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## NEARBY



### Challenge to Ayodhya Act posted before SC Bench

NEW DELHI  
The Supreme Court on Friday referred to the Ayodhya Bench a plea challenging the validity of the Ayodhya Act, 1993, under which the Centre acquired 67.703 acres of land, including the disputed Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid premises and adjacent areas.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 2

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### Ground Zero On the Silk Route trail

The Silk Route was an unobstructed stream of trade that built bridges between cultures, until it was broken up by the rise of national borders. A Russian plumber and a German nurse capture its romance by retracing the steps.

OP-ED PAGE

DELHI METRO ▶ 6 PAGES

# India revokes Pak's MFN status day after terrorist strike in J&K

PM says a 'befitting reply' will be given to those behind attack on a CRPF convoy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India on Friday revoked the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status of Pakistan and warned of more measures in response to its support for terrorist groups targeting India.

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that those responsible for Thursday's terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir would be given a "befitting reply," the Opposition rallied behind the government in a show of solemn unity. The government has convened an all-party meeting at 11 a.m. on Saturday.

The suicide car bombing in Pulwama district killed 40 paramilitary personnel, making it one of the worst incidents of violence in the history of the State's insurgency.

**School dropout**  
The attacker – a school dropout who had gone missing last year amid heightened volatility in the State – rammed a vehicle loaded with explosives into a convoy of the Central Reserve



Last salute: The flag-draped coffins of the slain CRPF soldiers kept at Budgam for the wreath-laying ceremony on Friday. ■ PTI

Police Force (CRPF).

As countries around the world shared India's outrage and condemned the incident, the U.S. put Pakistan in the dock by asking it to "immediately end" all support to terrorist groups. The Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

NO CHANGE IN STAND ▶ PAGE 8

A HUGE CACHE OF ▶ RDX PAGE 9

TERRIBLE THURSDAY ▶ EDITORIAL

## We stand by govt.: Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A day after the attack in Kashmir killed 40 CRPF men, Congress president Rahul Gandhi said it was not the time to ask the government questions, but to stand by it. "I want to make it clear that the aim of terrorism is to divide this country and we are not going to be divided for one

second. No matter how hard people try, this country and the entire Opposition are going to stand together, we are going to stand with our jawans and we are going to stand with the government," he said. He said the forces behind the attack should remember that India does not forget such things.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Jawan's family photo wish remains unfulfilled

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

Maneswar Basumatari (48) had survived tough postings in Kashmir thrice. Six months into his fourth stint, he left home in western Assam's Baksa district on February 4 after a truncated break.

He promised his daughter Didwmshree, a college graduate, to return for something that had always eluded him for one reason or the other - a photo of all members of his family.

This time, almost every member of his extended family had converged at his house in Kalbari village - about 110 km north-west of Guwahati - for the "big moment". But his son Dhananjay could not come because of a college project in Kokrajhar town, about 140 km west of Kalbari.

"God did not let him keep his promise," said Didwmshree, breaking down.

"Not God, but a bunch of people who kill in the name of God," corrected Kamal Boro, the nephew of the slain CRPF head constable.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

# CJI blames lawyers for delay in listing Rafale petitions

Errors in documents yet to be set right

### Objections raised

The main contentions raised in separate review petitions against the Supreme Court's December 14 order

Review petition of Yashwant Sinha, Arun Shourie and Prashant Bhushan:

SC should not just review but even recall its "erroneous" judgment, which had relied on a then "non-existent" CAG report to uphold the deal

The deal lacks sovereign guarantee clause

Review petition by AAP leader Sanjay Singh:

SC judgment relies upon "patently incorrect claims" made by the government in an unsigned note given in a sealed cover to the court without being shown to the petitioner, which is a violation of principles of natural justice

The court was "purposefully misled"

doing but that of the lawyers concerned. It has been over a month since the pleas were filed.

The occasion for the Chief Justice to clear the air came during the oral mentioning of an unrelated case by a lawyer.

Recently, the court had recused its guidelines to avoid the situation of lawyers crowding courtrooms to orally mention their cases for an early hearing.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

# Sedition charge a conspiracy: AMUSU

Students continue protest; demand withdrawal of charge, rustication of BJP MLA's grandson

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ  
ALIGARH



Students of Aligarh Muslim University on Friday alleged that the institution has been constantly under a series of attacks to create communal hatred and the recent sedition charge against 14 students is a part of a well-orchestrated conspiracy.

At a public meeting on campus, AMUSU leaders said they would continue to boycott classes and protest peacefully until the charges levelled against the students in an FIR are withdrawn and Ajay Singh, a student and grandson of Dalveer Singh, BJP MLA from Barauli in Aligarh, is rusticated for allegedly spoiling communal harmony on campus.

Mr. Ajay had recently given the university authorities a 15-day deadline to build a temple on the campus.

"It must be known that we

Security has been beefed up at AMU.

if they use the name of AMU, the issues that they bring up would come into the national limelight," he claimed.

Akash Kulhari, SSP, Aligarh, said that although preliminary investigation shows no evidence of "sedition", the police cannot give in to the students' demand to withdraw the FIR until the investigation is complete. "We have informed the university about all matters regarding the case and have asked them to conduct a probe," Mr. Kulhari said.

### Committee constituted

Responding to the demands of the students, the university said that it has constituted a fact-finding committee, comprising Deputy Proctor Rashid Umar, Assistant Proctor Mohd Mohsin and Assistant Proctor Rashid Ali, to enquire into the February 12 fracas on campus for which

eight students have been placed under suspension. The varsity, however, did not set a deadline for submitting the probe report.

On February 12, the district president of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, Mukesh Lodhi, had lodged an FIR claiming that he was attacked by some AMU students who were chanting "anti-India" slogans.

Pointing out that targeting students of central universities across the country has become a commonplace for the government, the Federation of Central Universities' Teachers' Association said: "What exactly happened on the campus is contested but when it comes to sedition, the script is painfully familiar. It is clear that the BJP government is simply using the sedition law to prepare the ground for the upcoming general election."

These leaders know that

# Vande Bharat: India's fastest train takes off

The semi-high speed express will cover Delhi to Varanasi in just eight hours



New service: Narendra Modi being saluted by the guard of Vande Bharat Express at New Delhi station. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA  
ON BOARD THE VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS

The inaugural trip of India's first semi-high speed train, Vande Bharat Express, was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the New Delhi railway station on Friday.

The train, named 'Train 18' at the concept stage, is a plush 16-coach, air-conditioned, self-propelled train set and doesn't have a locomotive.

The express will ply between Delhi and Varanasi, with halts at Kanpur and Allahabad. It will complete the 780-km journey in eight hours, slicing off 180 minutes from the current travel time of 11-and-a-half hours. This is India's fastest train to date, capable of commercial speeds up to 160 km per

hour. On the Delhi-Varanasi route, however, its top speed would be restricted to 130 km per hour. The train will start commercial operations on this route on February 17. The tickets for that date are already sold out.

IT WILL BE A GAME-CHANGER.  
SAYS GOYAL ▶ PAGE 100

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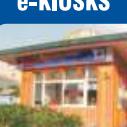
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## SC stays death warrant against M.P. teacher

Convicted of brutally raping a child

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Bench said.

The Supreme Court on Friday stayed the execution of death penalty against a school teacher, who was convicted for raping a four-year-old girl in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh in June last year.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Sanjiv Khanna stayed the execution of the death sentence of convict Mahendra Singh Gond, which was scheduled for March 2 in a Jabalpur jail.

"There shall be stay of execution of the death sentence awarded to the convict by the trial court.

**Dumped for dead**

After raping her, the convict had dumped her in a jungle, thinking she was dead, and her family members had found her in the wee hours when she was barely alive, the prosecution had said.

The Madhya Pradesh High Court had, on January 25, confirmed the death sentence awarded to the convict by the trial court.

"We are sending it to that Bench; let it come there," Justice Gogoi replied.

## Challenge to Ayodhya Act posted before SC Bench

The petition challenges the legislative competence of Parliament to acquire religious land

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday referred to the Ayodhya Bench a plea challenging the validity of the Ayodhya Act, 1993, under which the Centre acquired 67.703 acres of land, including the disputed Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid premises and adjacent areas.

**Act's validity**

The present petition has been filed despite the fact that the Constitution Bench, in its 1994 judgment in the Ismail Faruqui case,

had upheld the validity of the Ayodhya Act, except for sub-section (3) of Section 4 which mandates the abatement of "all pending suits and legal proceedings without providing for an alterna-

been decided by a Constitution Bench in the 1994 Ismail Faruqui verdict.

"We cannot have a review now, 27 years later," Mr. Dhavan said.

"We are sending it to that Bench; let it come there," Justice Gogoi replied.



the legislative competence of Parliament to acquire religious land.

**Right to religion**

The petitioners claimed that the 1993 Act infringed on the right to religion of Hindus guaranteed and protected under Article 25 (freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion) of the Constitution.

acres acquired under the Act, particularly the land belonging to Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, Manas Bhavan, Sankat Mochan Mandir, Ram Janmasthan Temple, Janki Mahal and Katha Mandap."

**Excess land**

Recently, the Centre had moved an application seeking leave to return the superfluous excess land acquired adjacent to the disputed area to its rightful owners after mapping the extent of acreage required to provide easy access and enjoyment of the RJD area to the ultimate winner of the title dispute appeals pending in the apex court.

## A lifetime of finding genes to counter heart disease

Helen Hobbs dwells on genetic mutations and diseases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

"Cholesterol in your blood is akin to smoking, and dietary choices can significantly increase the risk of cardiovascular disease," said geneticist Helen Hobbs, who delivered a public lecture here on Friday.

Dr. Hobbs, who works at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre, has been in India for most of this month and discussed her research on genetic mutations and their influence on heart disease as well as fatty liver disease. Her work has led to the development of a new class of drugs for the treatment of excessive cholesterol buildup and the prevention of coronary atherosclerosis (hardening and narrowing of arteries).

Dr. Hobbs, who won the 2016 Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, discovered a mutation in a gene called PCSK9, which particularly protects African-Americans against heart disease, and has this past month delivered public lectures explaining her work at Hyderabad and Bengaluru as part of the TNQ Distinguished Lectures in the Life Sciences.

The TNQ series has been bringing internationally renowned scientists face-to-face with the Indian scientific community since 2008.

The PCSK9 discoveries led to the development of PCSK9 inhibitors, said to be the most effective drugs to lower cholesterol – or low density lipoprotein (LDL) –



Dr. Helen Hobbs during the TNQ Distinguished Lectures in the Life Sciences in New Delhi on Friday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

since statins.

While most of her peers were focussed on genome-wide association studies, Dr. Hobbs underlined that drugs were of limited utility if people had indulged in a lifetime of fatty food. "It is very important to start a healthy diet early," she noted.

**Medical survey**

She organised the Dallas Heart Study cohort that saw 6,000 residents of Dallas County, Texas, United States, aged 18 to 65 years, complete a detailed medical survey. A total of 3,500 participants over age 30 were invited to provide blood

in the PCSK9 gene.

While the PCSK9 may be critical for a category of heart disease patients, Dr. Hobbs underlined that drugs were of limited utility if people had indulged in a lifetime of fatty food. "It is very important to start a healthy diet early," she noted.

More recently, Dr. Hobbs' team has identified genetic signatures that are associated with the full spectrum of alcoholic and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, including steatosis, steatohepatitis, cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.

Dr. Hobbs and her team found that mutations in the protein PNPLA3 were strongly linked to this condition. Yet another screen showed that a mutation in TM6SF2 led to an increase in fat content. Dr. Hobbs' team has shown that this protein helps the liver secrete fat into the blood in triglyceride-rich lipoproteins.

## Activists call for enactment of law on right to health care

It was one of the major poll promises of Cong. in Rajasthan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

Public health activists in Rajasthan have called for enactment of a law on the right to health care for fulfilling one of the significant promises made in the election manifesto of the ruling Congress. The State government has included the right to health as a policy commitment after being elected to power.

**C** State government should make a commitment for ensuring right to health care, rather than health, as the latter included social and economic determinants.

NARENDRA GUPTA

State convener, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan medical establishments, but the patients are also spending money in the State health institutions," Dr. Gupta said.

The JSA made a presentation on the draft Bill before Additional Chief Secretary (Medical & Health) Rohit Kumar Singh earlier this week.

Dr. Gupta said the State government should make a commitment for ensuring the right to "health care", rather than health, as the latter included social and economic determinants such as food, housing, water and sanitation.

Since the social determinants were outside the pur-

view of the Medical & Health Department, it would be prudent to initially give statutory recognition to the right to health care in order to guarantee quality health care to all citizens in the State. Dr. Gupta said this was important for Rajasthan, which experienced a high morbidity burden.

"Though the State's epidemiological profile is changing and 49.3% of all premature deaths are owing to non-communicable diseases, 39.9% deaths are still taking place because of communicable, maternal, neonatal and nutritional disease and 10.8% because of accidents and injuries," Dr. Gupta said.

According to 71st round of the National Sample Survey Office, 66.3% of the out-patients and 36.4% of the in-patients seek care from private health facilities in the State.

The draft Bill has laid down collective and individual rights of users and health care providers in general and in health establishments.

WALK IN INTERVIEW FOR THE POSITION OF JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWS

Walk-in interview of the candidates fulfilling the qualifications mentioned below initially for a period of two years (extendable as per rules), is to be held in DMSRDE, Kanpur to award Junior Research Fellowship.

Sl. No.	Associateship/Fellowship	Number of Associateship/Fellowship	Subject/Discipline	Qualification	Date & Time of walk-in Interview
1.	Junior Research Fellowship	02 (Two)	Chemistry	Post Graduate degree in Chemistry in first division with NET qualification.	10 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 (Wednesday) 0900 hrs
		01 (One)	Mechanical Engineering	Graduate degree in professional course (B.E./B.Tech.) in relevant discipline in first division with NET/GATE. or	11 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 (Thursday) 0900 hrs
		01 (One)	Chemical Engineering	Post graduate degree in professional course (M.E./M.Tech.) in relevant discipline in first division both at Graduate and Post graduate level.	

# The number of vacancies may vary depending upon requirement at the time of walk-in interview. A vacancy may be kept unfilled, if no candidate is found suitable.

**Age:** JRF is 28 years as on date of interview (5 years relaxation for SC/ST candidates & 3 years for OBC candidates). However, the OBC candidates in the creamy layer will not be eligible for age relaxation.

**Fellowship Stipend:** ₹ 25,000/- p.m. (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> year) for JRF.

Contingency grant up to a maximum of ₹ 15,000/- per annum shall be paid to Research Fellows respectively on reimbursement basis for the first two years. The contingency grant may be increased to ₹ 20,000/- for the subsequent years. They shall also be eligible for HRA as per Government rules.

Junior Research Fellows are not eligible for the other type of benefits like DA, CCA, Bonus, Retirement benefit etc. However, they are eligible for medical facilities for self only through MI Room facility available in the campus.

**The award of fellowship will not be confer any right on the candidate for further employment in DRDO. Director, DMSRDE reserves the right not to select any candidate, if suitable candidates are not available.**

Interested candidates fulfilling the above qualifications may appear for a walk-in interview at the **DMSRDE Transit Facility (Near DRRL Puliyar), DMSRDE, G.T. Road, Kanpur 208 004** on the date & time as mentioned above along with a bio-data (format enclosed) clearly indicating the name of the fellowship applied for, with a recent passport size photograph and Xerox copies of testimonials. They must also bring all original Mark sheets/Certificates/Testimonials/Community Certificate (if applicable)/GATE/NET Score Card and ID proof (Voter's ID/AADHAR Card/Pan Card/Driving License). Candidates working in Government/Public Sector Undertaking/Autonomous bodies should apply through proper channel.

**Note:**

1. Wherever the OBC category has been mentioned, it means only candidates not in the creamy layer.

2. Canvassing in any form will be disqualification.

DIRECTOR  
DMSRDE, KANPUR

### APPLICATION FORMAT

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ii. Intermediate/Equivalent				
iii. B.Sc.				
iv. B.Tech.				
v. M. Sc./M. Tech.				
vi. Ph. D.				

12. Experience:

13. NET/GATE qualified: Yes/No

14. If Yes, give detail:

15. Knowledge of computers:

- (i) Course undertaken
- (ii) Skill acquired
- (iii) Knowledge of research tools/softwares

16. UNDERTAKING: I hereby certify that the information furnished above is true to the best of my knowledge and in the event of any information furnished above is found to be false or it is found that I have suppressed/concealed any material/information, my candidature is liable to be cancelled and government may take such other action as it may deem fit.

Date: Signature of Applicant

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# EC urged to prevent misuse of govt. machinery during electioneering

Allegations of huge sums of money parked with some functionaries, says EC

STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR

The Opposition parties in Odisha have urged the Election Commission of India to prevent the misuse of government machinery and schemes during electioneering.

Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa on Friday said there were allegations of huge sums of money being parked with preferred government functionaries before the EC observers move in. Some parties also complained about the use of police vans and ambulances for transporting money for political use, he said.



Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa in Bhubaneswar on Friday. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

It was also alleged that inducements were being passed to self-help groups through newly started schemes. Instances of party publicity in the garb of go-

vernment schemes were also cited. KALIA scheme was also mentioned," Mr. Lavasa said at a press conference here.

The EC team led by Mr. Lavasa has met political parties and held discussions with the stakeholders to conduct free and fair elections.

For the first time, a mobile application – cVigil app will be activated in the State once the poll dates are notified. "If a citizen comes across any violation of the code of conduct, he or she can take pictures or make a video and upload it. The information will reach the control room along with the latitude and longitude which will enable it to ascertain where the picture or video was taken," said Mr. Lavasa.

"The enforcement machinery has to respond and upload the action taken report within 100 minutes. This application was tried in five State elections. We got about 20,000 complaints and 70% of them were found to be true. And prompt action was taken," he said.

The EC will be using 100% VVPAT machines in all the booths for the first time in Odisha. As many as 16 districts of Odisha have been identified to be affected by Left-Wing Extremism.

## 2 lynched in Meghalaya, another critically injured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SHILLONG  
Two persons were lynched by a mob in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district and another was critically injured, the police said on Friday.

The incident took place at Chanangpara village after the locals were alerted about the suspicious movement of the trio in their car,

they said.

A mob of over 1,000 people stopped the car and when they found weapons – a dagger and rods – in the car trunk, the occupants of the car were attacked, according to eyewitnesses. One Mokibul Akond died on the spot while Mikseng Marak was declared brought dead at the Hospital, district SP M.G.R. Kumar said.

SC refuses to withdraw work from Meghalaya HC judge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to withdraw judicial work from Meghalaya High Court judge Justice Sudip Ranjan Sen who had created a controversy by his remarks that India should have been declared a Hindu country at the time of partition in 1947.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Sanjiv Khanna asked the petitioner, who has sought withdrawal of judicial work from Justice Sen, to amend the prayer and seek expunction of the controversial remarks in the judgment.

Justice Sen had written in his judgment, "Pakistan declared themselves an Islamic country and India since was divided on the basis of religion should have also been declared a Hindu country but it remained a secular country. Even today, in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, the Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis, Khasis, Jaintias and Garos are tortured and they have no place to go and those Hindus who entered India during partition are still considered as foreigners, which in my understanding is highly illogical, illegal and against the principle of natural justice."

AIU meet begins today

STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR

The three-day annual meet of the Association of Indian Universities will get under way at the Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University) here on Saturday with 200 Vice-Chancellors and academic leaders slated to participate in the event.

According to the AIU, autonomy, considered an essential prerequisite for universities to flourish, will be the focus of deliberations.

THE HINDU

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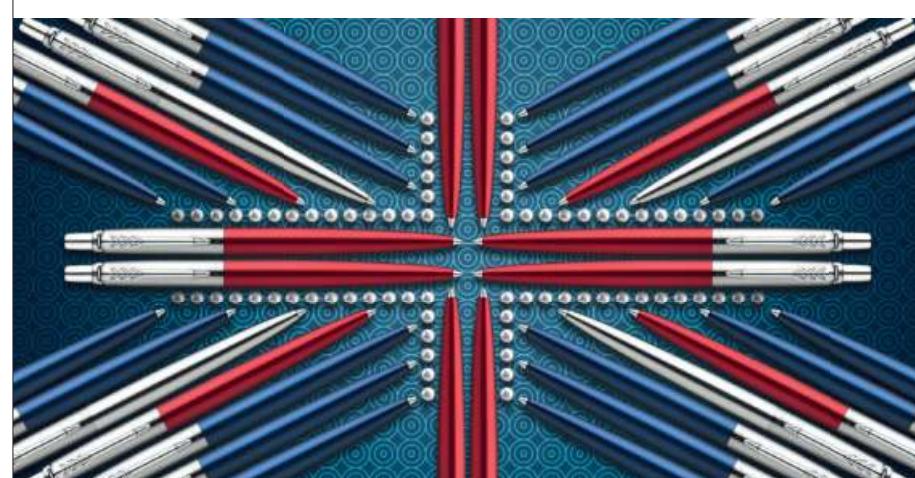
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- एनीमेशन, पॉवर प्लाइट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- मुख्य परीक्षा, निबंध, PT, सीरीज टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली, PT 365, Mains 365, सीरीज टेस्ट कक्षाएं
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**PUBLIC NOTICE****PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mr. Man Mohan Chugh, who intends to mortgage the Flat bearing no. 12, on First Floor, at New Central Market (Shankar Market), New Delhi with our client RBL Bank Ltd against the financial assistance. Whereas, Mr. Man Mohan Chugh purchased the above said property from Mr. Rajesh Jaggi vide Sale Deed dated 23.07.2018 and Mr. Rajesh Jaggi acquired the rights of the said property by virtue of Relinquishment Deed dated 17.03.2015 executed by the legal heirs of Late Narinder Jaggi without obtaining Surviving member certificate.

If any person(s) having objection regarding ownership and mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 07 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 07 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. RBL Bank Ltd. will proceed with the mortgage process.

KEWIN KUNJAPPY, ADVOCATE A-13, LGF, South Extn-II, New Delhi-49 # 011-26262610, 11, 12

**PERSONAL****LOST & FOUND**

I, MANU Seth w/o Satish Seth R/o 34, Rajdhani Enclave, Delhi-92 have lost original sale deed and chain for property no. 9/184, Geeta Colony, Delhi-31. If anyone finds it, kindly contact me at 9560897821

**lost & found**  
Our lease deeds document no. 3056 executed on 28 dec 1973 & document no 3373/74 executed on 8 April 1975 by Subregistrar, Ghaziabad for house 71 of Kavindra Colony in block-A of Ghaziabad has lost on 12 oct 2018 in Noida. If it is used in bank, court or anywhere else then it will be deemed illegal.

Pradeep Kumar Gupta S/o S. C. Gupta Mobile - 9810100577

**NOTIFICATION**

It is notified for the Information that my Original Mark Sheet Pass Certificate and Migration Certificate of AISSEE 2014 and Roll No 460982 issued by CBSE has been actually lost. Name of the Candidate Jaskaran Singh, S/o Palvinder Singh R/o Village Jabwabbal, Distt. Amritsar. Mob: 9488906210.

PREETAM CHAURASIA Name of Director DIN: 06741668 Address of registered office: 16TH FLOOR, TOWER-A, DLF BUILDING NO 9, DLF CYBER CITY GURGAON HARYANA-122002

Date: 16-02-2019, Place: Gurgaon

CORRIDING PUBLIC NOTICE DATED 11-2-2019

On behalf of my client, Smt. Urmil Gupta W/o Shri Yashpal Gupta, Who

has issued a Public Notice regarding her property bearing No. 47, Ashoka Park Extension, Near Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-26 on 11-2-2019 in this newspaper. I state that the correct address of the concerned Regional Director is:

Preetam Chaurasia Name of Director DIN: 06741668

Address of registered office: 16TH FLOOR, TOWER-A, DLF

BUILDING NO 9, DLF CYBER CITY GURGAON HARYANA-122002

Date: 16-02-2019, Place: Gurgaon

I have lost my handbag, Share Certificates of above mentioned flat along with my driving licence and bank pass book some where in Sector 58, Noida.

The necessary FIR, in this regard has been lodged with Police Station Sector 58 Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar (UP) on Dt 12/2/2019.

If any individual finds these documents, please inform me on my mobile number 7704004003.

These documents are necessary to obtain home loan as applied with State Bank of India, Sector-55, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar (UP) branch code 14702.

Rambhakt Agrawal Advocate 1375, Chandni Chowk, Ground Floor, Katra Lohswan, Delhi-11006

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**IN BRIEF**



Arun Jaitley takes charge as Finance Minister

NEW DELHI  
Arun Jaitley on Friday resumed charge as the Finance Minister after a gap of over a month, the second break within a year that he had to take to undergo medical treatment abroad. Mr. Jaitley tweeted on Friday, "Thankful to Shri Piyush Goyal who discharged the responsibility diligently & competently."

**Assam seeks cooperation as NRC hearing begins**

GUWAHATI  
Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal sought people's cooperation in ensuring smooth update of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) which began on Friday. About 40.07 lakh out of the 3.29 crore applicants were left out of the complete draft published on July 30 last year.

**Section 66A: SC asks States to sensitise cops**

NEW DELHI  
The Supreme Court on Friday directed all States to sensitise their police personnel about its March 24, 2015, verdict which had scrapped Section 66A of Information Technology Act, so that people are not unnecessarily arrested under the struck down provision. It also asked all High Courts to send the verdict copy to all trial courts. PTI

**Draft pact prepared to end Gujarat agitation**

JAIPUR  
A draft agreement was prepared on Friday to pacify Gujjars in Rajasthan agitating for reservation in government jobs and education and end the deadlock, as their protest entered eighth day. Gujjars continued to occupy the Delhi-Mumbai railway track in Sawai Madhopur district and several major highways, throwing traffic out of gear. Tourism Minister Vishvendra Singh said all misgivings would be addressed and the matter resolved.

## Fast forward

The semi-high speed Train 18, which has been recently rechristened Vande Bharat Express, can run up to a maximum speed of 160 kmph. A look at Indian Railways' new showpiece train

**16**  
air-conditioned coaches, including two executive class

**1,128**  
total passenger capacity

I am grateful to designers and engineers behind Vande Bharat Express which will take its first trip from Delhi to Varanasi today. With our sincerity and hard work in the last 4.5 years we have tried to improve railways  
— NARENDRA MODI, PM



**TRAVEL PLANNER**  
■ The bookings have begun and it will run commercially from February 17 from Delhi to Varanasi five days a week. The train is expected to complete the journey in 8 hours  
■ From Delhi to Varanasi, an air-conditioned

chair car ticket will cost ₹1,760, while the executive class fare will be ₹3,310. The fares are inclusive of catering charges

**MADE IN INDIA**  
Train 18 was designed and built by Integral Coach Factory, Chennai under the government's Make in India initiative

**MORE SUCH TRAINS**  
Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said tendering process has started for 30 such trains and P.M.'s nod has been sought to operate 100 of them

- Automatic doors
- GPS-based audio-visual passenger information system
- On-board WiFi hotspot
- Seats that can be rotated in executive class (see photo)
- Pantry facility in each coach
- Bio-vacuum toilets
- Dual mode lighting, personalised for each seat
- Regenerative braking system to save power



## A game-changer express: Goyal

Major systems of Vande Bharat Express have been designed and built in India

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA  
ON BOARD THE VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday told reporters that the tendering process for the manufacture of 30 more semi-high speed trains like Vande Bharat Express, has already begun. Additionally, the Prime Minister's approval has been sought for 100 more such train sets.

"The major systems of this train have been designed and built in India. It meets global standards of performance, safety and passenger comfort at half the global costs. It therefore has the potential to be a game-changer in the global rail business," said an official, add-



The brainwave: The shell of 'Train 18' being worked upon at the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai ■ V. GANESAN

ding, "This is only the first train of its kind. Based on customer feedback, further improvements can be made."

Built at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, the Vande Bharat Express has a

total seating capacity of 1,128 passengers. All the coaches are equipped with automatic doors, a GPS-based passenger information system, and free WiFi. But the WiFi can only be used to access select entertainment content pro-

vided by the Railways. The toilets are bio-vacuum type, similar to those on airplanes. On the downside, the chair car seats are not very comfortable, though the leg space is adequate. In contrast, the executive class seats are plush and can rotate 180 degrees. Every coach has a pantry with facilities to serve hot meals, and hot or cold beverages. The coaches are also well insulated from outside noise.

The train which left New Delhi railway station at 11.20 a.m. reached its terminus, Varanasi at 9.37 p.m. after a 40-minute halt at Kanpur and a 90-minute halt at Allahabad. The train did not stick to its scheduled timings as it was its inaugural run.

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for the Meghalaya villagers assaulted.

On the eastern edge of Assam, almost horizontally across the point where Langpih is situated, economic blockades by Assam-based ethnic bodies less than a fortnight ago began haunting the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh again.

While these organisations have threatened to relaunch their agitation after a brief lull, the indigenous communities in Arunachal Pradesh want the State government to "forget the plan". Tribe and district-specific constituents of All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) have also gone against their parent organisation for "keeping quiet" on the issue.

**For ST status**  
Organisations of six communities — Adivasi, Deori, Gorkha, Moran, Mising, and Sonowal Kachari — mostly inhabiting eastern Assam, have been demanding Scheduled Tribe status for their brethren living in pockets of

Arunachal Pradesh. The demand gathered steam after Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein made an assurance last year.

Central Intelligence agencies had tipped off Alok Kumar, Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime) about the seven refugees. They have been identified as Asma Begum, Mohammed Tahir, Omkar Farooq, Mohammed Halek, Rehana Begum, Mohammed Mustafa, and Rajat Mondal.

**Assam police commandos at the Republic Day parade, 2019 in Guwahati.** ■ AP

Assam police was unprovoked. The Khasi Students' Union, which had joined hands with its Assam counterpart to fight the Citizenship Bill, condemned the action of the police and demanded compensation

for the Meghalaya villagers assaulted.

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While these organisations have threatened to relaunch their agitation after a brief lull, the indigenous communities in Arunachal Pradesh want the State government to "forget the plan". Tribe and district-specific constituents of All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) have also gone against their parent organisation for "keeping quiet" on the issue.

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## Terrible Thursday

As investigations into the Pulwama attack begin, Pakistan must act against the Jaish

**A**s India mourns the death of 40 CRPF personnel in Thursday's terrorist strike in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district, it is clear that the attack was meant to provoke. The Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Pakistan-based terrorist organisation which has orchestrated numerous strikes in the Kashmir Valley, has taken responsibility for what is now the highest toll of security forces in any attack in the State. Investigations should yield a better picture, but it is a matter of extreme concern that a suicide bomber could time his attack to hit a security convoy. There is no question that Pakistan bears the onus to explain why Masood Azhar, the leader of the Jaish-e-Mohammed, enjoys such freedoms on its territory, if not outright support from the establishment. Certainly, diplomatic backing by Pakistan and China has been crucial in defeating efforts at the United Nations to put Azhar on the list of banned terrorists. Early details indicate that a sports utility vehicle laden with a huge quantity of explosives targeted the convoy of 78 buses carrying about 2,500 soldiers from Jammu to Kashmir. The video of the presumed suicide bomber too hints at an altered standard operating procedure meant to provoke and escalate tensions. Forensics teams have already begun work and answers to the disturbing questions the attack has raised on intelligence gathering, dissemination and coordination in the Valley must be pieced together.

However, if the terrorists have acted from an updated playbook, New Delhi's response must not play into their plans with reflexive and precipitate official action. India has withdrawn the Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan in a signal that it will not wait for preliminaries in the effort to isolate Pakistan. Coercive diplomacy is likely to continue, but to be effective the effort needs a wider net, especially at a time when the U.S. is seeking Pakistan's help in firming up a deal with the Afghan Taliban. Beijing too must not, and cannot, evade questions about its previous blocking of action at the UN, specifically against Azhar. Post-Uri, after terrorist attacks the air is always thick with calls for retributive cross-border strikes. The past history of limited, if any, returns from such precipitate action must serve as a cautionary check. Instead, the effort must be to isolate Pakistan for its support to the Jaish and seek substantive action, to effectively upgrade intelligence and plug security gaps, and to win the confidence of the local population in the Valley. Thursday's attack was meant to provoke and polarise the country. New Delhi's response must, instead, be to isolate the perpetrators and keep the peace on Indian territory.

## Forever president

Sisi stands to extend his reign if Egypt's draft constitutional changes go through

**E**

Egypt had begun nominal attempts at ushering in a multi-party system in 2005, when Mr. Mubarak got himself elected for a fifth term. But within a few months, he declared himself President for life. Attempts to switch to popular representative government in the latter part of his tenure were merely cosmetic. Within years, in 2011, followed the mass protests that demanded the overthrow of the Mubarak regime and formed the epicentre of the 'Arab Spring'. Today, events have turned a full circle under Mr. Sisi's firm grip on the levers of power. The military has been never so powerful since the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser. As with several autocrats today, the Egyptian leader has leveraged the American and the Russian governments effectively, while they seem indifferent to the military's excesses. Egypt similarly benefits from the strategic partnership it signed with China, bringing trade flows and investment. But above all, China's politically hands-off approach is a win-win for both regimes. While such diversification may be smart diplomacy, it begs the question about Cairo's long-standing position as the leader of the Arab world. There is a simmering anger among sections of the youth contending with unemployment and the absence of avenues for dissent. The Arab Spring is nearly a decade behind, but the conditions that brought the multitudes to Tahrir Square still prevail.

# Hindutva 2.0 is in crisis

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's winning formula of 2014 is under severe stress; can he refresh it?



VARGHESE K. GEORGE

**A** month ago, on January 18, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) general secretary Bhaiyyaji Joshi said in Nagpur: "When the temple will be constructed on Ram Janmabhoomi in 2025, this progress (of India) will gather further momentum... Once the Ayodhya temple is built, the country will gain the capital required for the next 150 years."

The idea that the construction of a controversial temple at the site of a demolished mosque can lead to the formation of capital in the country could be intriguing for the uninitiated. For the proponents of Hindutva, however, this notion is integral to their idea of development and progress. The proposition is that an aggressive assertion of the collective Hindu identity is an essential precondition for India's development. This is a point that pro-market supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi self-deceptively overlooked ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, though he himself had made his position clear. Asked whether he was "pro-business" or a "Hindu nationalist," he said in 2013: "There's no contradiction between the two. It's one and the same image."

### Three contradictions

While this has been a core component of Hindutva thought for decades, it was Mr. Modi's reign in Gujarat that made it acceptable, and popular. If enough people still thought Mr. Modi's 2014 campaign was jettisoning Hindutva for deve-

lopment, it was convenient for him.

Hindutva politics over the years had suffered from three inherent contradictions that stunted its growth: friction between pro-market segments and Hindu traditionalists in the Indian right wing; contradictory requirements of the centralised, disciplinarian, ideologically rigid core of the RSS and building a mass mobilisation through a political wing; and consolidating a Hindu vote bank among a people hierarchically and oppressively divided by the caste system.

Mr. Modi's innovation to Hindutva politics since 2002 has been in reconciling these three contradictions in a sufficient measure, initially in Gujarat and then in other parts of the country to win a Lok Sabha majority in 2014. That is Hindutva 2.0 – where material progress is married to a religious social agenda; disciplined organisation and mass mobilisation are balanced; and the lower rungs in the caste hierarchy are enlisted as part of an omnibus Hindu identity in which they are offered social acceptance and political representation. All these factors that worked in Mr. Modi's favour are now unravelling, and Hindutva 2.0 is in crisis.

The circle that admiringly described Mr. Modi as pro-market has shrunk very fast, and most of those who still call him so do it derisively, often accusing him of having promoted crony capitalism, and failing to deliver on job creation. Those who spoke of his managerial skills, many as a cover to mask their own bigotry, are now disappointed over the government's handling of the economy, especially demonetisation and poor implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). They may



NARENDRA MODI / S. S. S. / GETTY IMAGES

not be cheering for anyone else, but they are no longer saying Mr. Modi is the saviour.

On the other hand, the religious right is happy. They have pushed the temple agenda to the back-burner with a new deadline of 2025, giving Mr. Modi breathing space, and have begun to rally forces behind his 2019 campaign. Yet, the marriage of material prosperity and religious nationalism is not exactly made in heaven, and is teetering.

### Caste break-up

Enrolment of a critical mass of Dalits and backward caste populations into the Hindutva politics that is widely perceived as a project for the nourishment of upper caste dominance was Hindutva 2.0's second success. Mr. Modi presented himself as a lower caste leader and sought to appropriate Dalit and backward caste figures ranging from B.R. Ambedkar, Sree Narayana Guru to Ayyankali and even Mata Amritanandamayi into his politics. The idea of Hindutva is based on the premise that there is a collective interest for the community common to all caste groups. Given the social, economic, linguistic, cultural diversities within Hindus, a common thread that could unite them all is the image of a common enemy. Cow protection has been the convenient

tool here. In the 2015 Bihar elections, Mr. Modi urged Yadavs to not vote for Lalu Prasad, who he said was insulting the cow-worshipping community by supporting beef eating. In his home State of Gujarat it was "white revolution" and cow protection, while in Bihar it was pink revolution, or a proliferation of slaughter houses, he said.

But the same cow protection that helped Hindu unity soon enough fractured it as Dalits became targets of vigilantes. "If you want to attack, attack me, not the Dalits. If you want to shoot, shoot me, not the Dalits," Mr. Modi said in August 2016, as instances of cow vigilante attacks on Dalits increased. Moreover, the gravest impact of the collapse of livestock economy is in States where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did well in 2014, and within them, on backward castes and Dalits.

While Hindutva 2.0 offered a lot of rousing rhetoric for Dalits and backwards as quoted above, it also demonstrated an unprecedented hostility towards autonomous lower caste mobilisations. Brazenly partisan police action and the continuing police oppression of Dalit groups which organised protests, such as at Bhima Koregaon in January 2018, are signs of this intolerance of lower caste mobilisation against the Hindu right. The BJP governments in power also emboldened sections of the upper castes to seek to recapture the space lost to lower caste politics in earlier years.

The policy impact of the Modi government, ranging from the overall underperformance of welfare schemes for the Dalits, and the recently announced reservation for economically backward upper castes, is yet another source of friction. Pursuit of unity without

questioning caste hierarchy is vintage RSS, but is not very attractive to the majority among the Hindus. These contradictions are showing in regions where the BJP did well in 2014.

The iron grip of the RSS on the BJP, and the former's search for ideological purity have not only contributed to constant friction between the two, but historically also limited the electoral successes of Hindutva. For instance, while the RSS did not entirely trust Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who was often accused of being a closet Nehruvian, the more ideologically pure BJP leaders did not have any significant mass appeal. With Mr. Modi at the helm, Hindutva 2.0 overcame this dilemma, combining mass appeal and uncompromising Hindutva credentials in his persona. The synergy between the RSS and the BJP has never been stronger than it is today. But this disciplined march towards the goal of a Hindu Rashtra under the command of a 'strong leader' has created a new friction within. BJP legislators, Ministers and leaders who feel suffocated and powerless, despite being technically part of the ruling dispensation, now have a limited stake in Mr. Modi's continuation in power. A large number of sitting members of the Lok Sabha are likely to be denied tickets in 2019, if Mr. Modi continues on the 'Gujarat model' for beating anti-incumbency.

None of this is hidden from Mr. Modi and his tactician, BJP president Amit Shah, and they are bound to seek measures to reverse these trends. The extent of their success remains an open question. What is, however, clear is that the three critical components of Hindutva 2.0 are under severe stress.

vargheese.g@thehindu.co.in

## Heralding a new dawn

India and Saudi Arabia are poised to dramatically deepen the bilateral relationship



SAUD AL-SATI

**I**n April 2016, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia gave itself a goal and a promise in the form of Vision 2030. The Saudi citizen has become the focal point for sustainable development with massive projects directed towards building a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation. The entire foundation of our Kingdom's economy is being transformed towards a post-oil age with the aim of attracting \$427 billion in private investments over the next decade to diversify the economy and create 1.6 million new jobs through the National Industrial Development and Logistics Programme.

### Powered by reforms

According to World Bank's 'Doing Business 2018' report, Saudi Arabia has instituted the largest number of business reforms among countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region as of July 2017. With its platform Meras, starting a business in the Kingdom now requires only one step and one day! The single-window platform Fasah has also been

launched for customs clearance and import and export procedures. The 'Doing Business 2019' report has ranked Saudi Arabia as the fourth-largest reformer within the G20. In 2018, Saudi Arabia saw foreign direct investment rise by 127% year-on-year. Global confidence in Saudi Arabia's ascent has further solidified with the International Monetary Fund forecasting increased growth for Saudi Arabia in July 2018.

The Kingdom's construction market is set to touch \$96.52 billion in 2025, up from \$45.33 billion in 2016. There are three major projects underway – smart city project Neom, Qiddiya entertainment city and the Red Sea Tourism Project. In 2018, we also launched FekraTech, a national initiative for digital ideas, aimed at making Saudi Arabia a global innovation hub. The Saudi Intellectual Property Authority is also working towards transforming Saudi Arabia into an advanced knowledge-based economy built on innovation and entrepreneurship.

A \$100 billion planned investment in transport projects will also occur over the next decade as we expand the railway system and introduce new light rail mass transit projects in Riyadh, Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah. The grand expansions of the Holy Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah have increased their capacity for accommodating millions of worshippers. One of the most important goals of the Vision 2030 is to increase our capacity to welcome 30 million Umrah per-



formers every year by 2030, improve their experience and enrich it further.

Since a majority of the Kingdom's population is below the age of 30, education is a key component of Vision 2030. Over the decades, Saudi Arabia's education system has gone through an astonishing transformation. Due to generous scholarships from the Kingdom, a large number of Saudi students study overseas. By 2030, the Kingdom intends to have at least five Saudi universities among the top 200 in international rankings. Education reforms have also led to an increase in women's literacy and participation in the workforce.

With the Kingdom at the heart of the Arab and Islamic world, the changes taking place on the Saudi soil are creating positive influences for the entire Arab region. Saudi Arabia remains committed to the social, economic and political stability of the region and will continue playing a leading role in countering terrorism and establishing peace as demonstrated by the Kingdom's contribution towards

the historic peace accord signed between Ethiopia and Eritrea in Riyadh in 2018. We continue to stand by our Yemeni brothers and support the Palestinian cause. Our dream is of a peaceful, progressive and a prosperous world.

In our common pursuit for development and stability, Saudi Arabia sees India as an important partner. Our ties trace their roots to the third millennium BC. Trade, science, arts, literature, languages – the exchanges between our civilisations have indeed been profound. India holds a special place for us. Nearly 3 million Indians form the largest expatriate community in the Kingdom. India has also seen its Haj quota of 1,36,020 increase consecutively during the last two years to a record 1,75,025.

India and Saudi Arabia have more opportunities today to tap into than ever before. The bilateral trade for 2017-18, in excess of \$27 billion, will accelerate as Saudi Arabia and India engage in a host of new areas such as information and communications technology (ICT), health care, defence, biotechnology, education and infrastructure among others. India is one of the top countries on the Kingdom's preferred list with great potential for investment in organic and food processing industries.

### Expanding cooperation

The energy partnership between the two countries is also finding new grounds. As of October 2018, Saudi Aramco has nearly \$2 billion in material-service sourcing with Indian companies, and investing

in India's value chain from oil supply, marketing and refining to petrochemicals and lubricants is a key part of its global downstream strategy. The \$44 billion integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, being jointly developed by Saudi Aramco, Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and a consortium of Indian public sector units (PSUs) consisting of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), is yet another milestone.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2018 on the sidelines of the G20 summit and both sides agreed to set up a high-level mechanism to boost concrete actions in terms of investment, technology and manufacturing across various sectors.

As formidable economies of MENA and Asia, Saudi Arabia and India have a historic opportunity to collaborate in shaping the future of our regions, for a better tomorrow full of prosperity and promise. Combining our respective strengths will pave the way for endless possibilities and accomplishments for the benefit of our two peoples and the region. The forthcoming state visit of the Crown Prince to India presents another historic opportunity to expand collaboration between our two friendly nations.

Saud Al-Sati is Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to India

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Carnage in Kashmir

It is saddening that paramilitary personnel were caught unawares despite surveillance and close monitoring (Page 1, "37 CRPF men killed in J&K suicide attack," February 15). Neither Governor's rule nor President's rule appear to have resulted in any significant change in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as far as curbing terrorism is concerned. The people in the State seem to have no hope of peace. Eliminating terrorists is going to be difficult as terror elements appear to be working in isolation.

N. VISVESWARAN,  
Chennai

Evidence points to security and intelligence lapses. Where were the explosives

sourced from? It is time the international community came together and pledged to root out terror or act against terror centres.

SACHIN V.K. JADHAV,  
Lakhalia, Washim, Maharashtra

If there is incontrovertible proof of terror outfits being involved, India should step up its efforts to have in place a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. This must be at the level of the United Nations. Reports of Kashmiri youth now being a part of terror are deeply disturbing. Sincere efforts should be made to bring them back to the mainstream.

P. ALARMELMANGAI,  
Palani, Tamil Nadu

It is unfortunate that even after being admonished

publicly and warned of surgical strikes for any form of outrageous aggression, the forces backing terror have not mended their ways. The incident has also brought to light the vulnerabilities in India's counter-terrorism defences against fidayeen attacks. Lawmakers must address the lack of an institutional arrangement for the management of India's counter-terrorism response.

The country can ill-afford a loss of precious lives at the hands of a few extremist forces.

SHREYANS JAIN,  
New Delhi

One is at a loss for words and one's heart goes to the families of all those who have lost their lives. Defence officials must now ensure a calibrated response so that

anti-India elements do not dare to touch Indian soil.

DEBASISH BARUAH,  
Kohora, Kaziranga, Assam

One fears that people in the Valley will suffer for a terrible crime perpetrated by a few. Of course passions are high and cries of "blood for blood" are heard. Yet we still hope that even now there will be officials at the senior levels who will have their heads on their shoulders and proceed with patience and caution. Before furious retaliation is unleashed, there must be a dispassionate inquiry.

INDERJIT SINGH JAISWAL,  
Chandigarh

Safe blood  
It is unfortunate that there are some people donating their own blood for

pecuniary considerations, perhaps to make both ends meet. This practice, on the face of it, is morally and ethically incongruous, defeating the noble cause of blood donation (Editorial page, "Every drop matters," February 15). The panacea is to involve the community at large. If blood collection booths are accessible across the country, people may voluntarily opt for donation. There needs to be greater awareness of "blood donation day".

DEEPAK SINGHAL,  
Noida

How can one forget the incident in Tamil Nadu, of a youngster who donated blood that transmitted

# On the Silk Route trail

The Silk Route was an unhindered stream of trade that built bridges between cultures, until it was broken up by the rise of national borders. A Russian plumber and a German nurse capture its romance by retracing the route. **Peerzada Ashiq** reports

Mored to the banks of the Dal lake in Srinagar, 'New Shahen-shah' is not a fancy houseboat. An immersion rod hisses in a makeshift washroom set up on a wooden plank outside the houseboat. Tourists Roman, 47, a Russian plumber, and Anne, 31, a German nurse, are looking forward to their mid-day bath, and understandably so. Following heavy snow and landslides, they had been stranded for two weeks on the Zoji La, a pass which connects Kargil in Ladakh with Srinagar, their final stop.

When Roman and Anne met for the first time three summers ago in Tibet, they decided to do a special trip in 2018: retracing the famous Silk Route. They would explore the overland route that once connected Central Asia, Asia and Europe via the high mountain passes of the Pamir, Tian Shan, Hindu Kush, Karakoram and Kunlun mountain ranges.

Says Roman, "It was our dream to travel along the Silk Route, which was once an unhindered flow of different streams of cultures. Today it's a series of water-tight chambers due to national borders."

## On a military truck

It was in the late 18th and early 19th century that British archaeologist Sir Aurel Stein organised the first major expeditions to explore what German geographer Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen had in 1877 named the 'Silk Road'. Stein undertook eight expeditions along the ancient trade route that links China and the Mediterranean. On at least one expedition, Kashmir was Stein's starting point for a journey to explore a second century Buddhist site in China's Xinjiang province. The excavations made by Stein between 1900 and 1915 helped throw some historical light on this part of Xinjiang, which was once a part of the mysterious Kraina kingdom.

But in the post-colonial era, the consolidation of borders and hostility between neighbouring countries snapped the last remnant linkages of the Silk Route in the Kashmir region. The incorporation of Xinjiang into China in 1949 sealed it. But Roman and Anne managed to break through the 'sealed route' after 71 years, as they navigated through some of the world's toughest border posts.

In July 2018, Anne hired a military truck fitted with a modular kitchen and a two-bed arrangement in the back. It was a vehicle that could withstand temperatures as low as minus 50°Celsius. It was what helped Roman and Anne survive when they were stranded in Ladakh for 15 days. Recalls Roman, "Even the vehicle's fuel got frozen many times at the Zoji La Pass. If you stepped out, there was a good chance you'd freeze to death."

It was his idea to hire a military truck, preferably a World War II-era vehicle. He says, "Anne managed to find one with a 5,200 cc engine in Germany. We wanted a vehicle that could negotiate mountains of this height and magnitude and withstand its vagaries. Thankfully, it did." Roman (left) and Anne in Srinagar after completing their journey along the Silk Route. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



**Self-drive:** "We wanted a vehicle that could negotiate mountains of this height and magnitude and withstand its vagaries. Thankfully, it did." Roman (left) and Anne in Srinagar after completing their journey along the Silk Route. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



"At the Balti Fort, I saw an 18th century Russian samovar (copper tea pot). Variants of it are used in Afghanistan and Kashmir." He decided to pick up a 100-year-old antique Afghani 'samovar' (a word of Russian origin) from Pakistan's Peshawar. "Sam" means 'self' in Russian and 'Var' means 'cook,' he explains.

Samovar is a copper teapot with a chimney at the centre for charcoal. While the Russian samovar has a knob at the bottom, the Kashmiri one has a teapot-like nose at the top. Roman adds, "This is a living example of how much we still have in common despite the borders that have come up."

Roman and Anne met up in Pakistan for the onward journey to India through the Wagah border at Amritsar, and from there to Ladakh via Manali in Himachal Pradesh. The Silk Route journey would have remained incomplete unless they covered Ladakh's Leh and Kargil towns, which were once bustling stopovers for silk-carrying merchants from China. Despite inclement weather in November (snow had already covered the passes connecting China with Gilgit-Baltistan and Himachal Pradesh with Ladakh, while the day temperature hovered below freezing point), Roman was determined to carry the antique samovar for the Central Asian Museum in Leh.

Says Roman, "I feel elated to have brought a samovar for the Leh museum. It would highlight the broken link. In Leh, I realised that the Russian word 'aksakal', which means 'white-beard' and 'wise man', had become the designation for the customs officer who used to check the caravans on the Silk Route in the past. The words and the utensils used here make one feel as if it was only yesterday that the region was open for trade."

## A spark in the cold desert

The timing of Roman's offering of an antique samovar to the museum in Leh could not have been more opportune. Ladakh is sparsely populated. Its twin districts of Leh and Kargil have a combined population of just 2.74 lakh people (as in Census 2011) spread across a vast cold desert. Yet the region is astir with people's movements demanding a revival of the old trade routes. The setting up of the Central Asian Museum in Leh, in 2016, on the premises of a 17th

century mosque, stands testimony to the people's attempt to reclaim the past, with an eye on the future.

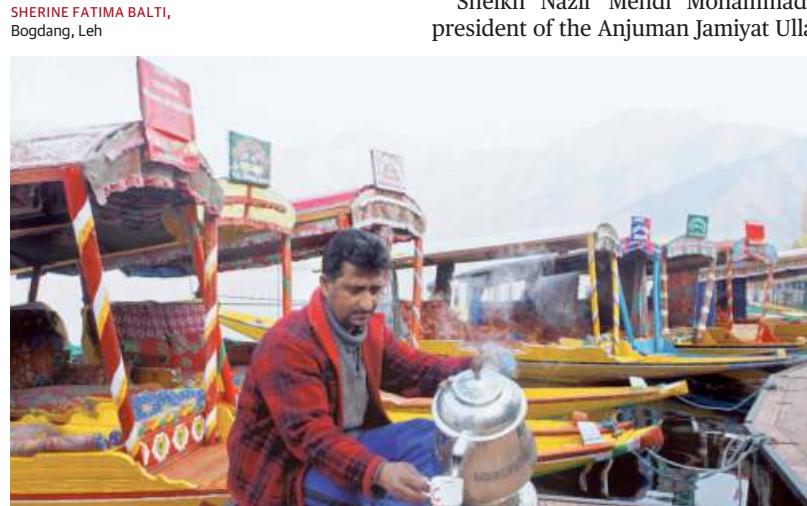
Back in 2004, in Kargil town, around 200 km from Leh, two brothers, Gulzar Hussain Munshi, 48, and Ajaz Hussain Munshi, 42, decided to sort out the artefacts hidden in their grandfather's inn. The inn had been set up in 1920 and was then known as the Aziz Bhat Sarai. The three-storey building also doubled as a depot for goods, with the ground floor accommodating a stable for traders' horses. The Munshi brothers converted the only surviving inn of the Silk Route in Ladakh into a museum. Gulzar became its director, while Ajaz is its curator.

Named the Munshi Aziz Bhat Museum of Central Asia and Kargil Trade Artefacts, the house of the Munshis has become a major attraction for tourists interested in learning more about the Silk Route. It houses over 30,000 artefacts from the 19th and the early 20th centuries. These include turquoise-studded silver necklaces and engravings from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Khotan and Kashgar, and 17th century carpets from the weavers of Yarkand and Kashgar in Xinjiang. There is also a 17th century gold-plated saddle strap from Yarkand. Early 20th century artefacts include western toiletries such as soap, toothbrushes, and shaving brushes dating back to 1903, 1905, 1926, and 1939 – all imported from England, Germany and the U.S.

Says Ajaz, "After reaching the Mumbai coast, these toiletries travelled all the way to Central Asia through Yarkand, the cold desert of Khotan, and Hunderman village, the nearest Silk Route point to Kargil town, still bears a great deal of resemblance to Kashgar bazaar in China's Xinjiang. It connects Kargil to Baltistan's Skardu area in PoK, which is less than 5 km from Kargil's main market. For the families here, retelling old tales and legends about trade and travel is a popular pastime on dark winter evenings. These stories, frequently told and retold, have also played a role in sparking the current political movement seeking a renewal of the Silk Route's old linkages."

I am the first Balti woman to take up singing, as it is strongly discouraged by our conservative culture. One day I would like to meet my fans across the LoC.

SHERINE FATIMA BALTI,  
Bogdang, Leh



A Kashmiri Samovar, at the Dal lake. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Kashgar. From the other side, silk and carpets would reach Indian and Western markets." His grandfather, Munshi Aziz Bhat (1880-1950), was a prominent owner of a Silk Route enterprise, Munshi Aziz Bhat And Sons. He adds, "It traded in a number of goods, including silk, rubies, gold, and spices, with its business extending 'in all the four directions'."

Says Ajaz, "I do not see my private museum as a mausoleum of the Silk Route. I see it as heralding a fresh start. The time has come for Kargil to open itself up to Baltistan and Xinjiang again. If travellers like Roman and Anne can make the travel happen again, why can't we, who were to the Silk Route what blood is to a body?"

Hajira Begum, the 104-year-old grandmother of the Munshi brothers, still has letters from 1933 containing details about the stocks of gold, rubies, and silk carried by the horses arriving from different directions. Says Begum, "One horse would carry 40 kg of gold dust. It used to cost ₹12 per kg. I can still smell the spices that criss-crossed these mountains."

The Munshis have already been approached by the Chinese Embassy in India for help in establishing a museum dedicated to the Silk Route. Says Ajaz, "China seems equally interested in reviving the links. They are in touch with us for the museum."

Hunderman village, the nearest Silk Route point to Kargil town, still bears a great deal of resemblance to Kashgar bazaar in China's Xinjiang. It connects Kargil to Baltistan's Skardu area in PoK, which is less than 5 km from Kargil's main market. For the families here, retelling old tales and legends about trade and travel is a popular pastime on dark winter evenings. These stories, frequently told and retold, have also played a role in sparking the current political movement seeking a renewal of the Silk Route's old linkages.

Sherine Nazir Mehdi Mohammadi, president of the Anjuman Jamiat Ullama

The time has come for Kargil to open itself up to Baltistan and Xinjiang again. If travellers like Roman and Anne can make the travel happen again, why can't we, who were to the Silk Route what blood is to a body?

AJAZ HUSSAIN MUNSHI,  
Kargil

ma Kargil, a local socio-religious group, is spearheading a campaign to reopen the Kargil-Skardu and Turtuk-Khapula routes. He says the people of Kargil are being denied their due. Says Mohammad, "People would be compelled to march towards the Line of Control (LoC) if the Kargil-Skardu and the Turtuk-Khapula roads are not reopened."

With each passing day, the movement is gaining momentum and support. Feroz Ahmad Khan, chairman of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC)-Kargil, a body set up to administer the region locally, says the time has come to take the battle to the doors of power in New Delhi.

## WhatsApp at the border

The advent of Internet and social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp have further strengthened the yearning of the local population to connect with their roots. For instance, Balti, a Tibetan language, is on the wane on the Indian side of the LoC, with only about 9,000 speakers in five villages of the Nubra Valley. But Sherine Fatima Balti, 23, a resident of Leh's Bogdang, a far-off village in the Nubra Valley, has emerged as a singing sensation for the 2.9 lakh Balti-speaking population of Baltistan on the other side of the LoC.

Says Sherine's father and a contractor, Ahmad Shah, 52, "My daughter is followed by 57,000 people on Facebook. Over 90% of her followers are from Baltistan." A comment from Manzoor Hussain Balghari and Ehsan Ali Danish, two well-known lyricists from Baltistan, on Sherine's Facebook page started an unusual musical jugalbandi (union) online. Says Shah, "Balghari and Danish now share their lyrics online with Sherine. She sings them and uploads the videos, which then go viral in Baltistan. Her songs are even aired on the local radio stations there."

In January this year, Sherine was conferred the Jammu and Kashmir State Award for Performing Arts.

Adds Shah, "Other Baltistan-based lyricists have also started sharing their lyrics for Sherine to sing." One popular song written by Balghari and sung by Sherine is about the yearning to meet a dear one. "At the end of the day, the sky meets the earth; why can't we too," go the lyrics.

Sherine's songs, 'Grifhat Sula Beik' and 'Tsertragi Jusay Jusay', are runaway hits in PoK. Sherine says, "I am the first

Balti woman to take up singing, as it is strongly discouraged by our conservative culture. One day I would like to meet my fans across the LoC."

Sherine's family, like the 12,000 other families that got divided into Jammu and Kashmir and PoK after Independence, saw the boundary redrawn after the 1971 war. And families again got divided. Says Shah, "Baltistan is just 4 km from Bogdang village. In 1971, we were part of Pakistan for six months during the war before India won us back. It took many divided families 47 years to cover this 4 km distance. Our past is painful. Opening the Turtuk-Khapula road will go a long way in healing the wounds of war here."

Today, WhatsApp helps the divided families exchange videos and see each other by cell phone. It also heightens the longing for a real reunion. For instance, the family of Ghulam Hussain, 42, a social activist, belongs to Thiyakhi village in the Nubra Valley. They became residents of India only in 1971, when the Indian Army annexed 804 sq km of territory from Gilgit-Baltistan.

Ghulam Qadir, Hussain's uncle, got separated from his family in 1971 and stayed back in Ghanche district on the other side of the LoC, while his wife remained stranded here. Says Hussain, "It took over 12 years to secure a meeting between husband and wife. Now we rely on online video conferencing to see my uncle and aunt, which is not enough." For people in nearby Bogdang village, Hussain's Thiyakhi village remained a "mini-Pakistan" for many years.

Locals want tourism to pick up at Turtuk too, like it has at the Wagah border. Says Hussain, "Opening the roads will liberate us. During the winter, it is easier to ferry vegetables from Baltistan than from Leh town."

Ironically, the twin routes of Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawla-kote that were opened in 2005 for the divided families of Jammu and Kashmir were of no use for those in Ladakh. Pakistan treats PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan as two separate entities. Says Hussain, "The bus service was limited to the divided families of PoK. So we could not avail it to reach Gilgit-Baltistan."

Kargil saw another shutdown on February 8. Since the announcement of the decision last November to open the Kartarpur Corridor between India and Pakistan, there have been three major rallies in Kargil town, with the protesters pressing for similar arrangements in this region.

Meanwhile, Anne and Roman, having successfully concluded their Silk Route adventure, have already shipped their military truck back to Germany from a Mumbai port. Says Roman reflectively, "Traditions live longer than regimes. Culturally, it will mean a great deal if people are allowed to move freely. I'm sure it will happen sooner or later."

## FROM PAGE ONE

## India revokes Pakistan's MFN status

There is "incontrovertible evidence" of Pakistan's "direct" involvement in the attack, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security that deliberated on India's response. Pakistan has denied any involvement and termed the attack "a matter of grave concern."

"The terrorists... they have made a big mistake," Mr. Modi said at an event in Delhi. "You will have to pay a very heavy price... I assure everyone that the forces behind the attack... we will bring them to justice."

India has asked its High Commissioner to Pakistan Ajay Bisaria to return to New Delhi for consultations.

"Those who committed this heinous act or supported it will be made to pay a heavy cost," Mr. Jaitley said in a statement.

The government said it would take measures to diplomatically isolate Pakistan.

## We stand by the government: Rahul

He was accompanied by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and former Defence Minister A.K. Antony. The Congress Core Committee met at UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi's residence to discuss the party's strategy on the attack. The Congress will send a delegation of senior leaders to Jammu and Kashmir in coming days. Former J&K Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad is likely to leave for Pulwama on Saturday to take stock of the situation.

Calling it an attack on India's soul, Mr. Gandhi said the forces behind the attack should not feel that India would forget the deaths of its men. "No force, no amount of hatred, no amount of anger can harm the love and affection that our country is built on," he said.

Mr. Gandhi refused to answer a question on the comments by many Minis-

ters blaming the Opposition and peaceniks. "I don't want to get into these comments. I am very clear, I am hurt and every single Indian is hurt," he said.

Dr. Singh also reiterated the need to stand by the government in this tough time and not to raise "contentious issues". "...Today is a day of mourning, our country has lost 40 jawans. Our foremost duty is to convey to the families that we are with them. In condemning the act of terror, I also want to say that we will never compromise with terrorism," he said.

Mr. Gandhi later went to the Palam airport when the mortal remains of the CRPF personnel were flown in.

The CPI(M) Polit Bureau headed by party general secretary Sitaram Yechury said violence was not the answer to resolve issues that required the engagement of all stakeholders in the State.

## CJI blames lawyers for delay in listing petitions

The court under the CJI has devised a mechanism by which cases are listed the very same week they are filed. However, this particular lawyer began to complain that the registry was not listing his case.

To this, the Chief Justice replied that the registry might not be at fault. The lapse in some cases lies with the lawyers, too. They do not cure defects in their petitions on time for an early hearing. It was in this context, he mentioned the state of the Rafale case. "The other side [lawyers] are not so innocent," he said.

In connection with the Rafale case, the Chief Justice said that instead of correcting the defects, these petitioners "go to the media and claim wide publicity."

There is no word about the government application filed on December 15, 2018, for a correction in the Rafale judgment.

The silence that shrouds the application belies the urgency with which the government had returned to the court on December 15,

## Jawan's family photo wish remains unfulfilled

Basumatari was one of the 40 CRPF personnel killed in the attack at Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday. He had come home in January on a month-long leave. "An emergency call made him cut his holiday short. We did not imagine they would cut his life short too," Kamal said, adding that his uncle was the lone breadwinner of

the family and his death has put a question mark on the sustenance of each member.

"My aunt [Basumatari's widow Sanmati] has stopped eating and is not talking to anybody," the 20-year-old said.

Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Friday announced ₹20 lakh to Basumatari's family.

## No change in China's stance

India seeks support to designate Jaish chief Masood Azhar a global terrorist

ATUL ANEJA  
BEIJING

China on Friday reiterated that it stood by a UN ban on the Pakistan-based terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), but stopped short of reversing its stance against sanctioning its chief, Masood Azhar, as a global terrorist.

Asked to comment on China's stand on listing Azhar as a global terrorist by the UN Security Council, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said: "As for the issue of listing, I could tell you that the 1267 Committee of Security Council has a clear stipulation on the listing and procedure of the terrorist organisations."

He added: "JeM has been included in the Security



**Elusive peace:** Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang called for regional cooperation to tackle terror. ■AP

Council terrorism sanctions list. China will continue to handle the relevant sanctions issue in a constructive and responsible manner."

In a statement in New Del-

Azhar, as a designated terrorist under the 1267 Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council and to ban terrorist organisations operating from territories controlled by Pakistan."

Mr. Geng signalled that China was looking for a solution to terrorism based on "regional" engagement. "We hope relevant regional countries will cooperate to cope with the threat of terrorism and jointly uphold regional peace and stability."

Mr. Geng said, "China has noted the reports of suicide terrorist attack." "We are deeply shocked by this attack. We express deep condolences and sympathy to the injured and bereaved families."

## U.S., UN condemn heinous attack

U.S. asks Pak. to end support and safe haven provided to terror groups

SIRRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON DC

The United States has reacted strongly to the terrorist attack on the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) convoy in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The United States condemns in the strongest terms the heinous terrorist attack by a Pakistan-based terrorist group that killed over 40 Indian paramilitary forces and wounded at least 44 others. We express our deep condolences to the victims' families, the Indian government, and the Indian people for the loss of life in this brutal attack," a statement from the White House said on Thursday evening.

**Counter-terrorism steps**  
"The United States calls on Pakistan to end immediately the support and safe haven provided to all terrorist groups operating on its soil, whose only goal is to sow chaos, violence, and terror in the region. This attack only strengthens our resolve to bolster counter-terrorism cooperation and coordination between the United States and India," the statement said.

**Bring to justice**  
In New York, the United Nations Secretary-General's office has also strongly condemned the attack and offered condolences. "We call for those behind the attack to be brought to jus-



We stand with the people of India in condemning the terrorist attack in Jammu & Kashmir, and send our condolences and prayers to the victims' families. We must all stand up against these jihadists and their ideology

— TULSI GABBARD,  
Democrat and U.S. Presidential candidate

The State Department had, earlier in the day, reacted via a separate statement.

"The UN-designated Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed has claimed responsibility for this heinous act. We call on all countries to uphold their responsibilities pursuant to UN Security Council resolutions to deny safe haven and support for terrorists," the statement said.

**Stand with India'**  
"We stand with the people of India in condemning the terrorist attack in Jammu & Kashmir, and send our condolences and prayers to the victims [sic] families. We must all stand up against these jihadists and their ideology," Democratic Congresswoman and presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard said on Twitter.

"Countries must not allow terrorist groups like Jaish-e-

Malik to operate with impunity," House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel said, condemning the attack.

"The United States stands strongly with India and I send my condolences to the families of the victims," said Congressman Tom Suozzi, whose Congressional district in New York City (Queens) has a significant Indian population.

**Collective effort**  
Congressman George Holding, co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for India and Indian Americans, also offered his condolences. "The United States stands with the good people of India and the Indian government in our collective effort to end violent extremism and terrorism," Mr. Holding wrote on Twitter.

Indian-American Members of Congress also conveyed their condolences with Democratic Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal calling the attack "heartbreaking" and her colleague, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi saying, "We must all stand united against terrorism."

## Mallya launches effort to halt extradition

Decision on appeal in next 2-4 weeks

VIDYA RAM  
LONDON

Businessman Vijay Mallya has launched his attempt to halt extradition proceedings against him this week, as he lodged his application to appeal against the extradition order with the administrative court of the High Court in London.

He had been widely ex-

pected to do so after British Home Secretary Sajid Javid on February 3 signed the extradition order against him, giving him a two-week window to launch appeal proceedings. An official at the administrative court confirmed to *The Hindu* that the application had been made on Thursday.

These petitions allege that the judgment is riddled with fault lines. They want the court to re-consider its "erroneous" judgment, which relies on a "non-existent" CAG report to uphold the Rafale deal.

The petitioners contend the judgment, based on a hypothetical CAG report, was not merely a "clerical or arithmetical slip" but a substantial error. They want a "recall" of the verdict.

A decision on whether to allow the appeal will be made by a judge — via paper submissions — within the next two to four weeks.

Should that attempt not be successful, Mr. Mallya would be able to ask for an oral hearing on the application to appeal. Should he gain the right to appeal, proceedings would then take place at the High Court in the coming months. It means that Mr. Mallya will remain on bail on the extradition warrant.

Mr. Mallya had indicated his intention to appeal the decision following the December 10 judgment at Westminster Magistrates Court but had to wait to the formal signing of the order by Mr. Javid before he could launch the process. Last week, the Home Office said



that the order had been signed after careful consideration of all matters.

**Further opportunities**

Should the appeal to the High Court fail, Mr. Mallya would still have further opportunities to attempt to overturn the extradition order, by seeking permission to appeal to the Supreme Court, though that could only take place if the High Court certified that the appeal involved a "point of law of general public importance, and either the High Court or the Supreme Court gives leave for the appeal to be made."

He could also, as a last resort, attempt an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights, though such appeals are only allowed very rarely.

This week, Mr. Mallya reiterated his settlement offer. "I respectfully ask why the Prime Minister is not instructing his banks to take the money I have put on the table so he can at least claim credit for full recovery of public funds lent to Kingfisher," he wrote on Twitter.

The 2005 law was enacted to ensure accountability in governance. The Commiss-

## Why only bureaucrats on information panels, asks SC

Appoint professionals from all walks of life, court tells govt.

### RTI integral, says SC but refuses to come under it

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Central Information Commission (CIC) and State Information Commissions, the country's apex bodies entrusted to uphold the citizen's fundamental right to information, have been bastions of government employees and their retired counterparts.

This "strange phenomenon" was exposed in a 52-page judgment pronounced by a Supreme Court Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and S. Abdul Nazeer on Friday.

The apex court found that "official bias" in favour of bureaucrats and government employees was evident from the very beginning of the process for appointment of Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners.

In fact, the selection committee, which shortlists candidates for appointment, is itself composed of government employees.

**What RTI Act says**  
The court said it could not quite fathom how government employees or retired ones had consistently been found "more competent and more suitable" than eminent persons from other walks of life.

The Right to Information Act of 2005 itself requires people from varied domains to man the Commissions.

The 2005 law was enacted to ensure accountability in governance. The Commiss-

ions are meant to be the law's eyes and hands to provide information to ordinary people.

The apex court directed the government to look beyond bureaucrats and appoint professionals from "all walks of life," including eminent persons with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism as Information Commissioners.

Parliament intended that persons of eminence in public life should be taken as Chief Information Commissioners as well Information Commissioners.

Now, the Supreme Court has, for the first time, put the government on a deadline as far as filling vacancies in the Commissions.

The court directed that the process of appointment should commence at least one or two months before the retirement is due.

## Foreign Secretary briefs 25 envoys

Wants immediate action against JeM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Kicking off a global diplomatic campaign, India on Friday briefed envoys of 25 countries about the security situation following the terror attack in Pulwama. Sources said the move came after a "very strong demarche" was issued to the Pakistan High Commissioner Sohail Mahmood.

The External Affairs Ministry said that Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale briefed envoys of Japan, South Korea, the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Israel and countries from the Central Asian region and the Gulf. Diplomats of South Asian countries were among those Mr. Gokhale briefed.

"All the HoMs (Heads of Missions) were left in no doubt about the role played

by the Pakistan-based and supported Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in the terrorist attack and our demand that Pakistan cease forthwith all support and financing to terror groups operating from areas under their control," a source said.

The Ministry highlighted that Pakistan was responsible for the attack on the CRPF convoy. Mr. Gokhale highlighted that Pakistan had used terrorism as an instrument of state power.

India has also rejected Pakistan Foreign Ministry's statement which had described India's accusation as media-driven insinuation. Hours after Pakistan briefed Ambassadors of the P5 countries of the UN Security Council, India said Islamabad's demand for an investigation was "preposterous".

## The lowdown on the MFN status

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN  
NEW DELHI

*India on Friday revoked the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status bestowed on Pakistan in 1996.*

**What does Most Favoured Nation mean?**

**What does revoking MFN mean?**

Revoking it means India can levy whatever import tariffs it wants. India can now make it very expensive for Pakistan to export its goods or services to India.

**Will this hurt Pakistan?**

So far, India has only revoked the MFN status. It has not altered the import duties on Pakistan. However, if it does hike them, then this will likely have an impact on that country.

That said, the scale of that impact is questionable. India's total trade with Pakistan stood at \$2.4 billion in 2017-18, with just \$488.56 million of this being imports from Pakistan, according to Commerce Ministry data.

Revoking Pakistan's MFN status seems to be more of a symbolic move.

**BACKGROUNDER**

EC officials may defer visit to J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission's visit to Jammu and Kashmir to review the preparedness for the coming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections may get delayed owing to the Pulwama attack.

At an internal security meeting on Monday, which is to be attended by representatives of the Home Ministry, EC officials are likely to discuss the situation in the State and decide the next step. The Assembly election in J&K may also be conducted simultaneously with the Lok Sabha poll.

**Income norm relaxed for judge posts**

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, has removed the need for lawyers to have a minimum income limit of ₹7 lakh in order to be considered for appointment as High Court judges. The threshold has been relaxed for government lawyers and judicial officers who belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Communities.

The Collegium brought to light its decision in its February 12 resolution while recommending some names for judges of the Allahabad High Court.



# Trump declares emergency to build border wall

The announcement transforms a highly charged policy dispute into a fundamental confrontation over separation of powers

PETER BAKER  
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump formally declared a national emergency at the border on Friday to access billions of dollars to build a border wall that Congress refused to give him, transforming a highly charged policy dispute into a fundamental confrontation over separation of powers.

In a televised announcement in the Rose Garden, Mr. Trump said he was signing the declaration to protect the country from the flow of drugs, criminals and illegal immigrants coming across the southwestern border from Mexico, which he characterised as a profound threat to national security.

"We're going to confront the national security crisis on our southern border and we're going to do it one way or the other," he said. "It's an invasion," he added. "We have an invasion of drugs



**Walled off:** A section of reinforced U.S.-Mexico border fence seen from Tijuana, Mexico. ■ AFP

and criminals coming into our country."

#### Pooling funds

The declaration will enable Mr. Trump to divert \$3.6 billion budgeted for military

construction projects to the border wall, White House officials said.

Mr. Trump will also use more traditional presidential budgetary discretion to tap \$2.5 billion from counternarc

cotics programmes and \$600 million from a Treasury Department asset forfeiture fund.

Combined with the \$1.375 billion authorised for fencing in a spending package

passed by Congress on Thursday night, Mr. Trump would then have about \$8 billion in all to advance construction of new barriers and repairs or replacement of existing barriers along the border this year, significantly more than the \$5.7 billion that Congress refused to give him.

#### Abuse of power

The President's decision, previewed on Thursday, triggered instant condemnation from Democrats and some Republicans, who called it an abuse of power. House Democrats plan to introduce legislation to block the president's move, which could pass both houses if it wins the votes of half dozen Republican senators who have criticised the declaration. That would put the President in the position of issuing the first veto of his presidency.

If such a legislative strategy failed to stop Mr. Trump, the issue would likely be taken to court, either by congressional Democrats, liberal advocacy groups or both.

White House officials rejected critics who said Mr. Trump was creating a precedent that future Presidents could use to ignore the will of Congress.

The spending package passed by Congress on Thursday after a two-month showdown with the President included none of the \$5.7 billion that Mr. Trump demanded for 234 miles of steel wall. Instead, it provided \$1.375 billion for about 55 miles of fencing.

Mr. Trump agreed to sign the package into law anyway to avoid a second government shutdown.

White House officials said Mr. Trump would sign that spending package later on Friday or on Saturday. ■ NY TIMES

## U.S. fund manager held in Moscow

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW

A veteran U.S. investment fund manager was detained in Moscow on Friday and faces fraud charges in a case that's likely to rattle the Russian business community.

Michael Calvey, founder and senior partner at Baring Vostok equity firm, was detained alongside two other fund managers, and a Moscow court is expected to rule on their arrest later on Friday.

The Basmanniy court said Mr. Calvey, who has been working in Russia since 1994, and five other people, including two Baring Vostok

managers, face charges of fraud. The Interfax news agency cited an investigator telling the court on Friday that Mr. Calvey is suspected of embezzling 2.5 billion rubles (\$37 million) from Vostochny Bank, where Baring Vostok has a controlling stake.

Mr. Calvey has long worked in Russia and invested heavily in the country's technology sector, including in the web search giant Yandex.

Baring Vostok said in a statement that the arrests are related to the dispute over Vostochny and have no effect on its core activities.

## 'Brexit defeat in Parliament a hiccup'

The setback may affect the ongoing talks with the European Union, says Minister

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

The British government on Friday dismissed as a "hiccup" its latest parliamentary defeat over Brexit, saying it would keep trying to renegotiate its EU divorce deal just six weeks before exit day.

But senior Minister Andrea Leadsom, the leader of the House of Commons, conceded that the setback might affect the ongoing talks with the EU. "Yesterday was more of a hiccup than the disaster," she said.

She added: "The one problem with last night's vote is that it allows the EU to continue with this pretence that

they don't know what we want. And they do know what we want."

#### Irish 'backstop'

MPs on Thursday night rejected by 303 votes to 258 a motion expressing support for Prime Minister Theresa May as she seeks changes to the Irish "backstop" in her Brexit deal.

It was intended to repeat the mandate given to Ms. May on January 29, when MPs voted to find "alternative arrangements" to keeping the border with Ireland free-flowing after Brexit.

But it also took into account another vote on Janu-

ary 29, saying Britain should not leave the EU without a deal.

Hardline Brexit supporters in Ms. May's Conservative party believe this "no deal" scenario should remain an option, and so they abstained on Thursday evening.

One of those Conservative MPs, Steve Baker, said the defeat was a "storm in a teacup".

But it comes at a time of mounting frustration in both Brussels and London at Ms. May's approach, with the clock ticking down to March 29 when Britain is set to leave the EU.

On January 15, MPs overwhelmingly rejected the withdrawal deal.

She now says she wants to reopen the text to change the backstop, but has yet to come up with concrete proposals to put to the EU.



Theresa May

## + U.S. may extend March 1 tariff deadline, says Trump

American negotiator briefs Chinese President of the progress

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump said that "there's a possibility" he would extend a March 1 deadline in trade talks with China if the two countries are closing in on a deal.

Mr. Trump made the remarks on Friday after two days of high-level negotiations in Beijing. The two countries announced plans to resume talks next week in Washington.

The world's two biggest economies are locked in a dispute over China's aggressive push to challenge American technological dominance.



Dialogue would continue in Washington next week, White House said. ■ AP

The U.S. is scheduled to hike import taxes on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods on March 2. But Mr. Trump told reporters that he might extend the deadline if I see that we're close to a

deal or the deal is going in the right direction." He had made similar comments on Tuesday.

Earlier on Friday, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, who led the U.S. side, told Chinese President Xi Jinping that while there was more work to do, they had made progress.

"I hope you will continue to work hard to promote a mutually beneficial and win-win agreement," the Chinese President told Mr. Lighthizer in a meeting after the negotiations ended.

The decision to hold more talks suggested they were making progress.

## U.S. charges 2 ex-executives of Cognizant

REUTERS

WASHINGTON

The U.S. Department of Justice has announced criminal charges against two former Cognizant Technology Solutions Corp executives over corruption, and said the company will pay \$25 million to settle a related civil case.

Prosecutors said the former president Gordon Coburn and the former chief legal officer Steven Schwartz allegedly authorised an unlawful payment of \$2 million to authorities in India to obtain a permit to build a campus in the country. In a related case, the company agreed to pay

\$25 million to settle charges with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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## Pakistan gets ready to woo Saudi Crown Prince

He will begin his two-day visit today



**Grand welcome:** Commuters ride past billboards of Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Imran Khan in Islamabad. ■ AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan was rescheduling flights, blocking-off luxury hotels, and – according to one report on Friday – collecting 3,500 pigeons and colourful balloons to release during a welcome ceremony for Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin

House and the Presidency, was to be sealed off, while civil aviation authorities have been told to reschedule flights during the Prince's arrival and departure.

Authorities in the capital said two five-star hotels had been ordered to cancel all advance bookings as the rooms will be reserved for the Prince's entourage.

Islamabad is hoping to sign a raft of investment deals and other agreements during the two-day visit, which begins on Saturday and will include talks with Prime Minister Imran Khan and the powerful Army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

**Kashmir attack**  
The visit came as regional tensions spiked after Islamabad was accused of harbouring militants behind a deadly attack in Kashmir.

At least 41 paramilitary troops were killed in a suicide blast on Thursday.

The Crown Prince, who is due to visit India after Pakistan, also continues to be tarnished by his alleged links to the brutal murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Saudi Arabia is reportedly preparing to sign a record investment package with Pakistan, including a \$10-billion refinery and oil complex for the strategic Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea.

## NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM

Tender Notice no. 23AC/393/Parking/Tender/Quotation/2018-II was published in various Newspapers on 16/01/2019 for allotment of Cycle/Scooter/Motor Cycle-Car-Bus-Truck-Tempo parking contracts at various locations as per NIT, to be opened on 18/02/2019 in which following amendments have been made: E-tenders of two parking sites of Okhla Railway Station mentioned at SN 2 and 3 i.e. notice no. Parking 02-2019 & Parking 03-2019, have been withdrawn due to administrative reasons. Rest contents of the NIT will remain same. Bid No. 23AC/393/Parking/Tender/Quotation/2018-II

482/19

**Office of Superintending Engineer, 1<sup>st</sup> Circle.**  
Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department, Mandi-175001  
Ph. 01905-224129, Fax:01905-221576, E-mail:hp-man1@nic.in

### "Notice Inviting Tender"

The Superintending Engineer, 1<sup>st</sup> Circle, HP.PWD, Mandi on behalf of Governor of H.P. the item rate bids were invited in 1<sup>st</sup> call vide letter No. PW-SE-I-Tender-107-PMGSY-MD-I-B-II-16-17-1" Call/Publication/18- 19657-19705 dated 29-10-2018 & corrigendum No. PW-SE-I-Tender-107-PMGSY-B-II-16-17-1" call/2018- 21263-21320 dated 27-11-2018 and opened on 19-12-2018 but no bid received for this work. Item rate bids were invited in 2<sup>nd</sup> call vide letter No. PW-SE-I-Tender-107-PMGSY-MD-I-B-II-16-17-1" call/2018- 21263-21320 dated 27-11-2018 and opened on 19-12-2018 but no bid received for this work. Item rate bids were invited in 3<sup>rd</sup> call vide letter No. PW-SE-I-Tender-107-PMGSY-MD-I-B-II-16-17-1" call/2018- 21263-21320 dated 27-11-2018 and opened on 19-12-2018 but no bid received for this work are re-invited in 3<sup>rd</sup> call and may be read as under:-

Sr. No	District	Package No.	Name of the work	Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh)		Total Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Period of Completion (In Days)	Bid security (Rs. Lakh) (2% of Total Cost)	Eligible Class of Contractor/Firm
				Constr-uction	Mainte-nance				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1.	Mandi	HP-08-257A	Construction of 19.75 mtr. span R.C.C. T-beam Bridge over Sakaray Khad at R.D. 6/320 on Amrebar Bunga Road Km. 0/0 to 9/09 under PMGSY (Batch-II, 2016-17) Stage-I, Distr. Mandi (H.P.) (Sub Head-Construction of Sub Structure, Super Structure and approaches) Package No. HP-08-257A	67.49	-	67.49	365	1.35	Class-C & B

Note:- The rates to be quoted shall be exclusive of GST and GST on prevalent rates will be added to the value offered by the bidder separately.

2. Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 16-02-2019

3. Cost of Bid Form: Rs. 200/- only (non-refundable) in form of Demand Draft in favour of the Executive Engineer, Mandi Division No. HP.PWD, Mandi.

4. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: www.pmgstenders.gov.in. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the valid digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

\* Non-registered bidders may submit bids; however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

5. Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit (a) original Demand Draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security in approved form and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4B(a) (ii) of ITB with Superintendenting Engineer, 1<sup>st</sup> Circle, HP.PWD., Mandi (address and details of office where to be submitted), on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the Bid, either by registered post or by hand.

6. Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-tendering: 07-03-2019 up-to 1030 Hours.

7. The site for the work is available.

8. Only online submission of bids is permitted; therefore, bids must be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The technical qualification part of the bids will be opened online at 110

## MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	35,809	-0.19
US Dollar	71.23	-0.08
Gold	33,310	0.93
Brent oil	65.64	2.77

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	350.15	1.05
Asian Paints	1393.60	-5.60
Axis Bank	686.60	-8.40
Bajaj Auto	2825.95	2.85
Bajaj FinServ	6025.45	-10.15
Bajaj Finance	2561.10	-48.10
Bharti Airtel	304.60	3.80
BPCL	327.85	12.20
Cipla	540.55	-2.35
Coal India	219.75	2.75
Dr Reddy's Lab	2563.35	-103.90
Eicher Motors	20234.10	217.70
GAIL (India)	317.75	9.80
Grasim Ind	706.75	-12.15
HCL Tech.	1057.25	-4.05
HDFC	1874.90	-25.80
HDFC Bank	2100.65	-9.55
Hero MotoCorp	2696.45	-79.75
Hindalco	186.60	-5.15
HPLC	216.35	-4.35
Hind Unilever	1772.80	-12.25
Indiabulls HFL	639.35	-17.25
ICICI Bank	342.15	-1.80
IndusInd Bank	1509.50	-8.00
Bharti Infra	306.90	9.70
Infosys	741.95	1.90
Indian Oil Corp	125.45	0.80
ITC	280.10	2.20
JSW Steel	266.90	-13.75
Kotak Bank	1283.65	-3.15
L&T	1243.10	15.50
M&M	627.55	-6.85
Maurti Suzuki	6930.05	-87.45
NTPC	136.25	5.00
ONGC	135.00	2.85
PowerGrid Corp	181.50	6.55
Reliance Ind	1244.45	20.25
State Bank	262.95	-4.15
Sun Pharma	422.90	-18.00
Tata Motors	161.65	1.80
Tata Steel	467.50	-15.05
TCS	2029.70	-14.90
Tech Mahindra	799.65	-6.25
Titan	1039.00	-3.25
UltraTech Cement	3439.45	-55.45
UPL	818.35	-2.70
Vedanta	147.30	-4.45
Wipro	376.10	1.00
YES Bank	219.00	-2.25
Zee Entertainment	431.35	-2.10

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.02	71.34
Euro	80.08	80.44
British Pound	91.07	91.49
Japanese Yen (100)	64.30	64.59
Chinese Yuan	10.49	10.54
Swiss Franc	70.60	70.92
Singapore Dollar	52.30	52.54
Canadian Dollar	53.43	53.70
Malaysian Ringgit	17.38	17.47

## Source: Indian Bank

## BULLION RATES CHENNAI

Retail Silver (1g)	43.1	(42.8)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3173	(3145)

## IN BRIEF

SEBI waiver for Wipro's buy-back offer	MUMBAI
The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has granted an exemption to Wipro to enable the firm to launch a buy-back offer. The exemption was necessary as the firm is in the midst of a scheme of amalgamation wherein four wholly owned subsidiaries are being merged with the technology major. SEBI rules state that a firm cannot go ahead with a buy-back offer if any scheme of amalgamation is pending.	

Rationalising ATR	MUMBAI
The past few months saw the airline withdraw some of its domestic and international routes and redeploy capacity on more profitable routes. This included "rationalisation of loss-making ATR network, moving short-haul international opera-	

Auto parts maker Minda to merge with Harita Seating	MUMBAI
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# Jet Airways may raise ₹6,000 cr. from aircraft sale, investors

Banks may not extend more than ₹1,000 cr. to address ₹8,500 cr. funding gap

## MANOJ SAHA

MUMBAI

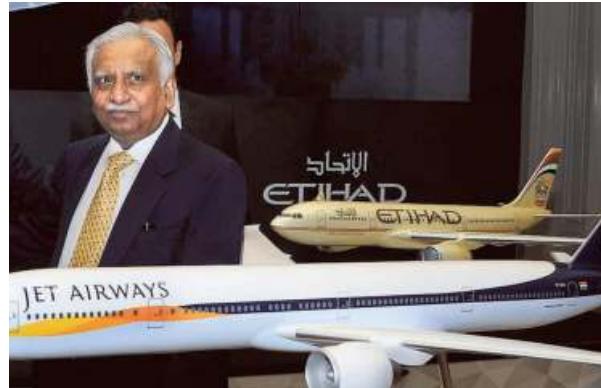
Debt-laden Jet Airways, which approved a provisional resolution plan on Thursday, will need to raise ₹3,000 crore by selling (and then leasing back) some of its aircraft, and a new investor would have chip in with another ₹3,000 crore, sources with direct knowledge of the plan told *The Hindu*.

The Jet Airways board, which had approved the bank-led provisioning resolution plan, had estimated the funds requirement to be ₹8,500 crore.

## Debt-equity conversion

Banks are set to take controlling stake in the airline by owning II.4 crore shares, or over 50% stake, for ₹1 by converting a part of their debt into equity.

"Banks will not extend more than ₹1,000 crore, as part of the resolution plan," said a source.



**Stake touchdown:** After the recast plan, Naresh Goyal's holding will fall to 25% and Etihad's to 12%. ■ RAMESH SHARMA

Jet has a fleet of 123 aircraft, including 16 that it owns – 10 Boeing 777, three Airbus A 330 and three Boeing 737. The rest are on lease. Of the 16 aircraft, six would be sold and leased back, as per the proposal.

Once the provisional debt recast plan is implemented, banks would own over 50% stake in the carrier while its promoter Naresh Goyal's

stake would fall to 25% from 51%. Similarly, foreign partner Etihad's stake would fall to about 12%. After the new investor comes in, Mr. Goyal's stake would further fall to about 12%. The public and institutional investors hold 25% stake in the airline.

The resolution plan would be presented to the consortium of lenders, overseeing the committee of the Indian Bankers' Association, board of directors of Etihad Airways and promoter Naresh Goyal, for consideration.

The plan is subject to the company receiving requisite approvals from shareholders at its EGM to be held on February 21, 2019.

## Capacity growth to resume, says Jet Airways

'Current liquidity challenges addressed'



Vinay Dube

tions from wide-body capacity to more profitable 737 flying, concentration of capacity, enhancing density and hub connectivity," the CEO explained.

The withdrawal of these routes led to the airline witnessing 6.9% fewer passengers in the third quarter (Q3) of financial year 2019 compared with the year-earlier period. The airline reported a loss of ₹732 crore during Q3. The airline, however, did not provide details of the bank-led provisional resolution plan.

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## IN BRIEF

**Ashwani Lohani takes charge as Air India CMD**

**NEW DELHI**  
Retired technocrat Ashwani Lohani took charge as the chairman and managing director (CMD) of Air India on Friday. Mr. Lohani took charge in presence of recently appointed Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola and senior officials of the national carrier. This is Mr. Lohani's second tenure as Air India chief. PTI

**5 of 55 mines auctioned are operational: Minister**

**NEW DELHI**  
The government on Friday said of the 55 mines that were auctioned in the last three years, five mineral blocks had become operational and two to three more mines would start operations by next month-end. "In the last three years, we have auctioned around 55 mines. Around five (mineral blocks) have been operational. Next fiscal, another 15 mines are going to be operational," Mines Secretary Anil Gopishankar Mukim told reporters. PTI

**Alembic gets nod for ophthalmic solution**

**NEW DELHI**  
Drug firm Alembic Pharmaceuticals said on Friday it had received approval from the USFDA for Moxifloxacin Ophthalmic Solution, used for treatment of bacterial conjunctivitis caused by susceptible strains of certain organisms. The approved product is therapeutically equivalent to the reference listed drug product Vigamox Ophthalmic Solution USP, 0.5%, of ovatis Pharmaceuticals Corporation. PTI

## Whistle-blower makes fresh charges in Fortis matter

Claims in letter to SEBI that real beneficiaries of funds transfer were top officials managing businesses of Religare Group

**ASHISH RUKHAIYAR**  
MUMBAI

The Fortis Hospitals matter, in which the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) ordered the company to refund over ₹400 crore in December 2018, has taken a new turn, with the regulator receiving a complaint alleging that the real beneficiaries of the money were some of the top officials managing different businesses of the Religare Group. Initially, the money was believed to have moved from the listed entity to a subsidiary and thereafter to three borrower entities.

In a letter submitted to SEBI on January 17, a whistle-blower has named brothers Gurpreet Singh Dhillon and Gurkirat Singh Dhillon, along with Sunil Godhwani and Sanjay Godhwani, among others, as the main benefici-

aries of the fund transfer. Mr. Sanjay Godhwani is the brother of Mr. Sunil Godhwani, the former chairman of Religare Enterprises. Mr. Gurpreet Singh Dhillon is the CEO of Singapore-based Religare Health Trusts. Both, Mr. Gurpreet Singh Dhillon and Mr. Gurkirat Singh Dhillon are sons of Shabnam Dhillon and Gurinder Singh, the head of Radha Soami Sat-Sang Beas.

**Loans to entities**

This assumes significance as the SEBI probe that was initiated in February 2018 was based on reports that the promoters of Fortis Healthcare took out ₹500 crore from the company.

The SEBI probe further found that Fortis Hospitals had given loans to three borrower entities - Best Healthcare, Fern Healthcare and

**Shady cuts:** It was alleged that the ₹155 cr. advance received by Best Healthcare went to the Dhillon brothers. ■REUTERS

Modland Wears. The ultimate beneficiaries of the three entities, as per the SEBI probe, were RHC Holding and Religare Finvest, with the former being controlled by Malvinder Singh and Shivinder Singh, the original

promoters of Fortis Healthcare.

The whistle-blower, in the letter, alleged that an advance of ₹155 crore that Best Healthcare received was disbursed to the Dhillon brothers. Further, Modland Wears

is also alleged to have transferred ₹133.36 crore to a few people, including the Dhillon brothers. Meanwhile, Fern Healthcare, which received ₹114 crore from Fortis, transferred the money to the Godhwani brothers and Dhillon brothers, among others.

*The Hindu* has reviewed a copy of the whistle-blower's letter to SEBI.

An email query sent to Religare Health Trust on Thursday remained unanswered till the time of going to press, while attempts to contact Mr. Sunil Godhwani proved futile. "While one cannot deny sensationalism through anonymous or whistle-blower complaints route, in some cases, SEBI in the past was able to identify possible fraud and other violations only because of information submitted by third parties," said Sumit Agrawal, founder,

RegStreet Law, who had earlier served as a law officer with SEBI. "SEBI usually wants these complaints to run it past by audit committees of listed companies as a first-check," added Mr. Agrawal.

"Unfortunately, SEBI investigation has conveniently forgotten and overlooked to collect and put out information about the dealings of well-connected Satsang Beas and moneys flowing from the Singh Brothers to the Dhillon family via an assortment of mysterious financial instruments," the whistle-blower's letter stated.

"To the best of my information, around ₹488 crore has been extended to the Dhillon family as loans whereas around ₹70 crore has been extended to the Godhwani family," the letter stated.

**Kirloskar Oil to expand globally**

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI

Kirloskar Oil Engines Ltd. (KOEL) has drawn up plans to expand its global footprint by 50% in two years, said a top official.

"Currently, we are present in 40 countries and our target is to reach 60 countries soon," said Sanjeev M. Nimkar, chief operating officer, Kirloskar Oil Engines Ltd. "All our efforts are directed at increasing the market share in select few markets to top 10."

As part of its plans for 2021, KOEL had set itself a revenue target of ₹5,500 crore. "Last year, we reported ₹2,800 crore and this year, it would hit ₹3,800 crore. We would be investing ₹200 crore toward strengthening back-end processes," he said.

## Daimler India achieves break-even in trucks

Cost reduction, increase in sales help company cross the milestone

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI

Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV), the Indian arm of Daimler AG, has achieved, for the first time last year, a break-even in the trucks business, said a top executive.

"It was a 10-year challenge. We have come a long way from being a greenfield project to full blown unit," said Satyakam Arya, CEO and MD, DICV.

"We have achieved the break-even in trucks business within six years after the market launch of BharatBenz. For the first time, an automotive OEM has done it in India. The break-even was achieved due to cost reduction and increase in sales last

year," he said.

DICV sales grew 35% in 2018 by selling 22,532 trucks against 16,717 units in 2017. The growth was attributed to the strength of BharatBenz product portfolio and expansion of pan-India sales and service network to over

180 touch points from 130.

**Doubling network**

Over the next two-three years, DICV plans to almost double its distribution network to 350 outlets and would digitise its entire customer interface, he said.

**In for long haul:** The company attributes growth to the strength of BharatBenz product portfolio. ■BIJOY GHOSH

Asked about the prospects for 2019, he said: "In second quarter, we have elections in the country. And this normally leads to slow down of demand because buyers will postpone their decisions. We expect the first half of the year to be slower than 2018. In the second half, we expect pre-buying effect of BS-VI. In our terms, the year will be mostly flat or little amount of growth."

Last year, DICV exported 7,054 trucks against 6,553 trucks to 50 countries, marking an increase of 8%. Since 2013, more than 20,000 vehicles have been exported. Last year, DICV's Chennai plant crossed one lakh units in production, he said.

**Gujarat facility**

Purchase to make firm 'largest' rabies vaccine maker

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD

Vaccine maker Bharat Biotech is acquiring Chiron Behring Vaccines Pvt. Ltd. from GlaxoSmithKline for an undisclosed amount.

An agreement was signed today, Krishna Ella, CMD, Bharat Biotech, told the media here on Friday. He said following the acquisition, Bharat Biotech, which has a capacity to make 10 million doses, will emerge as the world's largest rabies vaccine manufacturer.

**Krishna Ella**

cine manufacturing facility at Ankleshwar in Gujarat, Bharat Biotech would operate Chiron Behring, which has a headcount of 250, as a separate company. It, however, would launch the Chiron Behring product un-

der a new brand name in 3-4 months.

Chiron Behring Vaccines is a WHO pre-qualified manufacturer of rabies vaccines, eligible for supplies to UN agencies and has product registrations in more than 20 countries, according to a statement.

Bharat Biotech, Mr. Ella said, would be reorienting the strategy of Chiron Behring to focus on the India market first where there is a shortage of rabies vaccine, of about 10 million doses a year. The country's requirement is 35 million and on an average, the price per dose was ₹200.



# NAVA CHHATTISGARH

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING

**2008**

4400 acre agricultural land acquired from 1700 farmers and tribals of 10 villages in Bastar by the state govt for TATA to setup a plant

**2016**

TATA writes to the state govt informing about its inability and goes back on the commitment to setup the plant

**2018**

Shri Bhupesh Baghel is sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh

**2018-19**

Within 10 days of assuming office, the new govt decides to return this acquired land back to its rightful owners

'Lohandiguda has led the way and set an example for the country'



**BHUPESH BAGHEL**  
Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh



**ProActive  
ProPeople**

# Selectors name virtual World Cup squad for Australia series

All the top guns, including Kohli and Bumrah, will turn out for India in the build-up to the quadrennial extravaganza

## AUS IN INDIA

G. VISWANATH  
MUMBAI

The senior National selection committee on Friday virtually named India's World Cup squad for the five-match ODI series against Australia from March 2 to 13.

Over the last 15 months, the selection committee, chaired by M.S.K. Prasad and more significantly skipper Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri, gave themselves the opportunity to try out some fringe players in South Africa, England, Australia and New Zealand. Notable among these is left-arm seamer Khaleel Ahmed.

But, from the 15-member squad announced for the ODI series against Australia, it is evident that Khaleel, who started his India stint in the Asia Cup in Dubai, is not in the scheme of things for the quadrennial event in England.

### Not ready to tinker

The other indication from the squad announced is that the men who matter are not ready to tinker with the squad for what is an important series before the World



**Back in action:** India skipper Virat Kohli and fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah return for the limited-over series against Australia after a well-deserved rest. ■ REUTERS

Cup which begins in May.

India's top guns in the batting and bowling department will be seen in action in full strength against the Aaron Finch-led Australians.

The only change that will

be seen in the ODI series is Bhuvneshwar Kumar replacing seamer Siddharth Kaul in the last three matches. "It's good to keep the nucleus around because there is not much international cricket

for the team before the World Cup," said Prasad.

Another development in the ODI squad is Tamil Nadu's wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik making way for Delhi's Rishabh Pant.

## The squads

**T20Is:** Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma (vice-capt.), Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Dinesh Karthik, M.S. Dhoni (wk), Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Vijay Shankar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Umesh Yadav, Siddharth Kaul, and Mayank Markande

### THE DATES

February 24: Visakhapatnam

February 27: Bengaluru

Both matches begin at 7 p.m.

**ODIs:** Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma (vice-capt.), Shikhar Dhawan, Ambati Rayudu, Kedar Jadhav, M.S. Dhoni (wk), Hardik Pandya, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Vijay Shankar, Rishabh Pant, Siddharth Kaul, and K.L. Rahul.

**Note:** Siddharth Kaul will be replaced by Bhuvneshwar Kumar for the final three ODIs.



**THE DATES**  
March 2: Hyderabad  
March 5: Nagpur  
March 8: Ranchi  
March 10: Mohali  
March 13: New Delhi

**All matches start at 1.30 p.m.**

tional talent, played three ODIs against the West Indies last October.

Prasad stressed that Pant is a left-hander and that his best batting position would be ascertained after discussions with the team management. Sunil Gavaskar feels that Pant is a must for India's World Cup campaign.

Prasad said that Kaul has done well in the opportunities given to him and the committee is comfortable with this. "We have seen Khaleel in the last two series against Australia and New Zealand. We would like to watch Kaul now. Also Vijay Shankar's performance in the recent series has changed a bit of the dynamics."

A new face in the Twenty20 squad is leg-spinner Mayank Markande.

The 21-year-old Punjab cricketer has played seven First Class matches, 22 limited-over matches and 18 T20 matches and picked up 99 wickets.

Considering the recent workload, the selection committee has decided to rest Kuldeep Yadav for the T20I series while Bhuvneshwar Kumar has been rested for the T20I series and the first two ODIs.

that Karthik has been given opportunities and that Pant has to be given his due.

### Exceptional talent

The Delhi left-hander, who has proved to be an excep-

## I always expect big things from myself: Pant

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

Rishabh Pant was one of the success stories of the Australian series, as the dependable wicket-keeper and swashbuckling left-hander contributed big time.

The 21-year-old Delhi Capitals player is looking forward to delivering the first IPL trophy for home fans this season and gave an insight into his thoughts in a free-wheeling chat here on Friday.

Do you see a bright future for yourself, considering you were second only to Cheteshwar Pujara in runs scored and were exemplary as a wicket-keeper?

I am focused on the present and not thinking much about the future right now. I want to keep improving every day. That is what I am looking to achieve. Every day when I get on to the field, I am learning from everyone in the team.

Did you expect to be this good in Australia?  
I always expect big things



Rishabh Pant... packing a punch. ■ KAMESH SRINIVASAN

from myself. The main thing that I do is focus on the process. That is what is helping me in every situation.

### Who cultivated this habit?

My coach Tarak Sinha has always told me to focus on the process, rather than the results.

Personal achievements are good, but it is more important if you can see how well you can contribute to the team to make it better.

The secret to how you revel in all formats of the game?

My coach has always maintained that good basics are important, irrespective of you playing a T20, one-day or Test match. The most interesting thing is to play for India. Any format is fine. I like every form of cricket.

What about the influence of Virat Kohli?

Kohli is influencing cricketers all over the world. His work ethic, to be at the gym, even on an off-day; if he can do that as a legend, for me he is a legend, why can't we do that?

What does Virat tell you?

One thing he always says is that you don't have to play 100 matches to gain experience. You can watch others play in two matches and learn from their experience. He is very friendly, loves to be happy.

## The way Kohli leads is inspiring, says Warne



**Proud moment:** Kohli with the Sportstar Aces award presented to him by Warne earlier this week. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

SHAYAN ACHARYA  
MUMBAI

Spin legend Shane Warne was full of praise for India captain Virat Kohli who won the Sportsman of the Year (Cricket) Sportstar Aces Award.

"The way he leads the team is inspiring," Warne said.

His love for Test cricket is something near to my heart. I love all forms of the game but Test cricket is very important because of its history and tradition.

"I can't think anyone else better than (him) as the sportsman of the year," said Warne, the brand ambassador of Rajasthan Royals.

## A surprise for Markande

RAYAN ROZARIO  
MYSURU

Everything seems to be going well for Mayank Markande. The 21-year-old came up with a five-for against England Lions and that probably set the ball rolling in his favour.

"Hard work always pays," he said after the match. And it paid big time for the Punjab youngster in the form of a maiden call up to the Indian T20 squad. It certainly must have come as a huge surprise for Markande, who made his First Class debut this season.

"It has been a great journey for me," he said. "I never really thought the past year would turn things around for me. I learnt something from Shabbaz (Na-deem) and Jalaj (Saxena) in this match," he said.

"Rahul Dravid has also played a big role. He is a legend and a huge motivator in my stint with the emerging team. He does not allow anybody to think negative and it has helped me a great deal," he added.



Mayank Markande.  
■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

## Lions dance to Markande's tune

Leg-spinner's five-wicket haul helps India-A to an innings victory

## LIONS IN INDIA

RAYAN ROZARIO  
MYSURU

The pitch had demons in it and leg-spinner Mayank Markande (five for 31) maintained a tight line to bowl India-A to an innings-and-68-runs win over England Lions on the penultimate day of the second 'Test' at the SDNRW grounds here on Friday.

Seventeen wickets fell on Thursday and the home team was confident of wrapping up the series 1-0 as it had three spinners — Shabbaz Na-deem, Markande and Jalaj Saxena to back the batsmen, who had laid a solid foundation.

The trio spun the ball viciously and the England Lions batsmen, barring opener Ben Duckett (50, 61b, 4x4, 2x6) and Lewis Gregory (44, 49b, 6x4, 1x6), were all at sea.

### The slide begins

Saxena started the slide when he trapped Max Holden plumb in front. But he also came in for some stick from Duckett, who hammered him for 16 runs in an over. However, Saxena had his revenge by trapping Duckett leg-before later in a similar fashion.

Further, the introduction of Markande spelt doom for the Lions as the wrist spin-



**Happy bunch:** India-A won the second 'Test' against England Lions in Mysuru to clinch the series 1-0. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

ner mixed his pace well. He bowled a few slowly in the air and some a little faster, to finish with a deserving five-wicket haul.

The visitors required 224 for the day to make India-A bat again but failed to read the line and length of Markande and returned to the dressing room disappointed.

"They played like cubs and not like professionals. We did not come here for a no-show," said Neil Fish, an English spectator.

**Top-class spin**  
Sam Billings, the Lions skipper, admitted that most of his guys had not played top-class spin before. "Markande bowled an impressive spell

and Nadeem proved his class as well. Also, Navdeep Saini showed us how to bowl reverse swing. The Indians are tough guys and truly top-class. They thoroughly deserved to win," he added.

Karun Nair, who took some brilliant catches, said the team bowled as a unit and that it was Markande's day. "It was a great experience for me and I was happy that the wicket turned out to be pretty helpful. I just bowled in the right areas and it clicked," said Markande.

But it was Abhinav Easwaran who walked away with the Man-of-the-Match award for his classy first-innings knock of 117. **The scores:**

## Vihari's ton sets up an exciting final day

He has now scored centuries in three consecutive innings in the competition

## IRANI CUP

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN  
NAGPUR

Hanuma Vihari's monumental effort (180 not out) and his double century stand (229) for the third wicket with captain Ajinkya Rahane (87) enabled Rest of India set a challenging target for Ranji champion Vidarbha in the Irani Cup at the VCA stadium here on Friday.

Riding on Vihari's century and half-centuries from Rahane and Shreyas Iyer, Rest of India declared its second innings at 374 for three which meant Vidarbha needed 280 runs to defend its crown. At stumps on the penultimate day, the host had reached 37 for one.

On a challenging pitch which needed loads of patience and technical expertise to survive, it was an appropriate response from Vihari, who was willing to graft and systematically wear down the threat of Vidarbha spinners with eleventh-hour adventurous shots.

For Vihari the sweep — both conventional and reverse — was the productive shot which he often essayed against the spinners and he wasn't averse either in coming down the track to play the inside out shots to pick up boundaries.

In the first session, during which the batting was less



**Doing it again:** Hanuma Vihari hammered his second century of the match to help Rest of India fight back. ■ S. SUDARSHAN

precarious as in the previous three days, Vihari began positively with a boundary off Sarvate and played a few forcing shots to dominate the bowling.

Vihari lofted Whakare over long on to bring up his second century of the match and became only the second batsman after Shikhar Dhawan to score centuries in both innings in Irani Cup. He now has scored centuries in three consecutive innings in the competition, a rarefeat.

Captain Rahane was also assured in the middle but played second fiddle to Vihari.

Rahane's footwork against spinners was exemplary and he played a few pleasing shots on both sides of the wicket. Rahane looked set for a century but a rare lapse in concentration saw him step out for a big shot against Sarvate and wicket-keeper Wadkar did the rest.

The situation was tailor-made for Shreyas Iyer (61 not out) who put the tireless attack to sword. The Mumbai batsman raced to his fifty by playing the big shots and gave his captain the luxury of declaring the innings well before he had anticipated.

Ankit Rajpoot cleaned up Faiz Fazal with an inswinger in the opening over to give Rest of India a great start. However, R. Sanjay and Aditya Taide took the score to 37 without any further loss.

**The scores:** Rest of India — 1st innings: 330.

Vidarbha — 1st innings: 425.

Rest of India — 2nd innings: Mayank Agarwal c Kale b Wakhare 27, Anmolpreet Singh c Wakhare b Sarvate 6, Hanuma Vihari (not out) 180, A. Rahane st Wadkar b Sarvate 87, S. Iyer (not out) 61; Extras (b-8, lb-2, nb-2, w-1); Total (for three wickets dec'd in 107 overs) 374.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-25, 3-46, 3-275.

**Vidarbha bowling:** Sarvate 39-7-141-2, Gurbani 8-36-0, Wakhare 18-2-60-1, Karnewar 26-7-62-0, Sanjay 1-0-8-0, Taide 9-24-0.

**Vidarbha — 2nd innings:** F. Faizal b Rajpoot 0, R. Sanjay (batting) 17, A. Taide (batting) 16; Extras (b-4); Total (for one wkt in 16 overs): 37.

**Fall of wicket:** 1-0.

**Rest of India bowling:** Rajpoot 4-10-1, Tanveer Haq 2-0-9-0, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja 6-1-13-0, Chahar 4-3-10.

## TV PICKS

**New Zealand vs Bangladesh:** 2nd ODI, SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 a.m.  
**NBA:** Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 a.m.  
**Irani Cup:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.  
**South Africa vs Sri Lanka:** 1st Test, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m.  
**I-League:** Star Sports 3, 2 p.m.  
**Pro Volleyball League:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 7 p.m.  
**ISL:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



Barcelona extends Valverde's contract

Spanish champion Barcelona announced on Friday it has extended the contract of coach Ernesto Valverde for another season with the option of one more. Valverde's previous contract would have expired at the end of this season. AFP



Pelicans overcome Westbrook triple

Julius Randle (jersey no. 30 in pic) finished with 33 points and 11 rebounds as New Orleans Pelicans overcame another triple double from Russell Westbrook to beat Oklahoma City Thunder 131-122 on Thursday. The victory could prove costly for Pelicans as all-star Anthony Davis left the game with a shoulder injury at the end of the first half. **Other results:** Orlando Magic 127 bt Charlotte Hornets 89; New York Knicks 106 bt Atlanta Hawks 91. AFP

## Nishikori storms into the quarterfinals

ROTTERDAM Japan's Kei Nishikori carved out a comfortable 6-1, 6-4 win over Latvian Ernests Gulbis on Thursday to power into the Rotterdam Open quarterfinals. Asia's top player, the World No. 7, needed an hour and a quarter to advance as he booked a third victory against former French Open semifinalist Gulbis, who was a lucky loser at the Ahoy Arena. Earlier, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga won a lengthy opening set and then accelerated past Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor for a quarterfinal place. **The results (second round):** Kei Nishikori bt Ernest Gulbis 6-1, 6-4; Damir Dzumhur bt Milkhaul Kukushkin 6-4, 7-6(3); Daniil Medvedev bt Fernando Verdasco 6-2, 7-5; Jo-Wilfried Tsonga bt Tallon Griekspoor 7-6(5), 6-1.

## Sindhu and Saina set up a dream final

Lakshya stuns Kashyap, looks for revenge in men's final against Sourabh



Powering through: Saina Nehwal got past Vaishnavi Bhale in straight games. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

## du Plessis and bowlers put SA in control

Sri Lanka's left-arm spinner Embuldeniya takes a five-for in maiden Test

## LANKA IN SA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE DURBAN

South Africa took three Sri Lankan wickets in three overs to finish strongly on the third day of the first Test here on Friday.

Sri Lanka, needing 304 to win, was 83 for three at close. The tourists started promisingly with captain Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimanne putting on 42 for the first wicket but both were out in the space of five balls. Kul Mendis fell soon after.

The flurry of wickets negated Sri Lanka's turnaround after it took the last five South African wickets for just eight runs. Left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya, 22, playing in his first Test, took five for 66 as South Africa was bowled

out for 259 in the second innings. South Africa was on course for a more challenging target with captain du Plessis and Philander looking solid

in a sixth-wicket partnership of 60. But Embuldeniya, who bowled with impressive control, took Philander's wicket to trigger a collapse.

## SCOREBOARD SOUTH AFRICA VS SRI LANKA, FIRST TEST

**South Africa — 1st innings:** 235.

**Sri Lanka — 1st innings:** 191.

**South Africa — 2nd innings:** D.

Elgar c & b Embuldeniya 35, A.

Markram c Mendis b Rajitha 28,

H. Amla c Thirimanne b V.

Fernando 16, T. Bavuma lbw b

Embuldeniya 3, F. du Plessis

lbw b V. Fernando 90, Q. de

Kock lbw b Embuldeniya 55, V.

Philander b Embuldeniya 18, K.

Maharaj b V. Fernando 4, K.

Rabada c Dickwella b Embuldeniya 0, D. Steyn b V. Fernando 1,

D. Olivier (not out) 2; Extras

(lb-2, nb-3, w-2); Total (in

79.1 overs): 259.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-42, 2-42,

3-52.

**South Africa bowling:** Steyn 4-

0-19, 0-19, Philander 8-3-13-1,

Maharaj 4-0-14-0, Rabada 7-1-

28-1, Olivier 4-3-3-1, Markram

1-0-4-0.

**Sri Lanka bowling:** Lakmal 20-5-52-0, V. Fernando 17-2-71-4, Rajitha 13-1-54-1, Embuldeniya 26-3-66-5, Dhananjaya de Silva 2-0-8-0, O. Fernando 1-0-6-0.

**Sri Lanka — 2nd innings:** D. Karunaratne lbw b Philander 20, L. Thirimanne c du Plessis b Rabada 21, O. Fernando (batting) 28, K. Mendis c de Kock b Olivier 0, K. Perera (batting) 12; Extras (lb-2); Total (for three wkts. in 28 overs): 83.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-42, 2-42,

3-52.

**South Africa bowling:** Steyn 4-

0-19, 0-19, Philander 8-3-13-1,

Maharaj 4-0-14-0, Rabada 7-1-

28-1, Olivier 4-3-3-1, Markram

1-0-4-0.

## NATL. BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GUWAHATI

P.V. Sindhu and Saina Nehwal won their semifinal in contrasting fashion to set up a mouth-watering summit showdown at the 83rd Yonex-Sunrise senior National championship.

The final will be played on Saturday.

While Sindhu overcame a challenge from Assam's promising 19-year-old Ashmita Chaliha 21-10, 22-20 in the first semifinal, Saina got the better of Nagpur qualifier Vaishnavi Bhale, who was part of India's Uber Cup squad last year, 21-15, 21-14.

Saina has beaten Sindhu in their previous two encounters – at the Nagpur National in 2017 and Gold Coast Commonwealth Games gold-medal match in 2018.

While Saina has won the National crown in 2006, 2007 and 2018, Sindhu has

clinched the trophy twice – 2011 and 2013.

In the men's event, Lakshya Sen reached his second final with a 21-15, 21-16 win over former winner and 2014 Commonwealth Games champion P. Kashyap in the second semifinal.

The 17-year-old Lakshya, who had lost in the final to Sourabh Verma two editions ago, will look to settle scores in the final.

Two-time former champion Sourabh had earlier defeated Mumbai's Kaushal Dharmamer 21-14, 21-17 in 44 minutes.

## Other results:

**Mixed doubles (semifinals):** Rohan Kapoor & Kuhoo Garg bt Vignesh Devlekar & V. Harika 21-15, 21-16; Manu Attri & K. Maneesha bt Shlok Ramchandran & Mithila 21-18, 21-17.

**Women's doubles:** Meghana Jakkampudi & Poornima S. Ram bt Kuhoo Garg & Anoushka Parikh 21-13, 21-16; Shikha Gautam & Ashwini Bhat bt Aparna Balan & K.P. Sruthi 21-19, 24-22.

ters has climbed to the eighth spot.

The visitors never really got going and were on the backfoot right from the start.

Chennaiyin custodian Karanjit Singh was called into action twice early in the game as Kerala imposed itself.

Slavisa Stojanovic's shot from the edge of the box was saved by Karanjit and he had to be alert to block the follow-up effort from Poplantnik as well.

## Out of rhythm

John Gregory's side could not gain a foothold into the match and looked woefully out of rhythm.

The story remained pretty much the same in the second half as well.

**The result:** Kerala Blasters 3 (Matej Poplantnik 23, 55, Sahal Abdul Samad 71) bt Chennaiyin FC 0.

## Spartans look to bounce back

A semifinal berth is up for grabs

## PRO VOLLEYBALL

S. DIPAK RAGAV CHENNAI

After 12 days of action in Kochi, the Pro-Volleyball bandwagon moves to Chennai for the final three days of league games at the Nehru indoor stadium starting from Saturday before the semifinals and final.

The six-team competition has seen three teams completing their league fixtures during the Kochi leg while Chennai Spartans, U Mumba and Ahmedabad Defenders have two matches in hand.

Home team Spartans will look to get back to winning ways when it takes on U Mumba on Saturday, especially after squandering a two-set lead against Kochi Blue Spikers in its last league match.

The team, which has two points thanks to a win against Black Hawks Hyderabad, will hope to make the most of it against U Mumba and Defenders, both of whom have not won a match yet.

A win here on Saturday could boost Spartans' chances grabbing the final semifinal berth along with the two Kerala teams, Calicut Heroes and Spikers, and Hyderabad.

One good news for the Chennai team will be that key player Akhin G.S. is fit to play on Saturday. He had twisted his ankle during the match against Spikers but has since recovered according to head coach M.H. Kumara.

"We are home and we are looking forward to just going into the match with one objective that is of winning."

"The home support will certainly lift our morale. I am also glad that Rudy Verhoeven has come of age in this league and has been leading the team from the front with his game and international

## PVL Points table

Team P W L Pts SD PD

Calicut Heroes 5 5 0 11 13 70

Kochi Blue Spikers 5 4 1 8 1 2

Black Hawks Hyderabad 5 2 3 4 -3 -20

Chennai Spartans 3 1 2 2 -1 -10

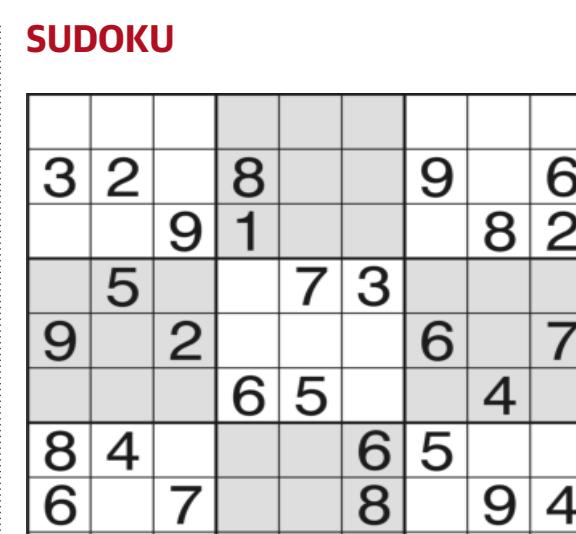
Ahmedabad Defenders 3 0 3 0 -5 -12

U Mumba Volley 3 0 3 0 -5 -26

SD: Set Difference; PD: Point Difference

No. 55/233 Distribution: www.nigntfotures.com

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

## Solution to puzzle 12551

B A C C H A N A L I A M O O

A A A E O A I P

C O M E T C I G A R E T T E

K I C K I O T N

A E S T H E T I C N I E C E

C O O I A S N R

H O I Y S E E L A R D

E E A O C P

S A T H E N T

I R I S M E D I A T E

C A M E O I R A S C I B L E

A U R I N A T E R

R E S C I N D E S T R A P

C T E A I I E T R A N

E N D L E G E R D E M A I N

8 4 7 9 5 6 2 3 1

9 1 6 3 2 4 8 5 7

5 2 3 1 8 7 6 9 4

1 7 9 6 3 8 4 2 5

3 5 2 4 1 9 7 8 6

4 6 8 5 7 2 3 1 9

6 9 1 2 4 3 5 7 8

7 3 4 8 9 5 1 6 2

2 8 5 7 6 1 9 4 3

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8 4 7 9 5 6 2 3 1

9 1 6 3 2 4 8 5 7

5 2 3 1 8 7 6 9 4

# Spain to face champion Croatia in Davis Cup finals

Serbia's Novak Djokovic and Britain's Andy Murray to miss the tournament

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MADRID

Rafael Nadal's Spain will host defending champion Croatia in the Davis Cup finals with the 17-time major winner set to be the only member of the sport's big four taking part in the controversially rebooted tournament.

Nadal, who has played in four Davis Cup-winning campaigns, has said he intends to take part in the new-look week-long event on home ground in Madrid from November 18-24.

However, long-time rivals Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray will be missing. Federer's Switzerland didn't qualify, Britain's Murray has virtually retired while Djokovic has said he intends to focus on the ATP World Team Cup. That is

- **Group A**
- France, Serbia, Japan
- **Group B**
- Croatia, Spain, Russia
- **Group C**
- Argentina, Germany, Chile
- **Group D**
- Belgium, Australia, Colombia
- **Group E**
- Great Britain, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands
- **Group F**
- United States, Italy, Canada

despite Serbia having qualified as one of the 18 nations for the 2019 Davis Cup finals.

Despite its troubled re-

vamp, Spanish football star Gerard Pique, whose Kosmos company is pouring \$3 billion into a 25-year deal with the 119-year-old tournament, insisted at Thursday's draw that the new Davis Cup will be a success.

"This means a lot, we have been working for more than a year, and we have created a great team to carry out this project," Pique insisted.

Nadal, a Davis Cup champion in 2004, 2008, 2009 and 2011, will likely face Marin Cilic, Croatia's top player who won both his singles in the 2018 Davis Cup final victory over France.

Russia, the two-time champion, makes up Group B. Ten-time champion France, 2010 winner Serbia and Japan contest Group A while 2016 victor Argentina,

Germany and Chile are in Group C.

Argentina will be sweating over the fitness of regularly-injured Juan Martin del Potro while Germany could be without World No. 3 Alexander Zverev.

The ATP World Tour Finals champion played in last weekend's qualifying round win against Hungary but has long insisted he has no interest in playing in the November finals, claiming he prefers to rest.

Group D sees Belgium and Colombia pooled with 28-time champions Australia while Britain, which has been champion on 10 occasions, Kazakhstan and Netherlands makes up Group E.

Group F sees record 32-time winners United States clash with Italy and Canada.



**High-profile gathering:** The captains of the various teams, who will be participating in the Davis Cup Finals, along with ITF president David Haggerty, sixth from left, and Kosmos president Gerard Pique, seventh from left, at the draw ceremony. ■ AFP

## Halep, Kerber battle through to semifinals

### QATAR OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

DOHA

World No. 3 Simona Halep and three-time Grand Slam champion Angelique Kerber came through tough tests on Thursday to reach the Qatar Open semifinals.

Halep won in straight sets but needed two tie-breaks – 7-6(1), 7-6(6) – to edge past Germany's Julia Goerges, despite racing to a 4-0 lead in the first set.

However, the match turned out to be anything but routine for the Romanian who was forced to save two set points and break Goerges' serve in the 10th game to stay in the second set.

"I am very happy, honestly," said Halep.

"It's been a really tough match and it is always tough



**Unusual:** Halep won in straight sets but needed two tie-breaks to edge past Germany's Julia Goerges. ■ AFP

to play against her."

The Romanian will play Elina Svitolina in the last four on Friday.

Halep has lost her three last matches against the Ukrainian, failing to win a single set in those matches, stretching back to 2017.

Svitolina was the first

player through to the semifinals, beating Czech qualifier Karolina Muchova by contrast in easy fashion 6-4, 6-2.

"I found a way to have to beat her," said Svitolina. "I was very happy I could do it in two sets."

She was followed on court by Kerber and the World No.

6 won 1-6, 6-2, 7-6(4) in a tough and feisty encounter against another Czech, Barbora Strycova, who was given a time violation in the final set.

"In the first set I did a lot mistakes," said Kerber. "She was playing good. She was pushing the ball. She hit the balls really fast."

"In the second set, I was just trying to come back, playing point by point and trying to make less mistakes."

It will be Kerber's first semifinal since she won at Wimbledon last year.

**The results:** **Quarterfinals:** 1-Simona Halep (Rom) bt 9-Julia Goerges (Ger) 7-6(1), 7-6(6); 4-Elena Svitolina (Ukr) bt Karolina Muchova (Cze) 6-4, 6-2; 3-Angelique Kerber (Ger) bt Barbora Strycova (Cze) 1-6, 6-2, 7-6(4); 5-Elsie Mertens (Bel) bt 5-Kiki Bertens (Ned) 6-4, 6-3.

## Shift Srinagar game: Minerva to AIFF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Holder Minerva Punjab FC has requested the All India Football Federation to shift its upcoming I-League

match against Real Kashmir from Srinagar or defer it in the wake of the Pulwama terrorist attack,

saying the club is ready to forfeit the game if it is not rescheduled.

Minerva is scheduled to play Real Kashmir on February 18.

"We have written to the AIFF requesting them to shift the game from Srinagar. My team jersey has the line written 'We Salute Indian Army'. A game of football is nothing

compared to what has happened last evening," Minerva owner Ranjit Bajaj told PTI.

### Willing to forfeit

He added, "We are willing to forfeit the game if it is not moved out. I am sure the people will stand by us and really three points don't matter under the circumstances."

When contacted, I-

League CEO Sunando Dhar said, "We will see what the local authorities have to say. We will go ahead with the match if the local authorities give us a positive feedback. As of now, it is on, and shifting remains the last resort."

## Sonia and Lovlina enter quarterfinals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Former world silver-medalist Sonia Lather (57kg) was among the three Indian women boxers who advanced to the quarterfinals, but the men were off to a disappointing start at the 70th Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

World championships bronze-medallist Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) and Pwiila Basumatari (64kg) also made the quarters of the prestigious European event on Thursday night.

Sonia, who is also a two-time Asian silver-medalist, defeated Serbia's Jelena Zekic 5-0.

Lovlina, a gold-medallist at the Indian Open last year, got the better of Australian

Jessica Messina.

Pwiila endured a stiffer challenge from Bulgarian Melis Yonuzova before prevailing 3-2.

However, there was disappointment for the men with former Commonwealth Games silver-medalist Mandeep Jangra (69kg) and rookie Harsh Lakra (81kg) bowing out following opening round losses.

Mandeep lost 5-0 to Ukraine's Viktor Petrov, while Harsh went down to Azerbaijan's Rauf Rahimov.

India's best-ever medal haul at the competition stands at 11, which came last year.

More than 300 boxers from over 40 nations are competing in the ongoing edition.

## Ankita bows out

SPORTS BUREAU

DUBAI

Ankita Raina found Monica Niculescu of Romania too hot to handle, losing 6-1, 6-1 in the first qualifying round of the \$2,828,000 WTA tournament on Friday.

In the doubles quarterfinals in the Cherbourg Challenger in France, top seeds Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Purav Raja w.o. Mats Moraing & Oscar Otte (Ger).

## SAI's request to CBSE

### Adjust exam dates to help shooters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

on March 29 and physical education on March 30.

SAI was approached by the parents of the two shooters to intervene and request the CBSE to allot fresh dates in two subjects each in the Class XII Board examinations for shooters, Youth Olympics gold medalist Manu Bhaker and World junior champion Vijayveer Sidhu.

The SAI has written to the chairperson of CBSE, Anita Karwal, to allow both the shooters to take the exams on fresh dates.

Last year, CBSE had accepted the request to have fresh dates of exam for pistol shooter Anish Bhanwala, in a similar situation.

This initiative by SAI is part of the efforts to help young athletes balance their sporting career and academic education.

## Chelsea edges out Malmo

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

Chelsea claimed a 2-1 victory at Malmo in the Europa League last-32 first-leg on Thursday to ease some of the pressure on beleaguered coach Maurizio Sarri, while Arsenal suffered a shock loss to BATE Borisov.

"I am happy because we played with confidence and it wasn't really very easy after the last match (the defeat by City)," said Sarri.

"I think I am always confident but sometimes we had the wrong approach with matches so we need to be careful in every match."

Arsenal faces an uphill battle to progress after a 1-0 defeat by BATE.

**Important results (last-32, first-leg):** BATE 1 (Dragan 45) bt Arsenal 0; Lazio 0 lost to Sevilla 1 (Ben Yedder 22).

Rapid Vienna 0 lost to Inter Milan 1 (Martinez 39+pen); Sporting 0 lost to Villarreal 1 (Alfonso 3); Celtic 0 lost to Valencia 2 (Cheryshev 42, Sobrino 49); Malmo 1 (Christiansen 80) lost to Chelsea 2 (Barkley 30, Giroud 58); FC Zurich 1 (Kololi 83+pen) lost to Napoli 3 (Insigne 12, Callejon 21, Zielinski 77).

## Road to Wimbledon from March 11

NEW DELHI: The Road to Wimbledon under-14 tennis tournament for boys and girls under-14 will be held simultaneously on the grass courts of the Chandigarh Club and Delhi Gymkhana Club from March 11 to 16.

The tournament will feature the top-16 boys and girls of the country.

The top two boys and girls will qualify for the UK under-14 tennis championship to be held in Wimbledon from March 11 to 16.

"The three points are very important for us tomorrow. Mohun Bagan have good players but they are also struggling for results. We have an upper hand since its a home match."

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## HIGHEST RANKING ACHIEVED BY PLAYERS WHO REPRESENTED INDIA

**No. 27**Sania Mirza  
Achieved on  
August 27, 2007**No. 122**Shikha Uberoi  
Achieved on  
August 29, 2005**No. 134**Nirupama Sanjeev  
(nee Vaidyanathan)  
Achieved on  
July 7, 1997**No. 144**Sunitha Rao  
Achieved on  
July 7, 2008**No. 164**Ankita Raina  
Achieved on  
February 11, 2019**No. 196**Karman Thandi  
Achieved on  
August 20, 2018

## Marching to her own beat

Ankita Raina has walked a lonely road — she hasn't always been able to afford a coach or a hitting partner on tour — but India's top-ranked woman says it has made her the player she is

N. SUDARSHAN

For most promising tennis players in the millennial age group in India, the inevitable measuring stick is Sania Mirza. It is an incredibly tough standard to be judged against, for Sania reached a career-high singles ranking of 27 — no other Indian woman has even breached the top 100 — and later went on to become the world's best doubles player, winning six Majors.

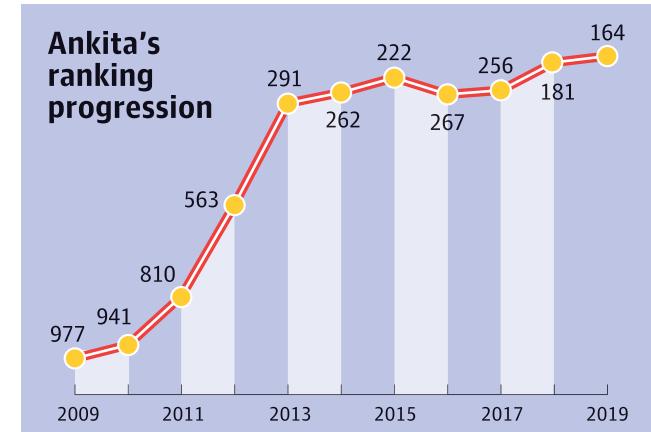
The latest to be put through this severest of examinations is Ankita Raina, the 26-year-old who is the country's best singles player. Ankita reached a career-high ranking of 164 on Monday on the back of her triumph in the \$25,000 Singapore event, where she beat three players in the top 150 back-to-back without the loss of a single set. Last April, she broke into the top 200, only the fifth Indian woman to do so. She also bagged the bronze at the Asian Games, another feat which clubbed her with Sania as India's only two women's singles medallists.

**C** When I used to play against players with a travelling coach, I could see how the coaching and moral support helped them. I overcame that as well

To be sure, their career trajectories bear little resemblance but for a small period in 2009-10 when Ankita, aged just 16, won the ADIDAS Nationals and the National grass-court championship and earned a call-up to the Indian Fed Cup squad. Ankita broke into the top 300 back in 2013, but it has taken her six long years to be where she is now. Sania's ascent from 300 to the top 50 took less than 12 months.

Yet, there is no denying Ankita's talent, however long-drawn her development may have been. In fact, it can even be argued that it is in tune with the times. Back in January 2017, data analyst Jeff Sackman pointed out in *The Economist* that in 1990 the average age of the women ranked in the top 100 was 22.8.

The equivalent age nearly three decades later was 25.9.



"Sports careers never go in a straight line," Ankita says. "It has taken years and years of hard work, from not just me but my whole team. Tennis is a sport where you need to be patient with results. If you stick to something and keep at it, things will eventually happen."

The trigger, Ankita feels, was the WTA Mumbai Open 2017, where she reached the quarterfinals. In March 2018, she won the \$25,000 tournament in Gwalior, her first singles success in four years, and added another four months later.

In between, in the Fed Cup in Delhi, she beat the then World No. 81 Yulia Putintseva (now No. 43) and World No. 120 Lin Zhu. At the Dubai Premier, she ran the 2011 U.S. Open champion Sam Stosur, whom she dubbed 'lady Nadal', close. The first-ever opportunity to play in the qualifying rounds of the French Open and Wimbledon was her reward.

## Turning point

"You need that one match, one tournament which changes things for you," Ankita explains. "I remember just before Mumbai I wasn't feeling very good mentally. You are doing the things, but it is not always that you get results. At times I didn't believe in myself. But my family and coach believed in me."

"A couple of years back, when I would play a higher-ranked player, the mindset would have been different. But after Mumbai, I was relaxed. I had had a good block [3 to 4 weeks] of training. I came up with good perfor-

mances against top-100 and top-50 players. It built up my confidence. I had never seen a woman play with so much top-spin and give [the ball] so much air like Stosur. Putintseva plays a similar style. But the kind of depth I hit with troubled them."

It is this approach which perhaps separates her from other Indians. When young, she wasn't interested in playing percentage tennis. Even at the highest level, where it is easy to slip into safety-first mode when faced with quicker, craftier players, Ankita's methods are unwavering.

"It's her footwork," says Hemant Bendrey, Ankita's coach for more than a decade. "And when she gets into position, she has to be aggressive. The problem is we tell our players to seek consistency. Then you will never be aggressive. I have always told her, 'You will miss but you have to attack if you are to last at the world level.' She is doing that and is focused on the top 100."

Ankita Bhambri, who has watched her from equally close quarters by virtue of being the Fed Cup coach, feels it is her relentless drive to excel which stands out. "Every time I see her during an important event there are certain positive changes in her game," Bhambri says. "She takes ideas and inputs you give her seriously. This time in the Fed Cup [2019], she lost against a Putintseva who was in the top-50, better prepared and someone who came up with the better point when it was needed... at deuce, break-point, etc. But

I expect Ankita to learn because her attitude and determination are such."

In a sense, Ankita's career is a lesson in the ideal of maximising opportunities. After all, she plays doubles — as successfully as singles — for the extra match-time to work on her game. The paucity of funds has meant that she cannot always afford a coach or a hitting partner on the road.

"When you lose early in singles but you are alive in doubles, you still feel a part of the tournament," she says. "You can always work on the little things while playing doubles. I played with Rushmi Chakravarthi very early [in my career] and won a couple of tournaments. Sharing the same court with a senior player helped and she gave me a lot of tips. Only after that did I win my first singles title."

## The TOPS situation

The grant from the Sports Authority of Gujarat is just about enough to cover her travel expenses for 25 to 30 weeks in a year. It is ironic that the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), of which she was a part until the Asian Games, doesn't seem to have her on its radar, especially at a time when she is doing better than ever before. Ankita, though, isn't perturbed.

"The biggest challenge in all these years has been to be on my own. I have done that since 14. I feel after some stage it has even helped me be a different player.... to fight alone, all by myself."

"Many times when I used to play against players with a travelling coach, I could see how the coaching and moral support helped them. I overcame that as well

## THE ANKITA RAINA FILE

BORN: January 11, 1993

PLAYS: Right-handed (two-handed backhand)

SINGLES TITLES:

8 (all ITF)

DOUBLES TITLES:

1 WTA 125K,  
14 ITF

HIGHEST SINGLES RANKING:

No. 164

MEDAL RECORD:  
Asian Games  
bronze  
(2018, singles)

CAREER SINGLES WIN-LOSS:

225-187

2019 SINGLES WIN-LOSS:

8-3

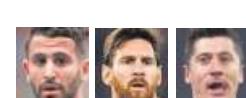


## WORD PLAY

## Goon

## ON THE BOX

## STACKING UP



**FA Cup:** SAT: Brighton v Derby, 6 P.M., Newport v Manchester City, 11 P.M.; SONY TEN 2 & HD.  
**SUN:** Doncaster v Crystal Palace, 9.30 P.M.; SONY TEN 1 & HD; Bristol City v Wolves, 6.30 P.M.; SONY TEN 2 & HD.

**La Liga:** SAT: Rayo Vallecano v Atletico Madrid, 8.45 P.M.; SONY TEN 2 & HD; SUN: Real Madrid v Girona, 4.30 P.M.; SONY TEN 2 & HD; Real Betis v Alaves, 1.15 A.M. (MON); SONY TEN 1 & HD.

**Bundesliga:** SAT: Stuttgart v Leipzig, 7.45 P.M., Hertha Berlin v Werder Bremen, 10.45 P.M.; STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & HD; Wolfsburg v Mainz, 7.45 P.M.; STAR SPORTS SELECT 2 & HD; SUN: Frankfurt v Borussia Monchengladbach, 7.45 P.M.; Leverkusen v Fortuna, 10.15 P.M.; STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & HD.

**Serie A:** SAT: Cagliari v Parma, 10.30 P.M.; SONY TEN 1 & HD; SUN: SPAL v Fiorentina, 5 P.M., Genoa v Lazio, 7.30 P.M.; SONY TEN 1 & HD; Atalanta v AC Milan, 1 A.M., Inter Milan v Sampdoria, 10.30 P.M., Napoli v Torino, 1 A.M. (MON); SONY TEN 2 & HD.

**NBA:** SAT: 7.30 A.M., SONY TEN 1 & HD; SUN: 6.30 A.M., SONY TEN 1 & HD.



## ICC Test Rankings

# TEAM	M	PTS	RATE
1 India	43	5,007	116
2 South Africa	39	4,280	110
3 New Zealand	30	3,213	107
4 Australia	44	4,566	104
5 England	53	5,490	104
6 Sri Lanka	48	4,256	89
7 Pakistan	32	2,803	88
8 West Indies	39	2,995	77
9 Bangladesh	25	1,727	69
10 Zimbabwe	11	138	13

## ODI Rankings

# TEAM	M	PTS	RATE
1 England	55	6,918	126
2 India	66	5,058	122
3 New Zealand	52	5,788	111
4 South Africa	50	5,545	111
5 Pakistan	48	4,872	102
6 Australia	43	4,290	100
7 Bangladesh	40	3,669	92
8 Sri Lanka	57	4,426	78
9 West Indies	27	2,725	101
10 Afghanistan	27	2,490	92
11 Sri Lanka	30	2,580	86
12 Bangladesh	30	2,321	77

## T20I Rankings

# TEAM	M	PTS	RATE
1 Pakistan	39	5,280	135
2 India	45	5,590	124
3 New Zealand	25	2,960	118
4 South Africa	22	2,586	118
5 Australia	28	3,266	117
6 New Zealand	29	3,367	116
7 West Indies	27	2,725	101
8 Afghanistan	27	2,490	92
9 Sri Lanka	30	2,580	86
10 Bangladesh	30	2,321	77

## English Premier League Standings

# TEAM	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1 Manchester City	27	21	2	4	74	20	54	65
2 Liverpool	26	20	5	1	59	15	44	65
3 Tottenham Hotspur	26	20	0	6	54	25	29	60
4 Manchester United	26	15						



JASON HOLDER

### West Indies down the years

From 1940 to 1999, West Indies was unbeaten in 61 of 80 Test series (winning 45). Over the last two decades, this has changed: it's unbeaten in just 24 of 66 series

Decade	Series played	Won	Lost	Drawn
1920s	1	0	1	0
1930s	5	1	3	1
1940s	2	2	0	0
1950s	11	6	4	1
1960s	11	5	5	1
1970s	14	7	4	3
1980s	20	14	1	5
1990s	22	11	5	6
2000s	35	9	23	3
2010s	31	8	19	4

 We [can't] rest on our laurels. Our number one goal is to be the number one team in the world, so there is a lot to improve on. We have to be clinical and a lot more consistent

JASON HOLDER  
WEST INDIES CAPTAIN

 There has always been talent in the West Indies. But that talent doesn't always make the transition to the next level since the facilities for training and the infrastructure isn't great. Now, things could be changing

RAHUL DRavid  
FORMER INDIA CAPTAIN

# A new beginning? Or another false dawn?

West Indies looked a world-class team during its Test series victory over England – the batsmen were disciplined and the fast-bowlers hostile. But Caribbean cricket has flattered to deceive over the last two decades. Can it build on this breakthrough triumph?

S. DINAKAR

The rhythm and joy in their cricket was unmistakable, so was the determination and steel. Along with flair, there was a sense of resolve and more than a hint of the old-fashioned pride.

Yet, given West Indies' wild fluctuations in form, doubters remain. Is the Test series triumph over England at home another false dawn?

The chances are it is not. In the Barbados and Antigua Tests, where the Englishmen were comprehensively defeated, by 381 runs and 10 wickets, the West Indians were able to keep their concentration going for long periods.

And retaining their focus in Test cricket had been one of the biggest problems for West Indies' players.

It's true that the side came apart in the final Test at St. Lucia but then the dead rubber lacked intensity and the host was without inspirational skipper Jason Holder.

The signs are promising from the men in maroon. A 2-1 series victory which made a mockery of ICC's Test rankings – going into the series, England was third and the

West Indies eighth – could be the breakthrough conquest that the Caribbeans so desperately sought.

In a telling comment, former England batsman David Lloyd said, "The West Indies have sent postcards to the rest of the cricketing world with words, 'We are back'."

After a stormy phase, West Indies cricket appears to be settling down with a young team and a level-headed captain. Logically, this team can only get better.

Former Caribbean pace ace Ian Bishop, while appreciating Holder's man-management skills and willingness to learn from the past, said consistency in selection had enabled West Indies cricket take flight again.

With their places secure, the Caribbeans have played with increased confidence. When it mattered in the series, the batsmen applied themselves and the quicks took wickets.

In fact, the pacers have driven West Indies' rise. The four-pronged attack not only has hostility but also a fair amount of control.

The big and strong Shannon Gabriel regularly clocks the high 140 kmph, can breach the 150 mark and has



■ SHAUN BOTTERILL/GETTY IMAGES

a mean short-pitched delivery. He bowls a heavy ball, pushes the batsmen back. For the batsmen, he is as much a psychological barrier as a physical force.

There is Kemar Roach, with the ability to get the ball to skid off the pitch. Not as quick as in his early days, he swings and seams the ball both ways and harnesses the angles capably.

He is particularly effective against southpaws; taking the ball away, getting it to straighten. Roach's consistency has been outstanding.

The young Alzarri Joseph moves the ball at sharp pace. He also has a good bumper.

Then there is the gangling Holder bowling the off-stump line, getting natural

bounce from just short of a good length and achieving two-way deviation. He gives little away, builds pressure and picks wickets.

And this pace attack seems to have the ability to carry the team through, even on days the batting fails.

During the India-Afghanistan Test, batting legend Sunil Gavaskar, back after commenting on the first West Indies-Sri Lanka Test, had said, "This is a very good West Indian pace attack. If Joseph [injured at that point] joins the eleven, it will be even better."

Gavaskar has an emotional connection with West Indies – it was in the Caribbean in 1971 that he made a sensational start to his Test

career – and he said after the West Indian victory over England, "It's great to see West Indians winning again."

West Indian triumphs, even at home, have been few and far between. The side defeated India in 2002 and then got the better of England in 2009, both in home Test series. But then, apart from the odd sparkling performance, West Indies, lacking spirit and cohesion, has largely disappointed.

Now, things are looking better for the Caribbeans.

Importantly, West Indies finally has a batting unit with both age and talent on its side. Kraigg Brathwaite is a calm and organised opening batsman. Left-handed opener John Campbell looks good even if he has not converted to the position.

Shai Hope has loads of ability, with the potential to be the longstanding No. 3. The left-handed Darren Bravo, back in the side, lends experience to the side; his influential, grinding 216-ball 50 on a testing surface in Antigua reflected the new-found resilience in the side.

Roston Chase can not only get bounce with his off-spinners but is a strokeful No. 5 with innings-building skills. And then there is Shimron Hetmyer with his jaw-dropping ball-striking talent. His methods remind you of a young, left-handed Virat Kohli. Such is Hetmyer's ability and belief. He can take the game away from the opposition.

As we saw against England, Shane Dowrich, an improving wicketkeeper, and the unflappable Holder lengthen the line-up.

The Dowrich-Holder partnership can torment the opposition like in the Barbados Test where Dowrich (116 not out) and Holder (202 not out) flattened England.

An incisive pace attack and greater faith in its own batting resulted in West Indies preparing lively pitches for the England series.

There was pace, carry and movement, even if the bounce at Antigua was uneven. Backing its pacemen is the right way to go; slow, low wickets have hurt Caribbean cricket in the past.

The Caribbean Premier League, with the money and the infrastructure it has brought in, has got more youngsters interested in the

game, too. The CPL and other global T20 leagues have allowed West Indians to test themselves against world-class talent in a high-stakes environment.

Looking back, there are parallels with Kerry Packer's World Series Cricket, which served as a crucible for the all-conquering West Indies side of the 1980s. Not only did it benefit from the professional approach of Australia's breakaway competition, but the side also met physio Dennis Waite, who played a huge role for many years in keeping the fast-bowlers fit and hungry.

Talk to Indian batting legend Rahul Dravid and he says, "There has always been talent in the West Indies. The West Indies were the under-19 world champions in Bangladesh [in 2016]."

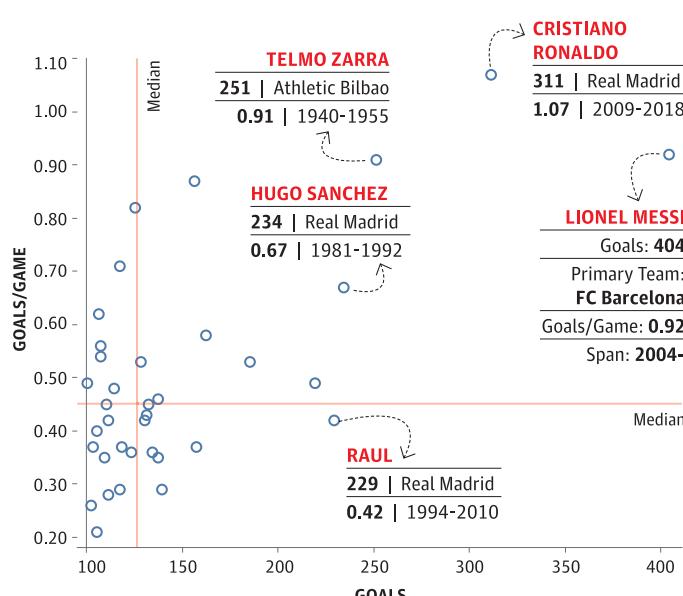
Dravid added, "But that talent doesn't always make the transition to the next level since the facilities for training and the infrastructure isn't great. Now, things could be changing."

"Even if this team is not able to reach the glory days of the 80s and 90s, a strong West Indies team will add depth to world cricket which is a good thing."

## GAME THEORY

### La Liga's top goal machine

Lionel Messi, who became the first player to score 400 La Liga goals earlier this year, is second only to Cristiano Ronaldo in terms of goals per game (min: 100 goals), as the chart shows. By Srinivasan Ramani



### Teams that have suffered the most against Messi

Opponent	Goals	Games	Goals/Game
Sevilla	25	24	1.04
Valencia	24	26	0.92
Atletico Madrid	23	25	0.92
Osasuna	21	17	1.24
Deportivo La Coruna	20	17	1.18
Espanyol	20	24	0.83
Levante	19	16	1.19
Real Madrid	18	24	0.75

## PICTURE THIS



### Coast to coast

Since 1982, New Zealand has hosted a non-standard endurance race involving multiple sporting elements.

The Kathmandu Coast to Coast – the race is sponsored by a retail-store chain, not the capital of Nepal

– stretches from the Kumara beach on the west coast to Christchurch on the east coast every February.

The 243 km-long course involves running, cycling and kayaking – unlike in other endurance races, one discipline isn't completed before moving on to the next.

The race involves a mix of

multiple stretches of the three.

There are also two versions of the race – one-day athletes complete the entire course in a day. Most, however, spread it over two days, camping overnight after the end of the mountain run.

This year's race, held earlier this week, proved to be quite the thriller.

Dougal Allan and Simone Maier won the men's and women's one-dayers in the closest-fought race in the competition's 37-year history.

The Coast to Coast is also an official 'Leave no Trace' event, a global movement with a mission to protect the environment by enjoying it responsibly.

## IN BRIEF



Roy to headline PEN World Voices festival

**NEW YORK** Writer and activist Arundhati Roy will deliver the PEN World Voices festival's flagship talk, the Arthur Miller Freedom to Write Lecture, which in the past has been delivered by luminaries including Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Salman Rushdie. The festival to be held in New York will include more than 60 events. **NY TIMES**

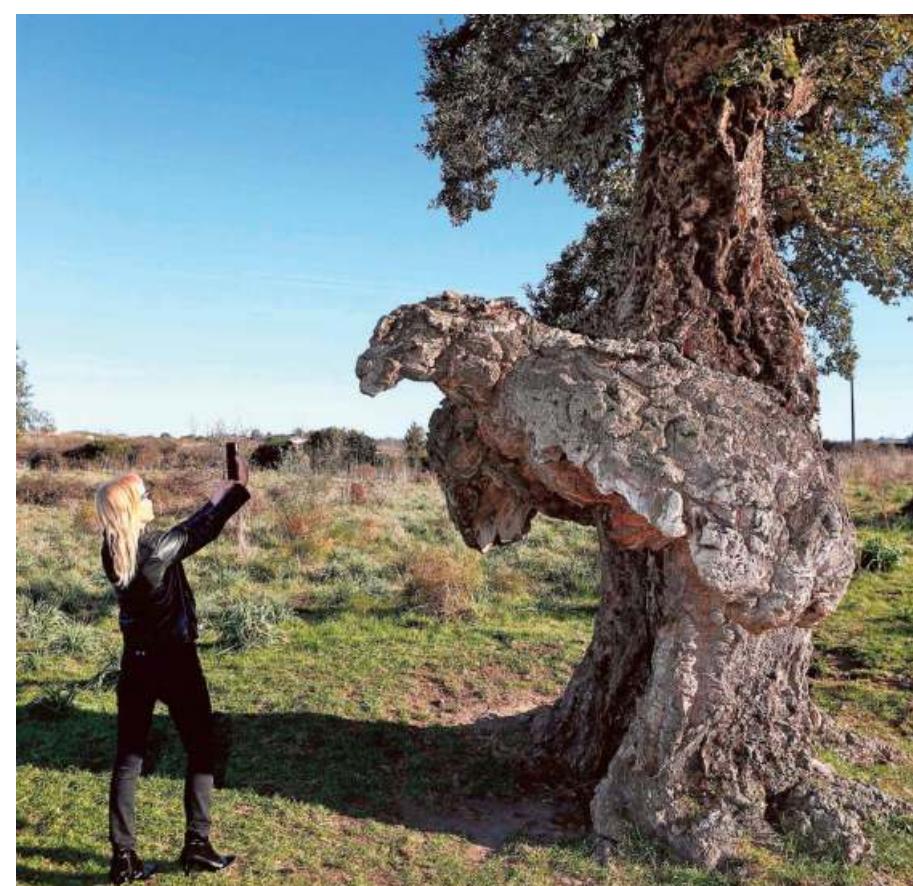


**Clooney, Pitt protest against Academy move**  
**LOS ANGELES** George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Robert de Niro have joined a growing protest in Hollywood over plans by Oscars organisers to present cinematography, editing and some other awards during the telecast's commercial breaks at next week's Academy Awards ceremony. They have demanded that the decision be reversed. **REUTERS**



**Rampling gets lifetime achievement award**  
**BERLIN** British actor Charlotte Rampling said she was moved to be awarded the Berlin Film Festival's Golden Bear for lifetime achievement. The 73-year-old, who started as a model, is best known for playing a concentration camp survivor in *Liliana Cavani's The Night Porter*. **REUTERS**

## In good shape



**Tree love:** A woman clicking a picture of a cork oak, which has been elected the French Tree of the Year 2018, in Ghisonaccia on the French Mediterranean island of Corsica. The form of its trunk resembling a large bird has made it a favourite among viewers. **AFP**

## Antibiotic-resistant NDM-1 gene found in pristine Arctic

Scientists are surprised by the detection of the gene, first isolated in India, in one of the earth's most remote spots

**RAMYA KANNAN**  
**CHENNAI**

The recent detection of the antibiotic resistant (AR) gene NDM-1, first isolated in India, in the Arctic region is a further indication of the globalisation of antimicrobial resistance, said a study.

The research was conducted in the High Arctic zone (Kongsfjorden region of Svalbard) and scientists were surprised to find a rather robust presence of NDM-1, according to Clare McCann, principal author of the study.

Answering questions from *The Hindu* over email, Dr. McCann said: "It was not a shock to find AR in the High Arctic. In essence, AR is a natural phenomenon. Most antibiotics are produced by soil microorganisms and over time they have evolved to become resistant to the compounds which they excrete to survive. However, finding NDM-1 in 2013 was a surprise."

## Five clusters

Researchers noted in their paper, in the peer reviewed journal *Environment International*, that it was detected in five out of the eight clusters studied. NDM-1 was first reported in 2007 in a patient admitted to a hospital in New Delhi, but was reported to be present in Germany, the same year.

"The first finding of NDM-1 in the environment, rather than a clinic setting, was in surface waters of Delhi, in 2010. So finding NDM-1 in the High Arctic three years after the first report of its presence in the environment was very intriguing. The results show how far reaching and fast resistance can move around the globe," Dr. McCann said.

ters studied. NDM-1 was first reported in 2007 in a patient admitted to a hospital in New Delhi, but was reported to be present in Germany, the same year.

"Our findings show that the NDM-1 gene is present in highest concentrations near fresh water sources where wildlife tend to congregate.

Additionally, we discovered levels of mobile genetic elements (MGEs), the mechanism by which bacteria 'trade' AR, to mirror NDM-1. MGEs



**Safe no more:** A beach at Svalbard in the Arctic. **REUTERS**

## Refugee wins top human rights prize

**REUTERS**  
**NAIROBI**

A Sudanese refugee stuck in an Australian detention centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea for five years has been awarded an international human rights prize for revealing the harsh reality of Canberra's off-shore refugee policy.

Abdul Aziz Muhamat, 25, has been named the 2019 Martin Ennals Laureate for his advocacy in drawing global attention to the harassment and beatings faced by hundreds of asylum seekers.

## + Hong Kong officials seize rhino horn in record haul

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
**HONG KONG**

Two men carrying at least 24 severed rhino horns were arrested in Hong Kong airport by customs officers who said it was their largest ever seizure of rhino contraband smuggled by air passengers.

The haul – worth \$1 million – was transported brazenly through the terminal in two cardboard boxes, the customs department said.

The pair had arrived from Johannesburg and was planning to transit to Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, according to a statement from the department, which did not give their nationalities. An environmental group in Hong Kong said the 40 kg of horn was a

major bust – accounting for 20% of the total amount of rhino horn seizures in the city in the last five years.

Sophie le Clue, environment programme director of ADM Capital Foundation, said there was likely an organised network behind the trafficking.

Rhino horn can fetch up to \$60,000 per kg in Asia, stoking transnational crime networks that target the protected species.

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## NASA heading back to the moon

U.S. space agency hopes to arrange short stays on the lunar surface

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
**WASHINGTON**

NASA is accelerating plans to return Americans to the moon, and this time, the U.S. space agency says it will be there to stay.

Jim Bridenstine, NASA's administrator, told reporters that the agency plans to speed up plans backed by U.S. President Donald Trump to return to the moon, using private companies. "It's important that we get back to the moon as fast as possible," said Mr. Bridenstine.

He hoped to have astronauts back there by 2028. "This time, when we go to the moon, we're actually going to stay. We're not going to leave flags and footprints and then come home to not go back for another 50 years," he said.

"We're doing it entirely different than every other country in the world. What we're doing is, we're making it sustainable so you can go back and forth regularly with humans." The last person

to walk on the moon was Eugene Cernan in December 1972, during the Apollo 17 mission.

Before humans set foot on the lunar surface again, NASA aims to land an unmanned vehicle on the moon by 2024, and has invited bids from the burgeoning private sector to build the probe.

The haul – worth \$1 million – was transported brazenly through the terminal in two cardboard boxes, the customs department said.

The pair had arrived from Johannesburg and was planning to transit to Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, according to a statement from the department, which did not give their nationalities. An environmental group in Hong Kong said the 40 kg of horn was a

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