



ACROSS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, drones are finding innovative uses — from monitoring displaced populations, to delivering critical medical supplies. P9

RESUL POOKUTTY mobilises support from the film industry to help victims of the Kerala floods. P6

Eastern Chronicle

E VOL 1, ISSUE 97

RNI NO. WBENG/2018/75722

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM

KOLKATA

GUWAHATI

NEW DELHI

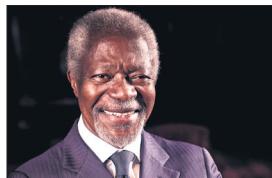
SILCHAR

PAGES: 12+12 = 24

PRICE ₹5

SUNDAY, AUGUST 19, 2018

AT A GLANCE



Former UN Secretary General passes away

BERN: Kofi Annan, the former United Nations secretary general, has died at the age of 80 after a short illness, his family and foundation announced on Saturday. The Ghanaian was the seventh secretary general of the UN who served for two terms between 1997 and 2006 and won the Nobel peace prize for his humanitarian work jointly. P9

Dabholkar murder key suspect arrested

MUMBAI: A key suspect in the sensational murder of rationalist Narendra Dabholkar has been arrested by the CBI five years after the 67-year-old was shot dead in Pune. Sachin Prakashrao Andure was arrested from Aurangabad. He was allegedly one of the shooters who fired at Dabholkar on August 20, 2013 while he was out for his morning walk. PTI

Mani Shankar Aiyar's suspension revoked

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Saturday said it had revoked the suspension of Mani Shankar Aiyar from the party following recommendation by its disciplinary committee. Aiyar was suspended in December 2017 after he used a derogatory word against PM Narendra Modi ahead of Gujarat elections. IANS

INDIA VS ENGLAND

India - 307/6
Overs - 87
Virt Kohli - 97

Ajinkya Rahane - 81
Day 1 stumps

CHANGE OF GUARD IN PAKISTAN, NEW REGIME TAKES CHARGE



Sidhu hugs Pakistan Army chief, storm back home

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu was allotted a seat next to the President of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) Masood Khan during the swearing-in ceremony of newly-elected Prime Minister Imran Khan.

At the event, instead of seating Congress leader Sidhu with other foreign dignitaries, the Pakistani government positioned him next to Masood Khan in the Aiwan-e-Sadr Hall of President's House. Earlier, Sidhu and Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa were spotted hugging each other just before the ceremony began.

Before entering the President House, Sidhu said: "People like Khan Sahab (Imran Khan) create history. With this invitation, they have honoured me. People who build relationships are respected, people who break them are disrespected and I am one of those who respect relationships. It's a new dawn. This government has come to change this country's perception, picture and destiny, with high hopes and expectations."

Sidhu, who is also a minister in the Congress-led Punjab government, on Friday said that he sees himself as "a goodwill ambassador of India". During a press conference on August 2, Sidhu highlighted that the invitation extended to him was in personal capacity.

Sidhu's visit to Pakistan and his hug has created a political storm back home. The BJP has slammed the Punjab minister, saying it was insensitive on Sidhu's part to be at the oath-taking ceremony at a time when the nation was mourning the loss of Vajpayee.

Imran pads up for a new political innings

AT THE HELM Cricketer-turned-politician is now Pakistan PM

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

his former teammates to witness his formal ascension to the top ministerial job in the country.

Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, former Indian cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu, cricketer-turned-commentator Rameez Raja, former paceman Wasim Akram were among the special guests present at the ceremony. Khan's third wife Bushra Maneka was also present at the event.

The Oxford-educated Pashtun on Friday defeated his only rival and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief Shahbaz Sharif in a one-sided election for the top post in the National Assembly.

Khan secured 176 votes while Sharif got 96 votes. A total of 172 votes in the 342-member lower house of Parliament are needed to form a government.

In his first address to

ALVI FOR PREZ

LAHORE: Imran Khan's party on Saturday said it has nominated veteran lawmaker Dr Arif Alvi as its candidate for the President of Pakistan. The Election Commission of Pakistan had announced on Thursday that the presidential election will be held on September 4.

A dentist by profession, 69-year-old Alvi is one of the founding members of PTI. See Page 9

Parliament, Khan had vowed to act against those who looted Pakistan. "I promise my nation today that we will bring the tab-deeli (change) that this nation was starving for," Khan said on

Friday after winning the election for the top post. "We have to hold strict accountability in this country," he vowed.

"The money that was laundered, I will bring it back — the money that should have gone towards health, education, and water, went into people's pockets," Khan said. Khan, who described Pakistan's founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah as his hero, has promised to transform corruption-affected Pakistan into an Islamic Welfare state.

He has the support of smaller parties including Muttahida Quami Movement with seven seats, Balochistan Awami Party five, Balochistan National Party four, Pakistan Muslim League three, Grand Democratic Alliance three, Awami Muslim League and Jamiat Umar Party one seat each.

Sidhu's visit to Pakistan and his hug has created a political storm back home. The BJP has slammed the Punjab minister, saying it was insensitive on Sidhu's part to be at the oath-taking ceremony at a time when the nation was mourning the loss of Vajpayee.

The urn containing

Vajpayee's ashes will be kept at the Bengal BJP headquarters in Kolkata for the general public to pay their homage. A glimpse of the urn there all through Sunday night. Our central leaders have instructed us to allow party leaders and cadres from other political parties also if they desire to pay their homage," Basu said.

All-party prayer meetings

will be held for the BJP stalwart

in New Delhi on August 20 and

Lucknow on August 23, keeping

in mind that Vajpayee's appeal

cut across all political divide.

THE URN CONTAINING VAJPAYEE'S ASHES WILL BE KEPT AT THE BENGAL BJP HEADQUARTERS IN KOLKATA FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO PAY THEIR HOMAGE

Vajpayee's relatives will attend the Lucknow prayer meeting. The former Prime Minister's ashes will also be immersed in river Gomti at Lucknow.

"The 'asthi kalash' will be taken to all districts' headquarters and state capitals. Prayer meetings will take place in state capitals, district headquarters and at the panchayat level," BJP leader Bhupender Yadav said in New Delhi on Saturday.

The immersion ceremony at Haridwar will be attended by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and his Uttarakhand counterpart Trivendra Singh Rawat, among leaders from different political parties and noted citizens.

One of the most charismatic leaders in independent India, Vajpayee passed away in New Delhi on Thursday at the age of 93. He was cremated with full state honours at the Rashtrapati Smriti Sthal in the national capital on Friday.

Basu said that a letter has been sent to the chief minister's office (CMO) for providing adequate security for the smooth travel of the tableaux with the urn from Kolkata to Gangasagar.

State BJP leaders expect a sizable turnout of the mourners in Kolkata and adjoining areas, including political leaders of all hues because Vajpayee was considered a statesman and secular person.

FREEZE THAT FRAME

It's official: Priyanka and Nick are now engaged, wedding soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI: It's official. Priyanka Chopra and American singer Nick Jonas announced their engagement at her residence in Mumbai, ending months of speculation about their relationship. Both of them declared their love for each other on their Instagram pages after the ceremony.

The priest who conducted the puja at Priyanka's residence, Kamal Kumar Mishra, said that the puja was performed for the couple's peace and well-being. "The puja started a little after 10.30 am and lasted for about four hours. We wish them a long and happy life. Nick is a very humble person. He just followed the rituals. Priyanka explained things to him," Mishra said.

In the first photos from



Nick and Priyanka during the ritual on Saturday in Mumbai. PTI PHOTO
the ceremony, Priyanka and Nick were seen in traditional Indian attires. A photo from the ceremony showed the couple standing in front of a background bearing their first initials. Priyanka opted for a yellow Abu Jani Sandeep Khosla salwar suit, while Nick donned an ivory kurta churidar. The designer duo also posted a picture from the ceremony.

Preparations for the ceremony were going on in full swing since morning at Priyanka's Juhu residence. Nick arrived Mumbai with his parents on Thursday and they were received by Priyanka at the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport. On Friday night, the couple went for a dinner along with their families at JW Marriott Hotel in Juhu.

The couple was reportedly throwing a party for their friends and family at her residence on Saturday night to celebrate their engagement. The bash was likely to be attended by a host of celebrities. The singer reportedly proposed to Priyanka on her birthday in July this year. More on Page 6

Infosys top gun quits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



of financial reporting, built a world class finance team, further strengthened the company's competitive position and thereby enhanced value to the stakeholders."

Ranganath had taken over

the said role after the then CFO Rajiv Bansal had quit in 2015.

"After a successful career spanning 18 years in Infosys including as CFO for the last 3 years, I now plan to pursue professional opportunities in new areas," Ranganath said, adding, "I am proud that over the last 3 years, during a critical phase of the company, we delivered strong and consistent financial outcomes, maintained high standards

MUST READ

UIDAI TO INTRODUCE FACIAL RECOGNITION



NEW DELHI: Aadhaar-issuing body UIDAI has finally announced a phased rollout of face recognition feature as an additional mode of authentication, starting with telecom service providers from September 15. The Authority had earlier planned to roll out face recognition feature from July 1, a target

that was later pushed to August 1. It has also proposed a monetary disincentive for telcos found slipping on the prescribed targets from mid next month. For authentication agencies other than telecom service providers (TSPs), UIDAI said specific instructions will be issued on implementation of face authentication feature, but did not give a fresh deadline.

Page 2

US TO FIGHT INDIA'S DATA LOCALIZATION

NEW DELHI: US technology giants plan to intensify lobbying efforts against stringent Indian data localisation requirements, which they say will undermine their growth ambitions in India, sources told Reuters. US trade groups, representing companies such as Amazon, American Express and Microsoft, have opposed India's push to store data locally. That push comes amid rising global efforts to protect user data.

Page 10



A disproportionate assets case had been registered against former West Midnapore district police chief Bharati Ghosh, an official said on Saturday. The case was registered by the CID at the West Midnapore Kotwali on Friday on the basis of a complaint by an official.

A ward councillor in the district took the initiative to arrange marriage of a farmer's daughter with a suitable boy at the eleventh hour, after the original groom demanded more money for tying the knot.

TO SPREAD the message of environment preservation through planting trees, Jhargram district administration has taken a novel initiative. The officials would engage students to plant trees and nurture them.



P4

P4

Kolkata Chronicle

cityhighlights



Foodies gear up for Ilish Utsav

Have you fixed your date with 'queen of fish' yet? If not then hurry up!! as she is going to stay here for few weeks more. Monsoon is definitely the season for hilsa or ilish – fondly known as 'queen of fish' because of its unique taste and characteristic silvery look. These fishes are also great swimmers as they cross thousands of miles in oceans to spawn their eggs in fresh or estuarine waters.

Time: 12:30 pm – 03:30pm and 7:30 PM to 11:00 PM

Venue: The Park

Sundy Brunch at Hotel Hindustan International

HHI Kolkata has some of the most sought after restaurants in India. Guests are treated to diverse cooking styles and the most imaginative culinary traditions from India, Europe, the Middle East and the Orient. Choose to dine in one of our restaurant- Myth and experience the delicacy. Time: 12:00 noon to 4:00 PM Venue: Myth- Hotel Hindustan International

Ullashe Ilish to tickle taste buds

A dish made of Hilsa is loved by all. To give the guests a gastronomic pleasure, Aaheli, the authentic Bengali cuisine restaurants brings to you "Ullashe Ilish", a unique Ilish festival to tantalize the taste buds of Hilsa lovers. Starting from August 1 to August 31 celebrate Ullashe Ilish. Time: 12:00 pm to 3:30 pm and 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm. Venue: Aaheli.

Sonar Ilish at Sonar Tori Restaurant

The sonar ilish or the golden ilish is conceptualized as series of recipes from Sona tori kitchen and majority of them are cooked in sorsae, which gives the name to the festival as well as the name of the restaurant. Timings: 12 Noon to 3:30 PM and 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Venue: Sonartori Restaurant Kolkata

IIT-K to set up reused water research centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



KOLKATA: The IIT-Kharagpur will set up a re-water research center, seed-funded by two alumni members to replenish and rejuvenate water resources, a statement issued by the institute said on Saturday.

The move is to tackle the challenge of resolving two burning issues faced by urban India sewage disposal and access to clean potable water, it said on the 68th Foundation Day of the premier institution.

"The scarcity of water for drinking and domestic use is becoming acute and will only worsen in the coming years. On the other hand, urban areas are witnessing massive sewage problems. The idea of linking these two crises and coming up with one viable solution is challenging," said one of the alumni members Anant Aneesh Reddy.

The Aditya Choubey Center for Re-Water Research would be networking with government bodies to take up this technology and the process of MM Ghangrekar, who will be heading this project, Reddy said.

The institute is setting up an on-campus plant which will convert 1.35 million litre of sewage water from the hostels

Bengal looks for its people marooned in flood-hit Kerala

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA: The state government has asked block development officers of Purulia, Murshidabad, Malda and Birbhum to prepare lists of people who work in Kerala and stranded in that state due to flood.

Several people from these districts work in the South Indian state.

A government official said the move comes after concerns were raised by family members of those people, who are affected by the deluge in the South Indian state.

"This will help us to have the exact figure of people who work in Kerala," the official said.

The officials also hinted that the state government is keeping its options open and means to bring back those workers who are presently stranded in Kerala.

Moreover, chief secretary Malay De called the senior officials of the Kerala government and has sought help in this regard.

Nabanna sources said that after receiving the reports of flood disaster in the Southern state, the anguished family members have approached the state government to help them find their kin who are presently stranded there and bring them back safely. According to sources in Nabanna, the state government has direct-

are not enough. Yet, I must tell all my brothers and sisters of Kerala that our thoughts and prayers are with each one of you."

She further added, "Condolences to those families, which have lost their loved ones. Strength to those, who are fighting the Kerala Floods".

Meanwhile, state government is also anxious about the well-being of the labourers from Bengal, who are currently working in Kerala. Sources said that the high officials in Nabanna held a meeting to discuss the situation as there are several people who are engaged in various professions in the South Indian state.

The state government is in touch with the Kerala government and exploring ways and means to bring back those workers who are presently stranded in Kerala.

The officials also said, "In that case, the state government might send its own disaster management team to Kerala for rescue operations. The team has been asked to stay on high alert, so that they could start preparation once the order is given."

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, on Saturday, expressed her solidarity with the flood-affected people of Kerala. In a tweet message, Banerjee said, "Words alone

ed the district administration to intimate the block development officers of those districts

to make a list of people from each district who are present working in Kerala. Water

level is receding in many parts as death toll since August 9 has reached 192.



People being rescued from flood-affected regions following heavy monsoon rainfall in Kochi on Saturday.

Child pushed into cooker by tenant, dies

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA: A two-and-a-half-year-old girl succumbed to her burn injuries at the NRS Hospital, where she was undergoing treatment for the past five days.

Her father said she was pushed into a rice cooker by their tenant who had a fight with him.

Dipanwita Bhuniya had suffered over 75 per cent burns and was in a critical condition. She was pushed into a boiling rice cooker when rice was being cooked on August 14. It occurred after an argument broke out over payment of rent between landlord Rushen Bhuniya and tenant Rajkumari Shaw.

According to Sushen, Rajkumari had not been paying rent for a long time. He alleged that frequent arguments took place between them regarding this issue. The incident occurred when Dipanwita was playing at the courtyard.

According to doctors, despite best efforts of the doctors in Kolkata's NRS hospital, the life girl's life could not be saved.

A police officer said, "A case was registered in this regard. We have arrested Rajkumari and started the interrogation. She will be produced to court on Sunday."

RAJKUMARI HAD NOT PAID RENT FOR A LONG TIME. HE ALLEGED THAT FREQUENT ARGUMENTS TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THEM, THE LANDLORD SAID.

Midnight dash brings new life to 5 transplant patients

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA: The government's continuous efforts to promote organ donation and transplantation in West Bengal have been paying dividends in the state's overall organ transplant programme, with an increase in organ donations due to proactive efforts by the health department working with the Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (ROTO).

At its 68th Foundation Day of IIT-Kharagpur, the first IIT in independent India, its director Partha Pratim Chakrabarti said that he wants its presence in the list of top four universities. "We are now dreaming really big. IIT-Kharagpur needs to fly now. We have drawn up a roadmap for this. We also know it is not easy. But, at the same time, it is going to be possible as IIT-Kharagpur is capable of doing so," said the director of the institute.

On the occasion, IIT-K alumnus and founder, chairman of The Chatterjee Group, Dr Purnendu Chatterjee was the chief guest. Many former students working in the in different field were also awarded in the occasion. "With some of the alumni, I sat down to develop so many dreams and as the alumni are working in top positions of various institutes, both in India and abroad. We need their contribution and suggestions to fulfil our dreams," said the director.



in two patients by doctors at SSKM hospital.

A brain-dead 15-year-old had brought joy to at least five people, who received her two kidneys, liver, corneas and skin graft in the city.

One recipient, a 44-year-old male with end-stage liver disease from Siliguri admitted to SSKM hospital and declared brain dead on Friday morning.

After counselling, her grieving parents agreed to donate her organs and keep her memory alive in the lives that would be saved through the transplants.

A green corridor facilitated by the Kolkata Police ensured that the donated liver reached Apollo Gleneagles in less than 10 minutes after it was retrieved from the donor. The donor's kidneys were also retrieved and transplanted

through the night and proved that our slogan 'Apollo Never Sleeps' is more than just words!"

A spokesman of the state-run Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research (IPGMER), SSKM Hospital, said on Saturday that Mallika Majumder was declared brain dead by the institute on Friday.

She was diagnosed with a brain lesion after being admitted on July 23 and had slipped into coma on August 14, the spokesman said.

Her father Manik Majumder said over phone from Siliguri, "We were told by the doctors that there is no possibility of our daughter returning to life once she was declared brain dead. We were then convinced that if her organs could be transplanted on other persons

Actor Sayak beaten up by miscreants

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA: Popular TV actor Sayak Chakraborty, was severely beaten up along with his friend at a market near Garia station at about 10.45 pm on Friday. Police arrested one person in connection with the case.

On Friday night, Sayak went to the market and parked his two-wheeler at the parking lot. Suddenly, he saw some miscreants vandalising the vehicles in the parking lot and raised his voice against the act. Locals said the miscreants were drunk and started beating up Sayak and his friend, Sukanta Kundu.

Kundu said, "The drunk miscreants suddenly started vandalising the two-wheelers after which we had protested. The miscreants first hit Sayak and when I intervened, they

started beating us up with bamboos. Not just us, even the local people were beaten up by them when joined us. An auto-rickshaw driver, Raju Das, was severely injured after the miscreants had broken his nose."

The injured persons along with Sayak were taken to the nearest hospital immediately. All of them were released after primary treatment. The actor has alleged non-co-operation on part of the police.

He said, "I called up the Patuli police, but they had refused to intervene as they said that the incident took place under the jurisdiction of Sonarpur police. Later, I had called up the Sonarpur Police but they didn't come to the spot till we were present there. If this happens with people like us, I wonder what will happen with the common people."

THE FILM TO CHRONICLE THE HERMIT

Srijit-Prosenjit back for Gumnani Baba

ANINDITA Acharya

KOLKATA: National Award-winning filmmaker Srijit Mukherji has teamed up again with one of his favourite actors Prosenjit Chatterjee for the ambitious project on Gumnani Baba.

Srijit, who is known for making films on innovative content, continues to surprise audience with his projects. As film lovers wait for his modern take on Bhawali Sanyasi court case Ek Je Chilo Raja, set to release this Durga Puja, he comes up with a film on the mystery over disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Srijit's film will revolve around controversial sadhu Gumnani Baba, one who is thought to be Netaji in disguise.

Srijit told Eastern Chronicle that he has a knack for thrillers. In fact, that's why we have seen the filmmaker churn out successful thrillers such as Baishe Srabon, Mishawar Rawhoshyo, Chotushkone and Yeti Obhijaan to name a few. Keeping in mind the fact that the case of Gumnani Baba is controversial, how

would he weave the plot? The director instantly replies, "I love unsolved mysteries. I like the confusion that comes with it."

Srijit, who started his journey in the Bengali film industry with Autograph (2010) starring Prosenjit Chatterjee, has returned to the Bengali superstar time and again. From Baishe Srabon, Mishawar Rawhoshyo, Yeti Obhijaan and Zulfiquar, Srijit has joined hands with the star several times. In fact, for his latest film, Shah Jahan Regency, which is a modern adaptation of Shankar's novel Chowringhee, Srijit had approached Prosenjit to play a pivotal role. But Prosenjit had backed out of the film.

Meanwhile, Prosenjit, too, is elated to work with Srijit again. "I am happy to

be a part of this auspicious project. Need all your love, blessings and good wishes @ SrijitSpeketh @srijitsocial @iammonoy," the actor tweeted.

shrikantmohta @srijitspeketh @srijitsocial @iammonoy," the actor tweeted.

FILE PHOTO



All-party prayer meet on Vajpayee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA: The Bengal unit of BJP is planning to organise an all party condolence meeting for former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who passed away in New Delhi on August 16.

"In Kolkata, we are planning to hold an all party condolence and prayer meeting for Vajpayee ji. He was not only a former prime minister of India but was one of the greatest mass leaders of Independent India. He was loved and respected across party lines," BJP national secretary Rahul Sinha said.

It is still in the planning stage nothing has been finalized as of now. We will invite leaders of all political parties and eminent citizens. His friends and admirers in Kolkata will also be invited, Sinha said.

City auto-rickshaws to get new colour coding

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA: In order to differentiate auto-rickshaws plying on streets of Kolkata, the state government has decided to come up with new colour coding for these vehicles.

According to sources at Nabanna, the state government has decided that autos which are plying on Kolkata roads, will be painted in white and blue colour. Though, it was categorically stated that colour of auto-rickshaws running on district roads will be unchanged.

A senior official said the decision would be announced officially, when the new auto policy would be declared by state transport minister Suvendu Adhikari next week.

THE PROPOSED MOVE CAME, AFTER THE STATE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, AS WELL AS KOLKATA TRAFFIC POLICE, FAILED TO STOP AUTOS PLIYING ON THE CITY ROADS, AS WELL AS DISTRICTS, WITH A SINGLE PERMIT



The new policy will come into effect soon.

FILE PHOTO

It may be noted that the proposed move came, after the state transport department, as well as Kolkata traffic police, failed to stop autos plying on the city roads, as well as districts, with a single permit.

It was noticed that such practice was rampant in Kolkata and on its outskirts, as well as those areas falling under district police commissionarate, said an official.

We often received complaints in this regard. A section of auto drivers were found driving beyond their permissible limit, the official added.

The state government is hopeful that with change in colour of autos in Kolkata, and those running in districts, remaining the same — green and yellow, the errant drivers could be identified easily.

Though, the state govern-

ment said the department would not give any financial assistance to auto owners for change in colour. "It is not legally possible to give financial aid in this regard. However, we will urge dealers to offer rebates to them," said the official.

Meanwhile, it has been learnt that auto unions have welcomed the decision of the state government.

Youth nabbed for selling pesticide-laced mutton

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

BERHAMPORE: Berhampore Police arrested a youth on Saturday from Ranibagan area for spraying pesticide on mutton and selling the meat to customers. Berhampore municipality has closed the shop after receiving a written complaint.

A picture on Friday went viral on Facebook of different persons of Berhampore, where a youth was seen to spray pesticide from a red bottle. The picture was taken by a youth while he was crossing Ranibagan area of Berhampore.

Hundreds of people from Berhampore got scared watching the picture on Facebook and started appealing on social media to stop purchasing mutton from the shop at Ranibagan crossing to avoid any health hazard.

Inspector in-charge of Berhampore police station Sanath Das said, "The youth in the picture has been identified as Salim Sheikh and on

the basis of a written complaint on Saturday we have arrested him."

It can be said that a few months back, thousands of people in the state got a jolt to find out how some dishonest businessmen were hoarding and selling rotten meat of different animals in the city markets and its adjacent districts. The picture of spraying pesticide on mutton has once again created panic among a section of people in Berhampore.

Sarmistha Mukherjee, a resident of Berhampore-Ranibagan area said, "My father often buys mutton from the shop. I have no plan to visit the shop in future."

The project coordinator of Berhampore municipality Narugopal Mukherjee said, "We have got complaint from several persons on the issue. Apparently, it seems that the youth was spraying something on the mutton. We have sealed the shop soon after receiving the complaint. Police will take legal action against the accused."

Train mows down two

KOLKATA: Two women were killed on Saturday after they were knocked down by a speeding local train near Belgharia railway station, under Eastern Railway's Sealdah division, a Government Railway Police (GRP) officer said.

Police said the two were hit by Up Krishnanagar City

local while walking down the railway track just outside the station in North 24 Parganas district on Saturday afternoon.

"Two women have been run over by the galloping Krishnagar City local outside the Belgharia station around 4.30pm on Saturday. Police said the two have not been identified yet."

IANS

Berhampore officials carry out checks on dengue



Fumigation being carried out in a Berhampore locality on Saturday. EC PHOTO

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

BERHAMPORE: Senior officials from health and district administration carried out checks in various localities of Berhampore and Jiganj-Azimganj municipalities, to prevent outbreak of dengue.

Murshidabad district magistrate (DM) P Ulganathan and project coordinator of Berhampore Municipality, Narugopal Mukherjee, led the team to carry out an inspection drive in Berhampore town.

On Saturday morning, the DM along with senior officials, inspected the ward number 26, 27 and 28 near Gorabazar, to find out presence of any dengue mosquito larvae. The team found these areas free from any dengue mosquito larvae.

What we need is the proper disposal of solid-waste. Otherwise it provides scope for mosquitoes to breed, said the DM, adding, we have formed a

dedicated team of 2,500 persons for the monitoring purpose, especially in rural areas.

The team will get assistance from officials of the health department, he added.

Narugopal Mukherjee said, "As per data, at least 189 patients have been diagnosed with dengue in the district, but none was from Berhampore municipality. We have taken steps to keep the localities clean, which fall under the civic body."

The civic body workers have been carrying out fumigation in various localities of the town on regular basis, said Mukherjee.

The officials also inspected the ward numbers 8, 9, 10, 11 of Jiganj-Azimganj municipalities. Prasenjit Ghosh, chairman of the civic body, said, "We didn't find any dengue larvae during inspection on Saturday. Besides, we have started awareness campaign against dengue."

IANS

Cattle smuggling no longer lucrative business in Indo-Bangladesh border

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

KRISHNAGAR (NADIA): The cattle smuggling through Indo-Bangladesh border is no longer a lucrative trade. Now, the smugglers have been opting for Phensedyl, a codeine-laced cough syrup, which is consumed in Bangladesh in large quantities, against the recommended small doses, to get a kick.

The drug is smuggled across to Bangladesh for its addictive quality.

Indo-Bangladesh border, the fourth longest in the world, has a total length of 4,096 kilometre and with West Bengal it shares a length of 2,217 kilometre. And after the border fencing work of 1,500 kilometre, at least 717 kilometre length still remains porous, making the task easy for smugglers.

Nadia shares 265 km length with Indo-Bangladesh border, out of which 110.65 km border has barbed fencing and the rest is porous.

The Bangladesh officials had urged Indian government several times, to put a blanket ban on production of the cough syrup, because 50% crime in Bangladesh is linked to this drug.



EC PHOTO

The smuggling of drugs to Bangladesh has become a big challenge between the two countries. Compared to smuggling of FICN, cattle and gold, the share of codeine-laced cough syrup is the highest.

On the other, Bangladeshi JMB militants consider Nadia district as safe haven to carry out such activities.

According to sources, smuggling of cattle to Bangladesh has become tough task, due

to heightened vigil on borders between the two countries.

The codeine-laced Indian drug is in great demand in Bangladesh and courier boys are entrusted with the task to serve a big clientele of private bank officials, housewives, boys and girls there, said the sources.

They book orders through phone and delivery boys are paid on weekly basis, he added.

Minister's quiz to varsity on marks and prestige

KOLKATA: West Bengal Education minister Partha Chatterjee has said Jadavpur University authorities should ponder whether changing the marks of candidates in the new merit list of History will enhance the prestige of the premier institution.

When asked about 15 new names having figured among the 70 candidates on the revised merit list for undergraduate (UG) course brought out by the university, Chatterjee told reporters on Friday, "Yes there has also been instance of someone getting 0 in the previous merit list, and now having secured 90 in the revised list."

"The authorities of JU should ponder whether such instances will enhance the prestige of the institution," he said.

Chatterjee added, "That is why I had always been maintaining that there should be uniformity in the admission procedure in all streams in JU."

Registrar Chiranjib Bhattacharya said, "After getting complaints from some guardians after publication of provisional merit list in History admission, the JU authorities decided to conduct a review of answer scripts of all the 344 students who took the history admission test. PTI

Students to offer tips on afforestation

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

JHARGRAM: To spread the message of environment preservation through planting trees, Jhargram district administration has taken a novel initiative. The officials would engage students to plant saplings and nurture them.

First, a school in Jhargram town has started this project. Now, the model would be replicated by other schools of the district. The students of class six of Rani Binod Manjari Rastriya Balika Vidyalaya, would be given the responsibility to take care of the trees. The administration issued cards named 'Paribesh Passport' or a passport for environment to the 50 students after 50 saplings had been planted in the school premises recently.

The initiative was taken at a time when several people in Jhargram had complained depletion of green cover in the town and nearby areas due to rampant felling of trees. They said they want that more trees to be planted for the sake of environment and to make the Jhargram town green with plenty of trees as it was earlier.

"It is a good initiative. From childhood, the students will know how to plant trees and to work for making our environment better", Swati



THE INITIATIVE WAS TAKEN AT A TIME WHEN SEVERAL PEOPLE IN JHARGRAM HAD COMPLAINED DEPLETION OF GREEN COVER IN THE TOWN AND NEARBY AREAS DUE TO RAMPANT FELLING OF TREES

Datta, who runs an NGO in Jhargram, said.

She added, "The town is also called 'Aranya Sundari' or a charming forest as there is plenty of sal trees. Now, there is also a good number of trees in the town but the number has recently declined over the last decade. We hope that it will help to grow more trees", she added.

According to forest depart-

ment, mainly sal and rudra palash saplings were planted. As many as 50 students of Class 6 of the school will nurture trees and the teachers will take a look at the trees after six months. They will also write comments on the cards. After taking a look at the growth rate of trees, the students will be given a certificate.

"We are watching the change in environment every year and every one of us has the duty to save the environment. The only way to reduce the pollution is to grow more trees. We want students to look after the trees and share a bond with them. We are trying to involve every students in the scheme", Ayesha Rani A, the district magistrate of Jhargram said.

"It's very easy to plant a tree, but it is not easy to ensure their growth. The 'Paribesh Passport' is a very good initiative and we will start the scheme in other schools", Basabraj Hellaichi, the DFO of Jhargram said.

The forest department and administrative officials are optimistic about the initiative. They feel that watching students get involved in such activities, others would feel motivated and come forward to actively participate in planting trees.

Class XI student arrested with arms, ammo in Murshidabad

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

BERHAMPORE: Police arrested a class 11 student of Kalijachak High School of Malda from Chander more in Berhampore on Saturday with 20 fire arms and 100 rounds ammunition. Significantly, nowhere in Bengal any student has been arrested with such a huge number of arms and ammunition over the past few years.

Murshidabad SP Mukesh at a press meet said on Saturday afternoon, the officers of Suti Police station got information that two persons of Kalijachak PS area were coming to Suti to hand over a big consignment of arms and ammunition to a man of Suti.

On the basis of the information, a special team of Suti PS led by officer-in-charge Biswabandhu Chattaraj was waiting at a road side dhaba in plain clothes for them to arrive.

And as soon they arrived with arms, police arrested one of them. Another arms dealer fled from the spot.

Mukesh said, "The arrested person has been identified as Mostaheer Islam, 19. He originally hails from Sherpur-Nimtata village under Shamserganj PS in



The accused in police custody on Saturday. EC PHOTO

Murshidabad but now stays at Sultanganj College more area under Kalijachak police station in Malda. The arrested youth studies in class 11 at Kalijachak High School."

The SP added, "In recent times, Shamsarganj and Farakka police have seized huge number of arms and ammunitions and some persons were arrested in those cases. The arrested persons divulged the name of Mostaheer during an inter-

HAPPY ENDING

Knotty affair gets a timely hand, bells chime for Bolpur girl

SUROJIT GHOSH HAZRA

BOLPUR: A ward councillor in the district took the initiative to arrange marriage of a farmer's daughter with a suitable boy at the eleventh hour, after the original groom demanded more money for tying the knot. The sad story had a happy ending on Friday as the reception was attended by around nine hundred people.

Around five days ago, on Monday, Sadhan Das of Raghajpur village in Panuri police station area had gone to meet the groom's family to talk about last-minute preparations. But, instead, the groom's family demanded more money from him to go ahead with the marriage. Realising that it was beyond his means to meet the increasing demands of the groom's family, Das came to meet Trinamool Congress ward office, apparently to 'get justice'.

"My wife and I went to the party office to get justice. We had arranged our daughter's marriage with a Adityapur youth in Santiniketan police station area. Just few days before the marriage, the boy demanded more money from us for the marriage," informed Sadhan Das.

He added, "After hearing



The couple in a jubilant mood after their marriage.

our story, Ward 4 councillor Sukhanta Hazra said he will try to get a solution though the area is not under his jurisdiction."

The next day Hazra called Das and informed him that he had found an eligible boy for his daughter. After consultations, the marriage was fixed.

"The proposal was like god-sent to us. We accepted the proposal after holding discussions it with family members," Das said.

Councillor Hazra said, "The unfortunate incident was very disturbing. I thought of doing something for them. I identified

Chandan Singh, my colleague, and a whole-time party worker. The boy too agreed at my proposal."

The 22-year-old Mum, daughter of Sadhan Das, was married to Bishnu (26) on Thursday.

The local ward committee made all the arrangements to make the marriage a success.

On Friday, there were around 50 women blowing conch shells to welcome Mum.

"On Friday evening, we arranged the reception in our locality. Our district president Anubrata Mondal and state fisheries minister



EC PHOTO

The smuggling of drugs to Bangladesh has become a big challenge between the two countries. Compared to smuggling of FICN, cattle and gold, the share of codeine-laced cough syrup is the highest.

On the other, Bangladeshi JMB militants consider Nadia district as safe haven to carry out such activities.

According to sources, smuggling of cattle to Bangladesh has become tough task, due

to heightened vigil on borders between the two countries.

The codeine-laced Indian drug is in great demand in Bangladesh and courier boys are entrusted with the task to serve a big clientele of private bank officials, housewives, boys and girls there, said the sources.

They book orders through phone and delivery boys are paid on weekly basis, he added.

He added, "After hearing



Chinese team will visit N-E to survey investments in region

BUSINESS HUB Tripura minister Sudip Barman says the delegation will visit Assam and Tripura in September to study potential sectors for collaboration and available resources

AGENCIES

AGARTALA: A Chinese delegation would visit Assam and Tripura next month to study the possible investment sectors in the resource-rich northeast India, Tripura Health and Family Welfare Minister Sudip Roy Barman said on Saturday.

Roy Barman, who as member of the Indian delegation visited China earlier this week, said: "A Chinese delegation would visit Assam and Tripura in September to study the probable investment sectors in the northeastern region and the region's available resources. After visiting Assam, the delegation would visit Tripura."

The Chinese official delegation, he said, would talk to top officials, traders, investors and experts of the northeastern region comprising eight states in Guwahati, said the Minister, who returned on Friday.

An Indian delegation led by Bharatiya Janata Party General



Sudip Barman visited a waste management plant in Guangzhou that generate power from garbage and waste materials in a very eco-friendly process.

Secretary Ram Madhav on a visit to the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou since August 11 met Indian and Chinese offi-

cials and businessmen from different parts of the country. Senior Ministers from Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat – the states governed by the BJP – were the part of the 10-member delegation, which was jointly supported by the Union Ministry of Industries and Commerce and Indi Foundation, a NGO runs by Ram Madhav.

Roy Barman, who also holds the Information Technology, Science, Technology and Environment Departments, said that the Indian delegation first visited a waste management plant in Guangzhou that generate power from garbage and waste materials in a very eco-friendly process.

"We have apprised the Chinese officials, investors and businessmen about the variety of enormous resources, both forest and mining, available in the northeastern region.

Surface connectivity, including railways, has developed to a large extent in the northeast region and transportation now become easier between the region and the rest of the country via Bangladesh, he added.

The minister said after the completion of the under construction bridge over river Feni (135 km south of Agartala) in southern Tripura, the region would be directly connected with the Chittagong international sea port in neighbouring Bangladesh.

The Chittagong sea port, only international port nearest to northeast India, is 72 km from southern Tripura's border town Sabroom.

"The Feni bridge would turn Tripura into a business hub for all the northeastern states," the Minister said, adding the state government has also invited investors to set up rubber based industries as Tripura is the second largest rubber growing state after Kerala.

Northeast India's only 250 km out of 5,687 km outer perimeter touches India. The remaining 5437 km represents international boundaries with China (1300), Myanmar (1643 km), Bangladesh (1880 km), Bhutan (516 km) and Nepal (98 km).



MHA teams reviewing flood loss in Tripura

AGENCIES

AGARTALA: Two months after the devastating flood that caused deaths of at least 23 lives, rendered over 50,000 homeless and damaged agricultural production, a central team headed by Joint Secretary of MHA Daniel Richard arrived on Friday to assess the volume of loss.

Besides, visiting the affected villages and interacting with the villagers, the team had a meeting with district administration of Unokoti, one of the worst flood affected districts to figure out the loss and assessment of the state government.

the state government, officials said here today adding that the team members would leave for Delhi tomorrow and submit a detailed report to the ministry.

Tripura government's estimated loss of Rs 1200 Cr in six phases of flood this year since April and sought compensation from central government to relief the victims. The state government has already paid ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh to each victim and cash relief to each of the victim families but it was insufficient to re-build the dwelling units.

'River siltation is major problem for Tripura'

UDAIPUR: The officers of Directorate of Economics & Statistics Planning (Statistics) department published in its economic review of Tripura that river siltation is one of the major problems of the State which is affecting aquatic life in several ways and thus effecting economic development of the state and steps should be taken to overcome this problem.

According to the report of directorate of economics & statistics planning (statistics) department, the economy of Tripura is characterized by high rate of poverty, low per capita income, low capital formation, in-adequate infrastructure facilities, geographical isolation, inadequate use of forest as well as mineral resources, low progress in industrial field and high unemployment problem.

Industrialization in the State is yet to take off and industry sector is not able to overcome un-employment problem at the desire level despite the State government's efforts for creation of a comprehensive base for industrialization.

On the other hand, agriculture sector has become stagnant and is not ready to absorb the growing demand for employment though the economy of the State continues to remain agrarian, informed by officers of Tripura Government. PTI

Guwahati-based enterprise among 100 SMEs in India

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

GUWAHATI: Beating stiff competition from more than 33,000 vibrant enterprises from across the country,

Guwahati based Out of Home (OOH) media firm Outreach Advertising has been recognised in the list of top 100 Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in India for 2017. The initiative by India SME Forum is organised in association with the Union Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises. The awards were presented at New Delhi on August 9.

The India SME 100 Awards is reputed as one of the largest gatherings of SMEs from India, drawing business owners, startup founders and investors from across the country.

The selection process to pick the top 100 emerging SMEs involved a qualified and eminent jury's assessments. Criteria considered in selecting the top SMEs included innovation, scalability, business feasibility, market opportunity, reach and revenue. Commenting on the recognition award, Sunit Jain, Managing Director of Outreach Advertising shared,



EC PHOTO

"I believe Outreach has taken right steps at the right time transforming the entire eco system of our industry while impacting city's landscape positively. More so, we have established business processes which is robust and systematic and has helped us get this recognition because most of small and medium enterprises don't follow organised work processes".

Sunit feels that such awards are a confidence booster for the entire services sector as most of the other winners were from manufacturing sector. "A lot of investors and bankers present at the event were amazed to see advertising & media enterprise getting an award and it would

perhaps change their outlook on the fast evolving OOH space. Outreach Advertising is the only enterprise amongst India's Top 100 SMEs from the advertising & media sector in India and only one from North East India", he said.

The award was presented by Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Giriraj Singh, Member of Parliament and former Union Minister of MSME, Kalraj Mishra, Secretary of MSME, Dr. Arun Kumar Panda (IAS), MD&CEO of Axis Bank, Shrikha Sharma and Chairman of India SME Forum, Prahad Kakkar.



There have been contrasting reports in the past for the venue of the permanent campus of the NIT with the institute management not keen on setting base at Rabongla.

"Despite the State government being very receptive to the needs of the institute, various wrong reports are being sent to the ministry of Human Resources Development projecting negative image of the institute's location. This also creates negative image of the

State. This is also creating hurdles in further infrastructure development of this institute," said Bhutia in his address at the function attended by HRD minister RB Subba, HRD principal secretary GP Upadhyaya and NIT senior officials, reported Sikkim Express.

The area MLA DD Bhutia mentioned that the State government has already made available more than 150 acres of land for the NIT Sikkim at Rabongla.

DEODHANI AT KAMAKHYA



A Hindu priest dances as he carries a sacrificial goat in a procession during the three-day long Deodhani festival at Kamakhya temple in Guwahati on Saturday. PTI PHOTO.

Operation Clean Drive in Arunachal

ITANAGAR: Over one thousand Inner Line Permit (ILP) violators and 'illegal immigrants' were driven out of Arunachal Pradesh by the activists of the All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union (AAPSU).

The students' body on Friday launched a state-wide "Operation Clean Drive", an initiative which aimed at evicting 'illegal migrants' from the State.

During the OCD, the AAPSU, with the help police, drove out more than one thousand ILP violators from the Capital Complex," chairman of OCD, Tatung Taga was quoted as saying in media reports.

"The district student unions have also carried out the drive in their respective districts and they shall submit their reports within this week. The drive shall continue with its movement from Saturday," he said. In the wake of Assam publishing its NRC on July 30, AAPSU had on August 1 set a 15-day deadline for illegal immigrants. PTI

Sikkim is firm on establishing NIT permanently in Rabongla

AGENCIES

GANGTOK: Sikkim Power minister DD Bhutia has told the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Sikkim management that the State government is firm in its decision to permanently establish the institute at Rabongla. The NIT Sikkim, set up in 2010, is running from a temporary campus at Rabongla.

Speaking at a function on Friday, at the NIT campus in Rabongla in South Sikkim, the Power minister shared that Rabongla is the finest example of Sikkim's development.

It is well connected by road and has all infrastructure facilities to make institute to sustain and grow, he said. He added the State government is constructing double lane roads and is committed to boosting digital connectivity, uninterrupted power supply for the smooth functioning of NIT Sikkim.



There have been contrasting reports in the past for the venue of the permanent campus of the NIT with the institute management not keen on setting base at Rabongla.

"Despite the State government being very receptive to the needs of the institute, various wrong reports are being sent to the ministry of Human Resources Development projecting negative image of the institute's location. This also creates negative image of the

State. This is also creating hurdles in further infrastructure development of this institute," said Bhutia in his address at the function attended by HRD minister RB Subba, HRD principal secretary GP Upadhyaya and NIT senior officials, reported Sikkim Express.

The area MLA DD Bhutia mentioned that the State government has already made available more than 150 acres of land for the NIT Sikkim at Rabongla.

AGARTALA: Police arrested four youth including one from the city allegedly involved in drug smuggling in two separate raids in last 24 hours.

About 80 kg heroin stored in 20 containers and 1248 contraband tablets were seized from a house here. Police said three persons- Amal Sarkar (30), Sujit Sarkar (34) and Prantosh Sarkar (27), the residents of Kamalnagar village of Sonamura in West Tripura were booked in connection with state's biggest ganja haul in Sonamura on Aug 2 last.

In a 13-hour operation, a joint team of DIB, DRI, BSF and Sonamura police recovered 85 drums full of dry ganja from the Kamalnagar village, which were kept under the ground of a betel leaf for smuggling. Two persons- Delwar Hossain and Ali Hossain were nabbed from the spot in connection with the illegal stock of 3350 kg ganja.

Based on secret information last evening police raided a car at Nagerjala here and arrested the three persons along with the vehicle. Police said Sujit Sarkar is linked with international drug smugglers. Agencies

AGENCIES

AGARTALA: Tripura Tribal Welfare minister Mevar Kumar Jamatia on Saturday supported the revision of NRC in the state and hoped that his party IPFT would soon demand it like several other states.

Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT) is an ally of the ruling alliance headed by BJP which came to power after the Tripura assembly polls in February this year.

About 80 kg heroin stored in 20 containers and 1248 contraband tablets were seized from a house here. Police said three persons- Amal Sarkar (30), Sujit Sarkar (34) and Prantosh Sarkar (27), the residents of Kamalnagar village of Sonamura in West Tripura were booked in connection with state's biggest ganja haul in Sonamura on Aug 2 last.

In a 13-hour operation, a joint team of DIB, DRI, BSF and Sonamura police recovered 85 drums full of dry ganja from the Kamalnagar village, which were kept under the ground of a betel leaf for smuggling. Two persons- Delwar Hossain and Ali Hossain were nabbed from the spot in connection with the illegal stock of 3350 kg ganja.

Based on secret information last evening police raided a car at Nagerjala here and arrested the three persons along with the vehicle. Police said Sujit Sarkar is linked with international drug smugglers. Agencies

PROJECT HEALTH

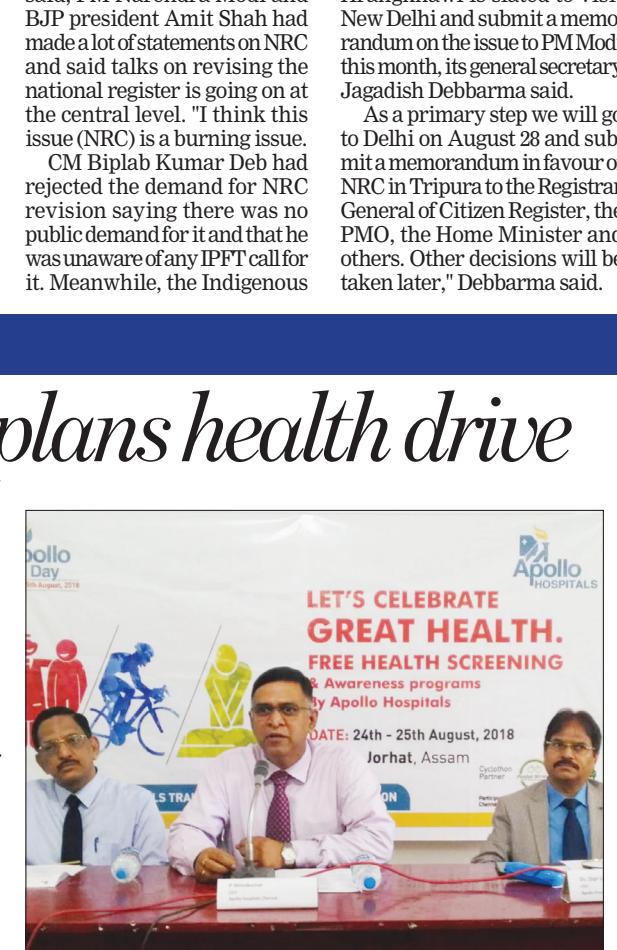
Apollo plans health drive

TINKLE ROY

JORHAT: Apollo Group of Hospitals announced a mega health awareness campaign 'Apollo Day' to be held in Jorhat on August 24 to 25, 2018, in its crusade to prevent and control Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and to spread the message of good health.

It is to be mentioned that the two-day awareness drive will be carried out by the Apollo Group of Hospitals from Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Delhi and Guwahati through a series of public awareness initiatives and activities focused on prevention and early detection of Non-Communicable Diseases.

This announcement was made by P Shivakumar, Chief Executive Officer, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, Dr (Sqn Ldr) Sudhakar Manav, Chief Executive Officer, Apollo Hospitals, Guwahati and R Sudharsan, Vice President Marketing, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai, at a press meet held in Jorhat on Friday. P Shivakumar said, "There is



a lot that can be done for the prevention of NCDs at individual, community and policy level. With the right strategies, they can be prevented." "In this direction, we at Apollo Hospitals with support of the Jorhat District Administration, the local medical fraternity and the public at large wish to take a small step towards educating and bringing an awareness amongst the mass people with a view to prevent NCDs," added Shivakumar. The activities as a part of the Apollo Day programme will include Basic Life Support training sessions in schools, colleges and for the community, Health Screening and Awareness programmes by Apollo Hospitals. The date is 24th - 25th August, 2018. Jorhat, Assam. Sponsor Partner: Hemiscope.

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

JORHAT: A new Forest Divisional Office is going to come up in the Northern Bank of Kaziranga National Park, this was stated by Akash Barua, Director of Kaziranga National Park on Thursday.

"The Northern Range of Kaziranga National Park is going to be upgraded to Biswanath wildlife Forest Divisional Office," said Barua.



the jurisdiction of the new Forest Divisional Office, added Barua.

Barua also said that the Head Office of the new Forest Divisional Office will be

in Biswanath.

It is worth mentioning that in Kaziranga National Park Forest Divisional Office existed earlier, which was located in Bokhata.

It may also be mentioned that Kaziranga National Park area is divided into five ranges, the Burapahar (HQ, Baguri), Western (HQ, Kohora), Central (HQ, Agaratali) and Northern (HQ, Biswanath), overseen by Range Forest Officers.

The first poster of one of the biggest films from the Northeast, *III SMOKING BARRELS*, was released on Saturday. It showcases at least six languages and highlights some of the biggest issues from India's northeastern part of India. The poster shows a gritty and hard hitting image of three different individuals, a child, a young boy and a man, each one holding a gun in his hands. The film weaves together three of the biggest challenges that people of the Northeast face - child trafficking, drug abuse and poaching. Filmed across the Northeast and capturing the breathtaking scenery of the region, it has already won accolades. Director Sanjib Dey who has won the Best Narrative Feature Award at the 12th Mexico International Film Festival 2018 and was nominated for the Grand Newcomer Award at the 66th International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg, Germany in 2017 makes his directorial debut with this film. The lead star cast features an ensemble cast of Indraneil Sengupta, Subrat Dutta, Shiny Gogoi, Siddharth Boro, Mandakini Goswami and Amrita Chattopadhyay. Dey says, "The film is not just about one particular state but the whole of the Northeast. There has never been a feature film made wholesomely representing the special region which is a warehouse of 8 provinces, more than 200 dialects, huge ethnic diversities, rich natural resources and yet encompassed with many conflicts and hard hitting issues. But the challenge lies in seamlessly accommodating them all in one film. It is one of the most exciting films of this year because it has the right vibe and some great music." In an age, when strong subjects are being explored, this film will hopefully stand out in the crowd with a content that had hardly been tapped before and for sure, the interest level of the audience will increase. But what the film needs is strong marketing which will help the makers reach out to more and more film buffs. We keep our fingers crossed and wish the men behind the film all success.



THE ACTRESS
inches closer
towards
matrimonial
bliss with singer
NICK JONAS
after their
engagement
ceremony in
Mumbai on
Saturday



PEECEE GETS ENGAGED

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

It's official. The speculation over Priyanka Chopra's engagement to Nick Jonas can be finally put to rest now. PeeCee and her American pop singer beau just got done with their 'roka' ceremony in Mumbai on Saturday. For the uninitiated, 'roka', as a Twitter user put it, is the official announcement of the consent of both the boy and the girl for getting married to each other.

It can be considered as stamping the boy and the girl with the title of "booked and engaged."

While the national media has been buzzing with the news since Saturday morning, the *Quantico* star broke the internet with beautiful pictures, confirming the news by evening. She wrote, "Taken... Our best wishes!

With all my heart and soul," with an adorable photograph of theirs right after the *roka* – with comments pouring in from the entire fraternity.

Nick was quick to share the same photograph, with this caption, "Future Mrs. Jonas. My heart. My love." Taking cue from 'the two who became one', their social media accounts followed suit! We didn't miss the 'same photo, post sharing' trend that has caught on with the 'most happening' couples of the country these days.

Priyanka has her priorities right. At a time, when she was deprived of opportunities in Bollywood for having reportedly dated a big Bollywood star, she risked trying her luck abroad. And boy, she did well. Closer home, Priyanka opted out of *Bharat* because matters of love came to the forefront. And here they are, wearing Abu Jani-Sandeep Khosla ensembles, gearing up for their Big Day.

Our best wishes!



AS AN INDUSTRY WE DON'T HAVE A COLLECTIVE VOICE OR FORUM. BUT LET'S LOOK AT THE GOOD THINGS AND SHRUG OFF THE NEGATIVITY NOW. EVERYBODY, WHOM I HAVE APPROACHED, HAS RESPONDED AT A PERSONAL LEVEL. I AM HUMBLED
- RESUL POOKUTTY



Resul leads rescue act

SWASTI CHATTERJEE

God's own country Kerala has been ravaged by a devastating flood over the last nine days. And assistance has been pouring in from several quarters. As more rainfall is predicted, the situation is getting grimmer. The Malayali film fraternity, led by Oscar-winning sound engineer Resul Pookutty, has come to the rescue of the victims at this hour of need.

Resul has personally approached several Bollywood actors for aid, and they have been quick to respond. From Shah Rukh Khan to Amitabh Bachchan, Sonam Kapoor and Alia Bhatt, they have contributed to his personal fundraiser. Speaking to *Eastern Chronicle*, Resul confirmed, "Nobody knows the extent of damage the state is facing, unless you are on ground zero. The contributions from the actors are out of my personal equations."

However, he feels the bigger job lies at the ground level. "The Indian Navy has to shoulder the main responsibility. Members from my foundation are at the ground helping the people stuck with food and clothing. Bollywood stars have

contributed with an open mind. The funds and other donations will be picked from Mumbai via air and dropped at Kerala by Sunday," he said. He is 'impressed' by the way Bollywood has come forward to help.

Right now, more than rehabilitation, Resul's group is focused on rescuing the trapped. But the real task commences once the flood victims have been shifted to a safer place. "The real job begins once the water recedes and everything settles down," Resul has

been joined by music director AR Rahman. "AR and I are working together to rebuild people's lives in Kerala, as soon as the level of flood water decreases. A lot of help is required in this process, but there is a dearth of people on ground. There is enough material with us, but it is getting difficult to reach the ones affected," he said, adding, "For instance, people who are stranded on top of buildings cannot be reached and can only be airlifted. There are many places beyond the Army's reach. The lack of manpower is also a grave concern."

As a red alert has been declared in the state, Resul anticipates the flood would spread an epidemic in the coming weeks. "There could be

OTHERS STEP IN TOO

Several from the Malayali film industry have lent their helping hands. Filmmakers based in Mumbai, will send a truck to Kerala soon. Director Rajeev Ravi said, "We are trying to coordinate where we should send the truck to. Ideally, we should send it to a place which has more than 3,000 people. We will send a month's stock of resources in the truck." Ajayan Adat, a Malayali cinematographer, has set out in a jeep with supplies. Ajayan said, "Many Tamil directors are reaching Kerala next week. Reaching Kerala would be a task. We'll reach Thiruvananthapuram by Monday, but we hear that the roads are broken."

a drinking water problem. What we need right now is water cleaning equipment, which don't run on power. The calamity is of a huge proportion and is unimaginable," he revealed.

He has also contacted a group of doctors in Canada for medical help. "They have promised to get back with necessary equipment soon. I have also approached some Malayali industrialists. There has been a huge inflow of money into the state in the last three days. But that isn't enough. The losses are in billions and no amount is sufficient. Malayalis are wealthy and they are putting in whatever they can. But, the focus is on rescue," he said.

But he is perturbed by the way the national media chose to ignore the calamity last week. "It's sad that only when the media reports, a calamity becomes a national news. Nobody knows the gravity of the damage," he lamented.

Solutions to Yesterday's Sudoku

1	3	2	7	9	5	4	8	6
8	6	7	2	1	4	5	9	3
5	4	9	3	8	6	2	7	1
9	8	3	1	5	7	6	4	2
2	5	6	8	4	9	3	1	7
7	1	4	6	3	2	9	5	8
6	2	5	9	7	1	8	3	4
3	9	1	4	6	8	7	2	5
4	7	8	5	2	3	1	6	9

No.CS489 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

8	1		6					
6					9	3		
		5			1			
3	4		2					
		6	7					
	4		2	1				
9		4						
6	7		3					
	2		7	8				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Across

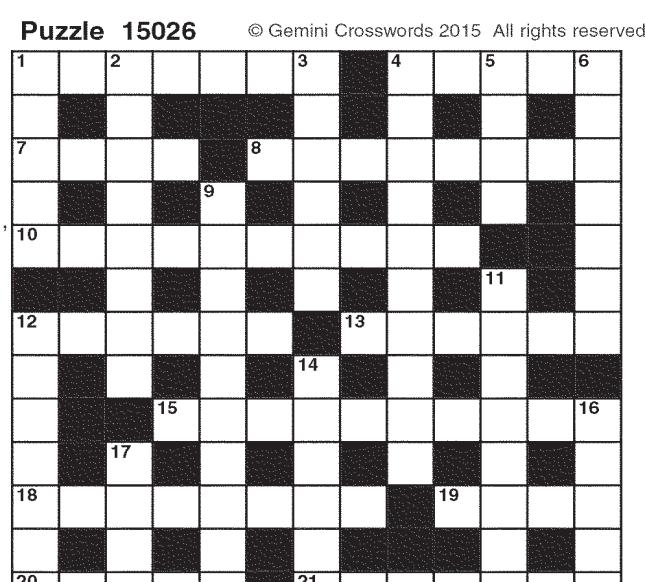
- 1 The top cereal - fancy! (7)
- 4 Mean to players (5)
- 7 Man we hear for the post (4)
- 8 Alarming trouble on the border (8)
- 10 He draws actors into trouble (10)
- 12 State of a tank perhaps after attack from the air (6)
- 13 About three minutes' fighting (6)
- 15 Agree on a definition of 24 hours and finish work (4,2,1)
- 18 Every letter is written in it (8)
- 19 Cheese that's made differently (4)
- 20 Card that is bitter about love (5)
- 21 Review on thug's weapon (7)

Down

- 1 His accounts are not taken seriously (5)
- 2 She has a duty to maintain order in retirement (8)
- 3 She may turn out to be Eastern alien (6)
- 4 Justice obtained by soldier in various matters (10)
- 5 Something final to any buffoon (4)
- 6 Did favours when compelled? (7)
- 9 Irreconcilable Europeans are divorced (5,5)
- 11 An animal looking for his master (5,3)
- 12 Batter some of the defence (7)
- 14 Superior marbles are found in the passages (6)
- 16 Potential enemy country (5)
- 17 After spring run and box (4)

Puzzle 15026

© Gemini Crosswords 2015 All rights reserved



Solutions to Yesterday's puzzles

S	P	A	N	I	S	H	M	A	I	N
E	O	E	L	O	G	E				
N	A	I	R	O	B	I	N	I	N	I
D	N	N	P	G	I	C				
O	A	T	H	C	U	P	O	F	T	E
R	C	P	L	E	P					
S	P	E	L	S	F	I	D	D		
E	N	O	A	A	A					
M	A	R	R	I	G	A	C	N		
E	A	S	R	S	R	A				
N	I	G	H	E	N	T	R	E	A	T
T	E	E	E	A	D					
A	D	D	R	E	S	S	B	O	O	K

Cryptic

Across: 1 Spanish Main, 9 Nairobi, 10 Nines, 11 Oath, 12 Cup of tea, 14 Spells, 16 Fiddle, 18 Marriage, 19 Acne, 22 Night, 23 Entreat, 24 Address book.

Down: 2 Point, 3 Neon, 4 Slip up, 5 Mongolia, 6 Ignited, 7 Endorsement, 8 Escape death, 13 Cloister, 15 Enraged, 17 Agrees, 20 Credo, 21 Stab.

SOAPS

BENGALI

STAR JALSHA

09:30 AM Parineeta
10:00 AM Anjoli Swarno Bandhan
10:30 AM Adi Mohini Mohon Kanjilal
11:00 AM Can Soumi's Wonder
11:30 AM Care of Keya
12:00 PM Parampara Ayurveda Bonediyan
12:30 PM Om Namah Shivaay
1:30 PM Jomer Raja Dilo Bor
5:00 PM Ardhangini

MOVIES IN TOWN

HILAND PARK 9, 10, 12:15, 1:15, 3:30, 4:35, 6:45, 7:55, 10:05, 11:15 PM; **INOX FORUM MALL** 9, 10:05, 12:15, 1:20, 3:30, 4:35, 6:45, 7:55, 9, 10:05, 11:15 PM; **HIND INOX** KOLKATA 9:55, 10, 12:15, 4:25, 7:40, 10:55 PM; **INOX CITY CENTRE** Rajarhat 9, 10, 12:15, 1:15, 3:30, 4:35, 6:45, 7:55, 10:05, 11:15 PM; **INOX CITY CENTRE SALT LAKE** 9, 10, 12:15, 1:15, 3:30, 4:35, 6:45, 7:55, 10:10, 11:15 PM; **INOX QUEST MALL INSIGNIA** 11:15, 2:35, 5:55, 9:15 PM; **PVR** 11:15, 3:30, 6:15, 9:15 PM; **PVR DIAMOND PLAZA** 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, 11:45 PM; **MUKTI WORLD BALLYGUNGE** 9:15, 12:15, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15 PM; **PVR AVANI MALL** 8:45, 9:45, 12, 1, 3:15, 4:15, 6:30, 7:30, 8:15, 9:45, 10:45, 11:30 PM; **LONDON PARIS** 9, 10, 11:05 PM

GOLD (Directed by Reema Kagti, the film stars Akshay Kumar, Kunal Kapoor, Mouni Roy, Amit Sadh) **BIOSCOPE (AXIS MALL, RAJARHAT)** 10, 11:45, 1, 5:00, 3:15, 6:15, 6:50, 9, 9:55 PM; **CINEPOLIS** Acropolis Mall 9:50, 12:35, 1:05, 3:45, 4:30, 7:10, 7:55, 10:35, 11:20 PM; **CARNIVAL** Salt Lake 8, 11, 11:35, 1, 2, 4:15, 5:15, 7:30, 8:30, 10:45, 11:45 PM; **CINEPOLIS LAKE MALL** 9, 9:45, 12:25, 3:55, 3:50, 4:2



STAR-GAZING

BEJAN DARUWALA
Week beginning Sunday, August 19



ARIES

Ganesha says you rope in your associates in your dealings and this proves to be a good move. The attention also shifts from the work front to home and family and there are many domestic responsibilities and joys to handle and enjoy. Plus there may be demands from siblings.



TAURUS

Love and money are the twin themes of the week. You also find time to relax, and there could perhaps be a home away from home as a kind of holiday retreat or weekend getaway. There will be loans, joint accounts, bonds, insurance and funds of all kinds to deal with on the money front.



GEMINI

Your people skills will be at their best and you will get the support of both colleagues and loved ones. Partnerships and collaborations are vital and most beneficial in this period. You surmount many obstacles and ride the wave to glorious times. You worry about your image.



CANCER

Money and its jingle appeal to you. You look at finances in a big way, as that is the main theme of this period. Personal and work related finances hog the limelight. There are tax issues and all sorts of monetary developments that will take up your time. You have to solve it all.



LEO

Once the finances are worked out, you get to spending the money which you believe is hard earned. There are many expenses and, for a change, your creative instincts blossom. You do well at work and there is recognition. You may even get an award for something you have done.



VIRGO

You have achieved a lot but you don't want to stop here. You are prepared to stick your neck out like a platoon commander flushing out terrorists. This works as you make many startling discoveries. Your new interests include spirituality, travel.



LIBRA

Your conciliatory moves and work success are highly appreciated. There is enhanced income and prestige. You party a lot now and look at finances in the form of inheritance and legacies. You are a social butterfly and spend time at various gatherings enjoying yourself thoroughly.



SCORPIO

You are again on the work track. You are confident, pragmatic and determined and will forge ahead furiously. You earn plaudits for your achievements and decide to make more money, which is never out of your sights for long. You look at holistic progress and make the necessary adjustments to your personal and work life.



SAGITTARIUS

You give your best to work and your relationships and there is great intensity in whatever you do. You extend your hand towards humanity, undertake social work and spend quality time with your children and/or parents. You are full of commitment and bond well with others. You are endowed with a new vision.



CAPRICORN

You see yourself in a new light and are empowered by your success. The early part of the year was hectic and now you try to enjoy yourself and ride on the momentum generated in the previous months. There is a welcome change in your perspective and the way you are looking at the world. You are caring, alert, active.



AQUARIUS

You are busier than ever and highly motivated in all that you undertake – and it shows in the results. You spend quality time with loved ones and there are possibilities of exciting travel. But there are pinpricks like unexpected expenses, ill-health in the family, and a frittering away of valuable resources.



PISCES

There are many distractions at play here. There are partnerships, religious ceremonies, meetings and interviews and several business/collaborations, all of which lead you into a profitable, upward spiral. This is a time to spread your wings.

CONTACT NO: +918141234275

Sonakshi is down to earth: Jason



Jason Tham and Sonakshi Sinha in a still from 'Happy Phirr Bhag Jayegi'

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

Actor Jason Tham is a lucky man. The actor, who has been seen in popular shows such as *Ek Deewana Tha*, *Just Dance*, *Dil Dosti Dance* and *Agent Raghav*, is going to be seen in *Mudassar Aziz's Happy Phirr Bhag Jayegi*, produced by Anand L Rai.

The film has Sonakshi Sinha as the female lead while Jason is playing a negative character, Chang. The actor says that he loved working with Sonakshi, "She is beautiful, talented and a fun loving person. The biggest thing about is her non-starrry attitude. We got along well both on and off the set. We were great at cracking

jokes. Whenever we used to reach the set, we used to greet each other. One day while greeting her, I said, 'Happy Birthday Sonakshi,' and she also responded to my joke and replied back saying, 'thanks!'. The whole unit thought that it was Sonakshi's birthday! In fact, Jassi Gill, who is part of the cast, even started his snapchat and announced that it was Sonakshi's birthday. That day the whole set was full of laughter."

Jason says Sonakshi has this unique combination of Indian beauty and can carry any kind of outfit. "Whether it's her debut film *Dabangg* or *Lootera*, she is an amazing artiste," he said.



CRITICS' CORNER

SATYAMEVA JAYATE

DIRECTOR

MILAP MILAN ZAVERI

CAST

JOHN ABRAHAM, MANOJ BAJPAL, AISHA SHARMA, AMRUTA KHAN, TOTA ROY CHOWDHURY

RATING

AVERAGE

SHOWLI CHAKRABORTY

Bollywood is never tired of using the same formula over and over again. Nor is the audience bored of watching it. Every time there is something that reeks of the old-wine-in-a-new-bottle syndrome, the ever-forgiving Indian audiences will still walk into the theatre pretending to be surprised! Worse still, some of them will even declare they have been misled into watching sub-standard films by the over-the-top promotions of the movie! This is herd mentality at its most stupid avatar!

Inside the theatre one came across whispers like, "I love John and his killer body. If not anything else, I will still get the chance of drooling at him for the next couple of hours."

By the time, the film ran into half time, this same John Abraham fan was ready to throw his bucket of popcorn and storm out! "I don't know why people make such formula films. Do they think we are stupid?"

Truth is that, we actually are stupid. At least every marketing professional



STEREOTYPED, YET AGAIN

in the show business will vouch for that. Poor films get made dime a dozen every year and provided the packaging is attractive, the film will make profits! It's all about packaging you see!

And John's *Satyameva Jayate* is no different. DCP Shivansh (Manoj Bajpayee) as been tasked to catch Vir (John), the man behind killings of cops in the city. Both are eventually against the same enemy but divided by a fine line, the

law. At the backdrop is the murder which took place some years back. The film looks like a revenge saga and a thriller with a basic cat and mouse game at the centre of the film.

Satyameva Jayate is reminiscent of films from the '70s and '80s, which entailed hardcore action sequences and enjoyable dialogue-baazi. It couldn't even deviate from the era's formulaic theme — revenge drama. Writer-director Milap Milan Zaveri

makes a conscious effort to reinvent himself from his previously-written films including the likes of *Masti* (2004), *Grand Masti* (2013) and *Mastizaade* (2016). Thankfully, we say he succeeds. However, at 142 minutes, *Satyameva Jayate* is incoherent, devoid of logic, repetitive and largely predictable.

It is gory, but shot remarkably. John looked convincing when he lifted a bike in *Force*, and justifies this act when he rips a tyre

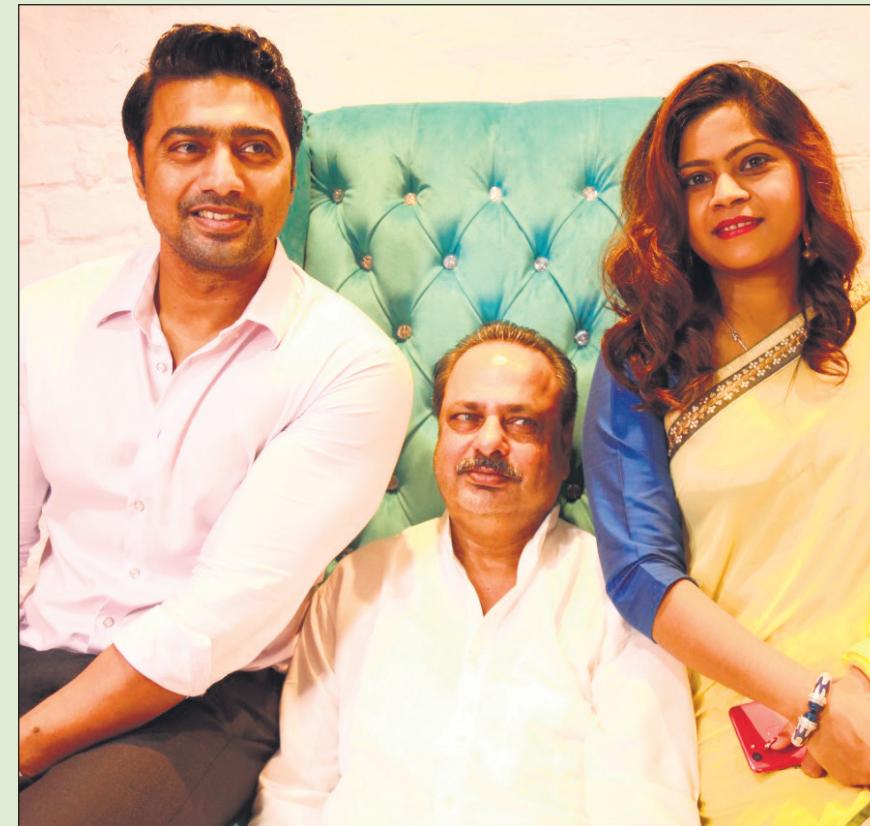
with his might here. Sadly, he romances action way more than he does his love interest, played by Aisha Sharma, who on her part needs lessons in acting. Talking of John, Kareena Kapoor Khan's 'expressionless' jab at the hunk, did infuriate many of his fans, yet there's no denying he is not exactly showing his versatile side. Even though Bajpayee's frustrations are depicted aptly, he is a talent that seems to have been underutilised here. The

film isn't entirely joyless. Zaveri writes dialogues that are certain to inspire applause.

But, given that it is sculpted to be a masala entertainer, the film is heavy only on action, not emotion.

Words like *faz*, *izzat*, *imaandari*, *bharosa...* are thrown at you from unexpected corners. Yet, the milieu gets too familiar and you are left with one realisation, never judge a book by its cover!

FAMILY MATTERS



For Dev, his family comes first. So, even if the actor-turned- Member of Parliament is busy with his professional commitments, he makes sure he finds out time to spend with his family. Recently, when his sister Dipali opened a beauty parlour, *Sparsh - Spa & Salon* at *Golf Green* - the "Chander Pahar" actor was the first to arrive. Dev looked happy with the way the salon has been done up. With his father Gurupada Adhikari in tow, Dev took a tour of the place and blessed his sister for the job well done. This is the second family business of the actor. Dev had launched a restaurant on Souther Avenue, *Tolly Tales*, which is now looked after by his father

Myriad hues of the City of Joy captured

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

A telier 66 Society for Art and Culture inaugurated its annual photography exhibition recently. The five-day exhibition was launched by designer Agnimitra Paul, secretary, Dum Dum Photography Association, Biswatoshi Sengupta and eminent photojournalist Tarapada Banerjee at 'Boi-Chitra' Art Gallery, 2nd Floor, Coffee House, College Street. The event that started on August 16 will end on August 20. Titled *City of Joy*, it is held every year to mark the World Photography Day and promote art and rediscover Kolkata in a different light. The exhibition showcasing 142 unique photographs is being held from 4 pm to 7.30 pm.

It features works of renowned photographers like Jayanta Shaw, Amit Datta, Anjan Sarkar, Avijit Roy, Ashim Paul, Arpita Dey, Ankita Dutta and Satyajit Shaw. "Kolkata is very close to our heart. We are organising *City Of Joy* to

express our affection and gratitude to the city. In this whole process we have explored and discovered various unseen corners of the city. We are hopeful that this exhibition will stand out to be a successful endeavour and pleasure to watch for the city lovers", said Shaw.

The exhibition this year showcases different types of themes reflecting the myriad hues of the city captured at their best by these renowned photographers.

Reliving college days

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

College years are undoubtedly the best in any youngster's life. With a realistic portrayal and focus on friendship, The Timeliners recently released its latest web series *College Romance*. Hilariously tackling various aspects of college life such as love at first sight, pool parties to road trips with buddies, the show unfolds beautiful experiences of college days along with the other aspects of growing up as undergraduates.

Written by Kunal Aneja of *The Aam Aadmi Family* fame and Abhishek Shrivastava, and directed by Simpreet Singh, the web series stars three BFF's - Tippy, played by popular Bollywood actor Manjot Singh (he has done films like *Oye Lucky! Oye!* and *Fukrey*), Apoorva Arora as Niara and Keshav Sadhna as Karan, along with Shreya Mehta, Hira Ashar and Gagan Arora.

"We had an absolute blast shooting with the young cast of the show and are loving

Shooting of serials stalled

On Saturday, the studios in Tollygunge, Kolkata wore a deserted look as shooting of all daily soaps were stalled due to the "pay irregularity" issue. According to an official of Artists' Forum, several production houses in Kolkata haven't cleared payments of technicians and artistes.

For the past two years, the technicians of the Bengali television industry, which chief minister Mamata Banerjee fondly calls 'Tollywood', are at loggerheads with producers. The technicians have halted shooting and demanded overtime payment in the past too. An official associated with a popular Bengali daily soap said, they did not shoot on Saturday. "Some production houses haven't paid for more than two-three months. So, tell me how it is possible to shoot?", he asked.

A meeting was called on Saturday to resolve the matter, but it was to no avail. There's no clarity on resumption of shooting.

CNS



the fact that our viewers are mirroring our love for the show, said Simparreet. For the writers, well, they were inspired from their own life when they were students of Delhi University. "Being students, the universe of the show came very naturally to us. It tells the story of three friends who fall in love. All of them think they are 'adults' since they are in college, but their actions tell a very different story. Amidst all the chaos and ruckus, the show draws emphasis on friendship," said Kunal.



From left: Joy Sarker, Arna Seal, Lopamudra Mitra and Srikanta Acharya at the boutique launch in Lake Gardens on Friday

“

PROTHA PURUSH IS A PLAYFUL DISPLAY OF TRADITION IN THE INDIAN STYLE. FOR ME, IT IS VERY MUCH COMFORTABLE IN THE TROPICAL WEATHER OF KOLKATA

-SRIKANTA ACHARYA

am constantly trying my best to add innovations to my collections. Wide variety of shirts is available now and we shall expand the list with time."

"Protha Purush is a playful representation of traditions in the Indian style. For me, it is very much comfortable in the tropical weather of Kolkata. And being a model for Protha Purush shirt today, I am feeling relaxed as I am an all-time cotton lover," said Srikanta.





Mamata's trump card

The unwavering consistency with which Trinamool supremo Mamata Banerjee and her minions are harping on Assam's draft NRC issue, it can be safely assumed that she is going to make it her party's main campaign plank for the coming Lok Sabha poll. Almost every second day either she or any of her trusted lieutenants come down heavily on the NRC to drive home the point that the exercise of drawing up a register of Indian citizens in Assam had been undertaken by the BJP governments at the Centre and in Assam with an eye on the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

It's been done to placate the chauvinists of Assam at the cost of Bengalis to ensure that the BJP bagged all the 14 Lok Sabha seats from this major north-eastern state. This contention of hers is nothing but a travesty of fact. She knows very well that the NRC is a product of Assam accord reached between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the leaders of Assam movement. And the work on preparation of NRC started when Tarun Gogoi was the Chief Minister. So why is she consciously resorting to lies? And, to what purpose?

Actually, she wants to fish in troubled waters that the NRC issue has thrown up in the wake of its publication. It is she who is trying to rouse up Bengali chauvinism by playing on the apprehensions of Assam's Bengali community that a sizable number of them will be labelled as foreigners by the BJP governments and will be deported to Bangladesh. She is desperately trying to foment sectarian trouble by pitting Bengalis against the Assamese by claiming lakhs of Bengalis whose names have not been included in the NRC or those who are protesting against the NRC exercise have been herded into Nazi-like detention camps. She knows it too well that neither the central nor the state governments have set up detention camps for "foreigners" whether in Assam or in any other Indian state. But she believes in the Goebbelsian theory that a lie repeated hundred times is eventually accepted as truth by a large section of population.

So what is the purpose of Mamata trying to pass off something which is a downright lie as truth? For now, she is trying to be the spokesman of Assam's Hindu and Muslim Bengali population. The way she is trying to champion the cause of Hindu Bengalis of Assam by saying that names of more Hindu Bengalis had been left out than Muslims, is a clear indication that she is trying to erode BJP's Bengali-Hindu vote bank in West Bengal and wean it away to her side in the coming Lok Sabha poll. That she is trying to appease the Hindus and widen an anti-BJP mindset among Hindu Bengalis comes loud and clear when she asked how can a party which swears by Hindutva can go against the interest of Hindus? By quoting an unverifiable figure of 25 lakh names of Hindu Bengalis as compared to 13 lakh names of Bengali Muslims being excluded from the NRC, she has laid bare what is going to be her electoral strategy for the coming election.

Mamata is absolutely sure that her Trinamool will get bulk of the Muslim block votes, but she is not so sure about Hindu Bengali votes coming her party's way in larger numbers. In fact she is scared that this time Hindu Bengalis may vote for BJP in larger numbers. Hence she has decided to play the Hindu Bengali card. It is with this end in view that she has decided to send her pet intellectuals, who are nothing less than her stooges with no public credibility, to Assam ostensibly highlight the plight of Bengalis whose names do not figure on the NRC. But the real purpose is to arouse Bengali chauvinist spirit in West Bengal before the elections. Some ragtag Bengali organizations of Assam which, enjoy her patronage, are masterminding a Bengali-Assamese showdown which amounts to playing with fire.

Sowing seeds of discontent

Agriculture in India is in dire straits and is in a crying need for structural reforms. Loan waivers have been merely stop-gap arrangements to avoid a backlash. However, the signs of discontent of farmers are more than visible. Come June, from the first of the month till 10th, the Rashtriya Kisan Maha Sangh, a representative body of 110 farmers' organisation will not send their produce to towns and cities to prompt the central government to address the ills plaguing the farm sector.

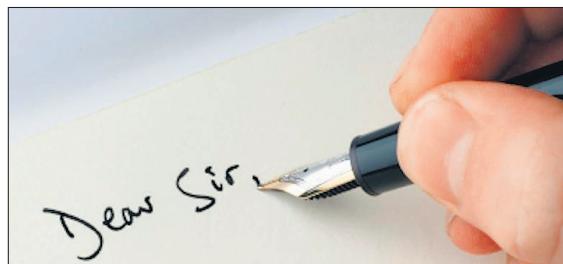
Imagine the plight of the people who need to stock up on cereals, milk and vegetables to survive for 10 days. This frenetic buying will automatically lead to jacking up of prices as middlemen will exploit the gap between demand and supply. The government has less than a month to avert this crisis, that too so close to the general elections. Scientists, agricultural experts and NGOs have long argued for proper MSP for the farmers who virtually stake everything to till their land.

It's evident from the plethora of farmer suicides in Maharashtra, Punjab and Telangana where one cycle of failed crops have a cataclysmic effect on the farming community. In view of the impending crisis, the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations have acquired a salience it never had in the past. Primarily, it talks about ways to achieve faster and more inclusive growth for farmers. The important takeaways from the suggestions are land and irrigation reforms, growth in productivity, credit and insurance and food security. The criticalness of the issue is overwhelming, compounded by knee-jerk solutions that have done more harm than good. These are truly testing times for the BJP, which cannot alienate farmers if it aspires to come back to power for a second term.

READERS REACT

Partisan attitude

Media coverage on former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was quite diverse and it also gave us a glimpse of how affable he was and how the country reacted. A lot of work he did in most demanding conditions will not go unnoticed. In fact, it seems Vajpayee was the true architect of the country's reforms, development and most of all, the image. While, many generations of politicians have come and gone, it would be difficult to have someone of his stature. The country definitely needs a leader who could think and act like him. What we did observe from the media coverage in the week was a partisan approach by some newspapers. Back to back we had the passing of two politicians



- one a former southern chief minister and party leader, and one a former

Prime Minister. Some southern newspapers splashed the news of

their departed DMK party leader K Karunanidhi over eight columns and the very same newspaper allocated only four columns to a national leader a few days later. Such an act shows how divided we are especially when it comes to north vs south. The south has always promoted its sons of the soil concept strongly all over the country when it comes to their interests and despite the advances

the country has made it still has an archaic and partisan approach. Such an attitude will not help the country progress uniformly.

Rakesh Trivedi
Cossipore

Readers can send in their letters to eedit@gmail.com. The letters could be edited for space and clarity

THOUGHT OF THE DAY



In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years.

Abraham Lincoln
American President

Two contrasting faces of Indian Right

UJJWAL K CHOWDHURY

Much is being spoken about the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and rightly so. Rest in Peace. He lives through his work and leadership. And he famously said, "Mout ki umra kya hai? Do pal bhi nahi. Zindagi ek silsila hai."

But beyond this moment, it is also the time to remind us of one vital aspect of Indian polity today. The Right is at the centre-stage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in power. It had its glory, albeit a benevolent one, with Vajpayee in power too. How do these two faces of the Indian Right compare between themselves?

First and foremost, Vajpayee had been a gentleman and a poet politician. As several channels today are showing clips of his speeches in the Parliament, both as the Prime Minister and as the Leader of the Opposition, we can see that whenever he stood to speak in the Parliament, people listened to him with rapt attention, enjoying the way he would blend poetry into politics seamlessly. Vajpayee respected the right to dissent or disagree, as a part of polemics, and engaged with the dissenter, within and beyond his own party, which is so important in current times.

Modi, in contrast, is known to mock at the accent of opponents, make crude gestures doing a mimicry of those in his opposition, resort to whataboutery and a blend of myths, facts and historical lies to convey his message, albeit with a gift of the gab.

He is known to be a communally dividing face, from Gujarat to Delhi, who can accept head-gears of any community but not a Muslim skull cap, can visit any mandir or gurdwara, and even a mosque in the Middle East, but not a church or mosque in India.

Second, that Vajpayee is a loved leader is proven by the fact that between 1957 to 2009, he was continuously a Parliamentarian, being elected ten times to the Lok Sabha. He believed in the seriousness of a lawmaker's job, proposed training for newbie Legislators, and proposed National Agenda of Governance including role of Parliamentarians. The purposefulness of the Parliament was writ large in his work while in the Opposition or in power. And, while in power, unlike several other PMs before and after him, he was indeed the 'first among equals' in the cabinet, in the true spirit of Parliamentary democracy.

Modi is a first time Parliamentarian, started by offering



In this Dec 9, 2003, photo, former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is seen with the then Gujarat CM Narendra Modi and BJP senior leader LK Advani.

pranams at the doors of the Lok Sabha, and went on to avoid attending sessions, answering questions on many occasions, passing important legislations in a jiffy, and short circuiting sessions and often ruling through ordinances. Like Indira Gandhi in Modi era, only the Prime Minister matters, and PMO is the most powerful office. For example, at times, even the media wondered who is the real foreign affairs minister of India: Modi or Sushma Swaraj.

Third, Vajpayee surely was a value-oriented leader. He lost his first government of 13 days in 1996 for lack of numbers in LS, and also his next government in 13 months, in 1998, again for lack of support of just one more MP. But he did not compromise on ethics. He was optimist that if your politics is right, people will back you up. His writing, 'Andhiara fir hatega, ek naya savera ayaega' and poem, 'Geet Naya Gata Hoon', bear testimony to his spirit against adversity and acceptance of the same to win another day. He is graceful in defeat. People rewarded him with full majority in 1999 and he governed a full term as the first non-Congress PM to have done so.

Contrast this with the times today. Governments in Goa, Meghalaya, Arunachal, Nagaland and Karnataka were made through jod-tod politics, which did not succeed in Karnataka. A ruling coalition in Bihar was broken. A government formed in Delhi with a historic mandate has not been allowed to function to fulfil its electoral promises and provide good governance. The CBI is allegedly being used to keep political opponents under pressures. Whether people reward Modi for his style of rule shall be seen in 2019.

Fourth, Vajpayee had been thoroughly a nationalist, but one who advocated and practiced positive nationalism. He proudly

took Hindi to the UN first time, and spoke in it in the General Assembly. He represented the best of Indian ethos and culture.

In contrast, today we are in a situation of acute social disharmony, mistrust and mutual hatred among communities: whether between Hindus and Muslims, or between upper and lower castes. Today, the discourse is less on positive nationalism or patriotism, and more on labelling people who question the government on politics, art, culture, media or on campuses as anti-nationals. An aggressive negative brand of Indian nationalism has overtaken the subtle benign 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' perspective of the world is my family.

Fifth, this nationalism of Vajpayee made him perhaps the only Right Wing leader of India ever who represented the Ganga-Jamuni culture of India to the hilt, and is loved by Hindus and Muslims alike in Lucknow. He was elected with record margin as MP from Lucknow which has a large percentage of Muslim votes. Vajpayee bitterly criticised the failure of Raj Dharma during Gujarat riots, which was an indictment of the government of the day in the state. His philosophy of being a Hindu, so aptly described in his poem, 'Hindu tan man, Hindu jeevan', stands in sharp contrast to the aggressive no-holds barred version of Hindutva today.

In contrast to his 'Hindu Jeevan' which is all embracing, stands the exclusivist aggressive brand of Hindutva, which has been brought in today in the Modi era, debates leading to lynching and violence on concocted grounds of love jihad, goraksha, ghar wapsi, etc. All these and violence against Dalits and women in general in several parts of the nation have aggravated social schism today. Rise of Modi unfortunately has been through a spate of violent riots killing more than 2000 people in Gujarat, some

responsibility of which rests on the doors of the then rulers. Indian nationalism today stands bruised, divided and begging for a healing touch, which Vajpayee had.

Sixth, Vajpayee was the man who ushered in an infrastructural revolution in India. His model of development was inclusive, for the common man on the street, and focused on large-scale growth. He initiated the Delhi Metro rail as a mass transit system, and encouraged CM Sheila Dixit of Congress to take it forward. He brought in National Highway Development Project leading to East West North South Corridor or the Golden Quadrilateral, and put his confidante B C Khanduri to lead the project to success which has surely revolutionized road transport in India. He envisaged and executed the first round of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana which connected rural India greatly. And, indeed he managed the economy quite well with an average of 8% year on year GDP growth on the earlier parameters during his tenure as PM.

Modi has also ensured the rise of infrastructure specially in roads, power, ports etc. However, the showcase projects are of a cost-intensive bullet train between Ahmedabad and Mumbai in contrast to upgrading Indian railways as a whole; looking at health insurance benefitting insurance companies and private healthcare providers rather than upgrading public health infrastructure, and building high cost statues of historical figures rather than investing in public good.

Seventh, Vajpayee was the Messenger of Peace. Against many odds, he himself rode a bus to Lahore in 1999 for Indo-Pak peace, along with many Indian celebrities. Sad that the Pak hawks got the better of the civilian government in Pakistan and Kargil war was imposed. But it is to the credit of PM Vajpayee that he did not allow India to cross the Line of Control during Kargil War to avoid being called the aggressor and also taking care due to the Pak Nuclear status. He, even in duress, gave peace a chance.

Modi invited Pakistan and South Asian leaders to his oath-taking and attempted to continue with peace initiatives of Vajpayee and Mamnoon. But soon his brand of politics degenerated into anti Pak jingoism on one hand, and failures to check China in Doklam or Pakistan from continuous cross-border terrorism. A bold surgical attack into Pakistan does not seem to have yielded any results. South Asia waits today to see if Modi's New India can shake hands with Imran Khan's Naya Pakistan.

Eighth, PM Vajpayee gave a great push to science and technology. He conducted Nuclear Test, Pokhran 2 in 1998, and made the hero of this achievement, Dr APJ Kalam as the next President of India, who was later named as the true People's President. Vajpayee coined the slogan: Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan. He promoted scientific spirit, and not just technology.

In utter contrast, Modi's approach is merely using technology benefit of true scientific spirit. He himself speaks of Ganesha elephant-head as plastic surgery, justifies Ganesha statues drinking milk, power being produced from gutter gas, etc, and his ministers questions Darwinian theory and scientific facts even on the platforms of Indian Science Congress.

Ninth, Vajpayee as a PM was against rule through ordinances. While turning POTO into POTA (Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance/Act), he took the entire Opposition into confidence. His was a perspective of reconciliation, and respect and consensus (he ran a government of 24 parties).

In contrast, Modi allies like the Akalis, JDU and Shiv Sena still call for the 'Vajpayee touch'. Dalit allies keep threatening a walkout, TDP has been lost, while parties with weak mandate like AIADMK and with only regional interests in mind like BJD and TRS are being managed to be pro-government. On many occasions, Modi govt has ruled through ordinances to the extent that former President Pranab Mukherjee had to pull up the government. There are attempts today to dilute the RTI Act, weaken the Election Commission, CIC, RBI and the independence of the Judiciary.

Tenth, as a person and politician, Vajpayee was not a hypocrite. His famous line, "I am a bachelor, but not a brahmachari", says it all. When he disputed on point of difference, he did not play Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Hence, when the RSS ideologue Govindacharya called him 'mukhota', he ensured that this view does not gain currency. Govindacharya is still in political wilderness.

So, there was the Right Wing leader, the leader of a diverse India for whom reconciliation and engagement were the key words, and here is the Right Wing leader Modi, whose rule seeks to polarise India aggressively to ensure consolidation of the Hindu vote-bank, and engages with other forces only with transactional utilitarian goals only, keeping open the option to dispense with them when the needs are over.

The writer is a media academic and a columnist.

AUGUST 19

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1897 - 1st electric taxis drive in London.

1919 - Afghan Independence Day, commemorates the Treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919, granting independence from Britain.

1942 - World War II: Over 4,000 Canadian and British soldiers killed, wounded or captured raiding Dieppe, France

1946 - (born) William Jefferson (Bill) Clinton is an American politician who served as the 42nd President of the United States from 1993 to 2001. (pic)



1949 - 1949 - Michael Nazir-Ali, Pakistani-English bishop.

1960 - Soviet Sputnik 5 carries 2 dogs, 2 rats, 40 mice, 1 rabbit and fruit flies into orbit, first animals to return alive from orbit.

1977 - Groucho Marx, American comedian and actor (b. 1890)

1987 - Nico Hülkenberg, German race car driver.

2013 - 37 pilgrims are killed in a train accident in India

Modi has his work cut out for 2019

FAZAL MEHMUD

Call it gumption or desperation, the ruling political force is now out to rearrange the electorate ahead of the 2019 general elections. Indeed, it is out to do so by hook or crook, and never mind the pertinent questions that may be asked of it.

We are told Assam is overloaded with illegitimate residents, but the government simultaneously seeks to pass legislation that would allow the Indian state to grant citizenship to any and all non-Muslim aspirants from you know where – Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh.

Clearly, this would bolster both the majority demographics of the country and the vote bank of the Bharatiya Janata Party. No matter that we will be overloading the nation. The silver lining here is that good old Prafulla Mahanta who had signed the Assam Accord with Rajiv Gandhi in 1985, has to his great credit come out to say that the Citizenship Amend-

ment Bill would not be acceptable to the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) for two reasons: one, that it contravenes the basic principle that informs the constitution of India, namely, secularism; and, two, because the fundamental objection of the party has not been one centred on religious identity but ethnic primacy. He has gone on to say that were the BJP to push the Bill hard, the AGP would have no hesitation to pull out of the state government alliance in Assam. More power to him.

If in Assam the BJP seeks to throw people out, in Jammu and Kashmir it seeks to throw people in; this by abrogating Article 35A of the constitution which would allow non-state subjects to both obtain employment in state services and acquire property in the state. A sort of compliment to the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill, because removing Article 35A would have the same consequence in effect – enable non-Muslims to enlarge the Jammu and Kashmir electorate. Put another way, the idea is to bolster

Assamese identity but diminish the Kashmiri one. And, do note, there is no talk of evicting refugees from west Punjab from the state, only the handful of Rohingya who, even in their wretched condition, must be deemed "dangerous" because of their religious identity.

Then there are the good non-resident Indians. Living away from "home," they are our super-nationalists who have the strong belief that they ought to have rights and privileges which not only match those Indians who live and struggle here in the "motherland," but far exceed theirs. In recent years though there have been honourable exceptions, if only rather very countable ones, of those who have succeeded in transcending embarrassing dualities of attitude and relocated in parts of India to engage in admirable groundwork.

But, paradoxically, whereas such honest ones have tended to become thorns in the side of official



US special counsel Robert Mueller has recommended a prison sentence of up to six months for former Trump campaign aide **GEORGE PAPADOPoulos**.

GLOBE-TROTTING



Tesla sues govt for scapping e-cars

ONTARIO: The Canadian arm of Tesla Motors is taking Ontario's new Conservative government to court, claiming it has suffered "substantial harm" after the cancellation of a rebate programme for residents who bought electric vehicles. Since taking power earlier this year, the new government – led by Doug Ford, the brother of the former, late Toronto mayor Rob Ford – has killed off several initiatives ushered in by previous Liberal governments, from a pilot exploring basic income to a hike in the minimum price of beer. Included in this was the end of a carbon pricing policy that sought to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada's most populous province. The move would also end a range of environmental initiatives funded by the programme, including rebates of up to C\$14,000 (\$10,700) for residents who bought electric vehicles.

China rejects Pentagon report

BEIJING: China, on Saturday, rejected what it called an "irresponsible" Pentagon report claiming Beijing's bombers are likely training for strikes against US and allied targets in the Pacific. The Thursday report said China was leveraging its growing military, economic and diplomatic clout to rapidly establish regional dominance, while its bombers were developing capabilities to hit targets as far from the Chinese mainland as possible. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said the report was "presumptuous and irresponsible", stating it was in total disregard of facts in today's statement and that Beijing's military development was defensive in nature.

China sacks 6 over vaccine scandal

BEIJING: China has sacked six senior government officials for their neglect of duty and misconduct following a drug-safety scandal in which a pharmaceutical company manufactured substandard vaccines, including that for rabies, exported to India and other countries. Rabies vaccines made by the Changchun Changsheng Life Sciences Company, the second largest in China, were found to have violated national standards including usage of expired fluids and falsified production dates. The vaccines were also widely exported, including to India.



Oxford plans to open new college

LONDON: Britain's world-famous University of Oxford is planning to set up a new college after a gap of nearly 30 years as part of his five-year growth strategy, according to a media report. The university's five-year draft strategic plan contains proposals to build 1,000 graduate rooms and 'at least one new graduate college'. The Daily Telegraph reported. This would be the first new college since 1990, when the graduate-only Kellogg College was established. The plan to open the new college, which have been backed by the university's governing body, must now win the approval of the Oxford's dons and academics, the report said.



The new sleep pods in Saudi based on Japanese designs.

AFP PHOTO

Saudi Arabia tests 'nap pods' for Haj pilgrims

AGENCIES
MECCA: Mansour al-Amer swipes a card to reveal a narrow sleep pod, reminiscent of Japan's famed capsule hotels. But this pod is in Saudi Arabia, where the Muslim haj pilgrimage begins today. The kingdom has plans to introduce capsule rooms in the western city of Mina in the coming days, as an estimated two million Muslim faithful gather for the six-day Haj, one of the five pillars of Islam.

The free nap pods are part of new measures Saudi Arabia is rolling out this year in a bid to modernise the centuries-old practice of Haj. The government has also introduced apps for on-the-spot translation and emergency medical care.

Amer is the head of a Saudi charity, the Hajj and Mutamer Gift Charitable Association, which is offering between 18 and 24 capsules for pilgrims to nap in for free in the coming days.

Each fibreglass pod – less than three metres long and just over one metre high – features a mattress, clean sheets, air conditioning and a large, well-lit

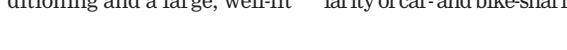
mirror. The pods can be lined up horizontally or stacked vertically to save on space.

"We are always thinking about pilgrims and how to make them more comfortable during the rituals of haj," Amer said. The nap pods provide a solution for pilgrims of limited means who cannot afford to book hotels on site but need a quick rest during haj.

Each napper will have three hours of access to the pods, which are imported from Japan at cost of around \$1,114 (1,000 euros) each. When the pilgrim wakes for prayer time – five times daily in Islam – workers will sterilise the pod before handing it over to the next pilgrim.

"The idea already exists globally, in cities across the world," Amer said.

"We believe it's extremely well-suited for crowded places in our holy sites and in Mecca." But for Haj, which takes pilgrims across Mecca and Mina – two cities in western Saudi Arabia home to the holiest sites of Islam – the pods were inspired by the popularity of car- and bike-sharing.



KOFI ANAN (1938-2018)

Life of war, peace and development goals

AGENCIES

BERN: Kofi Annan, the former United Nations secretary general, has died at the age of 80 after a short illness, his family and foundation announced on Saturday.

The Ghanaian was the seventh secretary general of the UN who served for two terms between 1997 and 2006 and won the Nobel peace prize for his humanitarian work jointly.

He died in hospital in Bern, Switzerland with his wife, Nane, and three children Ama, Kojo and Nina, by his side. He retired to Geneva and later lived in a Swiss village.

Annan's foundation issued a statement on his Twitter account on Saturday morning that described him as a "global statesman and deeply committed internationalist who fought throughout his life for a fairer and more peaceful world".

The statement added that Annan, who succeeded Boutros Boutros-Ghali as UN leader, was a "son of Ghana and felt a special responsibility towards Africa".

The former UK prime minister Tony Blair said on Twitter he was shocked and distressed by Annan's death, adding: "He was a good friend whom I saw only weeks ago. Kofi Annan was a great diplomat, a true statesman and a wonderful colleague who was widely respected and will be greatly missed. My deepest sympathy go Nane and his family."

Born in Kumasi, Ghana, on 8 April 1938, he was the first secretary general to emerge from the ranks of UN staff.

He joined the UN system in 1962 as an administrative officer with the World Health



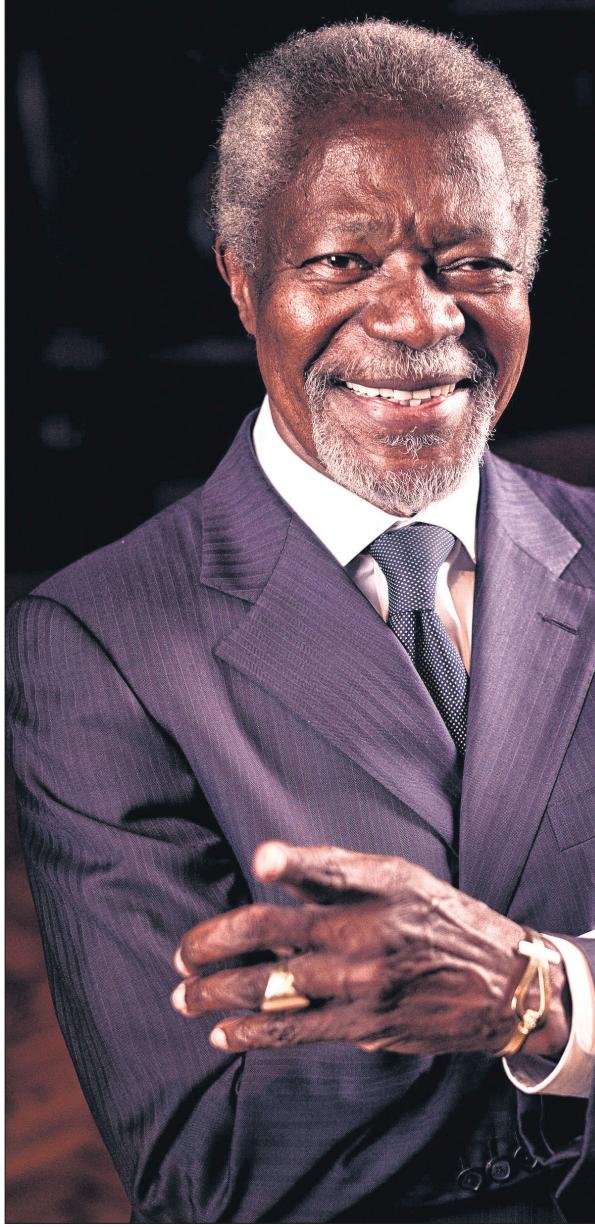
AMONGST HIS MANY PASSIONS WAS SILENCING THE GUNS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. A GREAT LEADER AND REFORMER OF THE UN, HE MADE A HUGE CONTRIBUTION TO MAKING THE WORLD HE HAS LEFT A BETTER PLACE THAN THE ONE HE WAS BORN INTO

TERESA MAY,
BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

Organization in Geneva. Annan later served with the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, the UN Emergency Force in Ismailia, the UN high commissioner for refugees in Geneva and in several senior posts at its headquarters in New York.

Before becoming secretary general, he was under-secretary general for peacekeeping and also served as special representative of the secretary general to the former Yugoslavia between 1995 and 1996.

Annan used his final speech as secretary general in December 2006 to deliver a parting shot at the administration of George W Bush, accusing the US of committing human rights abuses in the name of fighting terror.



Khan nominates Arif Alvi for President post

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan's party on Saturday declared that it has nominated party's veteran lawmaker Dr Arif Alvi as its candidate for the President of Pakistan.

The Election Commission of Pakistan had announced on Thursday that the presidential election will be held on September 4 - five days before the expiry of the five-year term of President Mamnoon Hussain.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has "nominated Dr Arif Alvi as its candidate for President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan," party spokesperson Fawad Chaudhry tweeted on Saturday.



HE WON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS FROM NA-247 (KARACHI) DURING THE JULY 25 POLLS. HE WAS ALSO ELECTED MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE 2013 GENERAL ELECTION

recommendations of the prime minister.

Hussain, elected in September 2013, was a nominee of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz led by jailed former prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

His parents migrated from Agra and settled in Karachi after partition.

This came hours after Imran Khan took oath as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan. Pakistan's Cabinet Secretariat today issued a notice denotifying caretaker premier Nasirul Mulk from his post, hours after Imran Khan took oath of the 22nd prime minister of the country.

Pakistan's president is elected indirectly by the members of Parliament and the four provincial assemblies.

The candidates can file nominations by August 27 and the final list of contesting candidates will be issued on August 30.

The polling will be held in the buildings of the federal parliament and provincial assemblies.

In Pakistan, the President is considered as a symbol of the federation and head of the state and exercises all powers on the

a person of the opposite sex, with the exception of certain immediate family members. Junod pointed out that freedom of belief and religion is enshrined in the laws of the Canton of Vaud, which encompasses Lausanne.

But "religious practice does not fall outside the law," he stressed. His vice-mayor, Pierre-Antoine Hildbrand, who was on the three-member commission that questioned the couple said he was "very satisfied with the decision" to deny the couple's application.

Muslims denied Swiss citizenship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GENEVA: The Swiss city of Lausanne has blocked a Muslim couple's bid to become Swiss nationals over their refusal to shake hands with members of the opposite sex.

The municipality said it refused to grant the couple's citizenship application over their lack of respect for gender equality, Lausanne mayor Gregoire Junod said. He said a municipal commission had questioned the couple several

months ago to determine if they met the criteria for citizenship, but had determined in the ruling made public on Friday that they missed the mark on integration.

He refused to divulge the couple's nationalities or other identifying details, but said they "did not shake hands with people of the opposite sex".

They also "showed great difficulty in answering questions asked by people of the opposite sex," he said. Some devout Muslims argue that Islam does not permit physical contact with



Italian president, Sergio Mattarella, attends the state funeral for the victims of the Genoa bridge collapse on Saturday.

AFP PHOTO

But Genoa prosecutors say they are focusing their investigation into possible criminal blame on design flaws or inadequate maintenance on the heavily travelled bridge, which was completed in 1967 and linked two high-speed highways in the city.

"My boy and the others suffered murder," said Roberto Battiloro, whose 29-year-old son, a videographer, was driving alone on the bridge when his Volkswagen Tiguan and the road it was on plunged to the ground.

Survivors, for their part, were shocked at how they escaped with their lives. Davide Capello, 33, a firefighter and soccer player, was driving alone on the bridge when his Volkswagen Tiguan and the road it was on plunged to the ground.

He immediately understood that the structure was collapsing, watching in shock as a car in front of him "disappeared in darkness." "It came down, everything, the world came down," he said.

FLOWER CARPET



An 1,800 sq metre (19,375 sq ft) flower carpet made out of more than 500,000 dahlias and begonias is on display in the Grand Place. The biennial event this year pays tribute to Guanajuato, a Mexican region with a rich floral culture

SAVING MARINE LIFE

Drones to track illegal fishing in African waters

AGENCIES

RWANDA: Across the African continent, drones are finding innovative uses – from monitoring displaced populations, to delivering critical medical supplies.

Moroccan technology start-up ATLAN Space is developing artificial intelligence (AI) to guide autonomous drones so they can scan large areas for "environmental crimes" like illegal fishing, poaching or deforestation.

In June, ATLAN Space won the National Geographic Society's \$150,000 Marine Protection Prize to implement a pilot project to combat illegal fishing in the Seychelles.

Drones will be armed with information about illegal fishing hotspots, explains Badr



Drones were used to air-drop first-aid kits in Virginia.

Currently governments employ light aircraft or coast guard vessels for this kind of surveillance. "With artificial intelligence we are able to replace the pilot, the data analyst, transmission equipment.

He adds that using drones

According to Idrissi, ATLAN Space technology can be integrated in any type of drone. He says the operational range could reach up to 800 kilometers when using drones equipped with a combustion engine.

Idrissi, 37 and co-founder Younes Moumen, 35, both based in Rabat, started developing the technology when they learned that illegal fishing costs coastal countries in West Africa approximately \$2.3 billion every year.

"We consider ourselves a partner of government to build a sustainable solution to the issues and challenges they are facing," Idrissi says.

ATLAN Space is one of many startups innovating with drone technology on the continent.

Across Southern Africa, drones are used to protect elephants and rhinos from poaching. In Sudan, a startup wants to use Acacia tree seeds from the sky to tackle desertification, and in South Africa, drones are used in agriculture to monitor crop health and detect disease.

In Rwanda, drones deliver vital medical supplies like blood and vaccines to remote areas. They are also used for critical humanitarian missions, like mapping displaced people in Niger, Burkina Faso and Uganda.

In Lilongwe, Malawi, UNICEF partnered with the government to set up a testing corridor in 2017 to investigate how drones can be used for humanitarian work.



MUSK STUNNED MARKETS last week with a tweet that he was considering taking Tesla private for \$420 per share and that he had secured funding. The SEC has opened an inquiry related to his tweets.

\$ 70.16
€ 80.26
£ 89.50

Gold
10GMS. (24CT) : 29,910
(22CT) : 28,800
Silver
1KG : 37,150

Sensex ▲ 37,948
Nifty ▲ 11,471
Nasdaq ▲ 7,767
DowJ ▲ 25,580

Business Chronicle

NEWS NUGGETS



FCCU shutdown not impacting Jamnagar refining biz: RIL

NEW DELHI: Reliance Industries (RIL) on Saturday said a short shutdown of one of the Fluid Catalytic Cracking Units (FCCUs) at its Jamnagar complex would not impact the production. Jamnagar Refining Complex has two independent crude oil refineries, each with several secondary processing units. FCCU is one such secondary processing unit, the company said in a regulatory filing. Out of the two FCCUs, one is under short shutdown, RIL added. "The company does not expect any material impact on its overall refining and marketing business due to this short duration event," it said. RIL was replying to a clarification sought by NSE over the shutdown of the FCCU. "The company shall make necessary further disclosures, if any, warranted in this matter," it added.

SBI donates Rs 2 cr for flood-hit Kerala

MUMBAI: The State Bank of India (SBI) has donated Rs 2 crore for the Kerala flood victims and initiated several other ground-level measures in the deluged state, an official said on Saturday. The SBI has encouraged all its 270,000 staffers to contribute to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF), and the bank would contribute an equivalent amount. It also announced a waiver of fees and charges on services like loans for flood relief, duplicate passbooks, ATM cards, cheque books and EMI delays, besides making attempts to restore the working of branches and ATMs in the flood affected regions of the state. Besides, the SBI has decided to waive all charges on remittance to the CMDRF, penalty on non-maintenance of minimum account balance from proceeds of relief fund provided by the government and agencies and if already recovered, such charges would be refunded for customers in the state.

Rupee to stabilise very soon: Official

NEW DELHI: The Indian rupee, which has been depreciating against the dollar on account of external factors, will "stabilise" soon with the fundamental equation for trade unchanged, an official said here on Saturday. "This breaking of 70 (mark) was on account of external factors largely on what happened in Turkey. Our fundamental equation for the trade has not been changed. Oil prices have not gone up. The demand-supply situation for dollars in the Indian economy has not got altered... our perception is that very soon it (rupee) will stabilise and it might go back to Rs 68-69," Union Finance Ministry's Department of Economic Affairs Secretary Subhas Chandra Garg said here. On Thursday, the rupee had touched an all time low of 70.39-40 in the spot market and settled at a record closing low of 70.16 against the greenback.

US tech giants set to fight India's data localisation

EXTENSIVE MEETS The government last month proposed a draft law to restrict data flow

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: US technology giants plan to intensify lobbying efforts against stringent Indian data localisation requirements, which they say will undermine their growth ambitions in India, sources told Reuters.

US trade groups, representing companies such as Amazon, American Express and Microsoft, have opposed India's push to store data locally. That push comes amid rising global efforts to protect user data but is one that could hit planned investments by the firms in the Indian market, where the companies currently have limited data storage.

The issue could further undermine already strained economic relations between India and the United States.

Technology executives and trade groups have discussed approaching Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office to appraise him of their worries. Separately, the industry is considering pitching the issue as a trade concern, including at the India-U.S. talks in September in New Delhi, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

Though a final decision hasn't been made, the deliberations come while the United States and India are locked in a dispute over U.S. tariff increases and on the Indian policy of capping prices of medical devices, which hurts American pharmaceutical companies.

"This issue is important enough to be discussed at the India-U.S. trade level," said Amba Kak, a global public policy adviser at the Internet company Mozilla Corp.

"Data localisation is not just a business concern, it potentially makes government surveillance easier, which is a worry."



Mark Zuckerberg.

Stricter localisation norms would help India get easier access to data when conducting investigations, but critics say it could lead to increased government demands for data access.

Technology firms worry the mandate would hurt their planned investments by raising costs related to setting up new local data centres.

Greater use of digital platforms in India for shopping or social networking have made it a lucrative market for technology companies, but a rising

number of data breaches have pushed New Delhi to develop strong data protection rules.

Shamika Ravi, a member of Modi's economic advisory council, said data localisation was a global phenomena and India wasn't an outlier.

"It's in the long term strategic and economic interest," said Ravi, who is also a research director at Brookings India.

The main government committee on data privacy last month proposed a draft law, recommending restrictions

US TRADE GROUPS SUCH AS AMAZON, AMERICAN EXPRESS AND MICROSOFT, HAVE OPPOSED INDIA'S PUSH TO STORE DATA LOCALLY

on data flows and proposing that all "critical personal data" should be processed only within the country. It would be left to the government to define what qualifies as such data.

The main government committee on data privacy last month proposed a draft law, recommending restrictions on data flows and proposing that all "critical personal data" should be processed only within the country. It would be left to the government to define what qualifies as such data.

Global companies are coming together to push back.

In a meeting last week organised by lobby group U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum, executives from Facebook, Mastercard, Visa, American Express, PayPal, Amazon, Microsoft and others discussed plans to approach Indian lawmakers, including Indian parliamentary panels on information technology (IT) and finance, five sources said.

The industry also discussed approaching media and internet groups to explain why data localisation would be bad for India's booming IT, e-commerce and payments landscape, the sources said.

"People are fairly stressed and scared," said an executive working for a multinational technology firm.

The U.S.-India lobby group said it was "nearly impossible" to implement "industry-specific regulations in our global data environment without the ripples being felt".



Easing inflation, weak ₹ limits gains

AGENCIES

Price Index data gave boost to the market, said Rahul Sharma, Senior Research Analyst at Equity99.

According to Hem Securities' Director, Prateek Jain, "Traders and investors saw modest losses due to Turkish concerns in the beginning of the week. But, towards the end of the week, markets reflected recovery." On the currency front, the rupee settled at its lowest closing level of 70.16 on Thursday, weakened by 1.33 paise from its previous week's close of 68.83 per greenback.

The rupee on Thursday also touched an all time low of 70.39-40 per dollar. Globally, currencies depreciated against the greenback for most part of the week following a plunge in the Turkish "Lira". Forex trade in India was shut on Friday on account of Parsi New Year.

In terms of investments, provisional figures from the stock exchanges showed that foreign institutional investors sold scrip worth Rs 2,028.47 crore, while the domestic institutional investors both stocks worth Rs 893.43 crore in the past week.

Figures from the National Securities Depository (NSDL) showed that foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) invested Rs 159.66 crore, or \$24.67 million, in the equities segment during August 13-16.

FOR THE LOVE OF HOPS

American pale lager Budweiser beer is exploding

NEW DELHI: At the Boozy Griffin bar in Marathalli, India, Shrikant Raj enjoys one of his favorite beers: Budweiser.

Raj, 28, who works at an analytics firm, enjoys its "clean and crisp taste." "After, a hard day at work, it really rejuvenates me," he added.

The scene — familiar in America for the 142-year history of its most popular beer — is now becoming commonplace in India. Beer's popularity has exploded in India, and Budweiser producer Anheuser-Busch is aggressively marketing it as a high-quality drink to millennials throughout urban areas — a process Ben Verhaert, Anheuser-Busch/InBev's president in India, called "premiumization." India's beer market grew from 500 million litre in 2011 to 2.37 billion in 2015, and by the end of 2017, it was estimated to have grown to over 400 billion litre — almost a thousandfold increase in seven years. The country is also urbanising rapidly, and its demographics are shifting — two factors that increase beer-drinking, Verhaert said.

AB InBev has the resources and manufacturing facilities to provide a consistent, affordable product in large quantities around the country, Cabras said. "I think Anheuser-Busch and



other big players want to target the masses," Cabras added.

In the U.S., "it's the type of beer that you currently say is for baseball matches. That you go for cheap and that you have at parties where you want to have plenty of people," he said. "In the U.S., generations have grown up knowing and consuming our brand," Verhaert wrote. "But in India our journey is very new."

AB InBev has aggressively marketed itself to Indian Millennials by sponsoring popular electronic dance music festivals like Tomorrowland and Electric Daisy Carnival, Verhaert said. Verhaert said AB aims to be the No. 1 beer choice for Millennials in India.

As America's King of Beers takes off in India, the U.S. craft beer craze is also making its way slowly to the East. IPAs are considered in India as an American variety. English sailors bound for India were forced to travel to the southernmost tip of Africa — the Cape of Good Hope — before looping toward India. Beers with low alcohol content couldn't survive the long voyage, so brewers added extra hops. The IPA was born, with its signature bitter taste and high alcohol content.

Pubs in India are on the rise

More than 19 million Indians each year become old enough to drink legally, he said. And disposable income is on the rise. Still, there's room for expansion. India's current ratio of pubs to people is about one to 16,500. India has only one pub for every 100 in China, despite having a population nearly as large, despite having a population

Microbreweries began popping up in India seven or eight years ago. Now, locally-brewed craft beers are becoming more competitive in Bengaluru.

Experts said Indian beer culture will likely begin to echo America's — namely, a movement toward craft brewing. Indian brewers will begin offering beer from other countries, Cabras said. And then customers will flock toward beer with local ingredients.

Cabras predicted Indian microbreweries will run into a problem: "They cannot market themselves all over the country, so they probably will be very local."

"The craft beer movement ... will grow in India," Cabras said. "But it will take a lot of time before big players will lose sleep because of the actions of small brewers."





GOOGLE on Saturday featured a colourful Doodle to celebrate the start of the 18th Asian Games where athletes from 45 countries will compete in 55 events.

KOHLI, RAHANE LEAD INDIA'S FIGHTBACK

GRITTY PERFORMANCE Captain and Vice-captain stitch together a vital partnership; India were 307 for six at stumps

THIRD TEST DAY 1

AGENCIES

NOTTINGHAM: India captain Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane frustrated England with an excellent unbeaten century partnership as the tourists fought back on the first day of the third Test at Trent Bridge on Saturday.

India were 189 for three at tea, having been 82 for three after Cheteshwar Pujara holed out off Chris Woakes, the only England bowler to take any wickets on Saturday, from what became the last ball before lunch.

Kohli was 51 not out and Rahane 53 not out in a fourth-wicket stand so far worth 107 runs.

It was a heartening sight for India, who badly needed a significant partnership after twice being bowled out cheaply in an innings and 159-run defeat in the second Test at Lord's that left them 2-0 down in a five-match series. England captain Joe Root may have been left wondering about the wisdom of bowling first on a day where conditions had become progressively better for batting.

And there could be fresh questions surrounding England's decision to drop Sam Curran, whose left-arm swing bowling added variety to an otherwise all-right-arm pace attack, and recall Ben Stokes just days after his acquittal on a charge of affray.

Woakes had tea figures of three for 45 from 15 overs whereas fellow pace-bowling all-rounder Stokes had none for 47 in 11.

Much of the pre-match attention had been focused on the recall of Stokes, who on Tuesday was found not guilty by a court on charges that stemmed from a fight outside a Bristol nightclub in September last year.



Captain Virat Kohli (second from left) and Ajinkya Rahane encourage each other during the first day of the third Test match at Trent Bridge in Nottingham on Saturday.

Stokes had missed the second Test because it clashed with his trial.

Woakes, his replacement at Lord's, made the most of that opportunity to score a maiden Test century and take key wickets as well.

India made an encouraging

SPORT DIGEST



Bolt arrives in Australia to fulfill football dream

SYDNEY: Usain Bolt says he's deadly serious about becoming a professional footballer and plans to show the world what he's capable of after arriving in Australia for a trial stint with an A-League club.

The superstar athlete has been given the chance to prove his worth by the Central Coast Mariners, who have agreed to let him train with the team indefinitely in his pursuit of a playing contract. They hope to turn him into a League material in time for the start of the 2018/19 season in late October.

Bolt, wearing a Mariners scarf, was met by a media scrum at Sydney airport. "I always put my best foot forward and I'm going to show the world what I'm made of," he said.

AFP



Lewandowski saves Bayern

BERLIN: Mighty Bayern Munich needed a late Robert Lewandowski goal on Saturday to secure a 1-0 German Cup win over Dordtseren/Assel, a fourth division village side who had described the occasion as their "game of the century". For the superstars of Bayern, it must have felt like another world as they toiled for 81 minutes until Lewandowski struck. AFP

Mbappe stars on return for PSG

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe marked his first appearance for Paris Saint-Germain since winning the World Cup by coming off the bench to score a late brace that gave the French champions a 3-1 victory at Guingamp on Saturday. Mbappe came on for the second half and Neymar equalised from the penalty spot soon after.

AFP

than winning a gold medal." Phelps won 23 gold medals and 28 medals overall in a glittering Olympic career that stretched from the 2000 Sydney Olympics through the 2016 Rio Games.

"I was able to do some pretty incredible things in the swimming pool and I struggled outside as well," Phelps said.

AFP

Saving a life more important than a gold medal: Michael Phelps

LOS ANGELES: Olympic swimming great Michael Phelps has opened up again about his ongoing battle with depression, hoping he can help others who struggle with the disease. "I'd like to make a difference. I'd like to be able to save a life if I can," Phelps said. "For me that's more important



"I'd like to make a difference. I'd like to be able to save a life if I can," Phelps said. "For me that's more important

Siddharth Parikh wins CCI BILLIARDS

GORDON D'COSTA

MUMBAI: Siddharth Parikh of Railways in grand fashion rose to the challenge and seemed to have saved his best for last as he crafted a stupendous effort, a 456 break, which helped him emerge champion.

The Mumbai-based lanky cueist, Parikh showed good temperament and produced a virtuoso performance to quash the aspirations of Sourav Kothari of ONGC by comfortably coasting to a 818-359 margin of victory in the 150-minute grand final of the Cricket Club of India organized Rs 3.8 lakhs prize-money CCI Billiards Classic 2018, at the Club's Sir Wilson Jones Billiards Room on Saturday.

Parikh had started with a break of 203 and then managed a run of 53 as wrested the initiative before compiling the huge break. The Kolkata-based Kothari's form seemed to have deserted him as he could



Siddharth Parikh poses with the cup.

only manage three substantial breaks of 75, 86 and 100.

Earlier, in a semi-final encounter, the Kolkata-based Kothari, a former Asian Billiards champion, showed good break-building abilities and started with a bang amassing a 211 break, his third double century effort in the competition, to brush aside the lukewarm challenge from seasoned pro and compatriot Alok Kumar, marching to a 652-231 victory with plenty to spare, at the CCI's Sir Wilson Jones Billiards Room on Saturday.

She will play Premangi Ghosh is the youth final and will take on Surbhi Patwari in the women's final.

All the finals will be on Sunday

India U-16 to play Turkey, Oman in Istanbul Cup

NEW DELHI: Less than two weeks after the India Under-16 football team finished runners-up to Japan in the five-nation WAFF U-16 Championship, the squad will be participating in the tri-national Istanbul Cup in Turkey as part of their exposure for next month's AFC U-16 Championship Malaysia 2018.

From January this year, the team has so far played 19 international matches against U-16 national teams including the likes of US, Norway, Japan, Serbia, Iraq, North Korea, China (U-17), Thailand, Jordan amongst others. IANS

Poymante in two finals

KOLKATA: Poymante Baisya has moved into two finals of the Kalyan Jayant Memorial table tennis championship at the Calcutta University Institute on Saturday.

She will play Premangi Ghosh is the youth final and will take on Surbhi Patwari in the women's final.

All the finals will be on Sunday



East Bengal players celebrate after scoring the opening goal against Aryan.

EB outplay Aryan 3-0

CFL PREMIER DIVISION

KOLKATA: Quess East Bengal completely outplayed Techno Aryan 3-0 in their fourth match of the Calcutta Football League (CFL) Premier Division 'A' on Saturday.

Kassin Aidara (27') scored the opening goal by heading in a Mahmoud Al-Amna's cross from the flag. Laldamnawia Ralte (49') got the second slotting home a cross from Brandon Vanlalremdika and Syrian superstar Al Amna (69') got his season's first goal as he converted a square pass from Kamalpreet Singh for the team's third.

The Aryan defence was

completely dominated by East Bengal. Deep defender Bello Rasaq did not seem to be on the same page with his fellow defenders and the team lacked coordination.

Aryan's custodian Souvik Satra made two terrific saves in the first half by blocking Kingshuk Debnath's attempt and Brandon Vanlalremdika's long ranger. Another comprehensive performance from the Bastab Roy-coached side saw them climb to the top of the table on goal difference. East Bengal now have 10 points from four matches same as rivals Mohun Bagan.

CNS

Manav captures 2 bronze medals

NEW DELHI: India's junior paddlers, led by World No 5 Manav Thakkar, continued their stellar show, bagging three medals in the individual events at the Asian Junior and Cadet Championships in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

India had earlier created history by entering the finals of the team championship for the first time. Today, they scripted their names on the medals too, winning three bronze medals in the doubles competitions.

DPL in September

KOLKATA: The second edition of the Darts Premiere League will be held here from September 11 to 14 in association with National Darts Academy (NDA) and All India Darts Association (AIDA). The meet will be in played in Bengal Club and Saturday Club.

There will be an auction on August 24 where about 60 players will go under the hammer. Each team will have nine players with five male and three female. Each team will have one icon player.

Federer pulls off tough victory; Djokovic to face Cilic in semis

CINCINNATI MASTERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

CINCINNATI: Roger Federer, second seeded, pulled off a tough win against compatriot Stan Wawrinka who snatched the first set, to qualify for the semi-finals of the Cincinnati Masters 1000.

Federer, who has won the title in Cincinnati seven times, will now face Belgium's David Goffin, who pulled off a surprise win against Argentina's Juan Martin del Potro, fourth seeded.

Wawrinka, ranked 151st in the world, who has only defeated Federer three times in the last 24 matches they have played, took the first set in a tie-break, and even seemed likely in the second set to notch his fourth win against his fellow countryman on Friday.

Former world number one Novak Djokovic won his second match of the day on Friday to set up a semi-final clash at the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters with Marin Cilic.

Djokovic, a five-time final-



Roger Federer acknowledges the crowd after defeating Stan Wawrinka in the quarterfinal at the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament on Friday. AP/PTI

Ist here who has never broken through, is aiming to lift the trophy at the only one of the Masters 1000 series events that he has never won.

It was the ninth win without a loss for Djokovic in the series with the Canadian. "We played five finals here, so that's pretty OK, but I do wish to win the title, without a doubt."

Women's top seed Simona Halep recovered from 1-4 down in the opening set, reversing her losing momentum to defeat

Lopetegui declines to reveal goalkeeper

MADRID: Real Madrid's new coach Julen Lopetegui on Saturday did not reveal who of his goalkeepers Keylor Navas and Thibaut Courtois would play against Getafe in their 2018/19 La Liga opener.

Real's starting keeper would remain a mystery until an hour before Sunday's match, to be played at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium, when Lopetegui announces his starting lineup.

"There is no magical formula. I believe in the weekly management and in analysis. We will see what is best for the team at each moment," Lopetegui said. The former Spanish national team coach said that Los Blancos have "two magnificent solutions" in the goalkeeping position that have been performing at the highest level.

Lopetegui said that two of Real's keepers will leave the club within the next few days and although he did not provide any names, Kiko Casilla and Luca Zidane were most likely to be transferred.

We will keep three and in that analysis I have shown what I think of Keylor and Courtois. We will take the best decisions,"



Harry Kane finally scored in a Premier League game in August for Tottenham. AP

Kane ends August drought, Bournemouth go joint top

Premier League

LONDON: Harry Kane ended his hoodoo of failing to find the net in August as Tottenham made themselves at home at Wembley by beating Fulham 3-1 on Saturday to move top of the Premier League.

Bournemouth are the only other side to so far take maximum points from their opening two games as Eddie Howe's men came from behind to win 2-1 at West Ham.

Everton's £50-million signing Richarlison continued

to quieten queries of his price tag with the winner as

Southampton were defeated 2-1 at Goodison Park, while Leicester saw off Wolves 2-0 despite a red card for Jamie Vardy.

After becoming the first Premier League side since the introduction of the summer transfer window to fail to sign a player, Spurs were dealt another blow off the field in midweek with the news their new 62,000-capacity stadium won't be ready until at least October.

AFP



VIBRANT AND SLICK OPENING CEREMONY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAKARTA: A presidential dig at their traffic woes, a colourful display of their cultural heritage and a message for world peace - Indonesia mixed it up all for a vibrant and slick opening ceremony for the 18th Asian Games here.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo was shown taking a motorcycle to the stadium after his convoy was stuck in one of Jakarta's infamous traffic jams.

The footage, played out on the stadium's giant screen, had Widodo grabbing hold of a motorbike to whiz past the stranded vehicles and take the narrow lanes to make the stadium in time.

A helmet-clad biker, presented to be the President, eventually appeared at the stadium before Widodo revealed himself at the dignitaries stands amid loud cheers from the crowd.

Raising the emotional quotient was the unified Korean delegation, repeating the touching images from the Winter Olympics, to once again deliver the message of world peace amid the recent diplomatic breakthroughs.

The two Koreas will field a united team in three events lightweight rowing, dragon boat racing and women's 5x5 basketball.

The flag was a unity banner, a light blue representation of the Korean peninsula on a white background. It was first seen at the 2000 Sydney Olympics and also at the Asian Games staged in the South Korean city of Busan in 2002 and in Doha in 2006.

"We are all here to celebrate diversity, we are all here to celebrate differences, we are all here to celebrate humanity," Organising Committee President Erick Thohir said in his speech.

NEERAJ CARRIES TRICOLOUR
Young Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, the flag bearer, led the Indian contingent with players arriving in blue



Fireworks explode over the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Main Stadium during the opening ceremony of the 18th Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia on Saturday.

Al-Sabah then addressed the packed stadium and was

delighted that his own country Kuwait participated under

country's flag. He also appreciated the harmony between the

two Korean nations.

Widodo then declared the

PHOTO: Xinhua/Huang Zongchi

Games Open.

In Palembang, which will host shooting and tennis disciplines among others, the athletes watched the opening ceremony on a giant screen, installed at the main football arena.

A team of visual artists from Jakarta and Bandung, West Java transformed the stadium's front area into a huge stage, designed to look like a lush mountain surrounded by the country's unique plants and flowers.

The ceremony opened with the traditional 'Samam' dance, which has been listed by UNESCO in its Representative List of Intangible Cultural

Two Koreas march together behind the Korean Unification flag



JAKARTA: North and South Korea marched together behind the Korean Unification flag at the Asian Games opening ceremony on Saturday, in the latest demonstration of their rapprochement.

South Korean women's basketball player Lim Yung-hui and North Korean footballer Ju Kyong-chol carried the blue and white flag as the Korean athletes paraded into Jakarta's Gelora Bung Karno stadium.

It is the second such symbolic gesture this year by the two Koreas, who also walked together at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics opening ceremony - an event that heralded an unprecedented warming of ties.

The North and South, still technically at war, are also joining forces in women's basketball, canoeing and rowing during the 40-sport, two-week regional Olympics. It is the 11th time the Koreas have marched together at global multi-sport competition. AFP

GAMES' SCHEDULE

(all time in IST)
■ Badminton
Men's team prelims 8 am
1 pm: Maldives vs India.
Women's team 8 am
■ Basketball
Women prelims 9 am
Taipei vs India
■ Beach Volleyball
Men's & women's team 8 am
■ Fencing
Women's Sabre Individual 8 am prelims, 5.50 pm final
Men's Epee Individual 9 am prelims, 7 pm final
■ Football
Women's 2 pm, Men's 3 pm
■ Handball
Women's 10 am
3 pm: India vs China
■ Hockey
Women's from 1 pm
7 pm: Pool B - India vs Indonesia
■ Kabaddi
Men's team
8 am: Group A - India vs Sri Lanka
Women's team
3 pm: India vs Japan
■ Rowing
Men's singles, Double sculls 8 am
Pair 8.30 am
Lightweight fours 10 am
Women's single sculls heats 7.30 am
Double sculls 9 am
Pair 8.30 am
Lightweight quadruple 10.30 am
■ Sepaktakraw
Men's team & Women's team regu 8 am
■ Shooting
Women trap Day 1 - 7 am
Men Trap Day 1 - 7 am
10m air rifle mixed team qualification 8 am; final 12.00 pm
10m air pistol mixed team qualification 10 am; final 3.30 pm
■ Swimming
Men's heats 8 am; final 5 pm
Women's heats 8 am; final 5 pm
■ Taekwondo
Men's & women's Individual & team poomsae 8 am; finals 3.30 pm
■ Tennis
Men's, women's & mixed doubles 9 am
■ Volleyball
Women's pool league 10.30 am
■ Waterpolo
Women's team 2 pm
■ Wrestling
Qualifiers 12 pm; finals 6 pm
Men's freestyle 57 kg: 65 kg; 74 kg; 86 kg; 97 kg.
■ Wushu
Men's Changquan final 8 am
Men's Sanda 6 pm
Women's Wushu 8 am
Women's Sanda 6 pm

Indian women eye gold to book Olympic berth

HOCKEY

AMANPREET SINGH



Indian women's team begins their campaign on Sunday against Indonesia. PTI

JAKARTA: Former champions India will have to recover from their medal-less World Cup campaign as they look to clinch the title at the 18th Asian Games and seal a Tokyo Olympics berth when the women's hockey competition begins on Sunday.

Indian women's team had won the gold medal at the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi and ended runner up to South Korea in 1998 in Bangkok.

They have managed to return with at least a medal in all the nine editions, including a bronze at the 2014 Games at Incheon, South Korea.

At world no 9, Indian women's team are the top-ranked side in the competition and will open its campaign against hosts Indonesia, ranked as low as 64, in a Pool B match here.

However, India's real test would be against defending champions Korea (ranked 10), China and Japan.

Clubbed in pool B, India

the World Cup disappointment, it remains to be seen how this side, guided by Dutch Sjoerd Marijne, handles nerves at business end of the tournament.

Both the men's and women's team had reached the finals in 1998 but clinching the double gold remained elusive for India in Bangkok with only the men's team emerging champions.

Considering the strength of both the Indian teams and their opponents, the historic double could be a real possibility this time.

PTI

As India looks to put behind

the 28-year-old media

draght when the women's team, led by Saina Nehwal and Sindhu, clinched its maiden bronze medal at the 2014 edition at Incheon, South Korea.

Before that, it was the men's team, comprising Prakash Padukone and Vimal Kumar, who had claimed a bronze in the 1986 edition.

Among the eight bronze won by Indian shuttlers since the 1966 Asian, Syed Modi remains India's only singles medalist in 1982 and Sindhu, who has been

OCA upholds China, Kazak Asiad ban

WEIGHTLIFTING

Teenage sensations face stiff test

SHOOTING

BHARAT SHARMA

WEIGHTLIFTING

PALEMBANG:

Teenage prodigies Anish Bhanwala, Manu Bhaker and Elaveni Varalivan will carry India's medal hopes in the shooting event of the Asian Games beginning here tomorrow, and standing in their way will be the mighty Chinese and South Koreans.

Bhanwala and Bhaker, who are 15 and 16 respectively, stormed into the limelight with a gold in the 25m rapid fire pistol and 10m air pistol respectively at Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Rumours had circulated in Jakarta that China could be reinstated by the International Weightlifting Federation after the country's banned athletes suddenly appeared on the official Games website two days ago.

But the IWF agreed at an executive board meeting in Lausanne on Friday to keep monitoring the nine countries before making any changes to their banned status.

The weightlifting competition begins Monday, with North Korea and Iran expected to dominate in China's absence. AFP

SHOOTING

PTI

quietly gone about her business '19-year-old Varalivan. She created a flutter by winning 10m rifle gold at the Sydney Junior World Cup earlier this year with a world record score.

In the absence of greats such as Abhinav Bindra and Gagan Narang, there is a possibility of another star emerging in the rifle events.

There is a lot of young blood in the squad but seniors like Heena Sidhu (pistol), Manavjit Singh Sandhu (trap) and Shreyasi Singh (trap) too would be itching to perform.

With a gold, silver and seven bronze, India had finished eighth in the shooting event at Incheon, South Korea four years.

PTI

India finalise doubles combo

TENNIS

PALEMBANG: The Indian tennis contingent squad has finally figured out its doubles combinations less than 24 hours before the start of competition at the Asian Games here tomorrow, a far from ideal scenario courtesy Leander Paes' sudden withdrawal.

Unhappy with the team selection, Paes pulled out of the event last-minute throwing captain and coach Zeeshan Ali's plans haywire.

The singles entries were already decided and so was the doubles pairing of Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan.

The other doubles and mixed doubles combinations were finalised after an intense training session on Friday evening.

The two events have always been crucial for India at the Games where the country col-

lected five medals four years ago including a mixed doubles gold, a silver and bronze in the men's doubles besides a women's doubles bronze.

Ramkumar Ramanathan, who will be playing singles alongside Prajesh Gunneswaran, will form the second men's doubles pairing with Sumit Nagal, who arrived only late last night.

Ali has already said that Paes' absence will be a big loss and the women's unit will have to fight for medals without Sania Mirza, who is

expecting.

The choice in the mixed doubles is rather interesting. Besides their singles duty, Ankita Raina and Karman Kaur Thandi will be playing mixed doubles with Bopanna and Sharan respectively.

Rutuja Bhonsale and Pranjala Yadlapalli will be the other women's doubles duo.

BADMINTON

JAKARTA: In-form PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth will look to break new grounds as they spearhead India's charge for an elusive gold at the 18th Asian Games badminton event which begins with the team competitions here. India ended a 28-year-old media

rught when the women's team, led by Saina Nehwal and Sindhu, clinched its maiden bronze medal at the 2014 edition at Incheon, South Korea.

Before that, it was the men's team, comprising Prakash Padukone and Vimal Kumar, who had claimed a bronze in the 1986 edition.

Among the eight bronze won by Indian shuttlers since the 1966 Asian, Syed Modi remains India's only singles medalist in 1982 and Sindhu, who has been

in rampaging form, will look to break that jinx when she begins her campaign in the individual event starting August 23.

In the team competition, Sindhu and Co. will look to better their bronze medal show when the women's team begins its campaign on Monday against top seeds Japan in the quarterfinals after

winning her second gold at Commonwealth Games and a runners-up finish at the Indonesian Masters at this Asian Games venue.

India coach P Gopichand is optimistic that a new page will be turned in India's history.

A lot will also depend on doubles specialists Ashwini

medals, is entering the field after losing his first bout in four years in Tbilisi Grand Prix in Georgia last month but sounded confident ahead of the competition. Sushil will open his campaign against Adam Batirov of Bahrain.

National Greco Roman coach Kuldeep Singh said Harpreet Singh (87kg) is India's best medal bet in Greco Roman style.

Five of the six Indian men's freestyle wrestlers will be in action on Sunday with CWG gold medalist Bajrang

medalist Bajrang Panja (59 kg), Manish (67 kg), Gurpreet Singh (77 kg), Harpreet Singh (87 kg) and Naveen (100 kg).

Women's Freestyle Team: Sakshi Malik (62 kg), Vinesh Phogat (50 kg), Pinki (53 kg), Pooja Dhanda (57 kg), Divya Kakran (68 kg) and Kiran (72 kg). PTI

Reddy as they deal with their higher-ranked rivals.

Saina Nehwal too had a decent outing this season, winning her second gold at Commonwealth Games and a runners-up finish at the Indonesian Masters at this Asian Games venue.

India coach P Gopichand is optimistic that a new page will be turned in India's history.

A lot will also depend on doubles specialists Ashwini

medalist Bajrang Panja (59 kg), Manish (67 kg), Gurpreet Singh (77 kg), Harpreet Singh (87 kg) and Naveen (100 kg).

Women's Freestyle Team: Sakshi Malik (62 kg), Vinesh Phogat (50 kg), Pinki (53 kg), Pooja Dhanda (57 kg), Divya Kakran (68 kg) and Kiran (72 kg). PTI

Reddy as they deal with their higher-ranked rivals.

Saina Nehwal too had a decent outing this season, winning her second gold at Commonwealth Games and a runners-up finish at the Indonesian Masters at this Asian Games venue.

India coach P Gopichand is optimistic that a new page will be turned in India's history.

A lot will also depend on doubles specialists Ashwini

med