed incentives worth ₹885 billion (\$12.4 billion) to encourage power plants to install equipment to curb emissions and to develop infrastructure for electric vehicles (EVs), a government statement said.

The bulk of the money, ₹835 billion, would be aimed at curbing sulphur emissions from power plants, with the rest devoted to development of EV infrastructure in 70 cities over five years ending 2025.

The proposal by the Power Ministry to its finance commission is in addition to an existing proposal that envisages installation costs for



**Unhealthy air:** The bulk of the money will be aimed at curbing sulphur emissions from power plants. ■ N. RAJESH

emission-cutting equipment to be passed on to consumers.

The Ministry's plans come against the backdrop of a utilities sector under financial stress, with loans from

mostly state-run lenders turning sour or requiring restructuring, according to an Assocham-Grant Thornton report this month.

The Association of Power Producers, an industry

group that represents private companies such as Reliance Power and Adani Power as well as state-run NTPC, had been lobbying for incentives for the past two years.

## Deadline extended

India has already extended a December 2017 deadline for utilities to meet emissions standards by up to six years as power producers struggle to comply with stringent rules set out by the Environment Ministry in 2015 to cut emissions that cause lung diseases, acid rain and smog.

Thermal power companies account for 80% of all industrial emissions of particulate matter, sulphur and nitrous oxides in India.

## Cosmos eyes metal scrap exchange

UAE-based company to set up 8 warehouses in port cities

N. ANAND  
CHENNAI

United Arab Emirates-based Cosmos Green FZE is planning to set up a metal scrap exchange to meet the recycling demand of metal manufacturers in India using blockchain technology.

"It will be the first metal scrap exchange in India with private warehouse catering to the demands of metal scrap manufacturers in the country on real-time basis," said Rajat Kapur, president, Cosmos Green FZE.

"Currently, Indian steel manufacturers are meeting their demand by extracting it from iron ore. We have started this firm with a vi-

We are planning to raise \$120 mn and have started talks with PE firms

RAJAT KAPUR  
president, Cosmos Green FZE

sion to save natural resources and provide cheaper and energy efficient product to the Indian metal scrap manufacturers. The scrap is imported from the U.S. and Europe," he said.

## Scrap yard

As a first step, Cosmos Green FZE established three scrap processing yards in the NCR (national capital region). It will be followed by the setting up eight warehouses

within a year in the port cities of Mumbai, Gujarat and Chennai. It had also entered into a pact with 20 firms including Jindal Steel to recycle metal scrap.

"The Indian outfit was started with promoters' seed funding of \$3 million. It will be sufficient till May 2019. We are planning to raise \$120 million in four tranches and have started negotiations with private equity firms," he said. "India needs 500,000 tonnes of scrap every month. Right now, we are handling 10,000 tonnes of scrap every month and our target is to touch 1,80,000 tonnes per month by 2024," he said.

## INTERVIEW | MARIANNE HAGEN

## 'United States seeking to sabotage multilateral dispute mechanism'

Norway, India must cooperate to strengthen WTO: Norwegian Deputy Minister

SUHASINI HAIDAR

Warning that the U.S. is seeking to sabotage the World Trade Organization (WTO), Marianne Hagen, Deputy Minister, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, says that India must work to strengthen the multilateral trading organisation, and also calls for India to join a WTO Ministerial convention to end fishing subsidies for illegal fishing units in 2019. Ms. Hagen was in Delhi and Mumbai this past week for meetings with Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu. Excerpts from an interview:

The focus of your India visit has been the blue economy. What kind of collaboration do you envisage with India?

■ We are very encouraged that PM Modi made the blue economy one of the most important issues in the Budget. It has been just a month since our PM [Erna Solberg] and PM Narendra Modi met, and the speed with which their agreements have moved is also very encouraging. We have now signed a letter of intent for cooperating on marine pollution and we have identified areas for cooperation. We also spoke of developing ferry services that are eco-friendly. Norway has about 70 electric or hybrid ferries running, and India could benefit from our technologies as well as our logistics services.

You are also discussing WTO issues with Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu.

What are the big concerns?

■ I think the WTO as an organisation is clearly under stress, and it is so important for all smaller countries [like Norway], that when the U.S. is sabotaging the dispute settlement system, we cannot look at that problem in isolation, but work with other countries so that the problem doesn't block the system. We want to have discus-



We need presidents and PMs to engage at WTO, not only trade ministers or diplomats

organisations...

■ The WTO system is like the diaphragm or the base on which global trade stands. I know that not everyone has benefitted from globalisation, but if you look at the world as a whole and see the millions who have been brought out of poverty because of global trade, you can see how important it is.

And the WTO, or the rule-based global system, is what small countries have in order to keep a fair share of it.

And, we want developing countries to realise that when they ask for investments and private sector growth in their economies, they need to see the problems of countries like Norway. So, Norway is trying to bring these problems at the top level. We need presidents and prime ministers to engage at the WTO, not only trade ministers or diplomats.

Norway is also working towards an agreement at the WTO on ending fishing subsidies...

■ Overfishing, or what is called illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is another example of the unfair practices that we want to talk about. Overfishing is to a large extent done by subsidised fishing vessels and subsidised fleets in developing countries.

Those fishing subsidies hurt the economy of India, especially its coastal states, and at the same time contri-

bute to overfishing. I am trying to connect the ocean agenda and the blue economy, with the conversations we are having at the WTO on fishing subsidies and the need to level the playing field. This has to be finished by December 2019, and if we conclude an agreement we will achieve two outcomes: lessen the pressure on the fish stocks by reducing fleets responsible for overfishing, and we will build more investment in the WTO.

One of the success stories we have seen with Russia, despite our other problems, is that we have been able to work out quota systems and resource management systems between us that have worked for 40 years. Maybe, that is a lesson to be learnt here in India too [with Pakistan and Sri Lanka].

Norway has often been accused of encouraging its own oil industry, while advising developing countries on climate change commitments. How do you respond?

■ If you compare the emissions from the Norwegian gas and oil industry, the new technologies we are developing make 16 times less emissions than other oil productions. But fossils will always be fossils and the world's need for energy is expected to increase by 30% by 2050, and the energy has to come from somewhere.

So, we can replace coal, which is the worst source, with oil and replace oil with more environmentally-friendly oil, then gas, and then renewables. We can't switch off the fossils yet, but we can work really hard on trying to replace them.

With India's growing population and need for energy, India has fantastic opportunities for solar and offshore wind production of electricity. India's growth must be as sustainable as possible.

## Govt. rakes in ₹12,000 crore GST from Bengal till Dec.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA

The Centre has raked in some ₹12,000 crore from West Bengal during the current fiscal till December as its share from the Goods and Services Tax (GST) from the State and expects to exceed the target of ₹18,000 crore by March 2019, according to a revenue official.

"The CGST (Central GST) share target for the FY19 was ₹18,000 crore and till December, we have already collected ₹12,000 crore. We hope the target may get exceeded by March," Assistant Commissioner of CGST Pandiyaraj G.V. said on the sidelines of a seminar organised by The Bengal Chamber on the contentious issues relating to GST.

One of the success stories we have seen with Russia, despite our other problems, is that we have been able to work out quota systems and resource management systems between us that have worked for 40 years. Maybe, that is a lesson to be learnt here in India too [with Pakistan and Sri Lanka].

Norway has often been accused of encouraging its own oil industry, while advising developing countries on climate change commitments. How do you respond?

■ If you compare the emissions from the Norwegian gas and oil industry, the new technologies we are developing make 16 times less emissions than other oil productions. But fossils will always be fossils and the world's need for energy is expected to increase by 30% by 2050, and the energy has to come from somewhere.

So, we can replace coal, which is the worst source, with oil and replace oil with more environmentally-friendly oil, then gas, and then renewables. We can't switch off the fossils yet, but we can work really hard on trying to replace them.

With India's growing population and need for energy, India has fantastic opportunities for solar and offshore wind production of electricity. India's growth must be as sustainable as possible.

## TechM board to mull share buy-back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

IT firm Tech Mahindra on Saturday said its board will meet on February 21 to consider a share buy-back proposal.

However, the company did not disclose any other details of the proposal.

The board at their meeting scheduled on Thursday, February 21, 2019 shall consider a proposal to buy back the fully paid-up equity shares of the company, Tech Mahindra said in a BSE filing.

Cash-laden Indian IT firms have been returning surplus cash on their books to shareholders by way of dividends and buy-backs.

Earlier this year, Infosys had announced a buy-back offer of ₹8,260 crore.

## Auditor rotation: ICAI withdraws clarification

Institute moves after Ministry sees red

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI has withdrawn an announcement regarding applicability of rotation of auditors at companies, following a directive from the Corporate Affairs Ministry.

In a rare instance, the Ministry told the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) to "immediately withdraw" the announcement and also provide reasons for making such an announcement, according to a letter.

Cash-laden Indian IT firms have been returning surplus cash on their books to shareholders by way of dividends and buy-backs.

On January 29, the ICAI issued a clarification on applicability of rotation of auditors under the Companies Act, 2013. Under the Act, implemented by the Ministry, certain class of compa-

nies are required to rotate their auditors and there is also a cooling-off period to be followed by the auditors.

Further, the Ministry has asked the ICAI to intimate the "reasons for issuing such announcement without any authority and without the specific approval of this Ministry."

## Letter and spirit of law

However, an official said that the ICAI announcement could have resulted in companies removing or re-appointing an auditor just on the basis of non-applicability of the rotation norms.

The official noted that an auditor cannot be removed in an unfair manner and that companies should be following the law in letter and spirit.

## Britannia to help women start businesses

Targets unemployed homemakers for initiative, gets over a million responses

INDRANI DUTTA  
KOLKATA

Britannia Industries Ltd. (BIL) is currently sifting the million-plus applications that it received from unemployed homemakers who responded to an initiative launched by the company to make them entrepreneurs.

BIL realised that many women were looking for fulfilment outside of their domestic chores by starting their own small enterprise.

So, in its centenary year in 2018, BIL launched the 'Britannia MarieGold-Mystart' initiative as a promotional campaign, said an official. It created a ₹1 crore purse for the purpose.

"We chose the 60-year old Marie Gold due to its association with the homemakers as a buyer as well as a consumer. We felt that there has been a significant evolution in the way a woman looks at things now.. she is now looking beyond the home.. she now has her own dreams," Ali Harris Shere vice-president, marketing Britannia, told *The Hindu*.

## Change catalyst

BIL realised that it could play a role in inspiring and supporting these women to chase their dreams and become a change-catalyst. We felt the need to help more women to participate in the



process of growing the economy, he said.

To that end, it rolled out the Britannia Marie Gold Indian Women Entrepreneurship Survey Report 2018. Conducted by Nielsen, this

study revealed that homemakers had the aspirations of embarking on a entrepreneurship journey and finding financial independence.

Results that came in last month showed 48% of the respondents had harboured dreams of launching a business and gaining financial independence, in their youth.

Armed with these findings, BIL launched an initiative to help register their keenness to set up a business. This drew over a million responses.

"BIL will shortlist 50 women from whom 10 would be selected for getting ₹10 lakh each to launch their businesses," Mr. Ali said.

## VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Yettinahole Project Division No 4, Madhugiri, Tumkur  
Dist-572132 Ph: 08137-282112 E-mail: eeyetmadhugiri4@gmail.com  
SHORT TERM E-PROCUREMENT CORRIGENDUM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO-09-1  
DATED: 14.02.2019 (Through E-procurement system)

The work called in Tender Notification No 09 Dated: 07.02.2019, dates are modified as below due to technical and administrative reasons.

Sl. No	Calendar of Events	Dates as per Notification No 9	As per corrigendum
1	The Contractor can have access to the e-tender document, i.e. the Tender Schedules, bid documents and other documents in the web site <a href="http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in">http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in</a> on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable) from	11.02.2019 to 02.03.2019 Up to 17.00 Hrs	14.02.2019 to 25.02.2019 Up to 5.00 PM
2	A Pre bid meeting at CE office, Yettinahole project zone VJNL, Tumkur	2	



# That grilling is finally on

What happens in the closed rooms?

CHANDRA MOHAN PILLAI



These days, the media are chock-a-block with reports of some luminary or the other being grilled by sleuths of the CBI, the ED, the Income Tax Department and so on. Rajeev Kumar, Robert Vadra, Christopher Michel, the list goes.

But what really happens behind those closed doors? How exactly are the proceedings conducted? There are no records of the actual proceedings being made public, and one is left to one's own sense of imagination and surmises as to what actually transpires... or to reports from a fly on the wall.

Venue: a large room with comfortable chairs arranged around a long oblong-shaped table. At one extreme are a couple of officious looking clerical staff, with desktops, all set to record the proceedings. Alongside the desktop is a recording device, seemingly kept there to strike terror in the "interrogatee".

The interrogating team, all clothed in tight and flashy safari suits, and all wearing keen expressions, are already seated along one side, when the interrogatee, with the lawyers in tow, shuffle in, exchanging brave looks amongst one another. They get seated on the opposite side, and wish a nervous good afternoon, this being a post-lunch schedule of play. There is a curt nod from the chairman of the interrogation team.

The proceedings begin with some shuffling of papers by the committee chairman, who recognises the interrogatee from the name provided in the rap-sheet, and then he breaks into a warm smile... *arrey sahab, aap? heh heh...* Nobody told me it was you, he mumbles, shooting an accusing glare at his fellow-interrogators. There is much shuffling of feet, nervous clearing of throats, weak smiles bestowed all around, and finally, loud laughter, in which the interrogator and his team also join in. The air has been cleared, the ice broken.

The interrogatee's suggestion that the proceedings be indefinitely adjourned, or at least be conducted at a nearby resort, or at his farmhouse, is apologetically declined... *yeh saale press-waala sab jagah par hai...* This point made by one of the interrogators is conceded, with a mournful nod, by one of the lawyers.

Refreshments arrive. Yesterday Marie biscuits, and warm tea in plastic cups. Even the clerical staff get disdainful at this, though some of the lawyers, doubtful of the eventual outcome of their client's fate and his consequent ability to settle their bills, grab some by way of an on-account advance. A lawyer seldom if ever gets

short-changed.

Okay, okay, let's begin, shall we, says the chairman, rustling the sheaf of papers in front of him. Yes, yes, responds the interrogatee, rustling the papers in front of him, and causing a few Rs. 2,000 notes to fall out, which get swiftly pushed under the table. A brief apology is offered, and accepted, apparently for the denomination of the notes being so paltry. Not his fault, as one of the interrogation team members murmurs to another... *yeh RBI waale ne hi gadbad kiya hai.* One of the lawyers swiftly crosses over to one of the interrogators, murmurs something about large imitation leather suitcases waiting elsewhere, and understanding looks are exchanged.

The rap-sheet, containing the various charges, is read out, item by item. Violent shaking of the head, in denial, and earnest protestations of innocence, are ignored. The list is long: defalcation, robbery, arson, kidnapping, forgery, money-laundering, even *rape...*

Each charge is taken up, with the maximum discussion-time on the charge of *rape*. The lawyers suggest it must be a typo in the FIR, and should read *gape*. After long back-and-forth exchanges, a compromise charge, of *groping*, is recorded... and duly denied. The interrogatee feels this is a slur on his libido-quotient.

In between, the proceedings get interrupted, as one of the interrogation team members has to attend to a lengthy phone call, presumably from his wife judging by the accusatory shrieks audible to all, and his placatory responses thereto. A full half an hour is consumed in this exchange.

The item-by-item detailing is getting to be tiring. The chairman has fallen into a light doze. The interrogatee is in a furtive conversation with one of his lawyers, with the word *groping* mentioned. But work is work.

Finally, the chairman jerks himself awake, looks at his watch, and announces a cessation for the day... *bahut ho chuka hai*, he grunts, and there are nods of agreement. We can now start the grilling, he says, with a cheery laugh... And the whole lot depart, for a conveniently located Bar & Grill.

*cm5151@gmail.com*

SAMATHA SHARMA

I have just come back from a morning meeting with the naturalists. I had to excuse myself after an hour and a half saying I had another meeting. I hope they assumed I was a busy entrepreneur. The truth was that it was time for my maid to come. At the naturalists' meeting were present ten men and three women, the gender ratio we try to promote in our political posts. As women, we are still far from aspiring for an equal presence in business and politics. Just a mere 30% present is almost a long shot.

In the evening I would like to attend the weekly philosophers' gathering. A group in which I have been the only woman for the last decade. I cannot but contrast what the other men in the group would be doing this afternoon when I would be cooking lunch for myself and dinner for the dogs. A nap after a supposedly heavy week at work? A lazy browsing of the Sunday newspaper? Maybe time to watch a favourite movie or a debate on television.

I notice that the maid has not yet done the clothes as she had promised to. I mention this to her. She says she has to go home and cook lunch for her kids. I relent and we decide she will do extra work tomorrow.

I have so wished the last few years that the image projected on me by my married friends was somewhat close to the truth. The image is

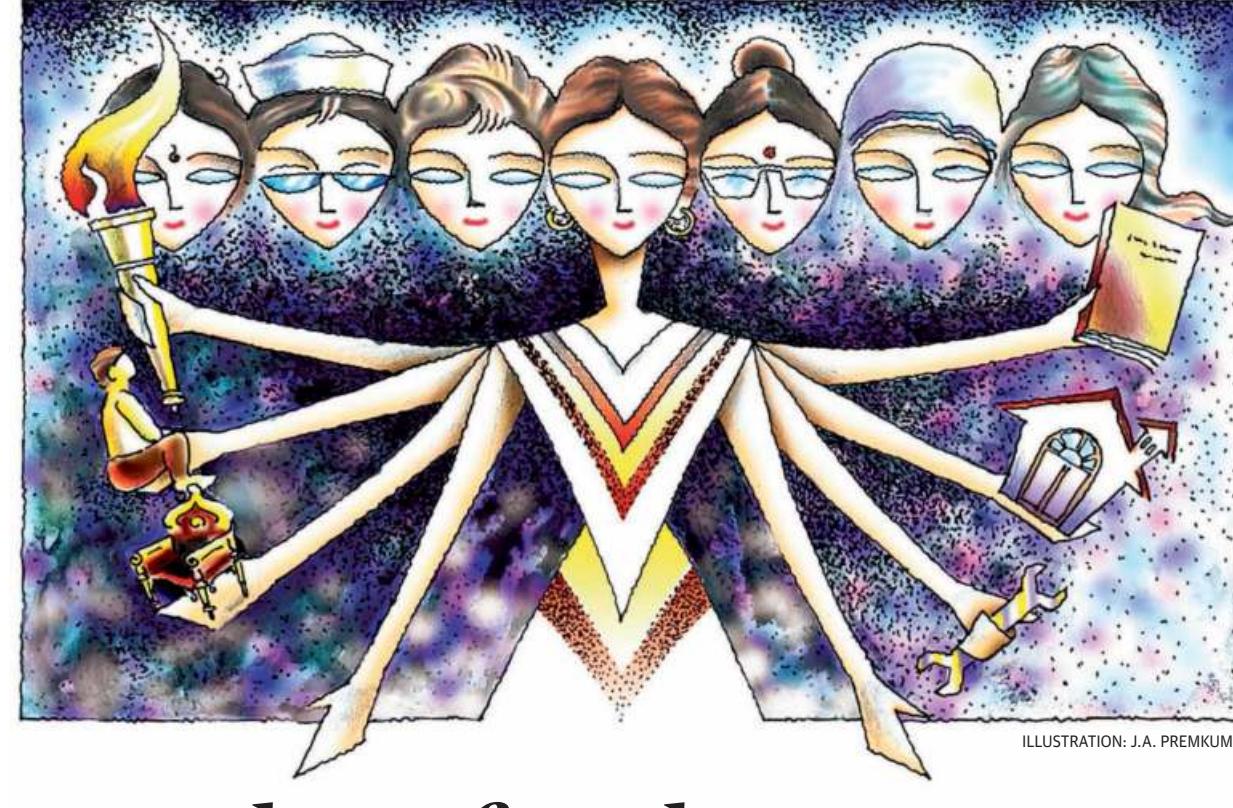


ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

## A place for the woman

Look at the glaringly huge gap between men and women in terms of work done

that I travel to exotic places, my body is perfect and I have much romance. It is all true in parts.

I can, if I arrange things very furiously, manage a one-month vacation a year to someplace exotic. I have dogs instead of kids and they are more easily pleased. At least, that's what I am told. I

am not complaining; my dogs are extremely loving and deeply satisfying to mother. Let's not forget that I mother them by myself, and I do not have a man or a mother-in-law to chip in with help or advice.

My work here is not to debate the gap between single women and married moth-

ers. My purpose is to point at the glaringly huge gap between men and women in terms of work done. If I say that women doing housework are stuck in the grunt work, I am immediately told that I do not respect traditional culture. I can imagine that when we lived, a few generations ago, in large joint families there was division of work at home; then women had their leisure. But the broken nuclear families are nothing but grun work for women. However contented their temperaments are, most have to escape into the vicious family dramas on television in order to make their lives more palatable.

So then, shall we bring back the joint family and true traditions? Or shall we ask our men to become more western and chip in with housework? Most husbands will tell you to get a cook or a maid. And refuse to manage the house-help as that is women's work and the labourers are women. There will go our free time.

I am Tamil, my much-questioned identity of late. I like living in Tamil Nadu and wearing my Sungudi sarees. I love flowers in my hair, ah the drugging jasmine. I accept the traditional nature of our life here in comparison to some other places. I would like also to be powerful in the work I choose to do and in spaces outside of my home. I come against the male hierarchy often in social systems such as schools, colleges and hobby groups. It is surprisingly not the more traditional colleges that I face a loss of voice in, but in the more liberal ones. I put forth simple views, like I want to leave this meeting early, and I am met with a glare. I ask a liberal man in power whether he will join my group for a new project and he is rattled. How can a mere woman ask a powerful man to team up? Her right place is under.

I am a meditation teacher. We close our eyes and there is no more a gender. I think I will keep my eyes closed for a few more generations.

*samatha.express@gmail.com*

## Radical law or magical nanny?

Is there something systemically warped in our style of nurturing young ones?

SUNANDA BHARTI



**S**tubborn Child Law! I was quite intrigued when I set my eyes on the title of a write-up on the liability of disobedient male children. This was Massachusetts in the 17th century and, more amazingly, the law was not repealed until as recently as 1973.

The contemporary times are, in my opinion, quite ready for an obverse law – one that defines the liability of parents for their kids' bad behaviour. Radical as it may sound, if that ever becomes law in India, more than half of even the 'educated' parents might end up being found guilty under it.

In between, the proceedings get interrupted, as one of the interrogation team members has to attend to a lengthy phone call, presumably from his wife judging by the accusatory shrieks audible to all, and his placatory responses thereto. A full half an hour is consumed in this exchange.

The item-by-item detailing is getting to be tiring. The chairman has fallen into a light doze. The interrogatee is in a furtive conversation with one of his lawyers, with the word *groping* mentioned. But work is work.

Finally, the chairman jerks himself awake, looks at his watch, and announces a cessation for the day... *bahut ho chuka hai*, he grunts, and there are nods of agreement. We can now start the grilling, he says, with a cheery laugh... And the whole lot depart, for a conveniently located Bar & Grill.

*cm5151@gmail.com*

child's microchip.

Till that divine intervention happens, they are allowed to scribble on walls – because any control there might just stifle their creativity and deprive the world of another Picasso, no less.

They can play outdoor games while being indoors (be it in malls, restaurants or private residences) and yell and ricochet like a jallikattu bull. All this, while the bewildered host wonders how to get the George out of the jungle! They can pee in public, for they are children after all! And now that they are off diapers, they might as well make good irrigation use of their newfound 'freedom'!

Atricious examples of such profound disinterest or complacency in disciplining one's own kids can be countless indeed.

Recently I had to play host and guide to a Japanese family with children, on a heritage trip to the Old Fort. After the mandatory distribution of chocolates amongst children, I could not help but notice that they were not eating any of those – all because there was no waste bin in sight to throw the wrappers in!

In astonishment and praise of the dropped-jaw variety, I found myself getting flashes of a contra-memory. Memory of an Indian parent chiding his kid for not wiping his face properly after eating the *golgappas* – and then throwing the paper plate and napkin right on to the road! Any Nirmal Bharat or Swachh Bharat assertions are possible with this mentality, I wonder...

I do not claim to be an expert at parenting. I'm just a child's microchip.

*sunanda.bharti@gmail.com*

## Of things lost

VIDHYA B. RAGUNATH

**T**he 'lost things' invariably hold a special place in our lives. We don't even remember certain important dates and valuable things, but the lost things will remain fresh in our memory regardless of the lapse of time. This could be because of the pain the loss might have caused. The pain is even more unbearable when the thing lost is very memorable and precious ones?

Indulgent Indian parents remain so besotted with inculcating an aggressive spirit of pursuing good academic scores in their wards, which children grapple with basic civic sense, civility, humility and compassion.

'Be a leader', one school motto says; and teachers doggedly insist that the child would 'lag behind', if s/he does not become 'initiative-driven'. The parents, in response, bludgeon that child with an impossible number of tuition and coaching sessions.

Only if we could collectively realise that leaders have to be good followers first – followers of a mannered, disciplined and civil life, which only parents can provide, leading by example. Whether we need law to achieve that or only a magical Nanny McPhee can put us on the path of self-correction is for us to consider and answer.

*vidhyabraghav@gmail.com*

brella. This was a unique object to me as my aunt had specially gifted it to my mother. Though I regret having thus lost several items in my life, this one is something that I feel very guilty about and would like to recover at any cost.

Attached as I am with my lost articles, I was touched when I read the book *The Keeper of Lost Things*, by Ruth Hogan. This is one of the books I connected so much to and got hooked with its pages. When the protagonist of the novel Anthony lost his 'gold medallion', a gift from his late fiancé,

he started to collect the lost things of other people. Anthony, upon approaching the end of his life, wrote a will passing on the entire 'kingdom of lost things' to his assistant Laura.

The ultimate twist came when Laura, in her effort to reunite the lost items with their rightful owners, found Anthony's 'gold medallion'.

Everybody at some point of time in their life would have lost some things. It could be a valueless, cheap and unimportant item or memorable, precious thing.

But they too were pieces of our lives once and holds a memory within it.

*ividhya06@yahoo.com*

## The truly big questions in the classrooms today

Looks like our education system might be routinely missing the wood for the trees



BADDAM ARAVINDA REDDY

**M**y grandson is in Class 1. In addition to English and Mathematics, he already has Environmental Science and General Knowledge as subjects to study in school. In a General Knowledge question-and-answer paper which he brought home recently, the questions asked were: what is the name of the dog that Russians sent into space, and how many planets are there in the solar system. He answered both questions correctly. The name of the dog is Laika, and the solar system has eight planets.

I was impressed with his answers. I then asked him, "what is space?" and "what is a solar system?" He had no answers for these questions. This reminded me of the topics for my master's de-

gree in Economics during 1974-76. The subjects ranged from macro-economic theory to the industrial policy of the Government of India, Five Year Plans, and so on. At the end of two years I had little knowledge of how the rate of interest is set, how a local bank functions, how a small company raises finances, how to look at the balance sheet of a company or how to manage my own finances. To sum up, the knowledge of economics that I gained lacked context and was not useful for application.

The manner in which instruction is imparted in our schools and colleges has not changed much from the 20th century to the 21st century. Much of the knowledge is taught in our schools and colleges today prepares the student to pass examinations

but not to analyse the knowledge in a context and apply that knowledge to practical problems. No wonder that many of the information technology firms that go to engineering colleges for campus recruitment find that 90% of the candidates are unfit for jobs.

Salman Khan, the American educator who founded the well-known Khan Academy, in a Ted talk explained why judging students based on marks obtained in examinations is amiss. A student who obtains 60% marks in an examination passes out in first class. He is lauded for his achievement. But he still has a 40% deficit. Salman Khan compares this situation to a motor car running with three

wheels. To be able to be a truly knowledgeable person, one has to internalise the concepts with his already known knowledge, build on them and apply them. If you know only 40% or 60% of your curriculum, you miss the connections that link you to the whole, and the 60% knowledge which is partial will be of no use. Recognising the lacuna in the education system, the Khan academy in its tutorials of Maths and Science subjects places emphasis on concepts. If a student is thorough in concepts, he can apply the concepts and solve mathematical and science questions easily.

A fundamental thing missing from our schools and colleges is the context. A student is taught knowledge given in the books. But the student has to apply that knowledge in the society or community in which he lives. How well he communicates his ideas to others, how well he understands his emotions and emotions of others, to know how human psyche works and how to work in a team are all paramount to navigate life. These skills are not taught in schools or colleges.

*aravindareddyb@gmail.com*



### More on the Web

[thehindu.com/opinion/open-page](http://thehindu.com/opinion/open-page)

#### The Year of Moderation

Humankind needs to moderate its consumption excesses now, and save the earth

SACHIN V.K. JADHAV

#### Are queues only for wimps?

The unique Indian art and science of jumping the line without a care in the world

RISHI KANNA

#### What a pharmacist can help with

They can aid patients in making prudent choices in terms of medication and dosage

SUNITHA MATHEW

Contributions to this page may be emailed to [openpage@thehindu.co.in](mailto:openpage@thehindu.co.in) to a length of up to 700 words. Please provide the postal address and a brief description of the writer. An email id that is provided could be considered for publication. Certify in writing that it is original material; The Hindu views plagiarism as a serious issue. Also confirm that the submission is exclusive to this page. Taking into account the volume of material being received, we regret our inability to acknowledge receipt, or to entertain telephone or other queries on the status of a submission. If a submission is not published within eight weeks, consider it to be out of the reckoning – in most cases owing to dearth of space. The publication of an article is not to be seen as The Hindu endorsing the viewpoint in any way.

## IN BRIEF

All awards will be aired,  
Academy rolls back plan

NEW YORK  
The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Friday reversed its decision to present four awards during the commercial breaks of the Oscar broadcast. All 24 categories will be shown live at the 91st Academy Awards on February 24, the academy announced in a statement. On Monday, the academy had said that the winning speeches for film editing, cinematography, makeup and hairstyling and live-action short would be aired in a taped segment during the broadcast. AP



**Push-ups can keep heart disease risk at bay: study**  
NEW YORK  
Active, middle-aged men who can complete more than 40 push-ups at a time had a significantly lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) outcomes compared to those who did less than 10 push-ups, says a new study. The study, published in *JAMA Network Open*, showed that men who are able to do more than 40 push-ups had a 96% reduced risk of CVD compared with those who were able to do less than 10 push-ups. IANS



**Swiss actor Bruno Ganz, who played Hitler, dies**  
GENEVA  
Bruno Ganz, the Swiss actor who played the role of Adolf Hitler in *Downfall*, died on Saturday aged 77, his agent said. Mr. Ganz, who was suffering from cancer, died "in the early hours of the morning" at his home in Zurich. Before the Oscar-nominated *Downfall*, which vaulted Mr. Ganz into new levels of global fame, he had already been acknowledged as one of the most important German-language actors. AFP

# Space harpoon that captures junk tested

Thousands of old satellite and rocket parts circle the Earth

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
CAPE CANAVERAL

A harpoon flung from a satellite has successfully captured a piece of pretend space junk, like a whale.

The British-led experiment is part of an effort to clean up debris in orbit, hundreds of miles above the Earth.

The University of Surrey's Guglielmo Aglietti said on Friday that the steel-tipped harpoon scored a bull's-eye last Friday.

The harpoon no bigger than a writing pen pierced an aluminum panel the size of a table tennis racket attached to the end of a satellite boom. The distance was just 5 feet, but researchers were delighted.

A video shows the harpoon slamming into the target and knocking it off its perch, and then the harpoon cable becoming entangled around the boom.

**A threat to ISS**

Mr. Aglietti said a much bigger harpoon will be needed in order to snare a real dead satellite "Moby Dick style." Thousands of old satellite and rocket parts, and other junk circle the Earth, a potential threat to working spacecraft, including the Interna-

**Bull's eye:** A harpoon striking a square target mounted 5 feet from the spacecraft. AP

national Space Station (ISS).

The same team used a net to capture a piece of space junk, in a test last September. And in December, they tracked a tiny satellite ejected from the mother ship, using lasers.

"We are very happy because so far, we have done three experiments and all three have been working," Mr. Aglietti said by phone from England.

All that remains is for the 400-km-high satellite to re-

enter the atmosphere and burn up. If all goes according to plan, a sail will inflate in March and eventually drag the satellite down, its mission accomplished.

Mr. Aglietti said the next step for the consortium, which includes Airbus, would be to offer this as a real service and go after real space debris.

The experiment was launched to the space station last April and released from the station last June.

First there were one-off

# Uruguay's Indian-origin cricketers searching for a permanent home

The team finished second in South American championships in Colombia last year

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MONTEVIDEO

Every Sunday, close to a statue of Mahatma Gandhi, a group of Indian expats take over a patch of land in Uruguay's capital Montevideo for a game of cricket.

Tucked in between the Rio de la Plata estuary and the long promenade known as the "rambla" that stretches from one side of Montevideo to the other, Avijit Mukherjee prepares to bat, watched eagerly by his Uruguayan girlfriend.

"I played in my country but with a lot more infrastructure," said the 28-year-old Mr. Mukherjee, whose girlfriend Veronica is the main reason he has stayed in Uruguay.

"There are stadiums and many places to play in India, whereas here we only have one."

Although cricket was first played in Montevideo by British expat workers even before the foundation of the independent republic in 1828, its practice died out in the 1980s.

But following an influx of Indian immigrants to Uruguay at the turn of the century, cricket steadily returned to Montevideo.

First there were one-off

**Making a pitch:** An Indian living in Uruguay plays a shot during a cricket match in Montevideo. AP

surprised that the players speak to each other in English.

**Lone Pakistani player**

And there's another surprise in the form of 29-year-old doctor Saeed Muhammad Asif Raza: he's from Pakistan.

"Between the governments and in (professional) cricket there are always problems, but the people get on really well and within the team there are no problems whatsoever," said Mr. Asif.

"I didn't come here to find a better life economically, I had a better life in my country because in my family we didn't lack for anything," said Mr. Asif.

"The thing is that when you live many years away, nowhere is home, and cricket brings me close to it."

Although now at home on their small patch, finding something more permanent is crucial to Montevideo's cricketers. "We're looking for a permanent ground," Beerbal Maniyattukudy, the Uruguayan cricket association's secretary, said.

"We have 120 players this year. On top of that we're starting some women's teams and for now we have 20 people interested."

# Limited anaesthesia may be safe for babies

An hour of surgery with general anaesthesia 'is safe for a child in early infancy'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Anaesthesia during a short surgery doesn't harm a baby's brain development, according to an experiment involving hundreds of infants in seven countries.

While the study can't answer broader safety questions about repeated or prolonged anaesthesia, it may ease the worries of millions of parents whose children have been put to sleep for common procedures.

"These findings should be reassuring," said Dr. Mary Ellen McCann of Boston Children's Hospital. An hour of surgery with general anaesthesia "is safe for your child in early infancy." She helped lead the study



In the study, the anaesthesia lasted less than an hour on average. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

involved in the research. The findings mean doctors "should not shy away from using general anaesthesia in children undergoing simple pediatric procedures."

**84% of babies were boys**

Since 84% of the babies in the study were boys, it's unclear how the results apply to girls.

In the study, the anaesthesia lasted less than an hour on average. Longer exposure could be more dangerous, as could anaesthesia for multiple surgeries, Dr. McCann said, so it's unlikely the Food and Drug Administration will change existing warning labels on anaesthesia drugs for children.

THE HINDU

AhGuru

**Preparing for IIT JEE or NEET?**

Sign up for

**AhGuru Online Courses**

Learn from India's BEST teachers

Class 9, 10, 11, 12

**Each Course has**

1420+ Videos

1140+ Questions

360+ Hours of Learning

Learn Now at [www.ahaguru.com](http://www.ahaguru.com)

For FREE Trial Lessons and Videos, Call or SMS

96001 00090, 96001 98493, 96003 74451

## When one man's stomach fills, this man's heart fills



**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL FEED THE NEEDY

Hunger seems to be an issue which we have been tackling for a long time now. Hence Hyder Moosvi, aged 47, decided to feed the underprivileged in Hyderabad, out of his own pocket. He buys the groceries, and his wife, with some help prepares dinners which are distributed to the poor. Hyder then carries the food to Dabirpura over bridge where hundreds of people throng for dinner and water. He intends to implement this idea in Hyderabad for now, and move the project to other cities later on.

## Closer to mother earth

**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL GROW MY OWN PRODUCE

Uma Hoysala from Bangalore ventured into terrace farming since 2015 and is a social media influencer with good support from her followers. Vegetables and fruits are the popular produce from her terrace. "Over time, I observed bees, butterflies visiting my garden for the nectar from the flowers and this simultaneously helps pollination," she says. In order to spread awareness at her workplace she conducted a workshop anticipating a 30-member participation but received over 250 people to attend the workshop.

## Feed your fellows anonymously



**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL SHARE AND CARE

"On my way to drop my son at school, people in and around the area used to throw the excess or in-consumable food into the blue dustbin," said Harish Kumar, who runs a community fridge outside his apartment in Bengaluru. He found that the dumped food could be of good use to his fellow citizens in the area where he was residing. Harish initiated the concept of a community fridge that would be beneficial to all. The 250 litres community fridge has 3035 people contributing food on a daily basis and a similar number consuming the donated food.

## An Accidental Historian

**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL PRESERVE MY HISTORY

"When I find an inscription, I give it to a history professor or an archaeologist who studies it. We then take it to the village named in the inscription as it rightfully belongs to them. I have been doing this restoration for the past two to three years," says Dhanpal, a fifty three year old Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) driver, tourist guide and a history buff. Apart from restoring inscriptions, Dhanpal has also tried recovering 'samadhis' or graves of famous people to ensure their stories are not lost with time.

## Living in the way of harmony



**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL EDUCATE CHILDREN RESPONSIBLY

Meghana Dabbari founded Make the Wonderful World (MTWW), an NGO working towards creating a better world. This is being made possible through educating underprivileged children from difficult backgrounds. Each day, their residential school is packed with activities, from study to play time, yoga to dance, Kung Fu to gardening, and more. Before the children go to bed, they have personality development and story-telling sessions, affirmations and visualizations. The stories of transformation of these children are innumerable and they have each become an agent of harmony and change.



## A Guardian to The Guardian of Camels

**THE HINDU #UNDERMYWATCH**  
I WILL PROTECT ANIMAL ENVIRONMENTS

Originally from Germany, Ilse Köhler-Rollefson's love for animals brought her to India 28 years ago on a doctoral research project to study the camel socio-economic and management system in the remote Raika settlements of Rajasthan. That experience turned her from an academician to an activist and led her to start two NGOs, one in Germany - Pastoral People and another in India - Lokhit Pashu Palak Sansthan (LPPS) that facilitates steady funding to help the Raika and their camels. Under her leadership, LPPS will continue to work for the benefit of Rajasthan's camel breeders.

**THE HINDU**

Tell us how you have made a difference in your own little way and get a chance to be featured in The Hindu.

Submit your stories at [www.thehindu.com/undermywatch](http://www.thehindu.com/undermywatch)



BY LAKSHMI GOVINDRAJAN JAVERI

*His popularity as a tabla player may be due, in large measure, to the fact that he was one of those rare musicians who was able to totally engage the mind of his listener with what he was playing.*  
— From a chapter on Ustad Allarakha in *Master on Masters*, by Amjad Ali Khan

**W**hile writing about the towering, almost spiritual presence of Ustad Allarakha in his life, sarod virtuoso and Padma Vibhushan, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan — the sixth-generation sarod player from the illustrious Senia Bangash gharana — recalls what it was like to watch a founding member of a musical dynasty in action. As someone who has accompanied the great Ustad Allarakha (lovingly called 'Abba'), Khan has undoubtedly had a *mehfil*-like intimate view to his genius.

Nineteen years after Abbaji's passing in 2000, Khan's sons and sarod players, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash paid tribute to the tabla maestro on February 3 at 'A Homage to Abbaji — Ustad Allarakha', the annual series of concerts that commemorate his life and legacy. Held every year since Abbaji's first *barsi* (death anniversary), his renowned son Ustad Zakir Hussain curates three sessions featuring eminent artists and students of the Ustad Allarakha Institute of Music.

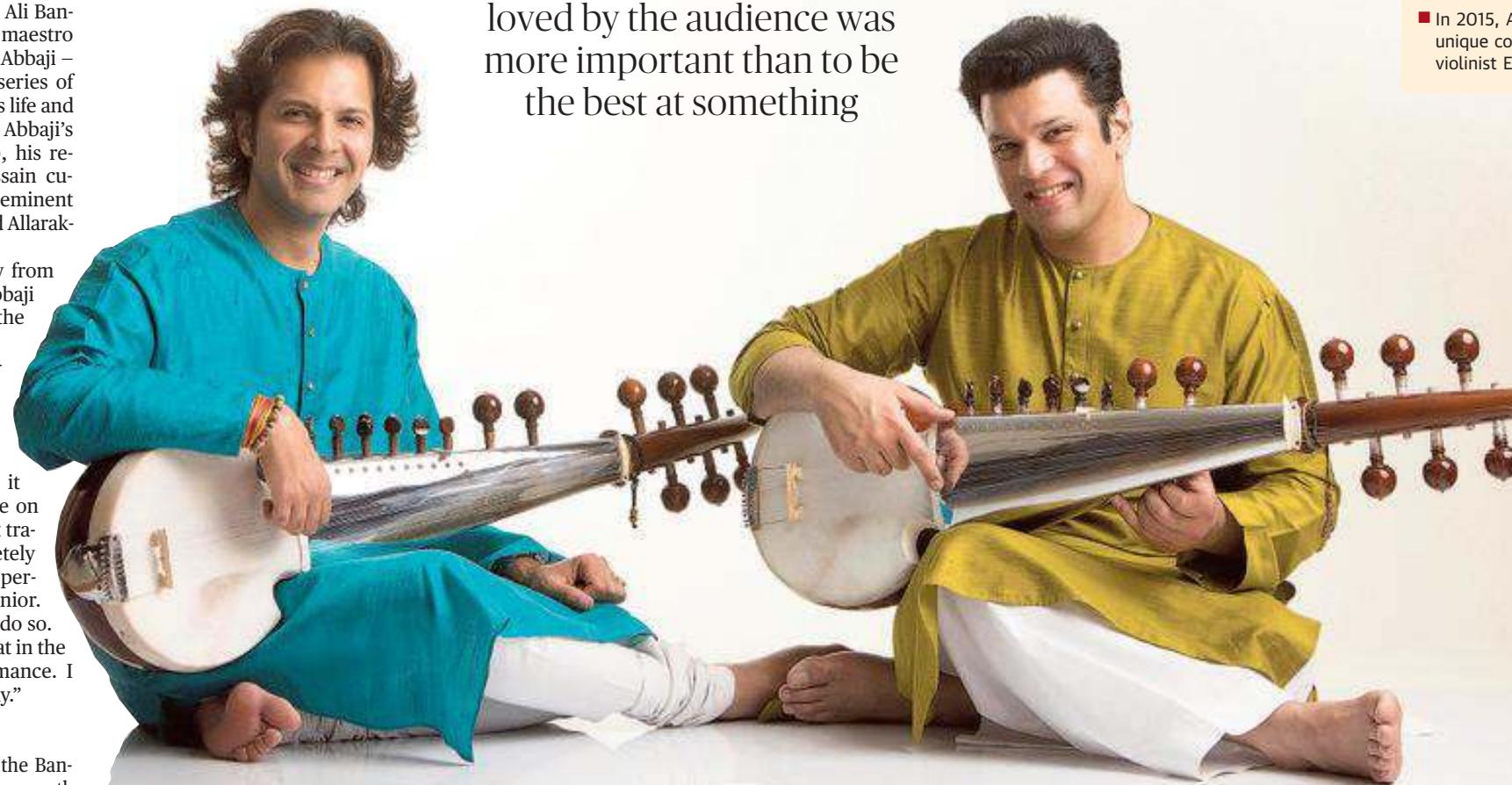
The Bangash brothers drew from their own experiences with Abbaji as they took to the stage for the first time in his honour.

Says the younger of the siblings, Ayaan Ali Bangash, "The last time I met Khan saab was in Ahmedabad. Since it was a late evening concert, he performed before me. When it was my turn, I obviously came on and announced that it's against tradition, not to mention completely out of place for me, to sit (to perform) after Khansaab, my senior. But it was his command that I do so. Imagine his greatness that he sat in the wings throughout my performance. I value those blessings even today."

#### Inheriting a legacy

Blessings are in abundance for the Bangash brothers, who represent the seventh generation of sarod players, from a family credited with creating the sarod from the Afghan rubab, and whose musical lineage traces back to Miyan Tansen.

Legacy is not a word lightly thrown around here. Amaan says, "Legacy is a



**Bond to win** Ayaan and Amaan Ali Bangash (right) feel they have a very high standard to live up to because of their father-guru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

blessing of god to you, and what you do with it is your gesture of appreciation or your biggest gift back to god. So many people ask us how we're going to take Khansaab's legacy forward. I tell them my first aim is to not be a cause of embarrassment to him. I should play the sarod the way it has been taught to me, the way he wants me to play."

A big part of their relationship with Ustad Amjad Ali Khan is the balance between him as their guru and as their father. Wholly aware of how that weighs on them and the opportunities and diffi-

culties that come with the turf, Amaan is candid in analysing his life thus far. "I feel if I was not Abba's son or disciple, whatever little I have accomplished in life, would have taken me another 25 years. To be born under a father-guru of his stature is not easy. One has a very high standard to live up to. He has been the most loving father to us. As a guru, he has been strict. There were many great sarod players in the world, but my father is my hero," he says.

On his part, Ayaan found the relationship confusing when he was younger.

He recalls, "He was more of a father and less of a guru. But as time went by, he became more of a guru. The change between the two relationships today is somewhat effortless. He could be a father from the hotel lobby to the car and then suddenly from the car ride to the concert, he could be a guru. The great thing about our father is that he has allowed us to fly and do things our own way. He always reminded us that to be loved by the audience was more important than to be the best at something."

Audience appreciation is a significant

part of an artist's life. Indian classical music, which evolved from intimate spaces like royal courts and temples, has grown to occupy packed auditoriums and arenas.

#### New directions, new sounds

Over time, much has been written about every subsequent generation's lack of interest in classical music. Ayaan though believes today's digitised generation is actually at a vantage position to use technology to find its roots. He says, "Today is a very fascinating time for

**Not having an audience for a particular musician doesn't mean interest in that form of music is going down**

classical music, for this is one genre that has organically redefined and reinvented itself. Year after year, newer elements are being incorporated. It's wonderful that you have so many platforms including web streaming, social media, YouTube and such sites to give access to rich traditional music."

Amaan, more scathing in self-assessment, believes that dwindling audiences for classical music is a myth, perpetuated by some musicians and picked up by the media.

He says, "God forbid, tomorrow if I don't have a full

house, I can't blame the audience... I have to blame myself for not being able to attract people to my concert. Not having an audience for a particular musician doesn't mean interest in that form of music is going down. I have never heard Ustad Vilayat Khansaab, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Ustad Zakir Hussain, Hariprasadji or Shivkumarji or my father make such comments. They have always said that it (classical music) is growing. That's the best part about the nature of music; it evolves with time and with collaborations."

#### Aural experiments

While the classical is in their DNA, they have experimented with sound over the years, releasing world fusion album *Reincarnation* in 2006, and the thematic album, *Mystic Dunes*, in 2007. Collaborations with world musicians have also taken this generation of Bangash sarod players in newer directions.

"Unlike Western music, Indian classical music is an incredibly oral tradition. We don't write music in the conventional understanding of songwriting, but we have broad guidelines of how we wish to collaborate when we're working with Western musicians and instruments. Indian classical music is like Indian cooking; you don't really follow a recipe, you follow your gut. I play a traditional instrument. I don't want to make it into an overly 'cool' westernised instrument. In fact, I don't feel like a musician; I feel like someone who works for an industry that preserves Indian art, culture and heritage," says Amaan.

The author dabbles with being a mum, an editor, a music journalist, and a budding bass player.

#### INSIDE INDIA

# Going ga ga over radio

A community radio station in rural Karnataka, run almost exclusively by women, takes on everything from menstruation to lake pollution

BY JAYANTHI MADHUKAR

**T**he only thing that sets apart the nondescript building from other houses in Anugondanahalli village in Karnataka's Hoskote district is a board announcing the radio station. RJ Sunil has been waiting for us and shows us around.

The living area is bare save for a big board on the wall; the kitchen has a medium-sized, all-important transmitter; and the bedroom serves as the radio station. There is a wooden door with a glass window through which I can see the RJ. On top of a large table that occupies most of the room are the mixer and microphones. Sensible shelving against a wall has a small portable radio on it.

This is Sarathi Jhalak, a community radio station, run almost exclusively by women and one that has forged a vital connect with its largely rural audience, hosting programmes on everything from menstruation and lake pollution to alcoholism and finance.

"Even before *Mann Ki Baat*, we had *Manadalada Matu* (Talk of the heart)," chortles Shamaanta D.S., the journalist who started the station in 2012. It reaches some 100 villages within a 30 km radius. This particular show, which aired at night "had so many female listeners," says Shamaanta; "they would call and speak about all their issues."

Sunil sits behind the desk. The jour-

nalism graduate tells us that he barely spoke for the first three months that he worked here. "I was so scared." It's hard to tell, looking at him run the station with confidence now.

RJ Nagamani joins us and prepares for the afternoon show. Nagamani has studied till Class X, but says her work with Sarathi has made her "articulate and knowledgeable."

#### Friendly neighbourhood

Sunil decides to interview our photographer. He puts on his headphones and after a silent countdown with his fingers Sarathi Jhalak goes on air.

As they chat, a farmer drops in with his son and sits down with me outside the studio. "I want my son to do better than me," the farmer says, "I work in the hot sun for ₹400 a week. Maybe Sunil can get him a job." I am told that another farmer had walked in the other day to complain about a government hospital doctor who had wanted money for treatment. Parents bring their children to the station so the RJs can give them a pep talk.

Shamaanta has trained Sunil and the three women RJs to speak simply and from their heart. "Instead of using clichéd phrases like 'mahila dourjanya' or sexual harassment of women, I tell the RJs to use a story that highlights it. That way people will listen."

Nagamani tells me about a pro-



**Changemakers** Shamaanta and Sunil at Sarathi Jhalak, all set to go on air. SUDHAKARA JAIN

gramme she did with girls from a nearby high school. They discussed menstruation and the disposal of sanitary pads. When there were reports from another part of the country of children falling sick from their midday meals, the RJs urged parents to check if the vegetables and vessels were being washed well. The women RJs are looked upon as friends by the villagers.

**Speaking out**  
Some like Kala, (who has now quit for other opportunities), became minor celebrities. Nagamani's children's friends and their parents hold her in high regard. "My husband is very proud of what I do," she says.

Shamaanta recalls the time she had first come to the region with a group of journalists to conduct a media literacy programme nearly 15 years ago. Almost every woman was illiterate here. "I would tell them to listen to the radio while doing the housework." After thorough background checks by at least seven different government departments,

Sarathi Jhalak got its licence in 2012 and a funding of ₹5 lakh from the government. Hoskote was the obvious choice of location because Shamaanta had worked there earlier. Around the same time the Women and Children's Department of Anugondanahalli wrote asking her to start educational programmes for women. "It became easy for me," says Shamaanta.

#### Cost factor

But there have been hurdles too. For one, recurring expenses are high. The radio station has been approaching nearby schools and colleges to advertise with them. Though community radio is run by and for the people, Shamaanta be-

lieves that it is not fair for the government to expect RJs to work without pay. The family pays Sunil ₹15,000 while Nagamani gets a token ₹3,000 a month. The station is always cash-strapped and requires at least ₹2 lakh a month to run. "We could then hire technical support, more RJs with better pay, better equipment, and document our popular programmes." Encouraging stations like Sarathi Jhalak makes sense at the grassroots level.

As Shamaanta says, "A community radio station like ours is not an alternative medium, it is a powerful one."

The freelance writer believes that everything has a story waiting to be told.

## FIELD NOTES

# A brand new yarn

In Kutch, women and young men are returning to handloom weaving in a remarkable counter wave



BY ASHISH KOTHARI

**M**y loom is my computer," says Prakash Naranbhai Vankar when I ask him whether he would have preferred working at an IT firm. The young weaver, who is sitting at his loom in Bhujodi village in Kutch, tells me that weaving carpets is anything but mechanical: there is thought, innovation, and love that goes into it. And freedom, and identity, and being with family.

Against the tide of handloom decline across India, there is a quiet revival of handloom weaving, *vannat*, in Kutch among the women, the youth and the elders of the Marwada vankar community. And I am here to find out why.

Prakash is one of several young people who have either stayed with weaving, or, more remarkably, come back to it after trying their hand at construction and other jobs. Prakash learnt the tradition of weaving carpets from his father, but he uses new yarns and designs while staying faithful to the unique 'Kutchi chhaap' motifs.

In Siracha village, several youth have returned to their looms after leaving or being laid off from the nearby Tata and Adani factories; many more tell me they want to return. In Kotay village, Shamjibhai says: "I market my products online; I hardly have to leave the village, I

can work from the comfort of my home." In other villages in the district, I hear similar stories of renewed interest in weaving and about its allure in terms of economics, culture, identity, dignity, convenience, social ties, and innovation.

"Such stories are rare in the handloom world, a refreshing counter to the otherwise depressing exodus of youth from such occupations," says textile technologist Durga Venkataswamy.

**New markets, new schools**  
Crucial to this story are institutions such as Khamir, which encourage innovation and help create new markets. Khamir is working with kala cotton, an indigenous variety ideally suited to Kutch's aridity, and grown organically. The group has worked out the full value chain – from cultivation to the marketing of cloth – creating a robust demand. Such institutions have also helped to diversify products – from carpets and shawls to saris and stoles, shirts and kurtas, linen, bags – and new design or handloom schools have enabled formal learning for young weavers.

The *vannat* revival has brought economic prosperity, but unevenly. Vankars who live close to Bhuj town or in villages where external agencies have intervened have benefited more than others. Distress is still visible among



**A yard and more** (clockwise from top)  
Mashru weaver Babubhai Ratansinh Vanodia Vankar at Bhujodi; multicoloured yarn on a loom; Sheetal Hiteshbhai, one of the young weavers at Jamthada village. ASHISH KOTHARI

many vankars. And there is a visible class divide too between entrepreneur weavers and weavers who work for them. "Such inequality was rare a few decades ago when the craft was mostly for local trade," says Shamjibhai Siju of Bhujodi, a prominent innovator who has travelled the world promoting the Kutchi weave.

**Changing trends**  
But the revival has brought in significant social changes. Vankars have traditionally suffered from untouchability and other manifestations of casteism; but today, due to economic transformation, contact with the outside world, education, and new opportunities for the youth, they do not experience its worst forms.

Equally apparent is the impact on gender. Traditionally, women did all the pre-loom work, such as getting the yarn ready, while men did the weaving. Now, women sit at the loom too, and express

their own creativity. Some have begun going out to melas (fairs). Champa Siju Vankar of Awadh Nagar weaves some of her own designs and recently exhibited her work in the U.K. as part of an exchange programme. In Adhoi village, Jaishreeben got married into a non-weaving family, and taught her husband Habubhai how to weave; the two now make saris side-by-side. But there is an ironic flip side: because men hardly step out to help with the housework, the women weavers are now doubly busy.

And has the *vannat* revival been positive for the environment? Kala cotton has only half the total ecological 'footprint' (in terms of carbon emissions and water use) compared to Bt cotton, which has taken over most cotton acreage in Gujarat, says ecologist Arun Mani Dixit. However, since the market for Kala cotton products is now mostly in Indian metros and in Europe, there is an increased footprint of transportation. And an uncomfortable and vulnerable dependence on elite consumers.

Vankar leaders like Shamjibhai and Murjibhai of Bhujodi feel the need for intervention on some of these issues: assisting weavers in villages far from Bhuj to access the market, reviving local demand, and collective mobilisation on policies adversely impacting them like GST. With these in place, the *vannat* revival story could become even more remarkable.

The author visited Kutch as part of a collaborative study (ACKnow-EJ) by Kalpvriksh, Khamir and the community, supported by the International Social Science Council.

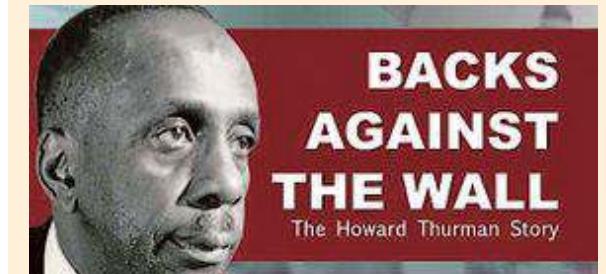
**Traditionally, women did all the pre-loom work, such as getting the yarn ready, while men did the weaving**

## CREDITS



**American Factory**  
Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert  
115 minutes

America's post-industrial rust belt in sharp relief, with some culture clashes to top it off. The General Motors plant in Dayton, Ohio, which was closed down in 2008, was reopened in 2014 by a Chinese billionaire under the name Fuyao Glass America. It would promise employment to more than 2,000 Americans – and bring in hundreds of Chinese workers to join them. It was far from smooth sailing. The Americans were worried by low wages and health and safety standards, while their Chinese managers complained low productivity and the looming spectre of unionisation.



**Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story**  
Martin Doblmeier  
56 minutes

Martin Doblmeier's documentary explores the life and legacy of Howard Washington Thurman – African-American civil rights leader, theologian, author, grandson of slaves. Thurman was a pivotal figure in the 20th century civil rights movement and mentor to leaders of the next generation including Martin Luther King, Jr. On a visit to India organised by the Student Christian Movement in 1936, Thurman would give a number of lectures across the country attended by many Indian luminaries, Tagore among them, and meet Mahatma Gandhi, whose thoughts on ahimsa would greatly influence Thurman.

A curation of some of the most interesting news films and videos from around the world.

## PEACE IN A POD

## Slipping between the global and the local

Despite different plotlines, each of the stories in Pratik Arora's *Tiny Tales* reflects a distinct urban sensibility

BY USHA RAMAN

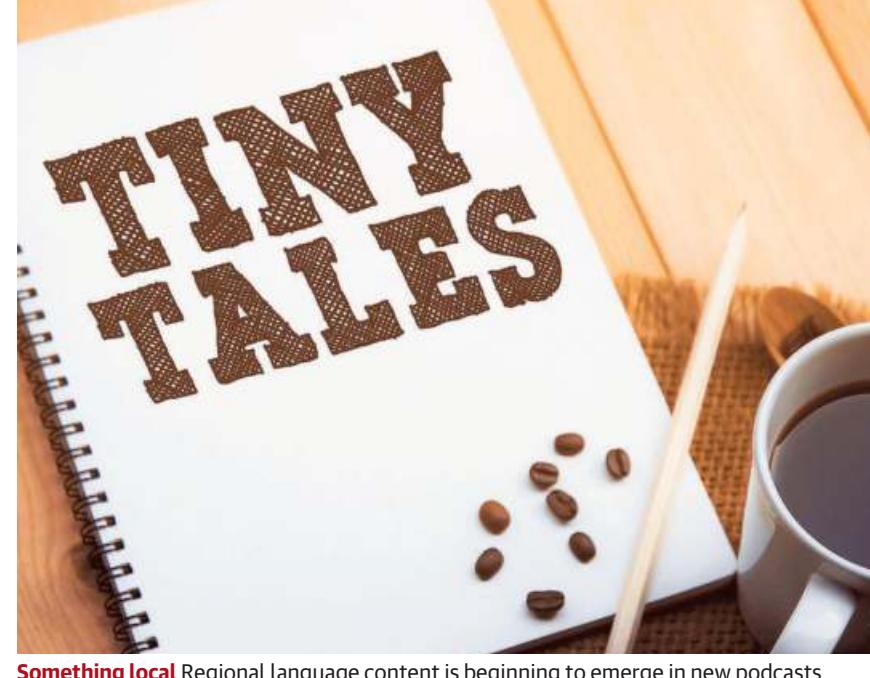
**L**ast week, the podcast community – makers more than listeners – went a little bit crazy over the news that the music streaming company Spotify had acquired two promising entities in the audio business, Gimlet Media and Anchor.

Gimlet, whose fiction series *Homecoming* has been featured in this column, is a content creator, while Anchor offers tools for creating, publishing and monetising podcasts. With this move, Spotify has made it clear that it takes podcasting very seriously, with CEO Daniel Ek referring to the acquisitions as 'best-in-class' and announcing on the official blog that they are part of a much bigger investment that the company will be making in non-music audio. "Based on radio industry data, we believe it is a safe assumption that, over time, more than 20% of all Spotify listening will be non-music audio," he wrote.

**Future strategy**  
But why should Indian podcast enthusiasts even care, given that Spotify does not have a presence here?

For one, the company is slated to enter India by the end of March, coming into direct competition with other premium streaming services such as iTunes and JioSaavn and publishing platforms like AudioBoom. For another, as Peter Kafka, writing in the online tech magazine *Recode* explained, podcasting will be a big part of Spotify's future strategy.

The company has indicated that it is



**Something local** Regional language content is beginning to emerge in new podcasts

likely to spend another \$500 million on multiple acquisitions in 2019, and this could possibly include buyouts in the Indian market, where interest in podcasting is growing significantly. As the creator of The Passion People Podcast (featuring interviews with people following their passion) tweeted, 'this is reaffirmation that podcasting is on the cusp of something big.'

Certainly, podcasting in India is 'on the cusp of something big', with new shows popping up every week on my radar, many of which got their start just in the past year or so. While most of the new shows are in English, regional language content is slowly making an emergence, with – no surprise – Hindi dominating in both fiction and non-fiction genres.

One of these, a drama series that piqued my curiosity because of its name – *Tiny Tales* by Radiofly – has five episodes available at the time of writing, all short 'audio-films', in Hindi/Hinglish. The episodes are

In *Reunion*, we meet three friends at a college reunion, probably IIT Bombay or some such campus, nursing old grudges and nostalgia over their not-so-chota pegs. In *Inner Voice*, a young man and woman trade unfriendly banter on a train journey but somewhere along the line end up trading telephone numbers. In *Time Lag*, an intruder surprises a young couple with what could be a tall tale – or a portent. *Bombay Blue* moves into crime and intrigue, while in *Namesake* a confused and conflicted yuppie tries desperately to do the right thing.

**Brave new face**  
The stories are written and directed by Pratik Arora, who also edits the episodes, and performed by a cast of seemingly amateur actors. Arora notes on his blog that finding actors is a challenge and so on occasion is forced to step in with his own voice, though he would much rather spend his energies on production. The performances therefore are uneven, and delivery at times stilted, but the stories are charming enough to hold one's interest on a slow day.

Efforts such as *Tiny Tales* represent the brave new face of Indian podcasting, trying something different, something local, with few resources and a lot of hard work. Often (like *Musafir Stories*, featured earlier in this column) they are weekend avocational, fuelled by time carved out of a busy weekday job that pays the bills – at this point, podcasts don't quite do that for indie makers.

But if giants like Spotify see potential in this space, then more interest – and resources – could become available. That can only bode well for those who want to sharpen their content for a listener base that will doubtless grow more discerning by the day.

**Podcasting in India is 'on the cusp of something big' with new shows popping up every week**

(A fortnightly series on podcasts.)

The Hyderabad-based writer and academic is a neatnik fighting a losing battle with the clutter in her head.

CM YK

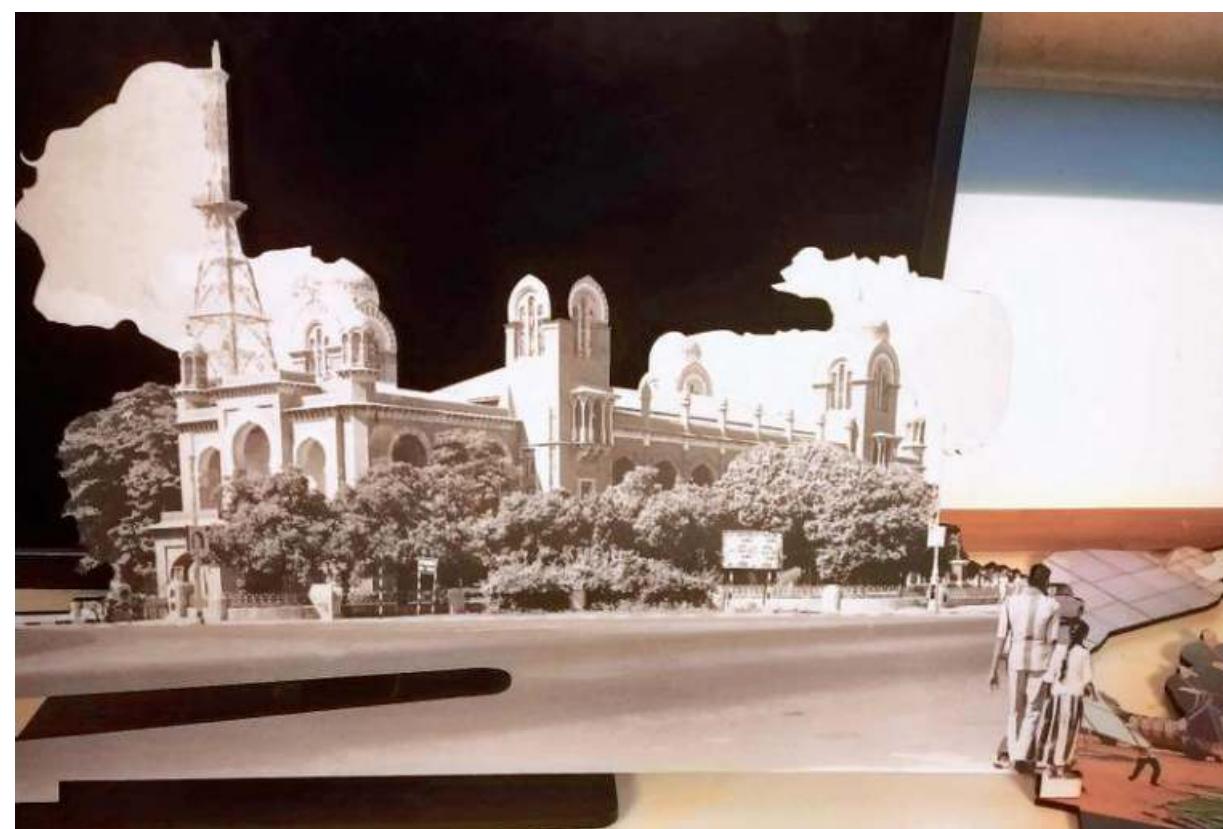
ND-X

BY ZAHRA AMIRUDDIN

## SPOTLIGHT

# Time travel through *The Hindu's* archives

What happens when an artist and a filmmaker meet up with a mammoth newspaper archive to build an art installation

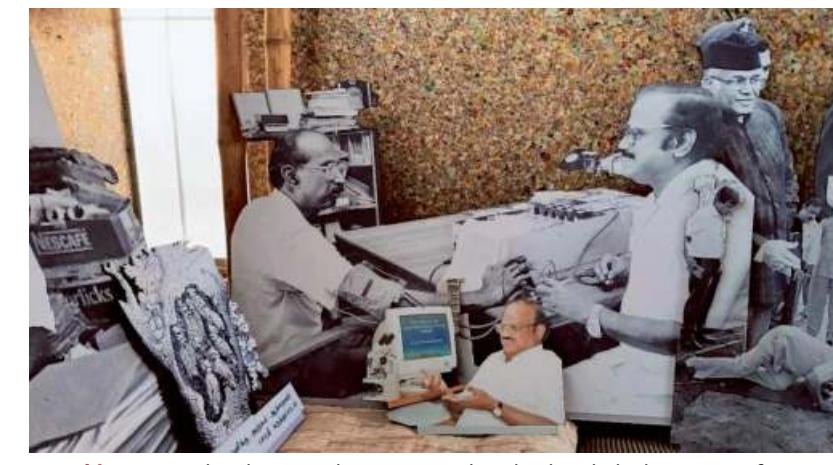


**C** The 100 ft sequence of images follows certain rules, the first of which is that 'people grow older, or younger'

veli on May 11, 2016, visuals of *The Hindu* office in Anna Salai that was enveloped in flames (February 8, 2013), and images of the Northeastern States, of Jammu and Kashmir, and scenes from the pre-Partition era.

The sequence of images follows certain rules, the first of which is that "people grow older, or younger"; the second principle is that "things in the background come into the foreground, or vice versa"; and the third is "two photo captions refer to each other."

**Visual package**  
The rules become clearer when looking at *A Photogenetic Line* as a work in progress. At their studio, I witness a mere 5% of the planned installation, as we move across photographs of a Jayalalithaa poster flying in the wind in Tirunel-



**Breathing space** The photographs are manipulated to break the heaviness of history. With cut-outs, the border of one image makes a jump into another. CAMP

I ask the duo how they managed to pick and choose from the staggering volume that makes up *The Hindu* photo archives. They explain that the editing process involved a combination of building tools and physically looking at the photos. "We built some software in the original stages (using open source toolkits) to detect similarities between images, and ran them on hundreds of thumbnails," says Sukumaran. Most of the background work was done by placing combinations of search terms into NICA, the Hindu's internal database that CAMP had been given access to.

#### Painted photographs

Through the editing process, Sukumaran and Anand uncovered painted photographs from the 1950s, unexpected scenes such as clothes drying on a forensic laboratory's fence in Madurai, and images of Chennai's relentless archivist, Roja Muthiah, at home. Inevitably there's a bank of political imagery, cardboard cut-outs of politicians falling

on crowds, being put up or being taken down.

"In all this, we are riding upon the courage and labour of press photographers across India," says Sukumaran.

What is it about this archival process that fascinates Anand and Sukumaran? It's the experiences that can be lived through these images, spanning a century. Now, with infinite data presenting itself every day, archiving is slowly shifting from documentation to what CAMP describes as "surveillance capitalism". But at the end of the day, it's the way one works with the information at hand, either for personal gain or solely to create. The latter moulding time and, in the case of *A Photogenetic Line*, literally breaking all borders.

**On show:** *A Photogenetic Line*  
At The Senate House, Chennai  
From February 22 to March 24

The writer is interested in art, photography, culture and history.

## SCANNER

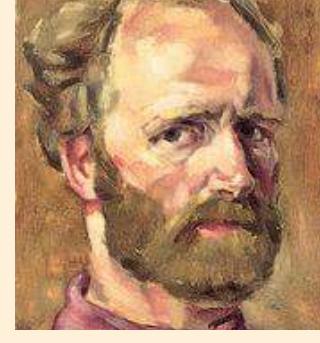
## Making art: Materials and technology



From February 24 to June 15, the Piramal Museum of Art in Mumbai will be hosting an exhibition on the development of a work of art, looking at how an artist conceptualises and how this relates to the

use of material. This will be part of an overarching look at specific methods and materials – charcoal, ink and graphite, paints pigments, sculpture, printmaking, photography and digital media – and their histories. The exhibition aims to provide a 'tactile' experience, allowing visitors to touch and experiment with the material.

## Cyril Mann: Painter of light and shadow



An 'unsung hero of 20th-century British art' is being celebrated in an exhibition at the Lightbox gallery in Woking, Surrey, open until March 31. Cyril Mann (1911–1980) was a painter whose earlier works include his 'solid shadow paintings', still-lifes that took shape under the glare of electric lights, whereas later works show a sunnier side of life such as the

romantic London cityscape he saw from his council flat window – one of a fair number of view-from-the-window scenes he painted.

## Frida Kahlo: Appearances can be deceiving



Placing the multifarious aspects of Frida Kahlo's personal identity at the heart of understanding the Mexican artist's work, this exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum – claimed to be the largest U.S. exhibition devoted to Kahlo in 10 years – features a collection of her Tehuana clothing and other possessions including jewellery, corsets and prosthetics, alongside paintings, drawings, photographs and film. It will be open until May 12.

## UNPLUGGED

# The inward people

The sarangi and its player are part of the music community, and yet stand apart



**GOURI DANGE**  
is a novelist, counsellor and music lover, who will take readers on a ramble through the Aladdin's cave of Indian music

**T**he sarangi player is the particle physicist or the long-distance runner of the music world. The similarities are not in what they do as much as in how they are – almost always inward people in everyday life as well as in the performance space. Their 'performance space' itself takes on a very different quality for them from that of others in their respective fields. They are part of the larger performing music community, and yet they stand apart. Now what came first – their inward personalities or the atmosphere surrounding their stream of music – is a matter of surmise and speculation.

#### Difficult choice

First, the instrument has not been vastly popular for some decades now. People do not 'throng' to a sarangi concert. The cognoscenti and the connoisseur will struggle upstream like salmon to attend a sarangi recital, but not a whole lot of classical music lovers will. Few people push and cajole their kids to learn the sarangi – partly because it is difficult and complex, even to hold and produce a sound from. And the sarangi is not a definite fixture on the concert and music festival, *utsav*, *samaroha* and *sammelan* circuit, not even in accompanying roles.

Second, for several decades, the sarangi was the instrument of choice for All India Radio and Doordarshan whenever state mourning was announced and programmes cancelled. For three days, there would be only protracted sarangi *alaaps*. It doesn't take a lot of analysis to understand what happens to people and instruments officially relegated to a 'call in the mourners' tick box. They change. If they were introspective and introverted to start with, they became more so once



Innovative player Dhruba Ghosh at a performance in Chennai in 2007. R. RAGU

tagged in this way. In most homes, the sarangi notes would be switched off in frustration until programming resumed. Fortunately, we had a grandfather who would wryly say, 'come', while everyone was pretending to be sad, 'let's enjoy this divine outpouring of sound'.

His only frustration was that there was no announcement or text identifying the performer. But then this was a grandfather who had in disgust dubbed our highly popular Hindi and Marathi singer of the time *kinchaal kumari*, which loosely translates as 'screechy girl'. So his love and understanding of the sarangi was already a minority thing even then.

And yet, the elegiac quality of this in-

strument affects people even when they haven't come solely to listen to it. Some years ago, at the finale of a concert dedicated to Kishori Amonkar, a line-up of percussion instruments was being readied and mic tests were going on. The sarangi was there just to hold the *lehra* or recurring tune that would hold the *taal* cycle in place.

#### Blown away

However, when the young sarangiya Sabir Khan played just a trial phrase, a shivering sigh or *hai*, as Begum Akhtar would have called it, ran through the audience. Which led tabla maestro Zakir Hussain to look up in happy surprise and

exclaim: "We're all playing something to test the mics, but you guys are blown away by just one movement of the bow of his sarangi?" Yet, the player kept his head firmly down. Perhaps it is the physical form of the instrument that dictates the performer look down, sarangi tucked under his chin. He holds it close, like you would a child. Is this too why flamboyance and playing at the galleries is rare in the sarangi player?

Sabir Khan's piece on Bundu Khan 'Playing for the Flowers' in her book *Here's Someone I'd Like You to Meet* says it all. The instrument almost melded with the man, and the complete absence of worldliness... and how he simply vanished into the ether after Partition has all the *dard* and *mithas* of the instrument and its players.

Hindi film music and the ghazal singer have given the sarangi a space of its own, mainly to provide understated pathos and poignancy. This may be a good place to start from, for anyone who wants to take in.

A year or so ago, another quiet, inward sarangi player, Dhruba Ghosh, passed away suddenly, having performed just the previous day. As some of us trawled the internet for pieces by him, typically, there was little by way of recordings and videos out there.

We are fortunate to have now a small set of young players in our midst again. Some of them are goaded into 'audience-connect' during the performance. No need, I would say. The sarangi speaks, weeps, laughs, rumbles and trills on its own, and the performer can remain true to his reticent self.

## BIG SCREEN

# A mixed bag in Berlin

As Berlinale 2019 draws to an end today, it's been 10 days of terrific cinema and some unexpected treasures



BY ASEEM CHHABRA

In Turkish-German filmmaker Fatih Akin's latest film *The Golden Glove*, protagonist Fritz Honka, a grotesque-looking man, picks up older, down-on-luck prostitutes from a bar he frequents. Then, in his drunken stupor, Honka beats them, strangles them, and saws their bodies into small parts.

People who visit Honka's apartment complain of the foul smell since he hides the body parts behind the walls. Akin makes the situation look so real that even the audience starts to imagine it can smell decaying human flesh.

It's a very hard film to watch. But in the hands of a master like Akin (*Head-On*, 2004; *The Edge of Heaven*, 2007), the film becomes a strange viewing experience. One is disgusted and shocked by the images, but there is also the curiosity to see how far the director will go to project his protagonist's depravity.

Quite like it happened with Lars von Trier's *The House That Jack Built* at Cannes last year, some people walked out of the screening of *The Golden Glove* at this year's Berlinale. One could sense discomfort among those who stayed back. Germans at large will have a chance to decide whether they can take so much violence when the film opens in theatres later next week.

*The Golden Glove* was programmed in the competition section of the 69th Berlinale. And it was one of the few hundred films playing in several categories – some brilliant and then, as it al-



ways happens in big festivals, there were others that fell relatively flat.

This year, there was also a large selection of Indian films, including Zoya Akhtar's *Gully Boy*, Ritesh Batra's *Photograph*, and Rima Das's *Bulbul Can Sing*, a follow-up to her National Award-winner *Village Rockstars* (2017). There were also a few shorts while *Tales From Planet Kolkata*, a restored 1993 documentary by London-based Indian writer Ruchi Joshi, played in the experimental Forum Expanded section.

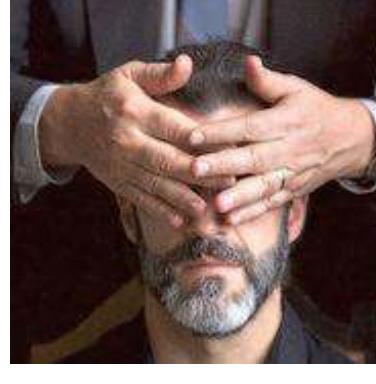
## True story

At the halfway mark to the 10-day festival, *The Golden Glove* stood out as a fascinating film for me. But I also liked François Ozon's *By the Grace of God* – a harrowing story of several adult men who band together to bring criminal charges against a priest who sexually abused them when they were teenagers.

Based on a true story, the trial and news of which still make headlines in France, the film deals with a theme similar to the Oscar-winning *Spotlight* (2015). But while *Spotlight* worked like a thriller, set in the editorial offices of *The Boston Globe*, the French film focuses mainly on the victims, now adult men, especially three characters from different class backgrounds, and how revisiting the traumas of their youth affects their present lives.

Ozon has directed nearly 40 feature-length and short films, often dealing with relationships, especially same-sex partners. *By the Grace of God* is one of his more complex films – a multi-layered screenplay, with several characters coming in and out of the narrative. By all counts, the strongest film in the competition section this year was the quiet *Ondog*. Directed by Chinese filmmaker Wang Quan'an, it's a tale of sur-

**Choice pickings** (Clockwise from left) Stills from *Ondog*, *The Golden Glove*, *By the Grace of God*, *Tremors* and *Piranhas*.



vival, sexual desires and a murder in the Mongolian steppes.

Scene after scene of the stunning film shows a vast sweeping landscape with a tiny dot – sometimes a wolf and at other times, an 18-year-old policeman guarding a naked female corpse.

But *Ondog* is not much concerned with the murder. Instead, it focuses on the way of life of a few gentle folks who live in the far-off land. A lamb is butchered for a meal, a cow delivers a calf, a single woman shepherd living in a round hut finds out she is pregnant. But life goes on.

In 2007, director Wang won the Golden Bear for *Tuya's Marriage*. *Ondog* is expected to win in one of the top categories as well.

## Mafia movie

I also watched another terrific film, based on the writing of Italian novelist Roberto Saviano who earlier captured the rise of the modern-day mafia in Na-

ples in his 2008 film *Gomorrah*, and in a television series that ran from 2014 to 2016. Now, director Claudio Giovannesi has adapted a new screenplay by Saviano (also based on his book), narrating another saga of the mafia in Naples, but this time entirely from the perspective of young teenagers.

The boys in *Piranhas* all have baby faces. They have barely crossed puberty. But led by the good-looking Nicola (Francesco Di Napoli) with his wide toothy grin, they all want to become gangsters, carrying guns to control their neighbourhood, sell drugs, protect local businesses, and command the respect usually given to older hoodlums.

They ride scooters and motorcycles through the narrow cobblestoned alleys of Naples, firing guns at rival gangs, picking up girlfriends, drinking, and snorting cocaine. Life is really good for Nicola and his friends, except that they are essentially children. *Piranhas* is an entertaining thriller, but at all times we have the foreboding sense that the world is going to come crashing down on these youngsters.

## Just children

With *Tremors* (playing in the Panorama section), Bustamante moves to new territory – examining the life of a well-to-do married man with two children. But the film's protagonist, Pablo, has a secret that he finally reveals to his family. He is in love with another man and wants to leave his family. Pablo's announcement shocks his family, and his conservative parents, and the repercussions are felt all the way to the church the family goes to.

Pablo believes he is making the right decision and that it will give him happiness, but his heart breaks when a judge forbids him from seeing his children. Much of the film focuses on Pablo's struggles with his wife, his mother and the church. There is truly no solace in his new life until he succumbs to mounting pressures.

Nobody wins in this complicated battle. But for the audience, the experience of visiting a culture vastly different from its own is very rewarding.

The author is an independent writer, film festival programmer and the author of *Shashi Kapoor: The Householder*, *The Star*.

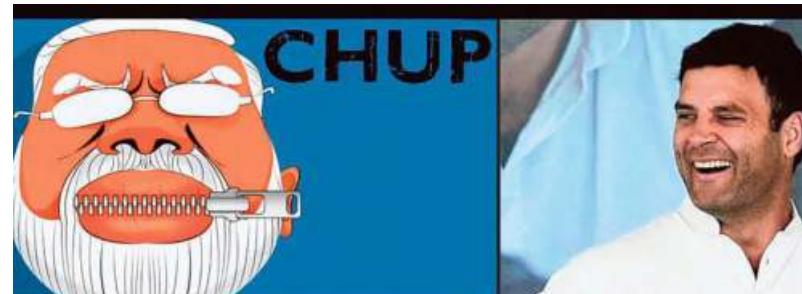
## BUFFER ZONE

# They're ruining our Internet!

How one wishes the crazy politicians would leave memes alone



AKHIL SOOD  
is a freelance culture writer from New Delhi who wishes he'd studied engineering instead



Sides of a coin Screenshots from the 'Azadi' videos released by Congress and BJP.

**C** Remember how cool Facebook used to be? And then our parents got on it, so we all had to flee to Instagram

Stakes. Which means the online discourse is going to continue to plummet till it hits rock bottom. The 'Azadi' merry-go-round is but one example; we keep seeing some silly photo or video mocking a rival, using contemporary trends to make a laboured point. They're ruining our Internet! (Which was a terrible place to begin with.)

This is what old people do. They find whatever it is that makes us happy – the soundtrack of a much-hyped film, for instance – and they set about systematically ruining it for us. Remember how cool Facebook used to be? Then our parents got on it, so we all had to flee and seek refuge in Instagram or Twitter, even Snapchat. We claim it's because of Facebook's casual disregard for privacy, but that's a lie we tell to feel good about ourselves. Same with SMS lingo, that archaic thing which didn't believe in vowels. We all did it, till an annoying uncle on WhatsApp decided to try his hand at it tym. We need our own language!

The most recent language developed by youth is memes. Stupid, postmodern, deadpan, nihilistic inside jokes that become a new kind of shorthand. And I can say with some surety that

memes are now under threat. As the ruling party and the opposition realise the need to grab the youth vote, and gain crucial Internet traction, aka 'virality', they're going after memes. They're going to take whatever it is that's popular on any given day and, to "connect with the youths", they will bludgeon all humour out of it. We'll just have to watch from afar, smacking our foreheads repeatedly.

## Crumbling facade

A bigger worry, though, is that we may end up buying the propaganda – accidentally. A meme doesn't take itself seriously, that's what makes it endearing. As when a garden-variety evil corporation that we attack for its capitalism makes a corny meme, thanks to a 'with-it' ad agency. Our anti-establishment façade crumbles as we jump over each other to laud it. It happens the most cringingly when police Twitter handles use, say, a *Game Of Thrones* reference to make a point. The stupid post gets like a million shares, with 'LOL Respect!' the most common refrain. And the next day we read an account of extreme police brutality. Yet, the cognitive dissonance never quite registers.

The Internet's propensity for extremism and homogeneity at the cost of nuance or self-reflection can be fun when the subject is trivial, like the new show on Amazon Prime. But on issues that matter, I'd rather know when I'm being played. And, given how smart our politicos are proving to be on social media, that's becoming harder and harder to tell.

## ODD FILM OUT

# Basu Chatterjee's odd turn

The Rajesh Khanna-starrer *Chakravyuha* is a great guilty pleasure

BY PRAGYAN MOHANTY

**B**asu Chatterjee's characteristic feel-good cinema has been a source of joy to generations of film-lovers who have discovered this fabulous filmmaker in their own personal ways. Feeling blue? Called in sick? Famjam? There's a Basuda film for every mood; they're bona fide conversation starters and natural mood-lifters.

The director entered Hindi movies in the 70s. For a generation struggling with political turmoil and economic instability, Chatterjee's *Rajnigandha* (1974), *Chhoti Si Baat* (1976) and *Baton Baton Mein* (1979) made the turbulent times tolerable.

Then, in 1978, Chatterjee made *Chakravyuha*, which remains an aberration in his wholesome, non-masala brand of films. It's unlike anything the middle-cinema maverick ever directed. There are secret agents, chase sequences, political sabotage and even someone getting his face blown off.

This action-adventure drama starring Rajesh Khanna and Neetu Singh was inspired by Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* (1935) based on John Buchan's novel of the same name. The plot is simple: a common man who gets accidentally embroiled in an espionage crossfire races against time to thwart a political assassination.

This was the first time Khanna and Chatterjee worked together. The director was charting new territory, while Khanna, in his post-superstar phase, was experimenting with different roles and films.

*Chakravyuha*, the hero, Amit (Khanna), finds himself in a soup when his mysterious government spy neighbour Raman (Vinod Meh-



Kooky thriller A still from *Chakravyuha* (1978). NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE OF INDIA

ra) is found murdered. Before dying, Raman had confided in him about an enemy outfit's plot to assassinate a foreign dignitary on Indian soil. Amit discovers Raman's notebook, with intelligence on the enemy agents and a message urging him to rush to Delhi to alert the authorities. Wanted by the cops for Raman's murder and by the villains for the notebook, Amit undertakes a precarious journey to the capital. What follows next makes the rest of the story.

## Languid pace

In a year when Dharmendra was fighting a tiger with a bucket in *Azaad* and Amitabh Bachchan was being chased by "gyaarah mulkon ki police" in *Don*, a film like *Chakravyuha*, where Khanna was in almost every frame, was supposed to bring him back to the top. Only it didn't.

Chatterjee is clearly influenced by Hitchcock's visual storytelling and tries to emulate him. But his unfamiliarity with the genre and his

**C** Each time there's an urgent situation, the characters drop everything to have tea

quest to make the narrative palatable to desi audiences makes him lose the plot.

In a runtime of over two hours, there are no dramatic payoffs and the only impetus the film gets is from the many versions of the groovy Rafi number 'Chal Chal Aage Nikal'. The easy, languid pace, a forte of Chatterjee's cinema, becomes *Chakravyuha*'s bane. Each time there's an urgent situation demanding attention, the characters drop everything to have tea. For inspiration, perhaps?

The climax is a one-man show. Khanna cracks the enemy's code, arrives just in time to stop the assassination, nabs the shooter, and even addresses the media afterwards. It's bizarre scenes like these that make *Chakravyuha* a guilty pleasure.

Khanna's natural performance, minus his trademark mannerisms, aided by Jainendra K. Jain's casual, non-filmy dialogues, makes up some of the film's genuinely good bits. Otherwise, it's so fervently focused on letting Khanna shine that there are hardly any other significant players. Even Neetu Singh's character is conspicuously sidelined, almost as if the makers forgot about her after starting the film.

The Bengaluru-based freelance writer believes one Rafi song a day keeps the doctor away.

BY ADITI SEN

## RUBRIC

# It was always on the cards

Old American trade cards were hilarious advertising tools but are also, today, a slice of history

**A** violent toddler with dishevelled hair is shaving himself in front of a mirror, blood dripping from the razor; another little boy is about to decapitate a doll while a frenzied young girl tries to stop him; there are cows selling suet, pigeons selling cooking oils with images of roasted birds, and so on. These are not images designed to act as a warning. Welcome to the early days of advertising, featuring trade cards.

Back in the day, these cards played a big part in helping businesses in the U.S., U.K. and Europe reach customers. As historian Elizabeth Kim points out: "Like print ads today, trade cards played an important role in business operations, providing customers with a carefully constructed impression of a shopkeeper and his business while also serving as a kind of mnemonic device for new customers." They were circulated widely, and often used as handbills and discount coupons.

Today, trade cards serve as valuable signifiers of the era they were circulated in. They are quite easily accessible since many libraries have large digitised collections that they have put in the public domain. Private ephemera collectors have also digitised their collections and often sell them at nominal prices.

## Stories from the past

Scholarly works on trade cards have largely focused on cataloguing them and analysing issues like gender and race, but these cards are also an excellent storytelling device, using pictorial tales with global appeal. For instance, the image of the toddler shaving himself was commissioned in the 1880s by Tefft and Esmay Fine Clothing of 42 Genesee Street, Utica, New York. One can't help but wonder what made the store owners consider this a suitable portrayal of their brand. Was it for shock value? The card has nothing to do with clothing, but it is impactful. On the one hand, it's a cautionary tale of a child playing with dangerous household objects. On the other, it is a powerful image of a fiendish kid, perhaps making one curious about the store.

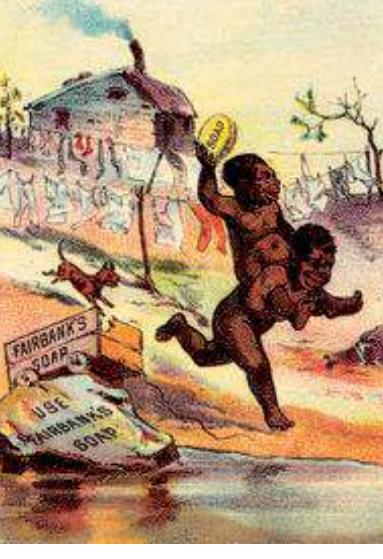
## Universal appeal

Each trade card has a long history, and many stories to tell. They were created for universal appeal, but they have now also become an invaluable commentary on the social and cultural mores of the time.

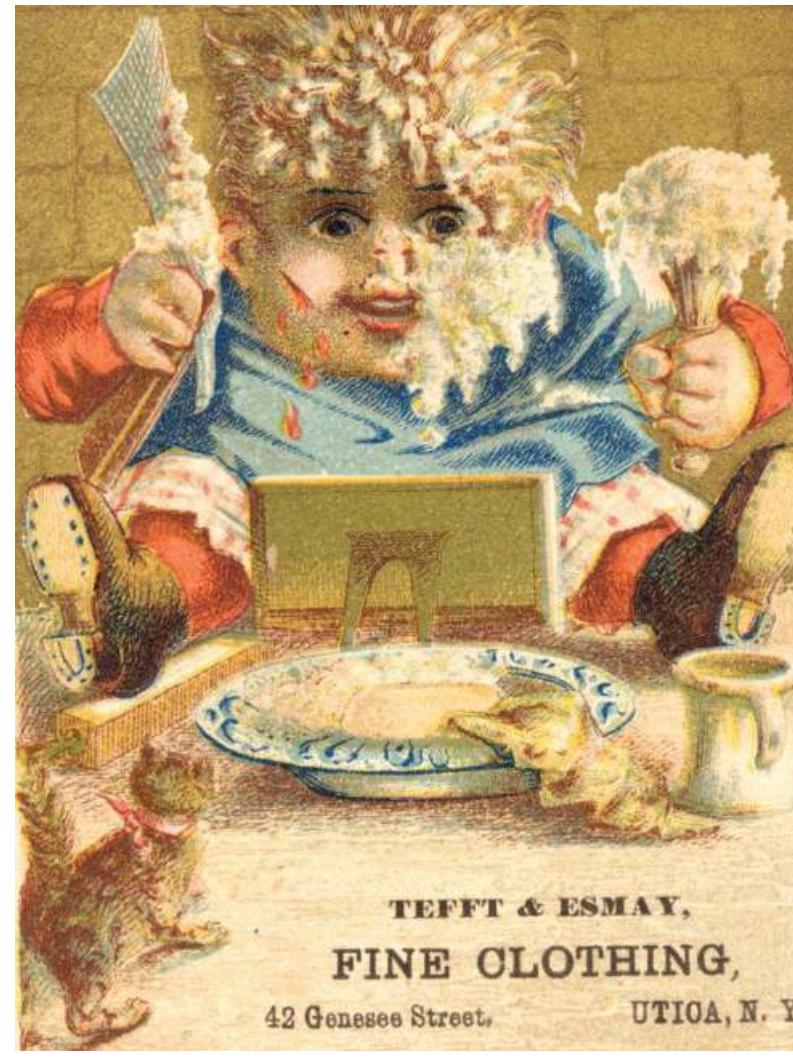
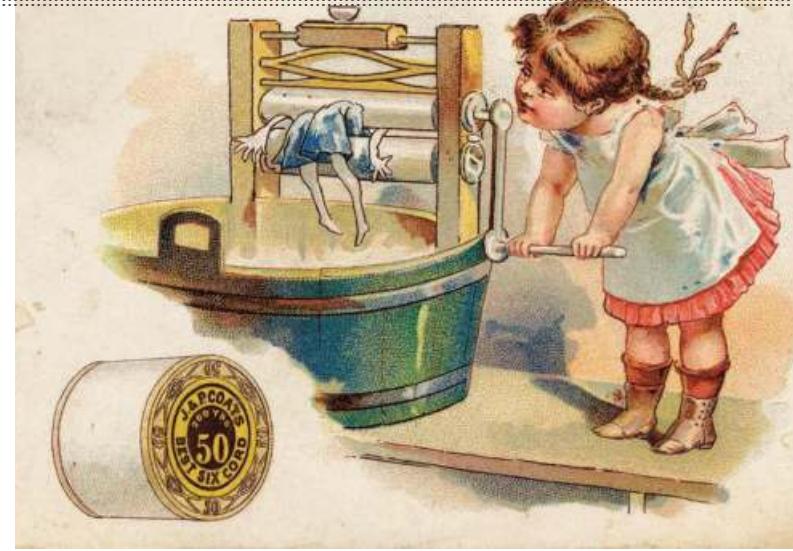
Evil children clearly had an appeal. This is not art where children have a creepy or diabolic expression; these are young people doing terrible things. The trade card with a little boy about to decapitate a doll was commissioned by The American Piano and Exchange Company. The boy looks shockingly well-prepared for

what is clearly a premeditated plan. British firm J&P Coats often featured children with nonchalant expressions torturing their dolls in manual washers. Of course, it made the thread look strong and reliable since the dolls survived the onslaught. But even otherwise, hurting younger children, torturing animals, and destroying things – considered very politically incorrect today – were fairly popular advertising themes then.

The peak of the trade card era in the U.S. was from the 1870s to 1890s, although the tradition had started a long time ago in Europe. Academics Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford trace the history back to 1622, to a French card that belonged to George Marceau, "a master



hatter, Paris 1622." Many renowned engravers like William Hogarth and George Cruikshank also designed trade cards. In fact, some of the artworks bear the artist's signature style. But more than anything else, these cards reflected day-to-day living – the everyday toil of polishing stoves, baking perfect



**Spookily good** Each trade card has a long history, and many stories to tell. Today, they are an invaluable commentary on the social and cultural mores of the time. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

bread, healing livers and darning socks. In 1918, when the Spanish flu was ravaging the globe, leading American newspapers prioritised war news and anti-German propaganda, while the flu got space only in the inside pages. So advertisements for tonics and other flu medicines became a major source for information about the epidemic.

## Happy scenes

Similarly, Victorian apothecary cards are not just an excellent source of historical data but also reflect the ambivalence between galenic ideas and new clinical practices. Interestingly, these cards seldom displayed containers of the ointment or syrup itself but showed idyllic settings, with happy children, flowers, young women and scenes from mythology. The soothing images were meant to convey overall good health. Of course, not all of them followed this rule. Merchant's Gargling Oil, for instance, used a rather evil-looking gorilla to sell the liniment. Of course, that was also because it was supposed to be good "for man and beast".

**Hurting younger children, torturing animals, and destroying things were fairly popular advertising themes**

Animal themes were hugely popular too. While there are endless motifs of animals going to school, playing sports, dancing, cooking, fencing, drinking and marrying, some images are decidedly morbid. For instance, Magnolia Ham, the "king of hams", used the image of a dead pig dressed in king's attire, sitting on a throne. Although, weirdly enough, there's also the card with a naked baby riding a tortoise. Then there are the cats. They sell either musical instruments or other products with their musical skills. Evidently, Victorians valued good meowing.

It would be impossible to escape racial stereotypes when talking of trade cards. The most common stereotypes were of Asians and black people. For instance, one card has Gen. Ulysses Grant rejecting a fat rat offered by the Chinese when he was on tour there because he always carries Magnolia Ham".

Ironically, these cards were created with the hope of gaining Asians and black people as customers. Soap companies, for example, featured the most racial images. Yet, soaps were a multi-purpose product used for washing clothes, cleaning and bathing, and it was the household help, who were mostly black during this period, who bought the most soap. Besides soap companies, stove polishes, boot polishers and baking powders also often featured black people on their trade cards.

The writer is a historian based at Queen's University, Canada. Watching old Bollywood films keeps her going.



Drawing parallels Photo collage of a Tokyo street (Ikebukuro, on the left) and a Mumbai street (Dharavi, right). URBJ.NET

## PLACE, WORK, FOLK

# Learning from Tokyo

What the world's largest city can teach us about local development

BY RAHUL SRIVASTAVA & MATIAS ECHANOVE

**U**rban continuities across Asia reveal unexpected family resemblances. At first glance, one wonders what could possibly connect cities like Mumbai and Tokyo, except for their dense demography and the speed at which they grew? They are worlds apart in terms of technological and infrastructural standards.

Yet, there are also striking similarities. In contrast to other comparable planned cities in Europe and America, large parts of Tokyo appear messy at first sight. For better or worse, Tokyo's planning rationalisers could never manage the city's rapid demographic expansion and urban spread.

The city largely grew out of their control. The largest urban agglomeration in the world is not master planned. It grew largely incrementally and was retrofitted with state-of-the-art infrastructure and urban management systems.

## Not illegitimate

The mixed use, low rise and high density of Tokyo's neighbourhoods happened by default, not by design. Tokyo's city planners do not see this 'default' model as ideal, but they do not consider it illegitimate either. Public works in sewage systems, piped water, electricity and road networks have been implemented over time in all parts of the city, without leaving any neighbourhood behind no matter how slummy it looked or and no matter who lived in them.

Even historically discriminated-against Burakumin (Japan's own "untouchable" community) areas were eventually provided access to the

same level of public services and amenities as any other part of the city. In fact, since 1969, Buraku districts were even given special treatment for public services by the state.

Private and public agencies negotiate labyrinthine inner roads and unexpected twists and turns, and nearly all neighbourhoods have state-of-the-art infrastructure. Tokyo's administrators took for granted the notion that infrastructure must be adapted to the existing habitats rather than the other way around. This seems commonsensical but it is actually quite radical in the context of India where the provision of infrastructure is often used as an excuse to bulldoze and redevelop neighbourhoods. The universal provision of water systems, electricity and optical fibre in Tokyo is a proof that retrofitting is possible in virtually any urban environment, no matter how dense and convoluted.

## Great variety

The 'Tokyo model' historically combines the construction of small houses at the neighbourhood level by artisans and contractors, a great number of small businesses operating from residential neighbourhoods, and the provision of good quality infrastructure by state agencies. This explains why Tokyo has some of the best urban infrastructure in the world and a housing stock of great variety.

While the buildings have been incrementally upgraded over time by their owners, the visual aspect of most residential neighbourhoods remains complex or 'informal'. They often have extremely narrow and meandering streets that confuse the hell out of visitors, and are lined with tiny houses ranging from futuristic to shabby, made of concrete, steel, prefabricated materials, metal sheets and wood.

## Positive outcomes

Historically, mixed-use zoning happened simply because there was no way of enforcing functional segregation in such a large and dense city. Jane Jacobs observed many positive outcomes of mixed-use urbanism – vibrant street life, a sense of safety provided by the presence of people in the street, and local economic activity.

In contemporary Tokyo, it is common to see small residential structures hosting businesses such as restaurants, shops, laundries, bakeries, public baths, martial art schools, massage clinics, bars, print shops, artisans, accounting firms, designers and architects' studios, and so on. This is partly due to the fact that they have always been part of the fabric of neighbourhoods. Something we see in various degrees across Asia, and which is very much part of the reality of Indian cities.

When thinking about the future of Indian slums, should we not look East for inspiration?

The writers are co-founders of urbz.net, an urban network that's active in Mumbai, Goa and beyond.

# How I used my OCD to track sugar intakes

I bought a continuous blood glucose sensor and stuck it up my arm for two weeks

BY NITIN CHAUDHARY

**I** have OCD: obsessive compulsive disorder. When it comes to health, I have used my OCD to good effect, to quit one bad habit after another. I was obese, so I took up running. Then, I serially quit drinking, smoking, coffee, cakes (which I love), processed foods, fried stuff.

I had imagined food science was relatively stable, maybe not as anchored as Newtonian physics, but steady enough to set some dietary rules. I soon discovered that food science is totally dynamic, so ever-evolving as to be almost unreliable.

In effect, there's a villain in every study. But worse, this villain keeps changing. For instance, fats, especially saturated fats, were considered responsible for everything from heart disease to obesity. So I quit ghee and butter and also nuts, which I loved. Later studies suggested that fats may, ironically, even be good for the heart. So I picked up nuts again thank god. Then the focus shifted to carbohydrates. I cut down rice and switched from processed to whole wheat flours.

## Sugar high

Now, research suggests we have got it all wrong. It's sugar that's to blame for all our ills. Our bodies aren't made to handle sugar because it's a recent food innovation. Also, like drugs, we get addicted to sugar. The chemical that sugar releases in our brain is the same as that released by cocaine. Importantly, a sustained level of high blood sugar can cause organ damage, and may lead to strokes and heart attacks. This sounded scary.

Now, I am no expert, just a normal person trying to stay healthy. When I see these studies, I take them seriously. I decided to cut my sugar intake. It began with no sugar in tea, and soon I'd cultivated a taste for it. Juice packs were returned and ice-cream consumption reduced (I can't even give it up entirely).

They said there's a high likelihood that all packaged foods – biscuits, chips, yoghurt – have some added sugar. Even breakfast cereals. So, I replaced cereal with oats. Then someone said even oats have added sugar. This broke me.

Imagine yourself in my position for a moment. I am a vegetarian in Sweden where my options are limited at best. I like a heavy breakfast that can carry me through most of the day. And I could not have bread or cereals or oats.

So I decided to measure how food really impacts me personally. While there are general theories on foods and their glycaemic indices (a figure that indicates how much a carbohydrate increases glucose levels in the blood),



it's also a known fact that not everyone reacts to the same foods in the same ways. Also, the body's ability to process sugar changes with age. Given all these unknowns, I decided to find out how my body responds to sugar before mindlessly removing yet another item from my diet.

## DIY sugar hack

So I designed a DIY experiment. I bought a continuous blood glucose sensor and stuck it up my arm for two weeks. My wife thought I had gone a step too far this time, but she just rolled her eyes. For two weeks, I measured every food I ate, the resulting glucose level in my body, and how long it took for the level to return to normal. On the way, I isolated each food (for instance, a banana or a spoon of rice) and measured its impact independently. Here's what I found out.

I would like to reiterate that I am not a doctor, I am simply curious about this stuff. So please don't take inspiration from my findings to change your food habits.)

Invariably, I start my day with a glass of lukewarm water with lemon and a teaspoon of honey. I was surprised that the glucose level shot up immediately, but I shouldn't have been. Honey is pure sugar, and the peak was expected. The peak subsided within 45 mi-

**C** *I was starting my day on a sugar rush. But honey also has fantastic anti-inflammatory properties, so I decided to keep it in*

nutes, the time I take to shower and meditate. Interestingly, this peak was the highest I would see through the day on most days. Essentially, I was starting my day on a sugar rush. But honey also has fantastic anti-inflammatory properties, so I decided to keep it in.

## Oats vs. cereals

I wanted to test cereal against oats for breakfast. Cereal caused blood glucose to rise and fall in a short time, whereas oats led to a more stunted peak that tapered out gradually over the next few hours. So I decided to stick to oats, but not the pre-packed oatmeal that tends to have added sugar. Oats kept my energy sustained for a longer duration.

In general, I noticed that fruits (banana, apple, sometimes pear) did not lead to noticeable highs; protein shakes did not either (I

**High and happy** We get addicted to sugar quite like a drug. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

drink a low-sugar version, but not all protein shakes are low in sugar), whole milk or lactose-free milk didn't show any difference, and cottage cheese, my favourite snack, did not even cause a blip on the blood glucose trend line. So far, so good!

## What's for dinner?

Then I began to study lunch and dinner. I mostly eat dal and vegetables with rice. With this food, the peaks were more noticeable, expectedly, for these carbohydrates process into sugar during digestion. I was surprised though at how quickly the glucose increases, indicating how fast the body processes food. But it also returned to normal within two hours, if not earlier.

In one experiment, I added ghee to the rice (white rice has a high glycaemic index) and discovered that the glucose peak truncated considerably. The fat (ghee) added to rice or roti lowered the glycaemic index of the carbohydrate. So I put ghee back in.

Another interesting thing I noticed was my body's reaction to food on days when I rested well against more stressful days. On days when I hadn't slept much and was rushing from one meeting to another, my glucose levels looked like irregularly shaped peaks and valleys. On the more rested days, like weekends, my glucose profile was more or less steady. Can stress cause glucose levels to fluctuate that much, I wondered? Maybe we need a study to explore a possible correlation.

Steady exercise mostly caused the glucose to plummet. Whether I lifted weights or ran, it tended to come down.

After two weeks of experimentation, I took off the sensor. In those two weeks, I had learnt that while it's okay to be aware of what foods spike blood glucose, the body also has an inherent mechanism to normalise the glucose through insulin.

I don't have to avoid all sugar (for instance, honey), but it makes sense to not overdo processed and sugary foods. I could feel the impact of glucose spikes and crashes on my body. With consistent levels, I was more energetic and felt less hungry between meals. I also realised that certain Indian food habits have good sense behind them.

On the whole, the body hack gave me a good sense of how my body operates, what I should eat more, and what I should avoid. Finally, I had managed to put my OCD to some good use.

The adrenaline rush-seeking travel writer lives in Malmö, Sweden.

## Notes from a ski slope

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



BY SYED SAAD AHMED

**I**t began well. A slight push and I slid effortlessly down the slope. The icy breeze serenaded my face, I pulsed with the thrill of speed and my confidence grew. But it was not meant to be. The swift pace was an alien sensation and I lost my balance.

"DON'T SIT BACK," she yelled. "DON'T..."

The wind roared. I could barely hear the coach, let alone will my body to follow her instructions. Completely out of control, I crashed into powdery mounds of snow. Dusting off the icicles creeping into my shirt, I strode uphill for yet another attempt.

I was at the Indian Institute of Skiing & Mountaineering (IISM) in Gulmarg, regarded as one of the best skiing destinations in Asia. Despite never having seen snow in my 26 years of existence, I signed up for a skiing course and ended up setting a personal record for falling flat on my face.

At the slope, we did various preparatory exercises – marching in our boots, lifting our legs and swinging them. I kept sliding back, though I was slightly better off than the two people on my right who nosedived in all sorts of Kamasutric positions. Once everybody could just about stand, we began skiing down the slope. Only halfway downhill did I realise that I did not know how to stop. I looked for the cushiest padding of snow and prayed for it to thwart my run. After the entire group similarly crash-landed, the secret was divulged – you halt by pointing your heel outwards.

Where there's skiing, there's bound to be an après-ski. In IISM's case, it was the 'evening conference', which was essentially a guise to keep us from mischief in the dark, snowy nights of Gulmarg. For about two hours, the principal of the institute talked about the disappointments of his skiing career (of which there were quite a few) and summoned students to the stage for bouts of cacophonic singing. Nobody could hide from his indiscriminating gaze and that is how I brayed to the tunes of 'Jab Koi Baat Bigad Jaaye' in front of a woefully unimpressed audience. The most memorable performance, however, was a 10-year-old's maudlin rendition of the song 'Maa' from *Taare Zameen Par*. It reduced most in the audience to bawls and a few of us to incredulous giggles.

On the second day, the adults moved to a steeper slope. By then, I had grown quite accustomed to falling and watching people fall. After the children joined us on the slope, it became a crowded mess. Skiers began crashing into each other, occasionally rolling into a mass of tangled bodies and skis that banged into more and more people as they hurtled down the slope – just like in the cartoons, albeit without the avalanche.

## Injuries and a wedding

As we got a hang of the techniques, the instructors helped us refine them. Day after day, the hill reverberated with exhortations of "Don't sit back!" (the beginner's instinctive response to hurtling down a slope) and "Put pressure on your shin" (leading to bruises, shin splints and better knowledge of anatomy). But every time I managed to hone an aspect of the technique, something else would go awry. When I was finally able to manoeuvre my shins, the pressure on my heel would go amiss and consequently, my uphill swing refused to go up. A few people also dropped out – for reasons as varied as injuries they claimed they would never recover from and even an impending wedding!

And so it went on for another week, culminating in the slalom competition. Slalom is an obstacle race for skiers where one has to pass through a series of gates formed by alternating red and blue poles. The person who completes the course fastest wins.

There was a heady mix of speed, stumbling and boisterous cheering. In a rush to reach the finish line, most students skipped a gate, resulting in disqualification. On seeing the slew of misses, I proceeded rather cautiously. I managed to go through all the gates, though my movement was far from swift. The brash skiers were all out of the running and the winners were to be chosen from the 15-odd people who managed to complete the course. "Maybe, I'll win the third prize," I thought.

The last day was the graduation ceremony. After some surprisingly brief speeches, prizes were handed out. Although I did not get any, I took consolation in the much-contested assumption that I stood fourth. After all the time spent face flat on the snow, I was glad I could finally stand on my own two skis!

The Delhi-based writer is a photographer and occasional filmmaker.

# United colours of Freda

Her family was hostile, her college was horrified, and their marriage caused a "minor sensation"



A wonderful life Freda and B.P.L. Bedi in Srinagar, 1948; (inset) Freda in her nun's robes in the late 60s.  
BEDI FAMILY ARCHIVES

a chaperone, though she saw it as racial discrimination. The registrar who conducted the wedding ceremony refused to shake hands with the couple in an ostentatious show of disapproval.

The marriage caused, as Freda put it with some understatement, a "minor sensation". It was even discussed by some of the Indian leaders who had come to England for the Round Table Conferences, the unsuccessful attempts to agree on India's future. The couple heard that A. Rangaswami Iyengar, editor of *The Hindu*, had been particularly supportive: "Why shouldn't our boys marry the best English girls?" he had declared, "I think they should get married. Why not?"

Freda and B.P.L. made a point of calling on the newspaper editor to thank him. By the time their first child was born, Iyengar was dead. They named their son in memory of "this great statesman who had helped us so much"; Ranga Bedi is now in his mid-80s and lives in Bengaluru.

This transgressive marriage was just the first of several occasions on which Freda refused to be constrained by barriers of race, religion, nation or gender. Once the couple had settled in Lahore, she combined being a dutiful daughter-in-law with political activism.

The Bedis were celebrated Leftists and nationalists and together published *Contemporary India*, an impressive quarterly review. Freda also had a weekly column – From a Woman's Window – in *The Tribune*, the city's main nationalist daily.

**C** *They were two students in love, refusing to recognise the barriers of race and colour...*

BY ANDREW WHITEHEAD

**W**hen she enrolled as a student at one of Oxford's women's colleges in 1929, Freda Houlston, from a middle-class family in the English Midlands, had never come across Indians or Indians. By the time she left Oxford, she regarded herself Indian.

Within a few weeks of her final exams, Freda married a Punjabi fellow student, B.P.L. Bedi, at the Oxford registry office. Although it was another year before she set foot on Indian soil, once married, she habitually wore Indian clothes, writing excitedly to her mother-in-law in Kapurthala that she had been shown how to wear a sari.

"It was a very quiet little student that came up to St. Hugh's College," Freda recalled years later, but for a

"provincial girl, it was really the opening of the gates of the world." She was anti-establishment by nature and, along with a group of friends, started going to meetings of the communist October Club and to the Majlis, where Indian students – there were about 40 at Oxford at that time – assembled to make the case for India's freedom.

Freda described herself as one of the Depression generation. Her outlook was shaped by mass unemployment, the rise of fascism, and growing unease about the oppressive manner in which Britain ruled over its colonies. B.P.L. and Freda became friends, comrades, and eventually, lovers. Even before she ever saw India, the couple had jointly edited four books about India's freedom struggle for nationalism.

More than an intellectual collab-

oration, their story was a romance – a heart-warming defiance of social convention. Quite a few wealthy Indians returned from studying in England with a foreign wife in tow. But Freda believed she was the first Oxford woman to marry an Indian fellow student. They were, she said, "two students in love, refusing to recognise the barriers of race and colour without

identity, she was still seen as an outsider because of the colour of her skin.

The former BBC India correspondent's biography, *The Lives of Freda: The Political, Spiritual and Personal Journeys of Freda Bedi* will be published this month.



# LITERARY REVIEW

DELHI

FOLLOW US:



thehindu.com

facebook.com/TheHinduSundayMagazine

twitter.com/TheHinduMag

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019

THE LEAD

## 'These are strange times, my dear'

The literature of, and on, post-1979 Iran provides the signposts essential to understanding the country

■ BY MINI KAPOOR

**T**he past, they say, never goes away – but it's perhaps truer of Iran than it is of anywhere else. As Iranians – led by the regime – finish celebrating 40 years of the Islamic revolution, an Iran reading list yields the sense that there are some dates before and after that remain as vivid in the Iranian memory. Today, as a new generation of Iranians and a hostile administration in the U.S. alter the mix of challenges to the regime in Tehran, it's tempting to mark out two points from which to launch an understanding of Iran: 1953, when the British and American-backed coup overthrew the democratically elected Prime Minister, Muhammad Mossadegh, and restored the Shah to power; and 2009, when an election result seen to have been stolen from the reformist Mir-Hossein Mousavi brought thousands of Iranians to the streets in protest in what came to be called the Green Movement, a popular mobilisation that was quietened forcefully that summer but whose last impact is still uncertain.

Did the 2009 protests chasten the Ayatollahs to be more mindful henceforth of heeding the demands from the street for incremental reform, for instance, or does the Green Movement still carry the seeds for a future republican challenge to the power structures that draw their legitimacy from the revolution?

A few books from the capacious, and high-quality, shelf of writing on Iran help flesh out the importance of these two dates in understanding Iran 40 years after the revolution.

### The 1979 purge

A rainbow coalition of democratic forces had stood behind Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that February 11 in 1979 when the revolution was won, less than a month after the despotic, and by then ailing, Shah of Iran had fled to Egypt, and just 10 days after Khomeini had made a triumphant return to Tehran from exile on a plane carrying his supporters and the media. Khomeini took little time to consolidate power.

In *Iran: A Modern History*, a thousand-page sweep of 500 years of Iranian history that brings the reader up to 2009, the Yale University historian, Abbas Amanat, vividly details how effectively and quickly Khomeini isolated and cracked down on leftist, "moderate" clerical and secular voices and purged, jailed or executed real or imagined supporters of the old regime".

How deeply the political has been personal, especially for women, in



post-1979 Iran has been clear in the number of excellent memoirs that have come to readers around the world in translation. The publication of Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* in the early 2000s was a landmark event for the graphic novel global, but this account of growing up after the revolution also explained, disarmingly, how an understanding of the 1979 revolution had to be placed in the context of Anglo-American machinations in Iran's politics and how a critique of the regime had to be embedded in an appreciation of Iranian pride and cultural confidence. In *Persepolis*, even the child's eye could see that after 1953, Western powers just could not ever hope to successfully play honest brokers in the domestic affairs of Iran.

### Remembering Mossadegh

The 1953 overhang comes across in the very narrative structure of *Iran Awakened*, Shirin Ebadi's 2006 memoir. The first woman president of the Tehran city court (in 1975) who'd find her career shattered in the aftermath of that Khomeini homecoming and whose legal work to fight the regime's human rights

excesses would win her the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2003, Ebadi subsequently went into exile. She begins her story in the year 1953, "the year before I started grade school": "My indulgent grandmother, who never spoke to us children in anything but honeyed tones of endearment, snapped at us for the first time on August 19, 1953." Or: the day that Mossadegh was deposed in the coup d'état.

Two years previously, the enormously popular Mossadegh had nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (now BP) as a reaction to what Iranians saw as an unfavourable revenue-sharing arrangement, and his downfall continues to be dished up as a cautionary tale by loyalists and opponents alike of the power elite in Tehran. In his biography, *Patriot of Persia: Muhammad Mossadegh*

and a *Very British Coup*, Christopher de Bellaigue, a British writer who has spent years in Iran, describes his subject as "the first and only Iranian statesman to command all nationalist strains". He writes: "The 1953 coup was a catastrophe that slammed him [Mossadegh] to the floor, and from which Iran never fully recovered."

### Green was the colour

De Bellaigue, author also of the excellent *In the Rose Garden of the Martyrs: A Memoir of Iran*, researched for the biography in the summer of 2009, and the events of 2009 are, in turn, placed in their potentially pivotal context by Michael Axworthy in his 2013 book, *Revolutionary Iran: A History of the Islamic Republic*. Green was the colour of the presidential campaign that year of Mir-Hossein Mousavi; and when the official result gave the election, against all anecdotal readings, to incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, green became the colour of resistance as the authorities struggled for a while to even anticipate where the next protest would materialise.

In time the authorities gained full control of the streets. But it was telling

how resonant the spirit of 2009 remained during the presidential campaign of 2017. Cries of "Ya Hossein, Mir-Hossein" (harking back to the election campaign of Mousavi, who continued to be under detention) would ring through the reformist incumbent Hassan Rouhani's rallies.

Rouhani was re-elected emphatically – but as has been the case since 1979, it remains impossible at any given time to determine where decisive power resides amidst Iran's complex web of security, political, clerical and administrative structures. Yet the 2017 result validates Axworthy's main point: that Iran must be understood on its own terms, and that the struggle for greater democratic freedoms will be led and fought by Iranians themselves.

### Literary postscript

No understanding of Iran of the past 40 years can be complete without reading its fiction and poetry, and *Strange Times, My Dear: The PEN Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Literature*, edited by Nahid Mozaffari and Ahmad Karimi Hakkak, provides a valuable sampling in English translation of the richness of

**Long live** Students wave Iranian flags to mark the anniversary of the 1979 revolution in Tehran in 2009 and (below) a panel from *Persepolis*.

REUTERS &amp; SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



post-1979 literature, in which time writers have worked against the constraints and risks posed by censorship and repression. The poem 'In This Blind Alley', from which the title of the collection is taken, is haunting: "They smell your breath/ lest you have said: I love you/ They smell your heart: These are strange times, my dear."

And then: "In this crooked blind alley, as the chill descends,/ they feed fires/ with logs of songs and poetry./ Hazard not a thought:/ These are strange times, my dear." Its author, Ahmad Shamlou (1925-2000), who was a political prisoner under the Shah and then lived under pressure from the post-1979 regime, is considered among Iran's greatest literary figures.

of Dalit and adivasi women in literature. "We wanted to look at women's issues too. For example, when we talk about reservation for women in Parliament, we need to also look at how that idea of equal participation is just symbolic. We need to discuss how that can be addressed," said Mehra.

"If you read women's literary narratives, especially where Dalit women writers are concerned, it is very emancipatory," he said.

"These narratives are not included in the debate when we talk about radical feminism in mainstream media. That needs to change," he added. An important theme was the question of Dalit identity and the use of the word 'Dalit' itself, over and above the existence of other phrases like 'Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe'.

"The word 'Dalit' comes with a pan-India social alliance. It is an umbrella term that talks about bringing together those who have been facing exploitation and deprivation, whether it be in the farmer community or the LGBTQ community. They want a word that reflects their sense of pain and crisis," said Mehra. "Dalit literature is not only of Dalits but of all those people who are struggling against atrocities," added Namishray. "The question of identity is further explored in several panel discussions on day 2, with the event culminating in a discussion that looked into the future of Dalit literature."

The issues debated in the panels found an echo in the musical performances by various artists who sang about identity, caste and politics.

So, is the festival coming back next year? Mehra was not sure – "But we've gotten a good response from people from all walks of life. Actor Nandita Das has also made a public statement saying she's keen to collaborate with us. So it is possible that we will hold an edition next year. We'll see."



**Strong voices** Medha Patkar (third from left) at a book launch during the fest and (left) books on sale at the venue. PRATEEK KUMAR

LITERATURE FESTIVAL

## 'Not a literature of luxury'

Who is a Dalit? What function does Dalit literature perform? Such questions found a platform in a first-of-its-kind lit fest at Delhi's Kirori Mal



■ BY JANANE VENKATRAMAN

**I**t was a foggy winter morning that heralded the launch of the Dalit Literature Festival, with the cheery laughter of the assembled crowd mingling with the rising steam from numerous cups of hot chai at Delhi University's Kirori Mal College. B.R. Ambedkar jostled for space with contemporary writers like Laxman Gaikwad

and Anand Teltumbde at the bookstalls set up at the venue, where literature lovers, activists and students from across the city assembled for the two-day fest held earlier this month. The usually blank wall near the canteen was taken over by a visitors' banner, which would later fill up end to end with comments, including those from the chief guest, activist Medha Patkar.

"Not a literature of luxury," was how

noted writer Mohandas Namishray defined Dalit literature at the festival. "[It is] a literature of suffering, strong voices, and struggles," Namishray added, setting the tone for the two days of open discussion and debate that followed.

### A new positive direction

Dubbed the first of its kind, the Dalit Literature Festival was organised by a mix of Dalit organisations, university departments and literary societies including the Ambedkaravi Lekhak Sangh, National Alliance of People's Movements and Kirori Mal College, among others.

The festival was an attempt to develop Dalit literary criticism, said Professor Pramod Mehra, co-convenor. "We wanted to look at the historical, contemporary and future prospects of the Dalit literature movements, especially how literature has performed as an agency, and the need of the hour," said Mehra, outlining the main goals of the event.

"This is an attempt at a response to the corporate-sponsored big events, where Dalit issues are spoken about in one session and then forgotten. These are not issues that you can discuss in isolation," he added. "There are identities, ideas and value systems not recognised in the mainstream and given due space."

Echoing that thought was Patkar, who said that Dalit literature brought to the forefront the suffering and the pain of oppressed people. "The Constitution gives the right to equality and there are

strict laws against caste discrimination in the country, but open mass-killing is continuing; the lands of farmers, labourers and tribals are being snatched. Dalit literature brings a new positive direction and energy to the development and politics of the country," she said.

### Songs of identity

The two days of the festival were packed with panel discussions exploring the past, present and future of the Dalit literature movement as well as the challenges inherent to it.

"The prime achievement of literature is that it established the 'Dalit' as a human being for the first time," read a statement from the organisers. "Subsequently, it also proved that all literature – culture-art and language before was simply a history of perpetuation of a caste-capital centric value system and it [Dalit literature] rejects that."

The panels also discussed the convergence between the Dalit and Marxist movements, in addition to the partici-

**Dalit women's narratives are not included in the debate when we talk about radical feminism in mainstream media**

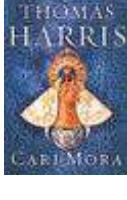
## MARKERS

  
**The Sahitya Akademi** has started selling its books online on Amazon to increase sales. It has made a beginning with printed books but hopes to venture into e-books soon. For the time being, English and Tamil titles are available – to this, Hindi will be added later. Since the Akademi publishes books in 22 Indian languages, this will mean a great boost to regional language writers, who still struggle to get their books sold. Going online is also expected to increase the availability of translated literature all over India.

  
**The Indian Rail Catering and Tourism Corporation** has partnered with Magzter, the world's largest digital magazine newsstand, to provide easy reading access to its passengers. Users can enjoy unlimited access to content from India, U.S., U.K., Singapore, Canada and South Africa on their smartphones or tablets during train journeys. The service doesn't require net connectivity – once the magazines are downloaded on a device, they can be accessed even without Internet connection.

  
The longlist for the **International Dylan Thomas Prize** has been announced. The prize, with a cash value of £30,000, is awarded to the best published literary work written by an author aged 39 or under. This year's longlist comprises eight novels, two short story collections and two poetry collections. Some of the writers are New York-based Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah for *Friday Black*, a collection of short stories; Guy Gunaratne for his first novel, *In Our Mad and Furious City*, which was also longlisted for the Man Booker Prize. The shortlist will be announced on April 2 and the award ceremony comes on May 16.

  
To mark Louis Braille's 110th birth anniversary this year, the Madhya Pradesh social justice department is planning to bring out **bi-script textbooks** – books with both Braille and normal text – in an effort to integrate blind students with the others in schools. This is thought to be the first experiment of its kind in India. Braille Press of Bhopal is ready with a master copy of a Hindi-Braille textbook for Class 1.

  
Thomas Harris, creator of *Hannibal Lecter*, is coming up with his sixth novel, *Cari Mora*, a story of evil, greed and the consequences of dark obsession. The 'monster' here, Hans-Peter, has unspeakable desires and makes a living fleshing out the violent fantasies of rich men. The titular Cari Mora is a war-survivor who risks falling prey to Hans-Peter until she unleashes her own special powers. The novel will be published by William Heinemann in hardback in May.

## POETRY WIRE

## The resurrection of Dom Moraes

He is in his element in two recently published prose compilations



■ BY KEKI N. DARUWALLA

Fine poet and loveable man that he was, Dom Moraes is befittingly in the limelight with some new books on and by him. Because of his lifestyle and his distance from day-to-day reality, as we know it, he exuded vulnerability. If you are vulnerable, women become instinctively protective. And that shock of hair across the forehead – the classical *zulf* so hyped up in Urdu poetry that even Ghalib fell for it (*kaun jeetha hai teri zulf ke sar honay thak*) – would make anyone a darling of the other sex.

It is good that his memory and work are being kept alive by his friends and poetry disciples, starting with Jeet Thayil and his imaginative novel, *The Book of Chocolate Saints*. Now Sarayu Srivatsa, a fine academic and long-time friend of Dom, has come out with two representative compilations of his 'profiles and conversations'.

## Forward into time

Most Bombay poets are obliged to Dom, and the older ones to Nissim Ezekiel. In earlier days, I had a poem of his almost by heart, about a reinder: *his beard white with rime/ Until he lurched erect and limped away/ Winter on winter forward into time*. A fine poet, and anthologists like R. Parthasarathy must be regretting not including him in anthologies of Indian Poetry. Let's face it, I too was a culprit. But those were different days; he had renounced Indian citizenship once, hadn't he?

As for prose, he once gave me a book on a South American country written by him, which read very well. His columns were a different matter. Some of them, about his hard-drinking poet friends like George Barker, were very entertaining. Frankly, any column on a binge would be enter-



Some of his columns, about his hard-drinking poet friends like George Barker, were very entertaining

taining. I have read only once with George Barker, and he was quite high.

His son was so drunk that he had to be thrown out of the hall. This was in London in 1987. But a time came when Dom had to make a living out of his columns. Then the quality declined steeply. Nissim and I regarded ourselves one afternoon. Nissim said, "You know what Dom's columns are like? 'So-and-so stepped into my room, and we shook hands. I offered him coffee, and Leela brought him a cup. He told me he had boarded the flight at Bangalore at such and such time. Both of us cursed the weather – sticky and hot. Then he left. I saw him to the door.'"

## The innocent columnist

The Nissim-Dom relationship needs someone in Bombay to write about it. The little I know is that Nissim mentored Dom when he was burgeoning as a poet. Then the student outshone the teacher and walked out of his shadow. Dom took swipes at Nissim publicly. He came to the India International Centre to give a talk on Indian poetry, surrounded by many of Frank Moraes's acolytes. I remember Dom picking on a poem by Nissim, 'Enter-

prise'. The poem starts 'as a pilgrim-age' party which disintegrates (fine metaphor).

*Deprived of common needs, like soap.  
Some were broken, some merely bent.*

'Bent' means different things, said Dom, rather superciliously. He walked out, nose in the air, ringed by his father's loyal acolytes. Nissim asked me later, "What is wrong if I use 'bent' in its primary sense?"

Two books, *Dom Moraes: Under Something of a Cloud* and *Dom Moraes: Where Some Things are Remembered*, both edited by Sarayu Srivatsa, have been brought out by Speaking Tiger. There are two entertaining write-ups on Indira Gandhi, one on the cyclone in 'East Pakistan' and one on Yahya Khan. His piece on his childhood and his mother's madness, 'His Father's Son,' is a minor classic. But often you see him as an innocent columnist. In an article on the Gujarat riots of 2002, for instance, he talks of parakeets, then of lunch around Mallika Sarabhai's table. You are talking of the most vicious near-genocide in the country (next to 1984) and your sensibilities don't jar talking of parakeets and conversations during lunch!

One must read more of his European travels. There, he knows the ground better and he comes into his element. He, of course, meets the high and mighty. "I also met Giorgio Bassani, so handsome and polished I could scarcely believe he was real, Moravia pale and austere, with an impressive limp, and Pier Paolo Pasolini, who, scowling in Italian under a dock worker's cap, deliberately untidy in blue denim, I liked the best of the three."

Let's end with Dom and Papa in Bangkok. A Chinese man appeared with a dish.

"Fried rice?" asked Dom's father dubiously, peering into the dish.

"No, no," said our friend, indignant.

"I told you this place was special. Fried mice."

Get these books, edited lovingly by a fine lady.

The writer is a poet and novelist.

## PROFILE

## Language is at the core of human beings'

The doctor-author of *The Afflictions* on the invisible strands between his writing and his medical work

■ BY SHIKHA KUMAR

I meet Vikram Paralkar in the house he grew up in, an apartment on the first floor of a residential building in a western Mumbai suburb. On the ground floor is a nursing home his doctor-parents run. As a kid, he would watch his parents go down stairs to see patients multiple times a day, and come home during mealtimes. When he was about nine, he would accompany his father to the operation theatre, standing on a table in the corner and watching surgeries being performed.

"If there was a sick patient in the hospital, I would hear my mother telling the nurse what to do. There was all of this medical vocabulary constantly flowing that I was subconsciously absorbing and getting fascinated by," he recalls.

## Blood and bones

Blood was another thing that fascinated him. His father would bring home slides of blood smears to place under a microscope, and Paralkar would look too to see the shapes of the different cells. Medicine, he states, is in his blood. Today, the physician and scientist works in the haematology-oncology department of the University of Pennsylvania.

Paralkar is also an author whose first novel, *The Afflictions* (2014), was released in India recently; his second work, *The Wounds of the Dead*, was published here in 2017. *The Afflictions* is an intriguing look at human diseases, narrated through magical realism. We follow an ageing librarian as he introduces a young apprentice to *The Encyclopaedia Medicinae* at the Central Library that contains descriptions of 50 mythical human ailments, exploring themes of language, exile, identity and music.

For instance, people affected by Pulchritudo Sclarata, or Accursed Beauty, have a bewitching loveliness about them, and anyone who lays eyes on them suffers migraines, rashes or inflammation of the joints and sinuses. Foetus Perfidus is a pre-natal disease – in the seventh month, the foetus starts shrinking back, and the womb regresses to its original state. Paralkar says that the novel started out as a short story, inspired by the story of the Tower of Babel in the Bible.

"There's a fable in the Tower of Babel where god, angered by the hubris of humanity, decides to make everyone speak a different language so they can no longer communicate with each other. I wanted to write a



**Origins** What if I had been born to a beggar woman on the street? SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

People can live with an amputated limb much easier than they can with an amputated tongue. It shows how little we understand of how the brain works

short story about a town where everyone wakes up one morning speaking a different language and the town plunges into chaos, because they cannot communicate with each other. As I began to write it, I realised that it actually worked better as a vignette written by a medical expert, who's trying to understand what happened in the town," says the Philadelphia-based doctor.

## Digging deeper

Paralkar's biggest influences have been Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, and *The Afflictions* is his love letter to them. "I read them

what's happening with human beings. When a patient comes to a doctor, the latter tries to find out their story, how they ended up this way, and a way to potentially change the future. "I think that's what authors are doing. They're trying to take some aspect of human beings that puzzles, disquiets, fascinates them, and digging deeper to find out what they can understand. While my writing is a separate endeavour from my medical work and research, there are certain invisible strands connecting the two," he says.

The afflictions centred on language are the most intriguing. Sufferers of *Dictio Alienae* experience a unique reversal – farmers and blacksmiths wake up with the speech inflections of aristocrats. The diction of barons and dukes, on the other hand, degenerates into the coarseness of labourers and townsfolk.

## Accident of birth

Paralkar says that language is at the core of human beings, it's what sets us apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. It allows us to formulate complex ideas, have conversations, develop skills and pass them on from generation to generation. "That's why disorders of language are the most distressing. People can live with an amputated limb much easier than they can with an amputated tongue. It shows how little we understand of how the brain works."

Another theme he wanted to explore was how the things we achieve in life are, to a large extent, governed by the accident of our birth. In the U.S., he says, there are many people who pretend that everything they have achieved is owing to their own accomplishments. "I'm a doctor and a scientist because I was born in certain circumstances, and exposed to certain influences. What if I had been born to a beggar woman on the street? Where would I have been today?"

Paralkar says that doctors are constantly encountering human beings at their extremes – afraid, distressed, grappling with the big questions – which provides a lot of literary fuel. He's currently working on his third novel, around a prosthetic eye-maker who can see the past and future of the clients he's working with. "It puts him in a strange position where he knows everything that's happening in their lives while he's crafting eyes for them. This leads to certain entanglements that I'm exploring."

The freelance journalist writes on books, gender, art and culture.

## REVIEW

## Still in the shadows of the past

The characters are weak, but the historical analysis is worthwhile

■ BY ANUSUA MUKHERJEE

Even before I opened the novel, I stumbled on its name: what did it convey, this with its unwieldy repetition of the definite article and the academic-sounding "others"? Dismissing the feeling as unwarranted fastidiousness, I started reading and was quite drawn in for the first two chapters – it is 1971 and the person who seems to be the protagonist, Imtiaz, has just reached Dhaka from his native Chittagong.

The year and the setting give us an inkling of what is to come – 1971 is, of course, the year of the Liberation War in the then East Pakistan that eventually led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1972 following months of butchering of Bengali civilians, students, nationalists and the intelligentsia by the military junta of West Pakistan. When we step into Dhaka with Imtiaz, the curfew is already on and the air is seething with discontent against the army.

Missing inner lives

*In the Time of Others* is part of Nadeem Zaman's two-part PhD dissertation on the creation of Bangladesh after its liberation from Pakistan. Herein lies the problem: the novel remains more of a thesis than a work of fiction in its own right. And this is not because there is overmuch of history but because the characters are merely pegs holding the events in place. They are undercooked, having little or no inner lives, which could have made them reflect on history as it happened.

Imtiaz is the character linking the rest and hence comes closest to being the protagonist. And yet throughout the novel he displays just one trait – indecisiveness, which is, to give it to him, partly a result of the circumstances he gets entangled in unwittingly. The rest of the cast too is assigned specific features that they display faithfully at all times.

In the novel, Captain Shaukat is the conscientious soldier while his immediate superior, Shabbaz, is the ruthless soldier; the American couple, Walter and Helen, are just that, Americans – trying to play saviours and bungling it all up.



**Turbulent** Indian army men outside Darsana railway station, 1971. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

**In the Time of Others**  
Nadeem Zaman  
Picador  
₹599

as they are in strong sentiments. "Country. Patriotism. Nationalism. They all amounted to mere human folly in the end. Not freedom. More shackles. Deepened fractures. Judge Mubarak covered his face for fear that his cook would re-enter [his room] and find it streaked with tears."

Another character who gives a glimpse of a thinking self is Imtiaz's little daughter, Tina. While her father sits like a dummy, she observes and questions, and in this, she represents the promise of the soon-to-be-free country.

Some of Zaman's descriptions are deeply affecting too, chiefly because he keeps it to the bare minimum. The students of Dhaka University being bundled up and killed point-blank in their dormitories; mountains of bodies being thrown into freshly-dug pits; carrion birds circling over the streets of Dhaka; women being raped in masse in village huts – all this gives an idea of the horror of the war of which much remains still undocumented because of state censorship.

Unfortunately, the lucidity is not uniform. In fact, much of the time there is an opacity to the language (prefixed in the title?) which can leave you baffled. The novel could have done with a better editor, to excise strange phrases like "his neck barking spasms".

Zaman's dissertation has a second part (available online) where he explains the theoretical underpinnings of the historical events. It was only after I read it that things from the novel began to fall into place. It is recommended reading for anyone who wants to understand a nation whose conflicted past continues to shape its present-day politics.

**C** Some of Zaman's descriptions of the Liberation War are deeply affecting, chiefly because he keeps it to the bare minimum

enemy camp, Captain Shaukat is the conscientious soldier while his immediate superior, Shabbaz, is the ruthless soldier; the American couple, Walter and Helen, are just that, Americans – trying to play saviours and bungling it all up.

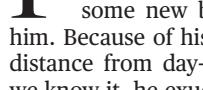
## Human folly

The only remarkable exception is Suleiman Mubarak, a Bihari Muslim judge, who is actually shown thinking through what is happening around him while the others passively role-play. Since he is Bihari, his support to the cause of Bangla nationalism is looked upon with suspicion by the freedom-fighters and the junta alike. His marginality gives him freedom to ponder the meaning of freedom, which nobody else can, caught up

## POETRY WIRE

## The resurrection of Dom Moraes

He is in his element in two recently published prose compilations



■ BY KEKI N. DARUWALLA

Fine poet and loveable man that he was, Dom Moraes is befittingly in the limelight with some new books on and by him. Because of his lifestyle and his distance from day-to-day reality, as we know it, he exuded vulnerability. If you are vulnerable, women become instinctively protective. And that shock of hair across the forehead – the classical *zulf* so hyped up in Urdu poetry that even Ghalib fell for it (*kaun jeetha hai teri zulf ke sar honay thak*) – would make anyone a darling of the other sex.

It is good that his memory and work are being kept alive by his friends and poetry disciples, starting with Jeet Thayil and his imaginative novel, *The Book of Chocolate Saints*. Now Sarayu Srivatsa, a fine academic and long-time friend of Dom, has come out with two representative compilations of his 'profiles and conversations'.

## Forward into time

Most Bombay poets are obliged to Dom, and the older ones to Nissim Ezekiel. In earlier days, I had a poem of his almost by heart, about a reinder: *his beard white with rime/ Until he lurched erect and limped away/ Winter on winter forward into time*. A fine poet, and anthologists like R. Parthasarathy must be regretting not including him in anthologies of Indian Poetry. Let's face it, I too was a culprit. But those were different days; he had renounced Indian citizenship once, hadn't he?



Some of his columns, about his hard-drinking poet friends like George Barker, were very entertaining

taining. I have read only once with George Barker, and he was quite high.

His son was so drunk that he had to be thrown out of the hall. This was in London in 1987. But a time came when Dom had to make



