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THE IDEAS PAGE

A DIGITAL POWER
BY RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
PAGE 11

BUSINESS AS USUAL
By UNNY



After social engineering a little civil engineering, please...

QUOTA PUNJAB

TELANGANA PLANTATION DRIVE

Again, official assaulted in line of duty, MLA's brother arrested

Forest officer Anita has hairline fracture, other staff hit too; say police didn't help

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JUNE 30

A WOMAN Forest Range Officer (FRO) was hospitalised with a hairline fracture after she was beaten up by a group, allegedly including Koneru Krishna Rao, the brother of Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) MLA Koneru Konappa, on Sunday morning, during a plantation drive in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. Other forest staff who were part of the team were also beaten up.

FRO C Anita tried to save herself by climbing onto a tractor but videos of the incident showed the crowd, including Rao, following her and assaulting her with a stick, hitting her several times on the head. Anita fell unconscious and was rushed to hospital, where she was diagnosed with a hairline fracture in her right wrist.

Komaram Bheem Asifabad SP
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MLA, BROTHER KNOWN FOR RUN-INS WITH OFFICIALS
PAGE 6



C Anita trying to save herself by climbing atop a tractor as a crowd attacks her in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district. Krishna Rao is the man in white shirt second from right. Express

Out on bail, Vijayvargiya Jr: Not sorry, but Gandhi's path from now

DIPANKAR GHOSE
INDORE, JUNE 30

FOUR DAYS after he was sent to jail for assaulting an Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) official, Indore MLA Akash Vijayvargiya walked out of prison on bail Sunday to a hero's welcome. As his supporters cheered, Vijayvargiya said that he "did not regret his actions" but "would try and walk in the footsteps of Gandhi from here on."

As he spoke, supporters con-



Akash Vijayvargiya being welcomed on release. PTI

stantly garlanded him, chanting slogans lauding his "bravery" while videos even showed a man firing celebratory gunshots in the air from a rifle in front of his MLA office, with BJP flags waving in the background.

Vijayvargiya, the son of powerful BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, was sent to jail for assaulting IMC official Dharendra Singh Bayas with a bat, preventing a building declared unsafe by the corporation from being demolished in the Ganji

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In first Mann ki Baat in new govt, Modi focuses on saving water

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

IN HIS first Mann ki Baat after being re-elected, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday stressed on the importance of conservation of water to meet the ongoing crisis across the country, comparing water to "God's prasad".

"We together should resolve to save every drop of water," Modi said in his monthly radio address. "I believe, like other problems on hand, we can solve this predicament with the participation of the people, *janbhagidari*, and their power, *janshakti*... We are bound to find a solution through the strength, cooperation and resolution of 130 crore citizens."

Pointing out that "only 8% of the water received from rains in the entire year is harvested in our country", he talked about the Jal Shakti Ministry created recently to "allow faster decision-making on all subjects related to water", after merging the Water Resources and Drinking Water ministries. The Modi government has also promised to provide piped water to all households across the nation in the next five years, as part of a "Nal se Jal" initiative.

Many people had messaged him about the "prevailing water problem", Modi said, adding that he had recently written to all sarpanchs and gram pradhans asking them to "discuss the res-



In Delhi, Amit Shah, Manoj Tiwari tune in. Prem Nath Pandey

olution of this problem with villagers". In response, Modi said, on June 22, "crores of people contributed free labour across thousands of panchayats" and "people in village after village resolved to accumulate every single drop of rainwater". It seems villagers "have become involved in competition for raising a water temple in their respective villages", he said.

Modi asked people to make water conservation a "mass movement" like the cleanliness drive, urging luminaries to take up the issue, and people to share traditional methods of water conservation as well as information on those working in the field to create "an intensive database". "We must wake up society, unite society and join society in this endeavour."

Modi also spoke about the importance of democracy, while raising the issue of Emergency imposed on June 25, 1975. Resistance against it was not limited to the political arena or "the confines of prison cells", he said, adding that there was "an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

As more resign, Rahul calls meeting of all Cong CMs today

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

CONGRESS PRESIDENT Rahul Gandhi will meet chief ministers of all five Congress-ruled states Monday, his first with them after the party's disastrous performance in the Lok Sabha elections. The Chief Ministers are expected to urge him to reconsider his decision to step down as Congress chief, a move which has plunged the party into crisis and has lately triggered a wave of resignations by middle-rung leaders.

Sources said the meeting was called by Gandhi though the Chief Ministers had sought time with him. But with Gandhi firm on his decision to step down, the Congress is facing a crisis unparalleled in its recent history, with several leaders now calling for mass resignations.

Rajya Sabha MP and former Punjab Congress president Pratap Singh Bajwa has written a letter to AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal saying Gandhi's decision to take responsibility for the poll defeat is an example of accountability but "has not had the intended effect".

"It is my firm belief that senior party office-bearers must follow Rahul Gandhi's lead and resign from their posts. This includes all CWC, all Chief Ministers and state chiefs. Instead, I am asking for fresh leadership, one that brings a renewed sense of purpose and drive to our demoralised cadres," he said in the letter.

"These resignations will help strengthen Rahul Gandhi's hand

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Budget may unveil a national warehousing grid to plug key gaps, Maharashtra model

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

THE CENTRE is readying the broad contours of an integrated warehousing network, with the aim of operationalising a 'national warehousing grid' to effectively integrate the highly fragmented warehousing market in India. An announcement on the scheme is likely in the Budget.

A template is likely to come from Maharashtra, where the state government has kicked off a scheme for identifying warehouses spread across various government departments and institutions, to be then taken over and managed by one nodal agency. The Centre's scheme, officials involved said, aims at broad integration of the warehousing capacities in India, where approximately 90% of the warehousing space is controlled by unorganised players, with small warehouses of less than 10,000 sq ft area.

An action plan has already been approved by the Centre on sectoral basis for the construction of steel silos with a capacity of 100 lakh metric tonnes in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode for modernising storage infrastructure and improving shelf life of stored foodgrains. The Ministry of Food Processing

EXPLAINED

A timely move

PRACTICALLY, MUCH of the country's warehousing capacity outside of the agri sector is in the unorganised sector, with small warehouses of less than 10,000 sq ft area. This creates an economies of scale problem. The push for a scheme to integrate the sector comes at a time when India's warehousing capacity, apart from conventional storing services, is now increasingly being used to offer value-added services.

Industries too has launched a 'Cold Chain Scheme' under which some 180 projects entailing a capacity of 60 Lakh MT of agri produce would be completed by next year. Other sectors could also see similar interventions, officials indicated.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



FIRST LOSS FOR INDIA

England celebrate the dismissal of Rohit Sharma, who scored his third World Cup century, as India lost by 31 runs at Birmingham on Sunday. The result means India stay in the 2nd spot on the table, England move up to fourth and Sri Lanka is out of the tournament.

AP
PAGE 16

Dangal star Zaira Wasim quits acting, says came in way of her religion, faith

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, JUNE 30

NATIONAL AWARD winner Zaira Wasim on Sunday announced her decision to quit acting, saying it interfered with her faith and religion. The 19-year-old Srinagar-born star, who gained widespread popularity with her impressive debut in *Dangal* (2016), was last seen in Aamir Khan-produced *Secret Superstar* (2017).

"This journey has been exhausting, to battle my soul for so long. Life is too short yet too long to be at war with oneself," Wasim announced in a long Facebook post, which she later shared across other social media platforms. "Therefore, today I arrive at this well-grounded decision and I officially declare my disassociation with this field (film industry)... This field indeed brought a lot of love, support, and applause my way, but what it also did was to lead me to a path of ignorance, as I silently and unconsciously transitioned out of *imaan* (faith)," she wrote. "While I continued to work in an environment that consistently interfered with my *imaan* (faith), my relationship with my religion was threatened."

Wasim could not be con-



Said she had been thinking about quitting for long. File

tacted, with her phone switched off till late into Sunday evening. Wasim had been the subject of a hate campaign in January 2017 after she met then chief minister Mehbooba Mufti. When Mufti, who was at the time facing massive protests, shared a picture of her with Wasim and called her a "real role model", she was trolled, abused and cursed on social media in the Valley. This had forced her to write an "apology" saying she was not the real role model.

Wasim said she had been thinking about quitting for a long time and that she wasn't "truly happy" with her new identity. "Five years ago I made a decision

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In historic first, Trump steps into North Korea, says will resume talks with Kim

PETER BAKER & MICHAEL CROWLEY
SEOUL, JUNE 30

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump became the first sitting American commander-in-chief to set foot in North Korea Sunday as he met Kim Jong Un, the country's leader, at the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone, and the two agreed to restart negotiations on a long-elusive nuclear agreement.

Greeted by a beaming Kim, Trump stepped across a low concrete border marker at 3.46 pm local time and walked 20 paces to the base of a building on the North Korean side for an unprecedented, camera-friendly demonstration of friendship intended to revitalise stalled talks.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Trump with Kim at the Demilitarized Zone Sunday. Reuters

RELATED REPORTS
PAGE 8

EXPRESS NETWORK



PAGE 1 ANCHOR

NAVEED IQBAL
BUDDHAM, JUNE 30

AT-SHIRT hurriedly thrown over her green *salwar-kameez* school uniform, 13-year-old Zahida Manzoor waits her turn to play a round of badminton before school is done for the day. Acutely aware that she will not be able to attend school for about four days next week, she is keen to get a few games this week. "Me and other girls my age miss school during our monthly period and I miss the game for about a week," she says.

PUNE COLLAPSE: BODIES FLOWN TO BIHAR

WE'D PACK UP, WAIT EVERY DAY: AN-32 RESCUE TEAM
PAGE 7

TRACKING CHANGE

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A student at the Government Girls' Middle School Razwan, Zahida promises to return to school even if she misses a few days. But last year, for more than 300 girls from the district's 1,200 schools, classes ended when menstruation began. And this is



Budgam Deputy Commissioner Syed Sehrish Asgar with students. She has ensured all Budgam schools, colleges have sanitary napkin dispensers, incinerators starting today. Express

what Syed Sehrish Asgar, J&K's only woman Deputy Commissioner, aims to change.

Starting Monday, all higher secondary girls' schools and colleges of Budgam district, adjoining Srinagar, will have sanitary napkin dispensers and incinerators installed. The district administration's efforts are focused on bringing girls who have dropped out for concerns of personal hygiene back to school and prevent their absence from classrooms. The current dropout rate is close to 20 per cent according to Asgar.

A 2013-batch IAS officer,

Asgar (33) says that by opening up the conversation about menstrual hygiene, she also hopes to advance the understanding that "one does not become a lesser human being or feel the need to hide from public view or make life-altering compromises for something that's entirely natural and normal".

With no separate budget allocations for such projects, she managed funds from the state's rural development department as well as assistance from the Airports Authority of India's corporate social responsibility (CSR) contribution.

"All the incinerators have been procured and the sanitary napkins are being sourced through a tendering process. These units will be placed at 106 high and higher secondary schools, five degree colleges and one ITI in the district," Asgar told *The Indian Express*. Apart from these, dispensers will also be placed at the DC's office as well as the Srinagar international airport that falls in the district.

Also essential to bring about this change are functional toilets to give young girls the privacy they need to use the facilities

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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FROM REMOTE RAJASTHAN VILLAGE, A NEET SUCCESS STORY

NEET 2019: This year, Jodhaaram cracked the NEET examination by securing all India rank 3,886, and All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) examination with 5,391 rank

VIDEO OF THE DAY



BUDGET 2019

Anil Talreja, Partner, Deloitte India, says FM has provide support to sectors like logistics

FULL COVERAGE



US AND NORTH KOREA TO REOPEN TALKS

Trump said he had 'plenty of time' and was in no rush

EXPRESS AUDIO

First openly gay Afghan man, Nemat Sadat

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In this episode of The Sandip Roy Show, Sandip talks to Sadat about what made him finally come out, why people around him saw that as an act of cowardice and his skepticism of 'liberal' Islam

FROM PAGE ONE

Mann ki Baat

outrage in the conscience of one and all". He said it was easy to forget the "joys of democratic rights, unless they are snatched away", and that the Emergency reinforced that. He said this showed that for Indians, democracy was embedded in their culture and heritage "beyond laws and rules". In the elections after Emergency was lifted, the PM said, people had voted "without bothering about other rights and requirements, just for the sake of saving democracy".

Talking about the recent Lok Sabha elections, he said it was the first time that "women enthusiastically voted, as much as men did". "Another encouraging fact is that today there are a record 78 women MPs."

Thanking people for re-electing him, Modi talked about his trip to Kedamath after polling had concluded and the results were not yet out. He said he did not want to "change the course of conversation" by talking about it at length, but said people had the right to ask him about it. "Most people have derived political conclusions out of that. For me, it was an opportunity to meet myself. In a way, I undertook the journey to meet my inner self. I shall not reveal other things today, but I cer-

tainly want to tell you that perhaps in that solitary cave, I got an opportunity to fill the vacuum created by the long pause in Mann ki Baat (due to the model code of conduct for elections)."

Moving on to the importance of reading, especially in the digital world, Modi mentioned several stories of author Premchand like Pooas Ki Raat, Nashaa and Eidgah.

Budget

Currently, of the total warehousing space of about 180 million sq ft in the country, the industrial segment accounts for about 86% and the agricultural sector the rest 14%, according to NITI Aayog statistics. Two-thirds of the warehousing capacity in the food storage segment is owned by the public sector.

The push for the scheme comes at a time when India's warehousing capacity, apart from conventional storing services, is increasingly being used to offer value-added services such as the consolidation and breaking up of cargo, packaging, labelling, bar coding and reverse logistics.

An official said institutional steps are also planned "to ease the procedural hurdles in setting up warehousing infrastructure". "For instance, in dealing with construction permits needed to build a warehouse, individuals require

about 35 procedures and 190 days to obtain a permit. There will be a focus on reducing this."

The sector is estimated to have seen Rs 1.25 lakh crore invested through private equity since 2014, according to data collated by property consultant JLL India. The leasing of warehousing space is documented as having seen a 45% surge last year to top 25 million sq ft in seven major cities, driven primarily by the e-commerce sector (23% of the total demand), according to real estate consultant CBRE. Warehouse leasing crossed the 25 million sq ft mark in 2018 in seven major cities — Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Pune and Bengaluru — CBRE said, adding that the demand for better quality space resulted in rents rising by 10-25% last year.

Officials involved in the exercise said the warehousing project is also aimed at plugging deficiencies given that India's current cold storage capacity at 25 MT is barely sufficient for 10% of the fruits and vegetables produced in the country. The lack of adequate storage infrastructure is an important reason for the high cost of food products and wastage.

Nearly 60% of the modern warehousing capacity in India is concentrated in top six cities, namely Ahmedabad, Bengaluru,

Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR and Pune, with Hyderabad and Kolkata being the other major markets, according to Care Ratings. This trend is driven by the concentration of industrial urban population around these clusters.

The primary challenge that India's warehousing market currently faces is acquisition of a feasible land parcel, given that land cost constitutes the largest component of a warehousing project.

In the agri sector, the total storage capacity available with the Food Corporation of India (FCI), Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and the State Agencies (both owned and hired capacity), is 86.26 million metric tonnes (as on May 31, 2019) comprising 73.98 million tonnes in covered godowns and 12.27 million tonnes in Cover and Plinth (CAP) storage. As against this, the total agri stock in these warehouses as on June 1, 2019, was 74.1 million tonnes.

Trump

"It is good to see you again," an exuberant Kim told Trump through an interpreter. "I never expected to meet you in this place." "Big moment, big moment," Trump told him. After about a minute on an officially hostile territory, Trump escorted Kim

back over the line into South Korea, where the two briefly addressed journalists before slipping inside the building known as Freedom House for a private conversation along with President Moon Jae-in of South Korea. Trump said he would invite Kim to visit him at the White House.

"This has a lot of significance because it means that we want to bring an end to the unpleasant past and try to create a new future," Kim told reporters.

"Stepping across that line was a great honour," Trump replied. "A lot of progress has been made, a lot of friendships have been made." A showman by nature and past profession, Trump delighted in the drama of the moment, which he had arranged with a surprise invitation via Twitter barely 24 hours earlier. Never before had American and North Korean leaders gotten together at the military demarcation line, where heavily armed forces have faced off across a tense divide for 66 years since the end of fighting in the Korean War.

The encounter in Panmunjon had been cast as a brief handshake, not a formal negotiation, but the two ended up together for a little more than an hour. After emerging from their conversation, Trump said he and Kim had agreed to designate negotiators to resume talks in the next few weeks, four months after they collapsed in Vietnam.

Trump was already scheduled to make an unannounced visit to the DMZ during his trip to South Korea, and he portrayed the idea of meeting Kim as a spontaneous one, although he had been musing out loud about it for days. Still, it caught even his own staff by surprise and forced an extraordinary scramble to arrange logistics and security.

Since Trump took office, North Korea has suspended nuclear tests, released detained Americans and sent back to the US the remains of some American soldiers killed in the war. South Korean officials and others in the region say tension has eased significantly, and Moon praised Trump as "the peacemaker of the Korean Peninsula."

But US intelligence agencies have concluded that North Korea "is unlikely" to give up its nuclear arsenal, as Trump has demanded.

Zaira Wasim

that changed my life forever. As I stepped (into) Bollywood, it opened doors of massive popularity for me. I started to become the prime candidate of public attention, I was projected as the gospel of the idea of success and was often identified as a role model for the youth," she said. "However, that's never something that I set out to do or become, especially with regards to my ideas of success and failure, which I had just started to explore and understand."

She added, "As I continued to ignorantly pass through while I kept trying to convince myself that what I was doing is okay and isn't really affecting me, I lost all the Barakah (blessings) from my life," she said. "I kept procrastinating by tricking and deluding my conscience into the idea that I know what I am doing doesn't feel right but assumed that I will put an end to this whenever the time feels right and I continued to put myself in a vulnerable position where it was always so easy to succumb to the environment that damaged my peace, imaan and my relationship with Allah... In the great and divine wisdom of the Quran, I found sufficiency and peace. Indeed the hearts find peace when it acquires the knowledge of Its Creator, His Attributes, His Mercy and His commandments."

Former chief minister Omar Abdullah said Wasim's decision should be respected. "Who are any of us to question @ZairaWasim's choices? It's

Official assaulted

P Malla Reddy told The Indian Express that several cases have been registered against Rao. "We have arrested him and Bora Posham (seen in the video) who beat up the FRO and also 14 villagers who participated in the attack. We have booked them under non-bailable sections."



FRO Anita C

After Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao expressed his displeasure, Rao resigned as vice-chairman of the Komaram Bheem Asifabad zilla parishad.

Speaking to The Indian Express from hospital, Anita, who was in shock and broke down, said, "I was singled out by four-five men, including Rao, and beaten up with sticks. It was a vicious attack."

The forest officials accused police, which arrived a few minutes after the attack began, of not stopping the mob.

Officials said that Anita, 32, had gone to Sarasala village which falls under the Sirpur constituency of MLA Konappa to plant saplings as part of the 'Haritha Haaram' plantation drive of the Telangana government. The plantation drive was undertaken to compensate for the loss of green cover due to the multi-purpose lift irrigation Kaleswaram Project.

A team of 21 Forest Department personnel, including Anita, were planting saplings on a reserve forest land identified on the outskirts of the village, when some people objected. The villagers claimed it was their land and attacked the officials with sticks and iron rods. Some of them called up Rao, who soon arrived with his supporters. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests PK Jha ordered an inquiry

and demanded that the state government provide police protection to forest officials on afforestation drives. "That is forest land where our staff was attacked. Even Sirpur MLA Koneru Konappa knew about our afforestation drive. I don't know why he chose not to inform the people and his brother who attacked our staff. The Forest Department has thwarted several attempts to encroach this land by villagers," Jha said. Divisional Forest Officer (Komaram Bheem Asifabad) Laxman Naik said, "Without even asking why forest officials were there, the villagers and Rao launched a brutal assault on them. Without even considering that the FRO is a woman, the men beat her up. The officials were planting saplings on forest land, it is government land."

Naik added that they had taken up afforestation in 20 hectares of land in connection with the Kaleswaram Project. "Rao and others arrived with the intention of illegally occupying the land, and attacked our staff."

Local strongmen, Rao and brother Konappa have been accused of assaulting government officials earlier too, besides frequent run-ins with them. In

March 2018, Excise Department officials in Kagaznagar-Sirpur had staged a demonstration after Konappa allegedly abused a woman excise circle inspector for confiscating a truck.

Working President of TRS K T Rama Rao condemned the attack and said no one was above the law. "Atrocious behaviour by Koneru Krishna... I condemn it strongly," KTR said.

Anita is well regarded as a forest officer, and was felicitated two years ago by the department for her afforestation work in Chennur mandal. Her colleagues said she had handled several situations like Sunday's and was known to never lose her cool. "When she was in Chennur, she handled many explosive situations where villagers cultivating illegally on forest land confronted her. She would talk to them calmly and explain why afforestation was necessary. I think today the situation became political and someone instigated the villagers," Giasuddin, a former colleague of Anita, said.

Anita's husband C Manik Rao said he quit his job as an interior designer to take care of their son seeing Anita's devotion to her work. "I understood she won't be able to do justice to her passion and also take care of home. So I decided to quit while she pursues what she loves most," Manik Rao said.

Anita told The Indian Express she was determined to finish the plantation drive at Sarasala. "I will go back to that village and finish planting trees at the very spot where I was attacked. There is no question of backing out... In fact, I now see it as a challenge. Let's see who stops me now."

her life to do with as she pleases. All I will do is wish her well & hope that whatever she does makes her happy," Omar tweeted.

Former bureaucrat-turned-politician Shah Faesal wished Wasim luck. "Perhaps no other Kashmiri has achieved such an iconic status, such success and fame, at such a young age. And today, as she quit the industry, I have no choice but to respect her decision," Faesal tweeted.

Wasim's new film *The Sky is Pink*, directed by Shonali Bose and co-starring Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Farhan Akhtar, is scheduled to release later this year. In a statement, the movie producers said, "Zaira is an exceptional artiste... She has been a complete professional all through the shoot of the film. This is a purely personal decision... and we will be supportive of her — now and always."

J&K woman DC

being introduced. When she took over as DC in June 2018, she said toilets in several schools were broken, which deterred students from coming to school.

At Razwan, Zahida and her friends said that they run home during lunch to use the bathroom and come back for class. The rest-rooms at the school are broken and have no water supply.

These and other facilities in the Budgam's schools are being repaired and made functional, says Asgar. This is already making the difference in school attendance such as the middle school in Jawalpora.

Headmaster Mohammad Yousuf says that at the school with roughly 150 students things are looking up since the broken toilet was repaired even as construction of new ones remains a priority.

Outside the school, Himu Gulzar admits that if she had the option of getting sanitary napkins in school, it would save her the backlog in classwork. Says Asgar, "We have to try to create a society

where women are concerned about their health and hygiene and do not feel ashamed of it. We need structures in our public spaces where they can feel comfortable."

Vijavargiya Jr

Compound area of Indore. Akash has since claimed that he did it to curb corruption and prevent women from being misbehaved with.

Incidentally, the IMC had originally planned to demolish the structure at the forefront of the controversy early Sunday morning. However, sources said that the demolition has been put off until Tuesday because of complications with the requirement of police personnel.

Asked by The Indian Express if he would protest the demolition of the structure again, Vijavargiya said, "I don't have any official confirmation until now. When it does come, we will decide the future course of action."

After he was granted bail, Vijavargiya said: "I am not sorry and I don't regret. There was information that some Congress leaders in my constituency are buying homes after tying up with the Nagar Nigam and they are breaking them down and making the poor homeless. Then, I had requested them that I am the elected representative, don't I have the right to ask what is happening? I had also asked them that whatever action you take, do it after informing me."

On the events of the day, Vijavargiya said, "They sent a notice to a building which has a poor family that came to me. I called the Commissioner and sent him photos of the house. I told him that the family is poor and there is a handicapped woman, it is the monsoon, they have no alternative. It is my request that these people be given some time."

"I called the Deputy Commissioner, and they said that the Commissioner will take the call. I told the person at the

site that stop for a while but he began pulling women out more urgently after I said that. They started the JCB. When I reached there, women were being pulled, in police protection. I requested them to leave, and I had to pick up the bat to shoot them away."

Vijavargiya said that while he would not label his actions as incorrect, he wanted to follow the path of "Gandhi". "What I did, even if it had happened five minutes later, they would have demolished the house. They would have misbehaved more and nothing could have done anything. I don't regret it. But I pray to God that I don't get an opportunity to do something like this again. In the future I want to walk on the path of Gandhiji," he said.

Vijavargiya said that he had spoken to his father Kailash Vijavargiya, who told him that he could take his own decisions, "but I must also live with the consequences of my actions".

Rahul

and give him free rein to make the systemic changes he has envisioned. I believe that any leader who does not resign has put their personal gain over the party's growth," wrote Bajwa, who also resigned from the post of vice chairman of the Congress's foreign affairs department.

Telangana Congress working president Revanth Reddy, too, announced his decision to resign.

While the Congress had performed much better in Punjab, the same cannot be said in other Congress-ruled states like Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Gandhi has already appointed a new state chief for Chhattisgarh and in Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Kamal Nath is also the state Congress chief. Nath is expected to convey to Rahul his willingness to step down as MPCC chief Monday but finding his successor is not an easy task.

YES BANK presents

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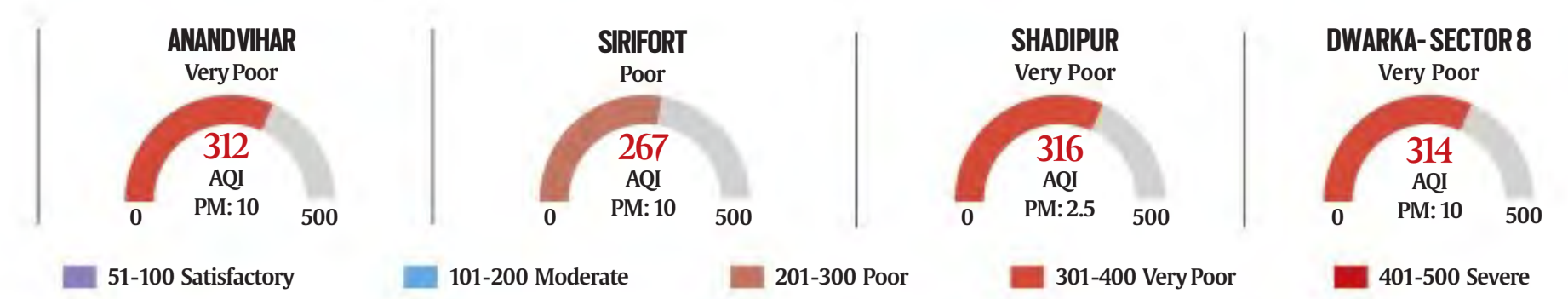
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DJB MISHAP: SEARCH CONTINUES FOR THIRD WORKER

2 days later, body of second worker found inside pipeline

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

ON SUNDAY morning, a team from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) crawled into a pipeline of the Keshapur interceptor drain, armed with a torchlight, and finally found the body of Devender Sharma (25).

Sharma and two others, Shah Rukh Khan (25) and Ankit (19), were swept into the drain while working on the Delhi Jal Board's interceptor sewage project in West Delhi on Friday. While Khan's body was found hours after the mishap, the search continues for Ankit.

"We knew the probability of finding the body near the bend. It was a 30-foot deep pipeline, and we had to wear our breathing apparatus set to get through it. We hope to find the third man," said Additional Divisional Officer (DFS) A K Jaiswal.

For two days, Sharma's family waited outside the drain, taking turns to sleep next to a shack. Some of them did not eat.

"... When I saw his hands and



Search operations in progress at the Keshapur drain, Sunday. *Dikshya Hazarika*

Etah district, and lived with his brother and his friend in Delhi. His family said he got married five months ago and would send Rs 3,000 to them every month.

"I was working near the drain when the incident took place. Devender had started working on the DJB project over a month ago. Before this, my brother and I worked as welders for contractors in Delhi. My parents are farmers and they came all the way from our village. We had to sleep on the streets, waiting for news about him," Ravi Kant said.

For Ankit's family, the wait continues.

His father, Rajender Rathore said, "We come to the spot every day... the last two days have been very difficult. I know he won't survive due to the water and the hazardous gases, but I want to see him. He was living with his sister Susheela and her husband Rajeev in Narela. He shifted to Delhi two years ago and began working on DJB projects last year. He would send Rs 5,000-6,000 to us every month. He started working at a young age to support the family. The work he did was dangerous, but he wouldn't tell us much about it."

legs, I knew straight away it was my brother, even though his face was swollen. He was never supposed to do this work. He told me he was a welder," said Ravi Kant, Sharma's brother, who was also working on the drain project.

Rescue agencies had to call off the operation at sundown due to low visibility.

DCP (West) Monika Bhardwaj said the immediate supervisor, Sandeep, was arrested for allegedly not providing adequate safety gear.

"We are also questioning several people and a team is going through the contracts for the project to fix responsibility," Bhardwaj said.

The FIR in the case states that the workers lost consciousness while working. Police are also investigating allegations that the flow of water was not turned off when the men were made to enter the drain.

Sharma hailed from UP's

Walker-friendly CP: Shoppers hail move but traders grumble

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30



Boys make use of the empty inner circle at Connaught Place to shoot TikTik videos. *Abhinav Saha*

FROM REDUCED noise levels to ease of access for walking, shoppers hailed restrictions on movement of vehicles inside the Connaught Place inner circle Sunday, but "empty showrooms" and a fall in sales at petrol stations have created resentment against authorities.

The plan to pedestrianise the shopping hub was tested Sunday by the New Delhi Municipal Council, under which movement of cars in the inner circle was restricted only to parking lots.

Barricades were put up on roads leading to the inner circle from the middle circle. NDMC staff said response to the move was largely positive, though there was little awareness among people. There was one instance of a motorist being issued a challan after he came violent.

An NDMC spokesperson said, "Footfall increased considerably... We will examine issues that came up with the help of experts."

Many shoppers and visitors to the hub said restricting vehicle movement in the inner circle created a "good environment" for shopping. Khyati Arora (30), said, "Cars and bikes should be kept away... from a security point of

view. There's less honking and traffic jams today, people are able to move about freely."

Others like Deepak Narain (34) said while Metro connectivity to Connaught Place makes it a "sensible place" to pedestrianise, authorities should introduce conveyance for the elderly and disabled. Mohammed Irfan (29) said he was unaware of the move and had trouble finding parking.

The NDMC spokesperson said e-vehicles were used to ferry those unable to walk to the inner circle, and added that similar support would be provided if the area is pedestrianised in future.

Meanwhile, showrooms and pumps in the inner circle complained of a fall in sales. Uttam Das, manager of Vintage Retail, said, "By 3 pm Sunday, our sales are around Rs 1 lakh. But today, it's just Rs 20,000." Ajay Sharma, manager of Mohanlal Sons, said, "Despite a sale, the showroom is nearly empty. Sunday is our main business day..."

While NDMC staff allowed motorists to access petrol pumps in the inner circle, attendants said business was hit. "By 11 am on a Sunday, we sell around 150 litres of petrol. It's past 2 pm and we haven't crossed 50 litres today."

Calling the move "completely irrelevant", the New Delhi Traders' Association had staged a protest at the shopping hub Saturday.

BRIEFLY

Betting racket busted, 6 held

New Delhi: Six men were arrested from Rohini and Shakti Nagar for allegedly running betting rackets. Police said over Rs 1 crore, 26 phones and four laptops were recovered.

Cops shot at

New Delhi: A group of unidentified men opened fire at a police party in Adarsh Nagar. Police said efforts are on to nab them.

35-yr-old dies in hit-and-run

New Delhi: A 35-year-old man died after a car coming from the wrong side hit him near Jantar Mantar. Police said efforts are on to nab the driver, and denied the family's claims of foul play.

Man falls to death

New Delhi: A 40-year-old man fell to his death from the terrace of an under-construction building Sunday. **ENS**

Seven, including four children, hurt in fire

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

SEVEN PEOPLE, including four children, suffered burn injuries after a fire broke out in Shahdara Sunday. The incident took place inside a two-bedroom house in Jwala Nagar. Fire officials said prima facie an LPG cylinder leak sparked a fire inside the air

cooler, which then exploded.

The victims include Ravi Ranjan (32), his wife Anshu and their son Gupesh (2), who lived in the house. The others — Babita (33) and her daughters Gungun (7) and Lovely (9) — were at Ranjan's house at the time of incident. Amaltes (2), who was playing outside the house, was also injured. They were rushed to GTB Hospital.

Ranjan, who suffered injuries to his face, chest and hands, said, "My wife and I were in the bedroom. Our neighbour Babita was outside, cutting vegetables, while our son was playing with her daughters. Suddenly, the cooler caught fire and exploded."

The children are severely injured and are in critical condition, with Gungun and Lovely suffering over 80% burn injuries.

Babita's husband Kamlesh said, "My daughters are unconscious and critical. My wife is stable..."

Brijesh Gupta, a shopkeeper who lives near Ranjan's house, said, "I was opening my shop around 8 am when I heard screams. We rushed upstairs and found seven people running and screaming. Their bodies were burnt and the children were lying on the floor."

उ. प्र. उर्दू अकादमी, लखनऊ
Urdu IAS
सूचना
समाचार पत्रों में जून माह में प्रकाशित विज्ञापन शीर्षक "उर्दू आईएएस स्टडी सेंटर, लखनऊ (गुपी) फ्री कोचिंग, फ्री हारस्टल, फ्री खाना पौर्चवें बैच का प्रवेश प्रारम्भ" में ऑन लाइन फार्म भरने की अंतिम तिथि: 01.07.2019 से बढ़ाकर 06.07.2019 कर दी गई है। अन्य विवरण पूर्ववत् रहेंगे।
प्रो० असिफ़ जुमानी (पदमश्री) वेयरपर्सन
रिजुवान अहमद Ex D.G.P. U.P. निदेशक
एस. रिजुवान सचिव

Government of India
Public Enterprises Selection Board
invites applications for the post of
DIRECTOR (FINANCE)
in
NORTHERN COALFIELDS LIMITED (NCL).
Last date of receipt of applications in
PESB is by 15:00 hours
on 3rd September, 2019.
For details login to website
<http://www.pesb.gov.in>

150
ANTI-DENGUE MONTH
JULY 2019
Dengue & Chikungunya are viral diseases spread by Aedes Mosquito which bites during day time and breeds in clean stagnant water
Sh. Manohar Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

Dos **Don'ts**

Don't allow water to stagnate
Prevent Mosquito Breeding

- Fill the pits around your houses with sand.
- Empty water containers, coolers, flower pots, haudies, fridge tray, bird baths etc. once a week and scrub dry to kill the eggs of mosquitoes.
- Wear full sleeved clothes, use mosquito repellents and sleep under insecticide treated Bednets (machhardani).
- Cover the overhead water tanks & other household water containers.
- Cooperate during spray operations. Ensure insecticide spray in each room of the house when spray teams come to your home.
- Seek Doctor's advice on having fever.

- Don't take medicines like Aspirin, Brufen etc. by yourself.
- Don't allow water to stagnate inside houses and in surroundings in pits, low-lying areas etc. for more than a week.
- Don't throw discarded items like tyres, tubes, plastic containers, polythene bags, disposable cups, glasses etc. in open or on rooftops.
- If it is not possible to remove discarded items lying in open, these may be kept covered, so that rain water may not get accumulated in them.
- Don't fill water in coolers, if it is not in use.
- Don't allow water to stagnate near hand pumps or water supply connections.

Always cover water tanks

Be Smart Be Prepared!

BEFORE FLOODS

- Ignore rumours, Stay calm, Don't panic
- Keep your mobile phones charged for emergency communication; use SMS
- Listen to radio, watch TV, read newspapers for weather updates
- Keep cattle/animals untied to ensure their safety
- Prepare an emergency kit with essential items for safety and survival
- Keep a First Aid kit with extra medication for snake bite and diarrhoea ready
- Keep your documents and valuables in water-proof bags

AFTER FLOODS

- Do not allow children to play in or near flood waters
- Don't use any damaged electrical goods, get them checked
- Watch out for broken electric poles and wires, sharp objects and debris
- Do not eat food that has been in flood waters
- Use mosquito nets to prevent malaria
- Don't use the toilet or tap water if the water lines/sewage pipes are damaged

IF YOU NEED TO EVACUATE:

- Raise furniture, appliances on beds and tables
- Put sandbags in the toilet bowl and cover all drain holes to prevent sewage back flow
- Turn off power and gas connection
- Move to a higher ground/ safe shelter
- Take the emergency kit, first aid box and valuables with you
- Do not enter deep, unknown waters; use a stick to check water depth
- Come back home only when officials ask you to do so

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Kapil S/O Raja Ram R/O H.No.DB-131, 27 Feet Road, NIT-Faridabad HR-121001. have changed my name from Kapil to Kapil Kumar for all future purposes. 0040501349-8

I, Taranjeet Singh Viridi H.No. 1037, Sector-23, Faridabad, Haryana have changed my name to Taranjeet Singh. 0070662782-1

I, Basant Jain S/O Tola Ram Bothra R/O-294-295, Block B-2, Sec-6, Rohini, Delhi-85. Changed My Name To Basant Kumar Bothra. 0040501340-5

I, Deelip R/O E-2/719, Gali No. 10, Pusta-4, Sonia Vihar Sahapur North East, Delhi-110094 have changed my name to Deelip Tiwari. 0070662776-1

I, Deepak Kapur S/O Bhoj Raj Kapur R/O Wz-406,T, Janak Park, Hari Nagar, Delhi-110064. Changed My Name to Deepak Kapoor. 0040501340-1

I, Suheb Ahmed Khan/ Suheb Ahmed S/O Sardar Ahmad R/O 1504/05, Block-1, Jahangirpuri, Delhi-110033. Changed My Name To Sardar Ahmad. 0040501340-3

I, Sourabh Kumar, S/O Surinder Kumar, R/O K-22, Civil Zone, Subroto Park, New Delhi-10 have changed my name to Sourabh Jaryal for all future purposes. 0070662771-1

I, Shivansh Kumar, S/O Suresh Kumar Rajput, R/O #92, Type-IV, North-West Moti Bagh, New Delhi-21 Have Changed My Name To Shivansh Thakur For All Future Purposes. 0070662769-1

I, Sardar Ahmad Khan S/O Sultan Ahmad R/O 1504/05, Block-1, Jahangirpuri, Delhi-110033. Changed My Name To Sardar Ahmad. 0040501340-4

I, Saranjeet Singh Bansal S/O Balvinder Singh Bansal R/O-B-2/10A, Sewak-Park Uttam-Nagar Delhi-59. Have Change My Name To Saranjeet Singh. 0040501340-8

I, Sahil Batra F/O Amaaya Batra H.No-750 1st-floor sec-52 Gurgaon Haryana-122003 have changed my minor daughter name to Saaz Batra. 0040501340-7

I, Rajni Aarya W/O Mr. Manoj Kumar R/O H.No. J Block 1839, 3rd Floor, Chitrnanj Park, New Delhi-110019. do hereby informs that both the names Rajni Aarya & Rajni are one and same person i.e. myself. 0040501273-1

I, Pravinkumar Ranganathan S/O Shri Ranganathan Arjun Kutil R/O F-4, B-230, Aditya Apartment, Shalimar Garden Main, Ghaziabad-201005, U.P. have changed my name from Pravinkumar Ranganathan Kutil to Pravinkumar Ranganathan for all Purposes. 0040501116-1

I, Monika Kapur W/O Deepak Kapoor R/O Wz-406,T, Janak Park, Hari Nagar, Delhi-110064. Changed My Name to Monika Kapoor. 0040501340-2

I, Madhu Sudan Kumar Singh S/O Rajbahadur Kuwar Singh R/O B16/1605, Supertech Eco Village 2, Sec-16-B, Greater Noida (W), U.P. have changed my name to Madhusudan Kumar Singh. 0070662780-1

I, Japleen Kohli w/o Ajit Singh R/O E-13/22 DLF-City phase-1 Gurgaon Haryana-122002. have changed my name to Japleen Singh. 0040501340-6

I, Devansh Sunder S/O Sutesh Sunder R/O-A3/184-185, Sector-28, Rohini, (Paharladpur Bengen) North-West Delhi-110042. have changed my name to Rishi Singh Sunder. 0040501340-10

ECCG (A Government of India Enterprise)

Regd. Office: Express Towers, 10th Floor, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

"RFP NOTICE No. - Ref: ECCG/Tender-01/107/2019-20"

ECCG Ltd invites REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR THE SELECTION OF SYSTEM INTEGRATOR TO SET UP A TIER-II/3 OR EQUIVALENT DATA CENTRE

The RFP can be downloaded from our website: www.eccg.in.

For further details, please visit our website www.eccg.in.

Amendments / Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted on the website only.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY e-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for execution of the following works by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), E.C. Railway, Dhanbad.

1. E-Tender No.: 174-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Supply of portion for welding of 60Kg/52Kg Rail by SKV process (Single shot) under Sr. Divl. Engineer (Estate)/EC Railway, Dhanbad. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,71,04,470/-. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,35,500/-.
2. E-Tender No.: 175-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Repairs to front, facade, concourse, circulating area of Dhanbad Station. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,31,72,608.26. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,65,900/-.
3. E-Tender No.: 176-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Changing of Bed Block of Br No. 11 at Km 4/4-5 between KRLR-ANPR & Bed Block of Br. No. 35 at Km 16/4-5 between ANPR-KRSL under Asstt. Engineer, E.C. Railway, Chopan. 08 (Eight) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,94,36,084.43. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,97,200/-.
4. E-Tender No.: 177-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: 22DCEP-VHF based warning system for track maintainers in Pradhankhanta-Manjpur section of Dhanbad Division in E.C. Railway under ADE/ENGJ. 03 (Three) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹47,40,024/- . Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹94,800/-.
5. E-Tender No.: 178-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: CG Section 'Provision of FOG at BU & CDB under the jurisdiction of Asstt. Engineer (1), E.C. Ry., Gomoh. 24 (Twenty Four) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,92,47,228.87. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,96,200/-.
6. E-Tender No.: 179-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: P. I. Work of Dugda under Asstt. Engineer (2), E.C. Railway, Gomoh. 09 (Nine) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹51,65,443.71. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹1,63,300/-.
7. E-Tender No.: 180-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Dhanbad Division - Provision of Rubberized Pad at Level Crossing Gates in Jurisdiction of Sr. Divl. Engineer (3)/E.C. Railway, Dhanbad. (05 Nos.), 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹91,19,916.61. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹1,82,200/-.
8. E-Tender No.: 181-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Improvement of slope by using Geomel and drain cleaning in between Kodama-Bahni and Katakamsandi-Bes. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,96,02,987.22. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,48,000/-.
9. E-Tender No.: 182-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Repairs and cleaning drain, trolley refuge and laying sleeper along drain to prevent rolling down of ballast in between Pipradoli to Jansarnawada and Hazaribagh Town to Kujju (excluding Kujju). 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,28,69,237.35. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,14,300/-.

Date & Time for closing and opening of e-tender: Date of closing of e-tender at 17:00 hours on 29.07.2019. Date of opening of e-tender from 12:00 hrs on 30.07.2019. Website particulars : <http://www.tenders.gov.in>. No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)/PR/0615/DHN/T/104 ECR/Dhanbad

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Website: www.ircon.gov.in CIN - L45203DL1976GOI0008171

e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No: IRCON/2019/IGRP/e-TENDER/19-20/Channel Sleeper/BSP-29 Dated: 01.07.2019

e-Tender in two stage bid system are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of Manufacturing, supplying and fitting of galvanized steel channel sleepers, trolley refuge, inspection ladder and other items related to USSOR for CRS inspection with all accessories all complete over steel bridges in connection with new BG electrified double rail line over South East Central Railway between Kharsia (Km 0) and Dharamajyagiri (Km 74.00) in the state of Chhattisgarh.

Estimated Cost of the work	₹ 3,77,96,441.74/-
Latest Date & Time of Bid Submission	Dt. 23.07.2019 up to 15:00 Hrs. (IST)

For further details, visit website: <https://tenders.gov.in/procureapp> and <https://www.eprocure.gov.in>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Chief General Manager/IGRP

CENTRE FOR RAILWAY INFORMATION SYSTEMS (CRIS)
(An Autonomous Society under the Ministry of Railways)
Chanakyaপুরी, New Delhi-110021

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), an Autonomous Organization under Ministry of Railways, Government of India wishes to recruit about 50 Assistant Software Engineers (ASE) in Level 7 of the 7th CPC.

- Selection would be based on GATE 2019 result of Computer Science and Information Technology (CS) paper.
- Detailed eligibility conditions, application fee, application process and mode of selection will be available on the website <http://www.cris.org.in> under the tab 'Careers' Shortly.
- Online application form and further instructions will be available on this website. Online applications would open on **08.07.2019**. Prospective candidates are advised to keep visiting the website for the latest updates.

Central Forensic Science Laboratory
Directorate of Forensic Science Services
Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs
Ramanthapur, Hyderabad - 500 013.

E-TENDER NOTICE No.1(425)/CFSL(H)/NCFL/2018 Dt. 27/06/2019.

The Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Hyderabad invites online Tenders from the interesting firms for the contract for the **supply of Manpower/ Cyber Forensic Professionals (13 Nos.) for NCFL, Hyderabad.**

Sl. No.	Name of the Item	Estimated cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (EMD)	Date of issue of Tender forms online	Date & Time of pre-bid meeting	Last date for submission of Tenders online	Date & time of opening of the Technical Bids
1	Supply of Manpower/ Hiring of Cyber Forensic Professionals (13 Nos.) on contract basis	1.0 crore	2 lakhs	01 /07/19 11.00 hrs.	08/07/2019 16.00 hrs.	31 /07/19 17.00 hrs.	05/08/19 14.30 hrs.

1. The detailed tender notice along with eligibility criteria and Tender Document is available on website www.cflshyd.gov.in for free viewing and downloading for reference purpose. To participate in e-tendering process, it is mandatory to get registered on the Government e-procurement portal i.e. e-procure.gov.in portal. **No tender will be accepted in physical form.** The interested agencies are required to scan/ fill in and upload the specified documents along with copies of Earnest Money Deposit. The EMD should be submitted to this office in the form of Bank Guarantee in favour of **Director, CFSL, Hyderabad** and should be submitted before the due date.
2. The Financial Bids of only qualified bidders will be opened at a later date to be notified to the technically eligible bidders separately.
3. The Director, CFSL, Hyderabad reserves the right to accept or reject tender in full or part of any or all tenders or to cancel the tender in toto without assigning any reason thereof.

For further information please contact: (040) 27035822/8429 Fax: (040) 27039281; e-mail: cflshyd@gmail.com

Sd/-
(K M Varshney)
Director, CFSL, Hyderabad.

davp 19121/11/0001/1920

From today, dial 100 to file an FIR in Noida

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, JUNE 30

NOIDA POLICE will be launching its 'Dial FIR' scheme from July 1 to register complaints of street crimes without having to visit the police station. As per the scheme, an FIR for crimes like chain snatching, vehicle and mobile thefts, among others, can be filed by dialling 100.

"The scheme is in place to ensure that citizens don't have to run from pillar to post to get a complaint filed. In such crimes, it is crucial to save time. The victims can call up the number, and officials in the control room will visit the spot and get the requisite details to file the case," said SSP, Gautam Budh Nagar, Vaibhav Krishna. The scheme will be applicable for crimes where the accused is unknown, police said.

Police said calls made in such cases will be redirected to the closest police response vehicle. Officials in the car will be carrying forms to note down details, and will then visit the police station concerned to register the FIR.

In another initiative, police has designated Sector 24 police station for urban areas and Sarajpur police station for rural areas to directly register FIRs related to cyber crimes.

Schools extend summer break as heat wave makes comeback

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

A RENEWED heat wave in Delhi NCR has prompted the administrations of Delhi, Ghaziabad and Haryana to extend the summer vacation of students up to Class VIII. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Sunday said schools, both government and private, would reopen after summer vacations on July 8. Students in senior classes will, however, return to school on Monday. Schools in Haryana will also be shut till June 8 for students up to Class VIII.

Ghaziabad District Magistrate Ritu Maheshwari also issued orders to extend the vacation for students up to Class VIII by two days. Schools in Ghaziabad will reopen on Wednesday.

India Meteorological Department officials said Delhi is expected to see high temperatures, qualifying as a heat wave, over the next two days. A heat wave is declared when temperature is consistently 5 degrees above normal.

On Sunday, the maximum was recorded at 42.2 degrees Celsius and is expected to be 42 degrees on Monday and Tuesday. The normal temperature at this



Monsoon, which usually hits Delhi on June 29, has also been delayed this year. *Gajendra Yadav*

Former hotel executive turned gangster held

New Delhi: A former five-star hotel executive, who gave up his career to allegedly become a close aide of jailed gangster Neeraj Bawana, was arrested by the Special Cell of Delhi Police. Acting on a tip-off, the officers arrested Sonu Jaat (28) while he was on his way to meet an associate late Friday night with a semi-automatic pistol and four live cartridges.

Sonu completed his hotel management course and worked at a five-star hotel in Gurgaon. Outside office, he was involved in Outer Delhi gang rivalries and allegedly murdered two people in Delhi, police said.

"He has been on the run ever since and even carried a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his arrest," said DCP (Special Cell), Pramod Singh Kushwah. **ENS**

WEEK'S FORECAST

Day	Min	Max
Monday	32	42
Tuesday	32	42
Wednesday	31	38
Thursday	30	37
Friday	29	36
Saturday	27	37

As per the official forecast, the whole of the coming week will see the likelihood of light rain or drizzle, but it will not affect the soaring temperatures much, especially on Monday and Tuesday.

An official statement issued by IMD said between July 2 and 4, conditions will become favourable for the advance of monsoons into the remaining parts of UP, Uttarakhand, and parts of Himachal Pradesh as well as the NCR.

Delhi is reeling under a significant rain deficit. While it gets 62.1 mm of rain between June 1 and June 30, it has received only 6.6 mm — a deficit of 89%.

Nationally, all states and union territories have received largely deficient rainfall since June 1. The national rain deficit is 33%.

Fire breaks out at restaurant, 80 rescued

Ghaziabad: Around 80 people were evacuated from a restaurant in Ghaziabad's Gaur Mall after a fire broke out Sunday afternoon. Fire officials said no casualty was reported.

"We received information at 1.50 pm that a fire broke out in the Barbeque Nation on the fifth floor of Gaur Central Mall in Raj Nagar. Two fire tenders were rushed to the spot. Smoke had filled the area but people were evacuated. No loss to life was reported," said Ghaziabad Fire Department in a release.

According to fire officials, almost 50 customers and 30 restaurant employees were present at the spot when the fire broke out. "The restaurant had one functioning exit... The other exit, which was closed, had to be broken down," said a fire official.

Customers and staff had to crawl out of the outlet due to the smoke, an official said.

The restaurant did not respond to calls and messages seeking a comment. The fire department said they are yet to determine the cause of the fire. **ENS**

Andhra govt seeks leeway for students in DU admissions

SUKRITABARUAH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

THE ANDHRA Pradesh government has asked Delhi University to accept newly released marks of their state board students, as opposed to CGPA, and extend the last date for taking admission against the first cut-off list by two days. Admissions under the first cut-off end on July 1.

The request came after confusion over conversion of grades to marks, which has resulted in no student from the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state boards being considered as having obtained more than 95% in their school-leaving examinations. Popular courses in DU have cut-offs well above this figure.

After protests by applicants and parents, the Controller of Examination of the AP Board of Intermediate Education wrote to Delhi University's Dean of Students Welfare Sunday evening, stating that marks of the students concerned has now been released in the public domain. "... Please consider overall marks obtained by the candidates and not the CGPA calculation for overall percentage. Kindly extend the last date... by two days please," read the e-mail to the Dean.

The current batch of AP state board students is the first to be given CGPAs, with subject-wise marks ranging from 91-100 being given grade A1 or grade point 10. The formula for conversion of the students' CGPA to percentage — which was printed behind their mark sheets — has been given as the CGPA multiplied by 10.

When students from the board — with a 10 CGPA — went to colleges to take admission, they were directed to the grievance committee to seek clarification on the conversion formula. On Saturday, a notice was put up by the university administration stating that subject grade A1 from the board will be taken as 95 marks — the midpoint of the mark-range 91 to 100.

Sukanta Dutta, the university's OSD for admissions, said a mid-point conversion was se-



Admissions under the first list end today. *Gajendra Yadav*

lected to ensure "maximum inclusion". "DU admissions are not based on CGPA — which is sum of all subjects — but on subject-wise marks. If we look at the 91-100 mark range, it is statistically far more probable that more students have scored in the range of 91 to 95, as opposed to above 96. It is in the interest of all students that we have given the mid-point formula," said Dutta.

However, students now find themselves without a fighting chance to get into top colleges, with cut-offs for popular courses in prominent colleges set well above 95% and most seats already getting filled up in the first two days of admission.

A student from AP, who gave up a seat in NIT, said the system is unfair: "I have a grade point average of 10 in my 'best of four' subjects and had gone to LSR to take admission in BA (Honours) Political Science. I was eligible despite the stream change percentage deduction... but now I don't qualify despite having an SC reservation. I gave up other opportunities... Since Monday is the last date for admission and with no clarity on the situation, I will have to take admission in BA Programme at Miranda House instead," she said.

Dutta, meanwhile, said he was unaware of the AP government's request but added that the admission committee will come to a decision which is "best for all students". "We have a very strict schedule which was already delayed because of the High Court case. The committee will take a call," he said.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY e-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for execution of the following works by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), E.C. Railway, Dhanbad.

1. E-Tender No.: 174-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Supply of portion for welding of 60Kg/52Kg Rail by SKV process (Single shot) under Sr. Divl. Engineer (Estate)/EC Railway, Dhanbad. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,71,04,470/-. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,35,500/-.
2. E-Tender No.: 175-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Repairs to front, facade, concourse, circulating area of Dhanbad Station. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,31,72,608.26. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,65,900/-.
3. E-Tender No.: 176-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Changing of Bed Block of Br No. 11 at Km 4/4-5 between KRLR-ANPR & Bed Block of Br. No. 35 at Km 16/4-5 between ANPR-KRSL under Asstt. Engineer, E.C. Railway, Chopan. 08 (Eight) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,94,36,084.43. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,97,200/-.
4. E-Tender No.: 177-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: 22DCEP-VHF based warning system for track maintainers in Pradhankhanta-Manjpur section of Dhanbad Division in E.C. Railway under ADE/ENGJ. 03 (Three) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹47,40,024/- . Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹94,800/-.
5. E-Tender No.: 178-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: CG Section 'Provision of FOG at BU & CDB under the jurisdiction of Asstt. Engineer (1), E.C. Ry., Gomoh. 24 (Twenty Four) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹2,92,47,228.87. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,96,200/-.
6. E-Tender No.: 179-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: P. I. Work of Dugda under Asstt. Engineer (2), E.C. Railway, Gomoh. 09 (Nine) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹51,65,443.71. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹1,63,300/-.
7. E-Tender No.: 180-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Dhanbad Division - Provision of Rubberized Pad at Level Crossing Gates in Jurisdiction of Sr. Divl. Engineer (3)/E.C. Railway, Dhanbad. (05 Nos.), 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹91,19,916.61. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹1,82,200/-.
8. E-Tender No.: 181-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Improvement of slope by using Geomel and drain cleaning in between Kodama-Bahni and Katakamsandi-Bes. 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,96,02,987.22. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,48,000/-.
9. E-Tender No.: 182-DHN-2019-20. Name of the work with its location & completion period: Repairs and cleaning drain, trolley refuge and laying sleeper along drain to prevent rolling down of ballast in between Pipradoli to Jansarnawada and Hazaribagh Town to Kujju (excluding Kujju). 06 (Six) Months. Approx. cost of work (IN ₹): ₹1,28,69,237.35. Earnest Money (IN ₹): ₹2,14,300/-.

Date & Time for closing and opening of e-tender: Date of closing of e-tender at 17:00 hours on 29.07.2019. Date of opening of e-tender from 12:00 hrs on 30.07.2019. Website particulars : <http://www.tenders.gov.in>. No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)/PR/0615/DHN/T/104 ECR/Dhanbad

KERALA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION e-Tender Notice

E-Tender ID	Items	Bid submission end date
2019_KSHTC_283931_1	LONG SHANKS 40mm-SEVEN LEVER LOCK	16.07.2019 06:00 PM

For more details visit: www.tenders.kerala.gov.in & www.keralactc.com/tenders/purchase
Ph.No.0471-2471011 Extn: 303
Date: 01.07.2019 (Sd): Chairman & Managing Director.

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Website: www.ircon.gov.in CIN - L45203DL1976GOI0008171

e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No: IRCON/2019/IGRP/e-TENDER/19-20/Channel Sleeper/BSP-29 Dated: 01.07.2019

e-Tender in two stage bid system are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of Manufacturing, supplying and fitting of galvanized steel channel sleepers, trolley refuge, inspection ladder and other items related to USSOR for CRS inspection with all accessories all complete over steel bridges in connection with new BG electrified double rail line over South East Central Railway between Kharsia (Km 0) and Dharamajyagiri (Km 74.00) in the state of Chhattisgarh.

Estimated Cost of the work	₹ 3,77,96,441.74/-
Latest Date & Time of Bid Submission	Dt. 23.07.2019 up to 15:00 Hrs. (IST)

For further details, visit website: <https://tenders.gov.in/procureapp> and <https://www.eprocure.gov.in>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Chief General Manager/IGRP

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY e-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India from competent and experienced contractor for execution of the under mentioned work. E-Tender Notice No.: RE/DNR/EL/Security/19-20. Date: 26.06.2019. 1. Name of the work with its location: E Tender for engagement of Security Guard for guarding of Railway materials and properties at DSK depot Patna ghat, CPD office campus & Rest House DNR, Central Garage DNR, Electrical Store DNR for 1 Year (365 days). 2. Approximate Cost of the work: ₹72,09,520.15 (Rs. Seventy two lakh nine thousand five hundred twenty and fifteen paise only). 3. Cost of Tender Form & Earnest Money to be deposited: Tender paper cost ₹5,000/- & EMD ₹1,44,200/- (One Lakh forty four thousand two hundred only) only through payment modes available on IREPS portal through net banking, debit card, credit card etc at www.ireps.gov.in. 4. Date & Time for online submission of tender and opening of Tender: Bidding starts from 17.07.2019 and opening of e-tender on 31.07.2019 after 15.00 hrs. 5. Address of the office from where the tender details can be obtained: Website particulars and notice board location: Office of the Chief Project Director, Railway Electrification, Danapur, Near Jagjeevan Stadium, Khagaul, Danapur, 801105. E-tendering website - Notice board - Office of the Chief Project Manager Railway Electrification, Danapur near Jagjeevan Stadium, Khagaul, Danapur.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/RE/PR/0616/RE/T/44 ECR/Danapur

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY e-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India from competent and experienced contractor for execution of the under mentioned work. E-Tender Notice No.: RE/DNR/EL/Security/19-20. Date: 26.06.2019. 1. Name of the work with its location: E Tender for engagement of Security Guard for guarding of Railway materials and properties at DSK depot Patna ghat, CPD office campus & Rest House DNR, Central Garage DNR, Electrical Store DNR for 1 Year (365 days). 2. Approximate Cost of the work: ₹72,09,520.15 (Rs. Seventy two lakh nine thousand five hundred twenty and fifteen paise only). 3. Cost of Tender Form & Earnest Money to be deposited: Tender paper cost ₹5,000/- & EMD ₹1,44,200/- (One Lakh forty four thousand two hundred only) only through payment modes available on IREPS portal through net banking, debit card, credit card etc at www.ireps.gov.in. 4. Date & Time for online submission of tender and opening of Tender: Bidding starts from 17.07.2019 and opening of e-tender on 31.07.2019 after 15.00 hrs. 5. Address of the office from where the tender details can be obtained: Website particulars and notice board location: Office of the Chief Project Director, Railway Electrification, Danapur, Near Jagjeevan Stadium, Khagaul, Danapur, 801105. E-tendering website - Notice board - Office of the Chief Project Manager Railway Electrification, Danapur near Jagjeevan Stadium, Khagaul, Danapur.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/RE/PR/0616/RE/T/44 ECR/Danapur

Doctors at Hindu Rao Hospital allege assault, on strike today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

RESIDENT DOCTORS at North Delhi's Hindu Rao Hospital went on strike Sunday, and will continue the strike Monday, alleging that attendants of a patient assaulted them Saturday. Police have registered an institutional FIR against unknown persons as doctors did not know the names of the patient's attendants.

Dr Piyush Singh, acting president of the Resident Doctors' Association at the hospital, said a patient with stage V chronic renal failure came to the emergency room around 11.30 am.

"The patient... was gasping for breath and had very poor vitals. She had been recommended dialysis thrice a week but had not been following directions. The attending doctor explained her condition to the attendants. She was declared dead soon. The attendants became violent when the doctor was signing the death certificate and the attending doctor was beaten up. He received cuts on his head... We will be on strike today. Emergency services will be available," Singh said.

"The patient died during treatment and her husband and relatives quarrelled with doctors on duty; her son slapped a doctor. Soon after, some doctors gathered and there was a scuffle," said DCP (North) Nupur Prasad. Police registered a case under



Doctors were on strike on Sunday as well. *Prem Nath Pandey*

Sisodia takes on Nadda over govt schools

New Delhi: A day after BJP working president J P Nadda called the AAP in Delhi a "laughing stock," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia challenged him and other senior leaders to compare the top 10 government schools in the capital with those in BJP-ruled states and come forward for a debate.

"Delhi's schools posted the best result in the capital's history this year with a 94% pass rate. I challenge J P Nadda *sahab* and Vijay Goel *sahab* to choose the top 10 government schools of the BJP's education model from any BJP state. I'll choose the top 10 schools of the Kejriwal education model. I'll visit your schools and you visit ours. Let's then debate," he said.

On Saturday, Nadda had said, "They (AAP) have become a laughing stock. Delhi is a capital and needs serious leadership." **ENS**

Activists decry fate of reserve forest despite plantation drives

MEGHA BISWAS
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

DESPITE MULTIPLE plantation drives in the past decade, activists claim the 213-hectare vast expanse of reserve forest, which stretches between Gammal and Delta sectors of Greater Noida, is devoid of its green cover.

This despite government audits at six-month, 12-month and three-year intervals. Forest officials have, however, attributed it to heat wave and accidental fires.

Saplings planted in 2015, the most recent plantation, have all but died. Incidentally, the same year, UP made it to the Guinness Book of World Records for distributing 10 lakh saplings in a day.

Pramod Srivastava, Divisional Forest Officer of the UP Forest Department, said the plight of the plants was because of the heat



The forest in Greater Noida

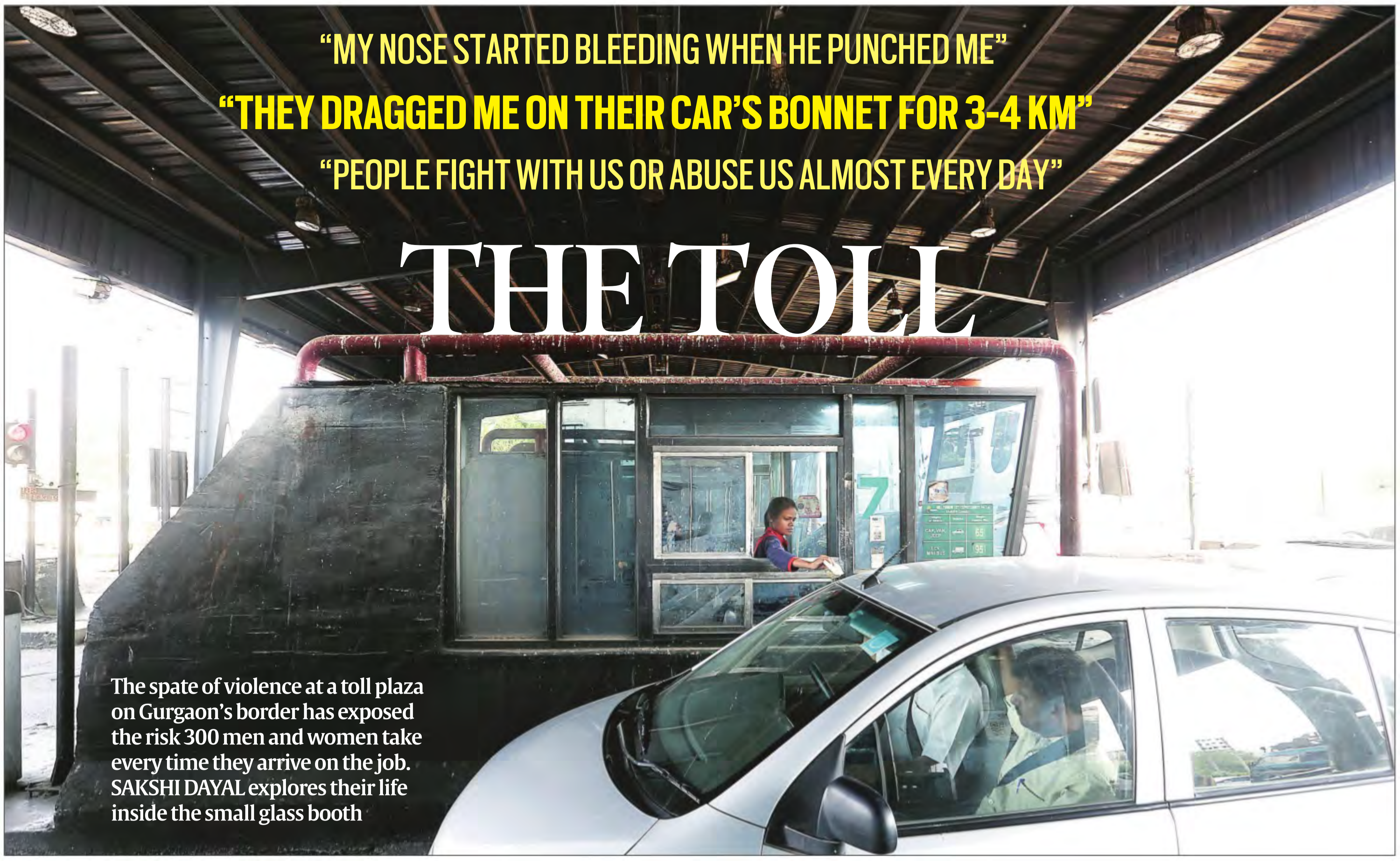
wave. On certain patches of land where the plants looked charred, Srivastava said it was because of an accidental fire in March. "Water is supplied from borewells... After concerns by environmentalists, tankers are also being sent," Srivastava added.

"This forest could be the lungs Greater Noida needs. Lack of maintenance has caused the trees to die," said environmental activist Vikrant Tongad.

(The writer is an intern at The Indian Express)

5 HARDLOOK

KHERKI DAULA PLAZA



“MY NOSE STARTED BLEEDING WHEN HE PUNCHED ME”
“THEY DRAGGED ME ON THEIR CAR’S BONNET FOR 3-4 KM”
“PEOPLE FIGHT WITH US OR ABUSE US ALMOST EVERY DAY”

THE TOLL

The spate of violence at a toll plaza on Gurgaon’s border has exposed the risk 300 men and women take every time they arrive on the job. SAKSHI DAYAL explores their life inside the small glass booth

AROUND 8.30 AM on Friday, Soni Kumari, who hails from Benaras, was manning a booth at Gurgaon’s Kherki Daula toll plaza when a car rolled into her lane. Asked to pay toll, the driver handed her a Haryana Police identity card, which he claimed belonged to him, and demanded that she let him pass for free.

Since police personnel are not exempt from paying toll, Kumari insisted the driver pay Rs 65 based on his vehicle’s size and make.

What followed next would shock many — but not Kumari. As she refused to open the boom barrier, the driver and two other passengers got out of the car and began abusing her. One of the men put his hand through the booth’s window, trying to grab the 22-year-old, but she moved back and evaded his grasp. Kumari’s colleagues rushed to her aid and the men, still abusing and threatening, reluctantly paid the toll and drove off.

Kumari went on with her day. “Such incidents are very common here. People come and fight with us or abuse us almost every day. Even violence is not uncommon anymore. In the last 7-10 days, there have been so many cases of commuters beating up employees, hitting them with their vehicles — just so they don’t have to pay the toll,” says Kumari.

Records obtained from Gurgaon Police are testimony to Kumari’s claims — between June 21 and June 28, four FIRs were registered over violence at the plaza.

On Friday, Kirpal Singh, PRO of toll operator Skylark, was assaulted with a brick by the owner of a WagonR when he refused to let his vehicle pass because the registration certificate (RC) the driver had produced was fake. Bleeding, he was rushed to the hospital.

Residents of 31 villages in the area are exempt from paying toll, and have to produce RCs to claim the benefit. “Tags are issued to vehicle owners based on their RCs; they have to produce these to get exemption. But people often show RCs that have been tampered with, by changing the address of the vehicle’s owner to one of the villages exempt from paying tax. When toll collectors challenge them, it ends in arguments, and often violence,” says Rajendra Bhati, Project Head at Skylark.

According to officials, 18,623 such tags have been issued since 2015, of which 15,463 are currently active. Apart from Manesar, exempted villages include Badshahpur, Bar Gujjar, Kasan, Kherki Daula, Narsingpur and Shikohpur. “A bulk of people who fight with toll workers do so when they are refused passage without paying tax,” says PRO Singh.

One such commuter had crossed paths with Santoshi Rajput, a 20-year-old from Jhansi, on June 21. The confrontation ended with Rajput getting a bloody nose.

CCTV footage of the incident shows the man pushing the boom barrier with his hand to allow his vehicle to pass through. On his way back to the car, he puts his hand through the booth window to slap Rajput, even as a colleague rushes to defend her. In the seconds that follow, he puts his hand through the window a second time and punches her in the face.

Although windows of toll booths, made of glass, can be closed when such confrontations arise, toll collectors as well as officials from Skylark admit that it is rare for collectors being targeted to have the presence of mind to do so.

“My nose started bleeding when he punched me. I was taken to the hospital and admitted for a day. I am still on medication for the pain,” says Rajput, a farmer’s daughter.

Her parents and two school-going brothers, who live in Jhansi, found out about the incident only on Thursday, when one of her brothers came across a news report.

“They had heard about the incident, but I lied and told them it happened to someone else because I did not want them to worry. But they found out anyway. They have been asking me to leave this job and take up some other work, but I am determined to continue — for now. My parents have taught me to not be afraid of anyone,” says Rajput.

In the long term, however, Rajput hopes she can secure a government job. She is pursuing a BA course through correspondence, and spends two hours each night and each morning preparing for exams. “I want to be financially independent and support my family. But this isn’t the work I want to do. A government job would be much safer,” she says.

Kumari and Rajput are among 40 women toll collectors who handle 27 lanes of the plaza, through which “70,000 to 80,000 vehicles” pass each day. There are a total of 300 employees, including toll collectors, line attendants and traffic marshals, who work at the plaza in three shifts. The women, however, work only in ‘Shift B’ — from 8 am to 4 pm. Each employee gets one day off a week, and a starting salary of “around Rs 10,000 a month”.

“The money we collect is government money. Our organisation is a private company that has been hired by government banks to do toll collection on their behalf,” says Bhati.

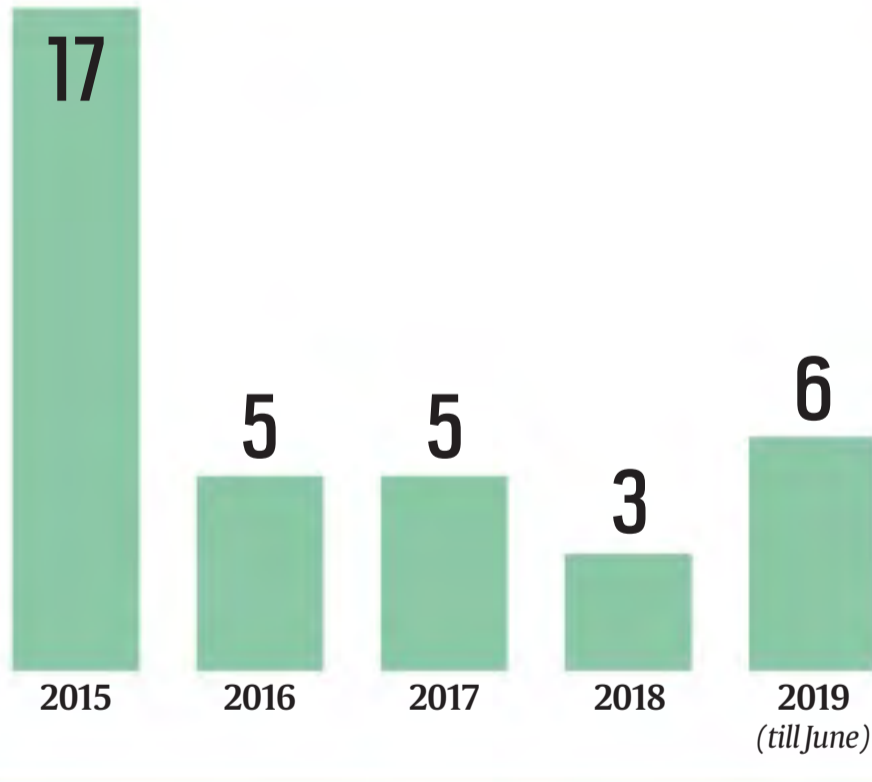
Apart from collectors seated inside booths to collect toll, those in lanes outside, manag-

MANNING THE PLAZA



15,463 TOLL-FREE TAGS CURRENTLY ACTIVE

FIRs OVER PAST 5 YEARS



HOT-HEADED COMMUTERS

- JUNE 28, 2019:** PRO of Skylark, the toll operator, beaten with a brick after he refused to let the vehicle of a commuter pass on the basis of a false registration certificate
- JUNE 27, 2019:** Lane attendant dragged on the bonnet of a car for 200 metres when he tried to stop its driver from passing without paying toll
- JUNE 21, 2019:** Woman toll collector punched in the face by a commuter after she refused to let him pass. He claimed he is a resident of Shikohpur, one of the villages exempt from paying tax
- JUNE 21, 2019:** A commuter hit a lane attendant with his car when the latter tried to stop him from passing without paying tax
- MAY 15, 2019:** Two commuters pass through toll plaza without paying tax after threatening toll collectors with what turned out to be a toy gun
- APRIL 13, 2019:** Lane attendant, who tried to stop commuters from passing without paying tax, dragged on the bonnet of their Innova for 3-4 km, taken to an isolated area, and beaten up
- DEC 7, 2018:** Lane attendant run over by a mini-bus after he tried to stop its driver from entering the plaza lane from the wrong side
- DEC 7, 2018:** Woman toll collector manhandled and beaten up by a man and his wife when she refused to let them pass on the basis of an expired tag

FATALITIES

- JUNE 28, 2016:** Traffic marshal on duty at the plaza died after being run over by a speeding truck that first hit a barricade and then ran him over
- SEP 23, 2011:** Toll collector shot dead by commuter after he refused to allow the latter to pass without paying tax on the basis of a photocopy of the driving licence

ing traffic or collecting tax on foot, speak of similar brushes with violence.

On June 28, 2016, a traffic marshal, who hailed from Bharatpur and had been working at the plaza for three months, was run over by a speeding truck. The case FIR states the incident took place around 11.40 pm, on the side of the carriageway meant for vehicles travelling from Manesar towards Gurgaon.

“A truck driver came speeding, driving carelessly. He first rammed into the barricade, after which he lost control and ran over Harpal,” says his cousin, who also worked as a traffic marshal at the plaza and was on duty at the time. Harpal died en route to hospital.

The other fatality in the last decade was in 2011, when a toll collector was shot dead by a commuter.

Incidents of employees being dragged on car bonnets or being hit by vehicles have, in the meantime, become alarmingly common.

In April, line attendant Arun Kumar, who hails from Muzaffarnagar, had a nightmarish experience when he was dragged on the bonnet of an Innova for several kilometres by two men who didn’t want to pay tax.

“They pressed the accelerator and the vehicle sped towards me. To avoid being run over, I jumped on the bonnet and held on with both hands. But this didn’t deter them. They kept driving for 3-4 km, after which they stopped in an isolated area and beat me up,” says Kumar. “They told me to remember the car number and not stop them the next time they come to the toll plaza.”

Son of a farmer, Kumar started working at the plaza four months ago. Before this, he worked at a toll plaza in Meerut for a year.

“That was my first job. They trained me for 15 days on how to operate equipment. That plaza was much better, people were not so aggressive. It’s very difficult here,” says Kumar.

His quest for justice, he says, is keeping him at the current job. “I am fighting the case. There is no point moving anywhere else if I have to travel back and forth for that. But I do want to switch to some other work. There is no point living in such danger on a daily basis. My family is also worried,” he says.

While many commuters manipulate RCs, some even produce false ID cards claiming to be government employees or police personnel. “There may have been a time when such methods worked. Government employees and police are not exempt from paying tax, but people keep hoping toll collectors will become scared and let them pass. They don’t realise our employees are no longer illiterate. Toll collection is becoming more corporate and professional — our workers don’t fall for such things and follow protocol,” says Bhati.

“It is because of the courage of collectors, because we quickly take up each matter with police and administration that such incidents have reduced in the last three years,” he says.

Police records, however, show that this year is an exception, with six cases already having been registered in the first six months, including four in June. In contrast, three FIRs had been registered over violence at the plaza

in 2018; and five each in 2016 and 2017. In 2015, 17 cases had been registered.

There are three types of security deployed around the plaza — traffic police personnel associated with Gurgaon Police, highway police deployed to manage traffic, and four personnel deployed at a police post to manage VIP movement.

For the plaza itself, there is no dedicated security. “The closest station, Kherki Daula, is around 800 metres away, and personnel respond promptly when there is an incident. But nobody is deployed here to help immediately when violence occurs,” says PRO Singh.

DCP (Manesar) Rajesh Kumar, however, refuted these claims, stating that personnel at the police post in the area are also meant to ensure safety and security at the plaza. “We have personnel linked to the Kherki Daula police station who are deployed near the plaza, in addition to the Traffic Police personnel who manage vehicle movement there.”

“The bulk of confrontations happen between toll collectors and local residents, not outsiders. In order to arrive at a long-term solution to this problem, we are planning to hold a meeting with toll officials and sarpanchs of villages exempt from paying tax to talk through the matter,” he said.

Most altercations, employees say, occur during the day, and the aggressors are usually travelling in cars.

“Drivers of trucks and buses do not usually get into arguments... But local residents fight with us. Many don’t even get exemption tags made simply because of ego, and when we try to stop them from passing, they become aggressive,” says Shyam Singh, who has been working at the plaza for over two years — and has been at the receiving end of three incidents of violence in the last nine months.

While one commuter shot at him, but missed because he ducked to avoid the bullet, another ran over his leg, leaving it fractured. In the third incident, in December 2018, he was punched in the face by a commuter and left with a broken nose. “My family has no idea about the level of aggression here. They only know about the time I fractured my leg. If they discovered that someone opened fire at me or broke my nose, they would never allow me to work here,” he says.

According to Skylark officials, the only long-term solution to the violence is better enforcement by the Regional Transport Office and traffic police. “If they carry out campaigns and seize false documents that commuters carry, such incidents will reduce, and the tax the government is losing out on will also be retained. We had hoped that when women were deployed, one positive effect would be a reduction in violence. But those with a violent frame of mind don’t seem to see whether it’s a man or a woman in front of them,” says Bhati.

“I have initiated women into this job at several toll plazas in the last 20 years, including in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Punjab... We never had to lodge a complaint on behalf of a woman collector in these places. It is only here that people don’t even hesitate to slap or punch a woman collector,” he adds.

People often show RCs that have been tampered with, by changing the address of the vehicle’s owner to one of the villages exempt from paying tax. When toll collectors challenge them, it ends in arguments, and often violence”

RAJENDRA BHATI,
PROJECT HEAD AT SKYLARK,
THE TOLL OPERATOR



The 40 women toll collectors work in the 8 am to 4 pm shift. Photos: Gajendra Yadav

6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

UP CM ASKS POLICE STATIONS TO LIST TOP-10 CRIMINALS

Yogi rejects Priyanka charge, says law & order better in UP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, JUNE 30

TAKING A dig at Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra after she targeted his government over the law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said that people sitting in New Delhi, England or Italy are speaking up on these issues only to remain in the limelight, and that the law and order situation in the state has, in fact, improved.

With opposition parties targeting his government on the law and order front, Adityanath told the media in Saharanpur, "You must be feeling the improvement in law and order situation. There is a sense of security among the common people, and I am happy that representatives of several outfits I met last evening also praised this."

On the reported exodus of some Hindu families in Meerut, he said, "Hum logon ke sarkaar mein rehte koi bhi palayan nahi ho sakta hai (No exodus can occur under our government)."

Holding a review meeting in Moradabad later in the day, Adityanath directed UP Police to identify and prepare a list of "top 10 notorious criminals" in each police station area of the state and work proactively to prosecute them.

He told the officers to improve monitoring and screening of "probable criminals", and that they should not "wait for the criminals to commit crimes".

"Use better technology to prevent criminals from committing crime. There is no need to wait for criminals to commit a crime. Identify them and foil criminal activity," he told the officials, according to a statement released by the state government.

"It is only when a criminal is prosecuted, public will start



UP CM Yogi Adityanath at a district hospital for inspection. PPT

EXPLAINED
E.
Attempt to pre-empt Oppn attack

FACING AN onslaught from opposition on law and order situation, the Yogi Adityanath government in UP is facing its first big challenge since winning the 2017 polls. Sensing the exigency of the issue, Adityanath has tried to preempt criticism by holding review meetings on law and order in several districts.

trusting the police, so police should not only prosecute criminals but also publicise their punishment," he said.

On Priyanka Gandhi's tweet about the law and order situation, Adityanath said in Saharanpur: "Angoor khatte

hai... Uttar Pradesh ki janta ne Congress ke iss brand ko fail kiya hai. Lok Sabha chunava mein Congress ke rashtriya adhyaksh chunava haar jaate hain UP mein. Swabhavik roop se unke liye ab angoor khatte hain (Grapes are sour. The people of Uttar Pradesh have failed the brand of politics done by Congress. In the Lok Sabha polls, Congress national president lost in Uttar Pradesh. It is natural that for them grapes are sour)."

He said, "Kuch nahi toh Delhi mein, England mein ya Italy mein baith kar kuch toh bolna hai na surkhiyon mein bane rehna hai na. Isiye kuch toh bolenge; uspe dhyaan dene ki awashyakta nahi hai (they now have nothing left to do, so sitting in England, Delhi or Italy, they are commenting on things only to stay in the headlines)."

On Saturday, Priyanka, Congress's in-charge for eastern UP, had tweeted on the law and order situation in the state, which was soon countered by the state police department on social media with data on encounters and arrests of criminals. On Sunday, she remarked on salaries of teachers and accused the state government of allegedly "committing atrocities" on teachers.

'Locked up' on Yogi visit, say journalists; DM, police deny

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

SEVERAL MEDIAPERSONS were allegedly locked up in a ward in Moradabad's District Hospital during CM Yogi Adityanath's visit on Sunday. While journalists alleged that they were prevented from coming out, so that the hospital's conditions could not be highlighted, the administration and hospital staff denied the incident and claimed it was crowd management.

District Magistrate Rakesh Kumar Singh tweeted, "Requested media persons to not go inside the ward with CM because it was not good for patient's health. Only police personnel in corridor... After completion of inspection media persons are there before departure."

The hospital staff also blamed the large number of people as possible cause of commotion. "There was so much crowd and nothing could be seen properly," said Dr Bonita Agnihotri, Chief Medical Officer (Moradabad), who was present alongside the CM.

Moradabad's SSP Amit Pathak said, "Since it was a CM visit, security had been increased. With regards to any incident, the police were there for security purposes."

Quoting a news report about the reported incident, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi late tweeted on Sunday, "Journalists are being held captive and questions are being curbed. Problems are being sideline. The BJP government, which got full majority, is dodging questions of the people. Netaji, this is the public and they know everything..."

FOREST OFFICER ASSAULTED IN TELANGANA

'MLA, brothers have history of assaulting government officials'

SREENIVAS JANAYALA
HYDERABAD, JUNE 30

TRS MLA Koneru Konappa Rao and his brother Krishna Rao have a history of assaulting government officials, especially women officers, according to police sources.

In March 2018, Excise Department officials in Kagaznagar-Sirpur staged a demonstration after Konappa allegedly abused a woman Excise Circle Inspector for confiscating a truck carrying jaggery prepared at an illegal manufacturing unit. The Excise Officers' Association had lodged a complaint with Telangana Chief Minister and TRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao against Konappa but no action was taken.

The brothers, Konappa (63) and Krishna (56) were earlier into agriculture at Kagaznagar, but allegedly made money by getting involved in land dispute settlements and small real-estate ventures. According to sources, the brothers are known to violently confront authorities — police, forest department, excise, prohibition and municipal authorities.

In 2004, Konappa was elected MLA from Sirpur in Asifabad district on a Congress ticket.

Thereafter, Krishna allegedly got involved in land grabbing and encroachment. "Using his brother's status as MLA, he started providing protection to people who grabbed or encroached land from private owners or government by violently confronting authorities. This made them popular in the area. Krishna is Konappa's enforcer. Konappa would give the orders and Krishna would go with his gang and enforce them. They enforced settlements running into crores," a police officer said.

In the 2009 elections, Konappa lost to TRS candidate K Samaiah. Ahead of the 2014 elections, Konappa switched to BSP and defeated the TRS candidate in the polls. "After Konappa became MLA for the second time, Krishna allegedly started threatening landowners to vacate their land so that he and his coterie could occupy," an official said. After TRS came to power in the new state, Konappa joined TRS which gave more power to Krishna, said sources.

In 2018, Konappa again won on a TRS ticket. Thereafter, he ensured Krishna's official entry into politics by getting him elected in the Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies polls; Krishna was named vice-chairman of the Kagaznagar ZPIC.

GIVING ALL A CHANCE

SPEAKER OM Birla has broken a record in the House in the first full functional week of the 17th Lok Sabha — he got 93 first-time MPs to speak at least once in the first week through the window of Zero Hour. In the previous Lok Sabha, about 60 new members could speak during the course of the full first session. Birla's generosity stems from his personal experience. As a first-time MP in 2014, he could not get to speak for a full year in the previous Lok Sabha. He doesn't want this to happen to more than 250 first-time MPs, it seems.

GOING BACK

AFTER JOINING the BJP, Telugu Desam Party's former Rajya Sabha floor leader Y S Chowdhary and chief whip CM Ramesh are set to lose their coveted first- and second-row seats, respectively. They will now get seats in the treasury benches, which will not be prime, given that they will be ordinary MPs of the saffron party. Many parties have set their sights on the soon-to-be-vacant front row seat, which could go to the DMK.

LOOKING FOR LEADER

DAYS SINCE the Parliament session began, the Samajwadi Party is yet to decide the party's leader in the Lower House. In the previous Lok Sabha, Mulayam Singh Yadav was the SP floor leader. Given that Mulayam is unwell for the past several weeks his son and party president Akhlesh Yadav — the MP from Azamgarh — is likely to be new leader but no decision has been made yet.

WEST BENGAL

Jhargram: Man shot at, BJP blames TMC supporters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JHARGRAM, JUNE 30

A PERSON was critically injured after he was shot at from point blank range in West Bengal's Jhargram district, police said on Sunday. A person has been detained in connection with the incident.

According to police, the incident took place at Bagua village on Saturday night when two persons approached Khagapati Mahato while he was at a kirtan programme, and one of them shot at him. Mahato was rushed to Jhargram hospital and from there he was taken to

Midnapore Medical College and Hospital, the police officer said. Later, he was referred to a hospital in Kolkata, he added.

While the BJP blamed the Trinamool Congress for the incident, the ruling party has denied the allegation. BJP's Jhargram district president Sukhomoy Satpati alleged that TMC supporters were involved in the incident. "We have informed the district administration. The miscreants should be arrested immediately," he said.

Denying the allegation, TMC's district core committee member Prasun Sarangi claimed that the incident was a fallout of personal problems.

Chinsurah shuts down day after TMC leader's murder

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JUNE 30

SHOPS REMAINED shut and public vehicles stayed off the road in Chinsurah town of West Bengal's Hooghly district Sunday during the 12-hour bandh called by the ruling Trinamool Congress to protest the killing of a party leader. The TMC has accused the BJP of killing its leader, Dilip Ram. Ram was shot dead on Saturday.

Local Trinamool MLA Asit Majumdar thanked the people for making the strike "successful".

"The people of Chinsurah have given a positive response to our bandh call and we want to thank them. It is also clear from their response that people do not want to witness BJP's violence here."

Trinamool leader and state minister Firdad Hakim said, "BJP's miscreants shot our leader dead. We have asked the police to immediately arrest the killers." Denying the charge, state BJP chief Dilip Ghosh said, "They are blaming us without any proper evidence. It might be a fallout of their infighting. Police must immediately find the killers so that truth comes out."

Local agencies play bigger role in disaster response: Additional Secy to PM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

LOCAL AUTHORITIES and agencies play a far bigger role in response to disasters than Central agencies and therefore they must be strengthened, Additional Secretary to the Prime Minister, PK Mishra, said on Sunday.

Addressing the valedictory session of a two-day conference on disaster management organised by National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Mishra said, "Having been associated with the conceptualisation of NDRF, I am delighted to see that since its inception more than 10 years ago, NDRF has established itself as a dependable, respected and trusted response fo-

orce.... But we must realise that however strong the NDRF becomes, it cannot be a substitute for local response capacities," he said.

The NDRF, he said, can be a source of inspiration. "It can also guide capacity development of local response organisations, but it cannot replace them."

Highlighting the importance of keeping abreast with technology, Mishra said, "Artificial intelligence, sensor technologies, robotics, etc, hold huge promise in making our disaster response system more efficient and effective. There is a need for at least a group of individuals to continuously scan the horizon, anticipate what is coming next on the technology front, and ensure that we are future-ready."

Face fine if you cover Agra-Lucknow expressway in under 3 hrs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, JUNE 30

TO PREVENT road accidents caused by over-speeding on Lucknow-Agra Expressway, the Uttar Pradesh government has come up with a unique idea under which e-challans would be issued to vehicles completing the journey in less than three hours.

In a statement issued by Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), arrangements have been made at the expressway toll plaza — at Agra (21 km) and Lucknow (290 km) — to keep a record of the vehicle's exit and entry times in order to monitor their travel time.

A total of 25 e-challans were issued on the first day of the implementation, sources said.

As per UPEIDA data, more than 1,900 accidents have taken place and over 240 people have been killed in mishaps on the Expressway since August 2017.

"We are starting this service on the two toll plazas. The modern equipment on these plazas will take photos and data, and e-challans would be issued with e-mails being sent to the offices of SP (Traffic) in Agra and Lucknow,"

said UPEIDA Chief Executive Officer Awanish Awasthi.

The distance between the two toll plazas is around 300 km, and while the speed limit for cars is 100 kmph, it is 60 kmph for heavier vehicles like buses and trucks.

"The biggest problem we have is drivers falling asleep while driving. We are now dealing with over-speeding, soon we will take steps in that direction too," Awasthi said.

AES toll 10 in Assam, Centre rushes team

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

ASSAM HAS so far recorded 10 deaths due to Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) this year, Samir Sinha, Principal Secretary to the state government's Health and Family Welfare department told *The Indian Express* on Sunday. Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has dispatched a central team to the state to review the situation there.

Sinha said those killed in the outbreak this year comprise eight adults and two children. "We are

Doctors in Guwahati say vaccination for Japanese Encephalitis has brought down the number of patients over the years and data shows there has been a decline in number of deaths

completely in command. Monitoring, immunisation and treatment is on in full swing. It is a recurring phenomenon in

Assam and if you compare numbers from previous years, you will see that this year, the numbers of cases diagnosed and deaths are quite less. Every possible step is being taken," he added.

Doctors in Guwahati say the vaccination for Japanese Encephalitis — a major cause of AES in India — has brought down the number of patients over the years and government data shows that there has been a decline in the number of deaths — 100 in 2012 to 58 in 2017.

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said he is closely monitoring the situation and the Centre is providing all lo-

gistic and technical support to the state government in terms of surveillance and diagnostic kits to strengthen their efforts in addressing the outbreak. Noting that community participation and empowerment are crucial in prevention of the disease, Dr Harsh Vardhan urged all the stakeholders to start rigorous awareness campaigns regarding preventive steps to be taken.

The central team is headed by Shri Sanjeeva Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and is accompanied by senior officers from National Vector Borne Diseases Control Programme, New Delhi.

ELECTRICITY REACHES DARK CORNER IN AAREY COLONY

7 decades after freedom, Mumbai locality gets power

NEERAJ TIWARI
MUMBAI, JUNE 30

BEFORE SUNDAY, Deepak Nimble (32) would have to wait to reach office before he could charge his mobile phone. But not anymore. On Sunday, Naushacha Pada in Aarey Colony, where Deepak lives, got electricity for the first time.

The village, where up till now, students studied under kerosene lamps, received a No-Objection Certificate last month from a veterinary college which owns the land parcel on which the village is located, ending years of deadlock. However, the final hurdle in the way of getting funding for the electricity sup-

ply was cleared after a Mumbai resident chipped in with nearly Rs 2 lakh.

Naushacha Pada is located in Aarey forest area and houses 60-65 tribal families comprising of nearly 250 people. Adivasi Hakk Sanvardhan Samiti, a union fighting for Adivasi rights, said that the village preceded the formation of Aarey in 1951.

Santosh Abadi, who is part of an Adivasi union, told *The Indian Express* that their union had been fighting for electricity supply to the village since 2009. To get electricity, the tribals needed an NOC from the Mumbai Veterinary College, which was received on June 3.

Prakash Bhoir, a member of the Adivasi Hakk Sanvardhan



A Mumbai resident chipped in with nearly Rs 2 lakh to help residents clear the funding hurdle to get electricity

Samiti, said that on May 28, union members and tribal families protested against the veteri-

nary college authorities. "We wrote a letter to the veterinary college saying that if they don't

Haryana's new Chief Secy is third sister in family to hold post

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 30

WHEN 1983-BATCH IAS officer Keshni Anand Arora took over as Haryana's new Chief Secretary on Sunday, she became the third sister from a family to hold the top administrative post of the state.

Keshni took over the assignment after the retirement of Chief Secretary D S Dhesi on Sunday. Prior to this, she was Haryana's Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue). She is due to retire on September 30, 2020. "Good governance and transparency in the system will be my top priority," Keshni told *The Indian Express*. "I will focus on implementing flagship schemes of the central and state government apart from working for inclusive growth."

Her eldest sister, Meenakshi Anand Chaudhary, a 1969-batch IAS officer, was the first woman Chief Secretary of Haryana. Later, her elder sister Urvashi Gulati, a

1975-batch IAS officer, held the post. Chaudhary retired as Chief Secretary in 2005 and Gulati retired in 2012.

Their father, Prof J C Anand, taught Political Science in Panjab University. "My mother, a housewife, always said it is studying that makes a difference. Both parents were a source of motivation for us," she said. Each of the three sisters cleared the Civil Services entrance exam in their first attempt.

Keshni holds an MBA degree from University of Western Sydney. She was appointed the first woman Deputy Commissioner in Haryana when the government gave her the responsibility to lead the administration in Yamunanagar in 1990.

Subsequently, she served as Principal Secretary (Tourism), Deputy Director General, UIDAI, Regional Office, Chandigarh and the state's Additional Chief Secretary (School Education) before taking over as Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue).

and thought I would do my bit for them," he said.

His contribution helped secure electricity connections to 27 houses while 10 other families managed to get connections on their own. So far, out of 65 families in Naushacha Pada, 37 families have got electricity connections.

Rakesh Sitaram Sighvan (40), one of the families to get an electricity connection, said, "I was born in Naushacha Pada and my childhood was spent in darkness. Now our village has electricity and children will benefit most from this." Rakesh has four daughters. "Earlier, during exams, they would study under kerosene lamps. Now they don't have to suffer anymore."

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7 EXPRESS NETWORK

Border drug bust nets 532 kg heroin worth Rs 2,700 crore

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AMRITSAR, JUNE 30

A MAN was arrested on Sunday and 532 kg heroin with an approximate market value of Rs 2,700 crore seized by the Customs Department at the Wagah-Attari border in what is being described by the department as the biggest drug bust in its history.

Apart from the heroin, 52 kg of a mixed narcotic substance was also seized at the Integrated Check Post (ICP), Amritsar.

The contraband was being smuggled from Pakistan via the trade route. Kashmiri salt trader Tarik Ahmad Lone was arrested and Amritsar-based importer, Gurdipinder Singh was detained by the Customs in the case. Pakistan exporter, Global Vision Impex, Wagah, Lahore had sent the consignment into India for Kanishk Enterprise ASR owned by Gurdipinder.

The consignment crossed into India via trucks on June 26 and was unloaded into an open space meant for storage. Interestingly, the large consignment went through truck scanners installed by Pakistan customs on their side of the border. There are no truck scanners installed on the Indian side. "There must be some lapse somewhere on the part of Pakistan. There are scanners on their side. It should have been detected. We cannot comment right now," said Dipak Kumar Gupta, Commissioner, Customs, Amritsar.

A press note by the Customs Department said: "In a major breakthrough in busting the International Organised Drug Smuggling, the Customs Preventive Commissionerate, Amritsar has seized 532 kg of suspected heroin and 52 kg of suspected mixed narcotics in the import consignment at ICP, Attari which is the biggest ever

AMARNATH YATRA

First batch of pilgrims sets off

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUNE 30

MARKING THE beginning of 46-day long yatra to the Amarnath shrine in the Himalayas, the first batch of pilgrims left the base camp in Jammu amid tight security on Sunday morning.

A total of 2,234 pilgrims have embarked on the journey.

The 93-vehicle convoy for the first batch was flagged off by Malik's advisor K K Sharma at Bhagwati Nagar base camp here. Nearly 1.5 lakh people have registered themselves so far for this year's yatra, which will finish on August 15.

To visit the cave shrine, nearly 1,006 pilgrims will trek the mountain path from Baltal, while another 1,228 will proceed from the Pahalgam route on Monday, subject to weather conditions.

Pointing out that the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, which administers the yatra and is headed by Governor Satya Pal Malik, has decided to allow 7,500 pilgrims on each route every day, sources familiar with develop-

EXPLAINED
E.
What the big catch means

THE HUGE haul of heroin being pushed into Punjab under the garb of salt is not only a big success for the Customs in the state's war on drugs but also proves that the big fish are yet to be caught. It also underlines the cross-border and inter-state dynamics of drug cartels. This seizure calls for a relook at the drive against drugs, and calls for better intelligence and inter-state co-ordination.

achievement in the annals of the Indian Customs history."

According to the statement, After the bust, searches were conducted at various places in Amritsar. "The mastermind of this smuggling racket based in Handwara (J&K) has been apprehended with the help of J&K Police. Further investigation is under progress," the press note said.

Dipak Kumar Gupta, Commissioner, Customs, Amritsar, added: "Salt is not a commodity affected much by weather. So often it is unloaded into open space. These salt bags along with heroin bags were unloaded on June 26 and remained under open sky till June 29."

Wall collapse: Bodies flown to Bihar, officials try to verify kin



Saturday's incident killed 15 people and injured two others.
Arul Horizon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, JUNE 30

AS THE mortal remains of 15 people who died in the Pune wall collapse were sent to their home districts in Bihar on board a special Air Force aircraft Sunday, the Pune district administration has asked authorities in Bihar to verify and provide a list of the next of kin who will receive the compensation announced by Maharashtra government.

District collector Naval Kishore Ram said that the aircraft will halt at Patna and Bagdogra in West Bengal for the bodies to be taken to families in Chhapra, Vaishali and Katihar districts of Bihar.

On Saturday morning, the retaining wall of a housing society had collapsed on temporary housing sheds built at an under-construction plot next door, crushing the tin sheds and its occupants. The collapse killed 15 people and injured two others.

Ram said that the inquiry committee set up to probe the incident has been asked to submit a report in eight days. "A detailed probe in the incident will be undertaken and every angle will be probed. The members

have been asked to devote two hours a day for the probe in addition to their regular duties. I will personally monitor the progress every day," he said.

The Pune City police are conducting their own investigation after a criminal case was registered against the builders, site engineers, supervisors and labour contractors of the two entities — the company that constructed the building whose retaining wall collapsed, and the company which had undertaken the construction and excavation work.

Those named in the FIR are Jagdishprasad Agarwal, Sachin Agarwal, Rajesh Agarwal, Vivek Agarwal and Vipul Agarwal—all of whom are partners in Alcon Landmarks company that developed Alcon Stylus residential society, whose retaining wall collapsed. The FIR also names Pankaj Vohra, Suresh Shah and Rashmikant Gandhi, partners in SVG Kanchan Group, which had undertaken work where the wall caved.

On Saturday evening, Vivek and Vipul Agarwal, two of five partners of Alcon Landmarks company, named as accused in the case, were arrested. They were produced before a court in Pune on Sunday.

In the remand application

Two builders sent to police custody, hunt on for six others

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, JUNE 30

AS THE PUNE city police launched a manhunt for six of the eight builders booked for culpable homicide over the incident of wall collapse that killed 15 people, the two builders already under arrest were on Sunday sent to police custody until July 2.

Pune police had registered a criminal offence against the partners, site engineers, supervisors and labour contractors of the two entities — the company that constructed the building whose retaining wall collapsed, and the company which had undertaken the construction and excavation work.

The police stated while speaking to the media, "We want to probe whether all norms were followed for the said construction and whether the very construction was authorised. We want to collect and examine the documentation for the permission granted to the building and the wall. We also want to identify others involved in the projects."

The defence lawyer argued that the prosecution had not shown anything that points to any action leading to culpable homicide. The court of Judicial Magistrate First Class S S Ramdin sent Vivek and Vipul Agarwal to police custody.



Accused being produced in court on Sunday. Ashish Kale

seeking their custody, the police said. "The wall was constructed in 2013 and was in dilapidated condition... the occupants of Alcon Society had told the builders and partners of the firm and had also written to them. In spite of that, no action was taken."

Police officials said a search has been launched for the other accused named in the FIR.

Electrical shop owner held in May 1 blast case

Nagpur: Gadchiroli police on Saturday arrested an electrical shop-owner from Kurkheda town in connection with the May 1 IED blast that killed 15 police commandos and the civilian driver of a vehicle targeted by Maoists, police said on Sunday.

Identified as Kailash Premchand Ramchandani, 34, he has been remanded in police custody for 12 days. "We arrested him on Saturday on the basis of interrogation of the seven accused persons arrested earliest in this connection," SP Shailesh Balkawde told *The Indian Express*. "He had supplied the blast material like wires, a battery and switches," he said. Asked if Ramchandani was aware that the purchases would be used for the IED, Balkawde said, "he was aware. That's why we arrested him."

Earlier, the police had arrested senior Maoist leader Narmada and her husband Kiran on June 16. Two more persons, Dilip Hidami, Parasram Tulavi were held on June 19.

ARUNACHAL'S EVEREST CONQUEROR WAS PART OF IAF SEARCH TEAM 'For 9 days, we waited in inclement weather'

ABHISHEK SAHA
GUWAHATI, JUNE 30

WHEN TAKA Tamut (27), a mountaineer from Arunachal Pradesh who scaled Mt Everest last year, heard that an An-32 aircraft of Indian Air Force had crashed in a remote mountainous region near the China border earlier this month, he decided to help - he drove from state capital Itanagar to join the search for the wreckage in Pari Adi mountains. Stating that he decided he just "had to help the search team and put my knowledge of the terrain and mountaineering experience to use", Tamut, who comes from Arunachal Pradesh's Siang district and is settled in Itanagar, said, "I bore the price for my equipment and gear."

The AN-32, which took off from the Air Force Station in Assam's Jorhat on June 3 at 12.27 pm, never landed at Mechuka Advanced Landing Ground in Arunachal's Shi Yomi district.

On June 11, the IAF said that the wreckage was spotted 16 km north of Lipo, at an approximate



Kishon Tekseng and Taka Tamut on Everest. Express

elevation of 12,000 ft, by an IAF helicopter. In that helicopter were Tamut and his friend and colleague Kishon Tekseng (28), who had scaled the Everest with him and volunteered to join the search.

The next day, a team of 15 mountaineers, comprising personnel from IAF, the Army and civilians, were airdropped to the nearest possible location.

On June 20, IAF announced that the bodies of all 13 person-

Bengal: 24-year-old beaten up for 'theft' dies, Malda tense

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JUNE 30

TENSION WAS reported in Kaliachak and Baishnabnagar areas of West Bengal's Malda district on Sunday after the death of a youth, who was allegedly beaten up by a group of people on June 26 on suspicion of involvement in a motorbike theft.

The protests began after the body of Shanaul Sheikh, 24, was brought to his hometown, Baishnabnagar, in Malda, on Sunday. Sources said Sheikh, who had suffered injuries in his private parts, eyes and ears, died in Kolkata after his condition deteriorated. He was referred to Kolkata's SSKM Hospital by doctors at Malda Medical College and Hospital.

Sheikh is survived by his wife and a six-month-old daughter. "He was the family's only earning member," his mother Sufiya said. "He worked in a brick kiln. On Wednesday, some people called him outside and we heard later that he was being beaten up."

Protests began on Sunday after the video of Sheikh getting beaten up became viral on social media. Sources in the police said protesters blocked National Highway 34 and ransacked shops and other establishments in Kaliachak.

It was learnt that a government bus was also vandalised, and that the police had to fire in the air to bring the situation under control.

"Protesters belonging to the minority community protested on NH 34 in Kaliachak area. They were protesting against the killing of a youth," a police officer said. "A large contingent of police force has been deployed in the area. The situation is peaceful now."

Kaliachak had seen communal violence in 2016 when a mob set fire to a police station and

Shanaul Sheikh, who had suffered injuries in his private parts, eyes and ears, died in Kolkata after his condition deteriorated.

ransacked vehicles. On Sunday, protests were also held outside Baishnabnagar police station. Congress leader and Sujapur MLA Isha Khan Choudhury, who met Sheikh's family, called for peace and demanded arrest of the accused.

Choudhury said: "The family members and residents wanted to take the body to Baishnabnagar police station to protest. I convinced them to perform the last rights and stop the protest. We demanded arrest of people who killed Sheikh. I also asked the police to probe whether it was a communal incident."

After he left Kaliachak, Choudhury said, "I heard there were some problems. Whoever takes law into their hands — from whichever community — should be punished. I appeal to all parties, including the BJP, to maintain peace. I have seen communal riots in Malda... people from both communities suffer in such violence."

BJP MLA from Baishnabnagar Swadhin Kumar Sarkar also demanded strict punishment to those who killed Sheikh.

He said, "No one has the right to take law into their hands. I have heard, he (Sheikh) was beaten up by some people for being a motorbike thief. Instead of beating him up, they should have called the police. We want strong punishment for those who have committed this crime."

In the evening, police said they have arrested one person in connection with the incident.

Porters carry material for 32-km trek from Chandanwari, near Pahalgam.

Shuaib Masoodi

ments said a large number of pilgrims reach both base camps on their own instead of travelling with the yatra convoy.

A multi-tier security apparatus has been put in place along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and also the roads leading to Baltal and Pahalgam and the areas around base camps and the Amarnath shrine.

Vehicles have been fitted with Radio Frequency Identification

(RFID) tags for real-time location information. Stretches of the highway have also been given cut-off times.

Also, this time, authorities have decided not to allow the movement of civilian vehicles along the national highway until the yatra convoy reaches its destinations, around 3 pm. Police in Poonch district seized a tempo carrying 14 pilgrims to Kashmir via Mughal road.

MOST CASES PENDING TRIAL, CONVICTIONS IN ONLY TWO

Tabrez Ansari 18th mob violence victim in Jharkhand in three years

ABHISHEK ANGAD
SERAIKELA KHARSAWAN
(JHARKHAND), JUNE 30

TABREZ ANSARI (22), who died after being assaulted by a mob on the suspicion of theft, was the 18th victim of mob violence in Jharkhand in the past three years.

These incidents were triggered by a variety of factors, ranging from suspicion of cattle slaughter and theft, and child-lifting rumours.

A total of eight cases were registered pertaining to these deaths. Most of these cases are pending trial. Convictions have been secured in only two cases — of these, life term sentence was suspended in one.

LATEHAR

On March 18, 2016, Mazlum Ansari and Imteyaz Khan were beaten to death and their bodies hung from a tree in Jhajar village. The perpetrators were allegedly members of one Gau Rakshak Samiti, who attacked the duo when they were taking eight oxen to a local market for sale.

A sessions court in December 19, 2018, convicted eight accused for murder and sentenced them to life imprisonment. In the order, the Additional Sessions Judge said, "The convicts deserve no sympathy either of the society or of this court, therefore, the maximum sentence may be awarded to all the eight convicts so that message may go to the society and none can think to repeat such type crime in future."

RAMGARH

On June 29, 2017, Alimuddin, alias Asgar Ansari, was intercepted by a mob on suspicion that he was carrying beef in his van. The mob allegedly assaulted him and set the car on fire. Ansari later succumbed to the injuries. In March 2018, a fast-track court convicted and sentenced 11 accused, including BJP leader Nityanand Mahto, to life imprisonment for the murder. Another accused is a juvenile and the case is on in the Juvenile Justice Board.

Three months later, Jharkhand High Court granted bail to 10 out of 11 accused and suspended their life-term during the pendency of the appeal in view of "lack of evidence on specific assault". Ansari's family will appeal against the order in Supreme Court.

SERAIKELA KHARSAWAN

On May 18, 2017, four people, Haleem, Nayeem, Sajjad and Siraj Khan, were lynched in Shobhapur and Padnamsai over rumours of child lifting. The mob also attacked the policemen who went to rescue the victims. Two cases were registered — one for the lynchings and another for obstructing public servant on duty. The first case is pending trial. In the second case, a fast-track court in July 2018 convicted 12 people and sentenced them to four years of imprisonment for "obstructing and assaulting government officials on duty, attacking with deadly weapons, trespassing into other's house, disturbing law and order, breaking public peace".

EAST SINGHBHUM

On May 18, 2017, brothers Vikas Verma and Gautam Verma, their grandmother Ram Chandra Devi and their friend Gangesh Gupta were attacked by a mob following child-lifting rumours. Uttam, the brother of Vikas and Gautam, had said he went with his brother to look for a land for building toilets when the villagers demanded to see their IDs.

They also asked their 70-year-old grandmother to provide proof that they were not child-lifters. They were allegedly beaten to death. A case under charges of murder and other sections was registered at Baghbera Police Station against 17 accused. The trial is on in the court of Additional Sessions Judge.

GARHWA

On August 19, 2017, a tribal Christian, Ramesh Minz, and others were attacked by a group of cow vigilantes in Borkol area of Garhwa over the suspicion that they had killed an ox. Minz died while he was in judicial custody and it was alleged that doctors didn't treat him properly. A case was registered and is currently at evidence stage pending trial. A case was also registered against the victims under the Jharkhand Bovine Animal Prohibition of Slaughter Act.

PALAMU

On September 5, 2018, three persons were beaten up by residents of Tisbar village on the suspicion that they were thieves. Police said the three went to the

village to meet the family of a girl in connection with a marriage proposal. They were rushed to hospital where one Bablu Mushar died. Police had said a burglary occurred in the area the night before and rumour spread that these three played a role in it. A case was registered against the villagers. The case is pending trial at evidence stage.

GODDA

On June 13, 2018, Chiraguddin and Murtaza Ansari were caught by villagers for allegedly stealing buffaloes and were beaten to death by a mob in Bankatti village. Police arrested four persons and later registered two cases — one for the murder of Ansari and Chiraguddin and another against

people with Ansari for allegedly stealing buffaloes. A chargesheet was filed and the matter is at evidence stage pending trial.

GUMLA

On April 10, 2019, a mob attacked four men in a field between Jhurmo and Jairagi villages. Police rushed the four — all tribal Christians — to a community health centre where one Prakash Lakra was declared dead. The others, identified as Peter Phuljans, Belasus Turkey and Janriush Minz were sent to Ranchi for treatment. A case of murder was registered against seven people of Jairagi village. A case was also registered against the victims under the law against cow slaughter. Both cases are under investigation and the chargesheet has not been filed.

8 THE WORLD



EUROPE Timmermans in line for EU top job

Dutch socialist politician Frans Timmermans is on course to be named as the EU's next chief executive, diplomats and officials said Sunday, hours before EU leaders meet to decide who wins the bloc's top posts in Europe.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Wesley Mathews at a Dallas court in 2017

USA 'Sherin's father thought she would resurrect like Lazarus'

Houston: The Indian-American father of Sherin Mathews told jurors that he was not ready to believe that the toddler was dead and thought that if her body was buried near their home, she might come back to him, much like Lazarus, resurrected in the Bible. Wesley Mathews was sentenced to life after pleading guilty to the charge of injury to a child, in the death of his 3-year-old adopted daughter in October 2017. Mathews had told police that Sherin died when he "physically assisted" her in drinking milk, during which she choked.

WEST ASIA Palestinian minister held in Jerusalem

Jerusalem: Israeli police said Sunday they had detained and were questioning the Palestinian minister for Jerusalem affairs, while a source close to the official said he was arrested in his home. Palestinian minister for Jerusalem affairs Fadi al-Hadami was detained and was being questioned for "activities in Jerusalem", Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said. Hadami's arrest was most likely due to recent activities that have included accompanying Chile's President during a visit to Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque complex, a source close to the minister said.

CAMEROON Opposition leader released after abduction

Yaunde: The leader of one of Cameroon's main opposition parties was released by his captors on Saturday after being abducted by unidentified gunmen in the country's restive Anglophone region a day earlier, his party said. Separatist rebels have been battling government forces for nearly two years over perceived marginalisation of English speakers by the African country's Francophone-dominated government. John Fru Ndi had finished runner-up to President Paul Biya in the 2011 election.

TRUMP, KIM MEET AT DMZ

S Koreans react with hope, scepticism

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SEOUL, JUNE 30

EXPLAINED
E
Historic moment at the DMZ, but questions remain

SOUTH KOREANS watched the latest meeting between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Sunday with a mixture of hope and scepticism, wondering whether the impromptu summit will be enough to break an impasse in nuclear negotiations and inter-Korean dialogue.

Trump and Kim's meeting at the inter-Korean border, where an armistice was signed 66 years ago to stop the fighting of a war that killed or injured millions, was their third overall and first since the collapse of their high-stakes nuclear summit in February in Hanoi, Vietnam, over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief and disarmament.

Some South Koreans said Sunday's meeting will help resolve a months-long deadlock in nuclear negotiations following the breakdown in Hanoi and revive a positive atmosphere for peace.

Others, however, said it was yet another summit that was all style and no substance. They also raised concerns over what they saw as South Korea's declining voice in international efforts to deal with the North.

Since the Hanoi summit, North Korea has significantly slowed down dialogue and engagement with South Korea, while demanding that Seoul break away from Washington and resume inter-Korean economic projects held back by U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

Sunday's meeting between Trump and Kim at the border village of Panmunjom came days after the North vowed to "never go through" South Korea again when dealing with the United States.

Min Jung-won, a 26-year-old graduate student in Seoul, expressed hope that the Trump-Kim meeting would help thaw bilateral relations between the Koreas. He also called for the Koreas

TRUMP BECAME the first sitting US President to step inside North Korea, a country still technically at war with the United States. This has brought back hopes of a North Korea nuclear deal, which had dampened after the optimism of the first Trump-Kim meeting in Singapore was replaced by the reality check of the second one in Hanoi. Their third meeting, historic as it was, has been met with more scepticism than optimism by many analysts. The two sides have agreed to resume negotiations, but the fundamental issue that derailed the Hanoi summit — North Korea's unwillingness to destroy their nuclear facilities without the US lifting sanctions — remain, and neither side have shown that they are willing to compromise on this point.

and the US to formally declare an end to the 1950-53 Korean War.

But Kim Dae-won, a 40-year-old office worker in Suwon, said the Trump-Kim meeting was a made-for-TV spectacle that failed to address fundamental differences between Washington and Pyongyang that were exposed in Hanoi. He said that the US and North Korean flags raised at the South Korean side of the border village symbolised how Seoul got sidelined in the process to resolve the nuclear standoff, despite its pivotal role in brokering the first summit between Trump and Kim Jong Un last June in Singapore.



People watch a TV screen showing the meeting between Trump and Kim Jong Un, at the Seoul Railway Station. AP



US President Donald Trump with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on the North Korean side of the border at Demilitarised Zone separating the two Koreas, on Sunday. AP

NORTH KOREAN SECURITY GUARDS SCUFFLE WITH JOURNALISTS

Seoul: US President Donald Trump's historic first steps into North Korea sparked a scuffle between reporters and North Korean security guards, with officials shoving and trying to block the press. Also roughed up in the fracas was incoming Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham, who ended up with bruises. The jostling grew especially intense as reporters tried to enter a room inside the Freedom House on the southern side of Panmunjom where Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un were meeting after exchanging initial handshakes on the border. North Korean guards tried to physically prevent members of the US press pool from entering the room, pushing and shoving, and the Secret Service stepped in to intervene.

TRUMP OFFERS SUPPORT FOR AMERICAN TROOPS STATIONED AT DMZ

Seoul: US President Donald Trump met with several dozen troops stationed at the Korean Demilitarised Zone separating South and North Korea and telling them, "We're with you all the way." The troops include both US soldiers as well as South Korean troops. Trump was joined by South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who praised Trump for deciding to meet shortly with North Korea's Kim Jong Un. Trump has at times appeared to question the value of keeping US troops on the Korean Peninsula in light of the US-South Korea trade deficit. Addressing the troops, Trump complained about the press not giving him sufficient credit for improved US relations with North Korea.



At Osan Air Base in South Korea as Trump arrived to meet the troops. AP

TRUMP-KIM DIPLOMACY: THE UPS AND DOWNS

MARCH 7, 2018: A special South Korean envoy returns from visiting Pyongyang and says Kim is willing to discuss the future of his nuclear arsenal with US. Days later, Trump accepts Kim's invitation to meet.

APRIL 21, 2018: North Korea says it has suspended nuclear and long-range missile tests and is shifting its focus to improving its economy.

MAY 9, 2018: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visits North Korea to prepare for the planned Trump-Kim meeting. Pyongyang frees three Americans who had been imprisoned.

JUNE 12, 2018: Trump and Kim meet in Singapore for the first summit between the leaders of the US and North Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. Kim vows to work toward achieving complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

FEBRUARY 27-28, 2019: Trump and Kim meet in

Hanoi, Vietnam, for their second summit. The meeting collapses with reaching any agreement after Trump rejects Kim's calls for major sanctions relief in return for dismantling his main nuclear complex in a partial denuclearisation step.

MAY 9, 2019: North Korea fires two short-range missiles toward the sea in its second launch in five days, ending a pause in ballistic testing. The launches are seen as measured efforts to dial up pressure on Washington and Seoul without actually causing the negotiations to collapse.

JUNE 29, 2019: In a tweet, Trump invites Kim to shake hands during his planned visit to the Korean Demilitarised Zone.

JUNE 30, 2019: Trump shakes hands with Kim at a jointly controlled area inside the DMZ and becomes the first US president to cross over into North Korean territory. Kim then walks over the demarcation line into South Korea with Trump.

Amid 'critical' peace talks, Taliban kill 19 in Afghanistan

AGENCIES
KANDAHAR, JUNE 30

TALIBAN BOMBERS targeting a district centre in southern Afghanistan have killed at least 19 people, including eight election workers, officials said Sunday.

The attack comes as a new round of talks between the United States and the Taliban to end the 18-year long war in Afghanistan entered a second day in Qatar. Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen described the latest round of talks as "crucial".

The militants rammed four armoured vehicles packed with explosives into a government



Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar (second from left), the Taliban's chief negotiator, in Moscow for talks on May 28. AP

compound in Maruf district late Saturday, a police spokesman in southern Kandahar province said. "Unfortunately 11 policemen were martyred and 27 more injured," Qasim Afghan said. Eight election workers who

were stationed at the centre to register voters ahead of the presidential polls in September were also killed in the attack, said Zabiullah Sadaat, a spokesman for Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC).

Afghanistan's twice-delayed presidential election is now slated for September 28.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, with a spokesman tweeting that their fighters had captured the district centre, killing 57 security forces.

Afghanistan's interior ministry, however, rejected the claim, saying in a statement that the militants had been beaten back and 25 insurgents killed.



At a rally in support of police in Hong Kong on Sunday. Reuters

Thousands rally in Hong Kong to support police, who were criticised for using excessive force

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HONG KONG, JUNE 30

THOUSANDS PROTESTED outside Hong Kong's Parliament on Sunday — this time to support police as they face mounting criticism over their use of tear gas and rubber bullets.

The large crowds, most of them dressed in white or blue, illustrated the ideological fissures now running through the finance hub as it experiences its worst political unrest in a generation.

Hong Kong saw two record-breaking rallies earlier this month by protesters opposed to a now postponed plan to approve extradition to mainland China.

But it has also been rocked by unprecedented clashes. On June 12 police used tear gas and rubber bullets to clear largely

young anti-extradition protesters from around Parliament. The police classified the demonstration as a riot and defended their tactics, but opponents have accused officers of using excessive force and called for an independent inquiry. Twice in the last two weeks, the city's police headquarters has been blockaded by angry crowds. Sunday's rally — comprised of a noticeably older demographic, some waving Chinese flags — was smaller than the huge anti-extradition marches, but showed the police and pro-Beijing establishment still had plenty of supporters. "I can't put up with peoples' behaviour towards police," 70-year-old demonstrator Frances Yu said. A 54-year-old said officers were trying to "maintain order" and that anti-extradition demonstrators had gone too far.

WHITES' BOYCOTT OF RESTAURANT HAS DRAWN 'AN EYE ROLL' AMONG MANY BLACKS

Boycott of S African eatery reflects underlying racial tensions

KIMON DE Greef & NORIMITSU ONISHI
STRAND, JUNE 30

FOR MANY white children growing up in apartheid South Africa, the Spur Steak Ranches restaurant chain was a home away from home, offering kid-friendly meals and play areas with an American Wild West theme.

For their parents, the chain's outlets served as the social centre in many rural towns and in suburbs like Strand, a once-popular beach resort about 30 miles from Cape Town. "A lot of people thought of



Spur Steak Ranches in Strand

Spur as their living room," said Johan Pienaar, a brand consultant. But some of Spur's most ardent fans have been staying away, supporting a boycott now entering its third year that has highlighted the underlying racial tensions in South African society.

The former patrons speak in emotional terms of a betrayal by a cherished brand, whose outposts were effectively barred to blacks during apartheid because of their locations in whites-only areas. "I'll never set foot inside that place again," said Keith van Eeden, who lives in Strand and was a loyal Spur customer for more than three decades, reluc-

giously taking his three children there on their birthdays. "Spur is only for blacks now," van Eeden added. "They don't want the whites." The boycott began in 2017 when Spur sided with a black woman who was in a confrontation with a white man at a franchise in Johannesburg. But the continuing campaign against the chain — promoted by South Africa's most prominent groups that advocate white-minority rights — reflects something more profound than lingering bitterness over that dispute.

It's a demonstration of a strong, and what appears to be a growing, sense of resentment among many white South Africans a quarter of a century after they lost political power, and the outrages and brutalities of apartheid were ended. In the fight that started the

boycott, caught on videos that went viral, the two customers are seen arguing over the behaviour of their children. The white man yanks the arm of a black boy, before threatening to hit the black woman and trying to overturn a table where her small children were sitting.

A few days later, Spur issued an apology to the woman and banned the man for his "aggressive manner" and "unacceptable" actions. Conservative whites were outraged, with many saying both customers should have been banned. The boycott push took on momentum when white-minority lobbying groups got involved. One was AfriForum, which has drawn widespread criticism for its views, including its recent denial that apartheid was a crime against humanity.

TELLING NUMBERS

Delhi ozone level went beyond limit for 95 days in last 3 years

DURING THE last three calendar years, ozone was reported as prominent pollutant for 95 days in Delhi and 11, 48, 8 and 49 days in Faridabad, Gurugram, Ghaziabad and Noida respectively, the government said in Lok Sabha during the current session of Parliament. These numbers were based on the Air Quality Index of the Central Pollution Control Board. Replying to a question on ozone levels in Delhi-NCR, Environment and Forest Minister Prakash Javadekar tabled AQI figures on ozone status for 2016, 2017 and 2018 as well as for the first five months of 2019. The figures showed that until May 31, Delhi has already had 23 days with ozone levels over the prescribed limit, while Faridabad has had 55.

About steps taken to control the rise, the minister noted that ozone is a secondary pollutant formed through atmospheric reactions and the factors responsible are high temperature and



AQI monitoring station in Delhi.
Abhinav Saha/File photo

emissions from vehicles, power plants and burning of waste. He listed several measures to control such emissions, including a shift from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards since April 1, 2018 in NCT of Delhi and from April 1, 2020 in the rest of the country which he said will reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen of heavy duty diesel vehicles by 88.5% in comparison to BS-IV vehicles.

NUMBER OF DAYS WITH OZONE REPORTED AS PROMINENT POLLUTANT

CITY	2016	2017	2018	2019 (TILL MAY 31)
Delhi	36	14	45	23
Faridabad	3	0	8	55
Gurugram	43	0	5	6
Ghaziabad	—	0	8	3
Noida	—	33	16	0

Source: Central Pollution Control Board via MoEF

TIP FOR READING LIST

WILL AI PARTNER WITH HUMANS?

JAMES LOVELOCK, chemist and environmental thinker, is best known for formulating the Gaia hypothesis, also known as Gaia theory or Gaia principle, which proposes that all organisms and their inorganic surroundings on Earth are closely integrated to form a single and self-regulating complex system, maintaining the conditions for life on the planet. Lovelock, who turns 100 on July, has now come up with a new theory about life on Earth — or its future. He argues that the anthropocene — the age in which humans acquired planetary-scale technologies — is coming to an end after 300 years. Lovelock describes the new age, which has already begun, as the "novacene".

Novacene: The Coming Age of Hyperintelligence proposes that new beings will emerge from existing artificial intelligence systems. They will think 10,000 times faster than we do and they

will regard us as we now regard plants — as slow acting and thinking creatures. However, machines will not violently take over the planet as suggested in science fiction, because these beings will be as dependent on the health of the planet as humans are. As *The Guardian* writes in its review, "... for Lovelock, the Gaia hypothesis will save us, because the machines will realise that they need organic life to keep the planet at a habitable temperature. (Even electronic life could not survive on an Earth that veered into runaway global warming.) So, Lovelock argues, it will suit the robots to keep humans around."

It is crucial, Lovelock argues, that the intelligence of Earth survives and prospers. He does not think there are intelligent aliens, so we are the only beings capable of understanding the cosmos.

The book is co-authored with journalist Bryan Appleyard.



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AN EXPERT EXPLAINS

Reading Maratha quota verdict

Among the factors taken into consideration were the question of backwardness, and justification of taking total reservation beyond 50%. How Bombay High Court judgment addressed these and other issues



FAIZAN MUSTAFA

IN A landmark judgment in the case of *Dr Jishri Laxmnarao Patil*, a two-judge Bench of Bombay High Court has upheld Maratha reservation in Maharashtra. The judgment, reserved on March 26, was delivered on June 27 by Justices Ranjit More and Bharati Dongre. Since the Second National Backward Classes Commission, popularly known as the Mandal Commission, and two State Backward Classes Commissions had refused to recognise Marathas as a backward class and as many as 12 chief ministers belonged to the Maratha community, upholding of reservation in favour of Marathas has surprised many constitutionalists. Moreover, in the past, reservation on the basis of similar recommendations in favour of Jats, Gujjars, Patidars and Muslims had failed the judicial test.

In the very first statement of 482-page judgment, the court talked of the challenge before modern democracies — "complex task of providing social justice to sections that have been traditionally discriminated against, while affirmative action does not hinder opportunities offered to the rest of the population".

Issues involved

The case involved several constitutional issues such as determination of Marathas as a backward class on the basis of quantifiable data; constitutional validity of the Act providing for their reservation; validity of extraordinary circumstances that justify going beyond the judicially created 50% reservation rule; limits of judicial review in examining affirmative action policies of the state and the effect of powers given to the National Commission for Backward Classes in 2018 after its conversion from a statutory authority to a constitutional body; legality of creation of a new socially and educationally backward class and inclusion of just one caste in this class; and, assuming Marathas are backward, their non-inclusion in the existing OBC category.

Backward or not

The Mandal Commission, which listed 128 communities as backward, identified Marathas as 'forward'. The Khatri Commission (1995) constituted by the Maharashtra government held by majority that Marathas may not be included as Kunbis in the list of OBCs, but recommended that people entered as Kunbi-Maratha or Maratha-Kunbi may be given the same benefits as the Kunbi caste. The request of treating Marathas at par with Kunbis was not accepted even in 2000 and Marathas were not included in the central Backward Classes list. In 2008, the Bapat Commission by a 4-2 majority recommended that it would not be proper to include Marathas among OBCs from the viewpoint of principles of social justice.

The state government constituted a non-statutory committee under Narayan Rane, which concluded that the Bapat Commission's findings were not based on quantifiable data and should not be accepted. The Rane Committee independently collected data and



CM Devendra Fadnavis and MLAs in the Maharashtra Assembly in November 2018, after the government tabled the Maratha quota bill. Ganesh Shirsekar/File photo

concluded that the Maratha community is socially, educationally and economically backward, and recommended its inclusion among OBCs with separate 16% reservation.

The Governor of Maharashtra on July 9, 2014, promulgated the Maharashtra State Reservation (of seats for admissions in educational institutions in the State and for appointments or posts in the public services under the State) for Educationally and Socially Backward Category (ESBC) Ordinance, 2014. This was replaced with the ESBC Act of 2014 (Maharashtra Act No. 1 of 2015). The Bombay High Court in 2015 stayed implementation of this Act, which has now been upheld.

Quantifiable data

In 2017, a reference was made to the Maharashtra Backward Class Commission. When its chairman Justice SB Mhase passed away, he was replaced with Justice M G Gaikwad in November 2017. The Gaikwad Commission report submitted on November 15, 2018, found that Marathas are socially, educationally and economically backward and eligible to be included as a Backward Class.

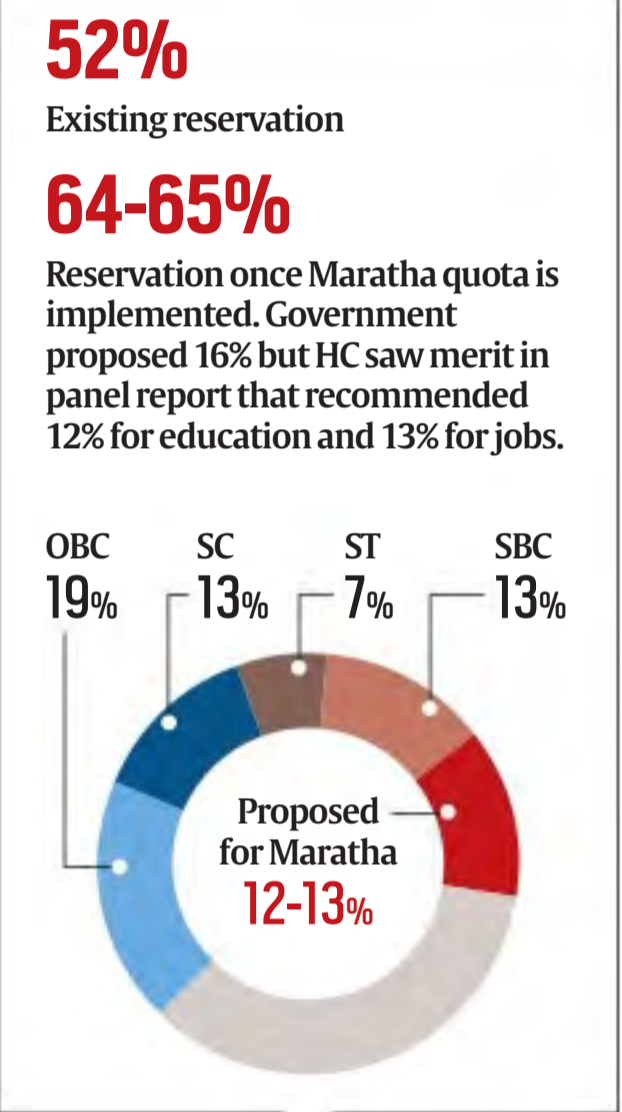
The High Court expressed its satisfaction on the authenticity of the data in the report. The court also discussed at length through comparative tabular analysis why denial of Backward Class status to Marathas by earlier Commissions was wrong.

In social backwardness, the Gaikwad Commission found that 76.86% of Maratha families are engaged in agriculture and agricultural labour, around 70% live in *kachcha* dwellings, and only 35.39% have personal tap water connections. In educational backwardness, it found that 13.42% of Marathas are illiterate, 35.31% primary educated, 43.79% HSC and SSC, 6.71% undergraduates and just 0.77% postgraduates and professionally qualified. In economic backwardness, the Commission found that 93% Maratha families have an annual income of Rs 1 lakh; 37.38% families are Below Poverty Line against the state average of 24.2%, and 71% own less than 2.5 acres land.

Share in population

Based on its estimate of the Maratha population at 30% of Maharashtra's total, the Commission had suggested for 12% and 13% reservation to Marathas but the state government of its own adopted 16% reservation.

MAHARASHTRA BREAKUP



The Commission found that Marathas are about 30% of the state's population. The court rejected the argument of the petitioners who had argued that 30% is not mathematically correct. If the population of SCs is 13%, that of STs is 11%, and that of OBCs as per Mandal Commission is 52% and if Maratha is added as 30%, it would take the total population over 100%, the petitioners had argued.

Breach of 50% ceiling

Though B R Ambedkar said in the Constituent Assembly that reservation must be confined to a minority of seats, the Constitution does not mention such a ceiling. The judgment quoted *Indira Sawhney* (1992) and other judgments to say that the Supreme Court permitted going beyond 50% in extraordinary circumstances, and this limit is not exhaustive of all categories of reservation. The High Court relied on *Indira Sawhney* which had laid down that "while 50% shall be the rule, it is necessary not to put out of consideration certain extraordi-

nary situations inherent in the great diversity of this country and the people. It might happen that in far-flung and remote areas the population inhabiting those areas might, on account of their being out of the mainstream of national life and in view of conditions peculiar to and characteristic to them, need to be treated in a different way, some relaxation in this strict rule may become imperative. In doing so, extreme caution is to be exercised and a special case made out."

In some cases, the courts have not permitted even 1% reservation in excess of 50%, for example Muslim reservation in undivided Andhra Pradesh. Neither is Maharashtra remote or far-flung, nor are Marathas seen as being out of the national mainstream. This portion of the High Court judgment will be challenged in the Supreme Court.

Here the court accepted the Gaikwad Commission's recommendation that 85% people of the state have now become backward with the inclusion of 30% Marathas and thus are entitled to affirmative action. If the 50% rule is followed, the miniscule forward classes will benefit and their domination will continue.

Separate Backward Class

Since 346 castes are already in the OBC list and entitled to 19% reservation, the court held that adding Marathas with 30% population will not be appropriate. Marathas will then take away the major chunk of seats, and it will adversely affect the interests of existing OBCs. Relying on *Indira Sawhney* where the Supreme Court had permitted classification between 'backward' and 'most backward', the High Court approved the creation of a new class for Marathas.

The court also rejected the argument that Socially & Educationally Backward Class is now at par with SC and ST and comparison of Article 341 and 342 with Article 342A, inserted with effect from August 15, 2018, means that this particular class will receive recognition only in the manner set out in the Constitution i.e. Article 342A. The court observed that the 102nd Constitutional Amendment has not taken over the powers of the state to set up its own Backward Classes Commissions and states may validly make reservations without the concurrence of National Commission for Backward Classes or Presidential order for inclusion of any caste.

The interim order

The court rejected the argument that the Maratha reservation is an overruling of the interim order by Bombay High Court in the case of *Sanjeet Shukla* which had held that in the absence of quantifiable data before categorizing the Maratha community as a backward class, the increase in reservation was not justifiable. The latest judgment upheld the reservation as a legitimate exercise of legislative power as the government has now collected quantifiable data and analysed it. With this exercise, the judgment concluded, the very basis of the interim order had been validly removed.

The judgment will open the floodgates for reservation in favour of dominant castes in other states. If at all there was a legitimate reason to go beyond 50% reservation, as in the case of Tamil Nadu, it could have been inserted in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

The writer is a well-known expert in constitutional law

The geopolitics of Indo-Pacific: how India and others interpret the term

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
MUMBAI, JUNE 30

THE TERM "Indo-Pacific" has featured during the just-concluded G20 summit as well as during US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo's recent visit to Delhi. Geographically, the Indo-Pacific refers to the Indian and the Pacific Oceans between the east coast of Africa and the American west coast and their several littoral countries. As a term to denote an economic and strategic community, it has been in use among scholars of international relations and geopolitics since the first decade of this century, around the same time as China's rise. The earliest it was noticed was in a paper written by Gurpreet Khurana, an Indian naval officer, on the congruence between Japanese and Indian strategic interests in protecting sea routes for energy security. On a visit to India in 2007, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe did not use the exact term, but spoke of a "broader Asia" in the "Confluence of Two Seas".

"The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity. A 'broader Asia' that broke away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form. Our two countries have the ability — and the responsibility — to ensure that it broadens yet further and to nurture

and enrich these seas to become seas of clearest transparency," Abe said then.

Gaining currency

It was as Australia began reimagining its security and trade policies through a new regional lens in 2011-2012, that Indo-Pacific became its way to position itself to play a larger role in Asia, as an ally of the US and Japan, and as a country with friendly ties with China, India, Indonesia and South Korea among others. At the end of 2012, the Julia Gillard government brought out a White Paper on 'Australia and the Asian century', following it with a national security policy document, 'Strong and Secure — A Strategy for Australia's National Interest' at the beginning of 2013. Both dealt in detail with the term Indo-Pacific. This is what the White Paper had to say about it: "Some observers have raised a new 'Indo-Pacific' conception of the Asian region. Under such a conception, the western Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean would come to be considered as one strategic arc. This conception is being driven by the increased economic interaction between South, Northeast and Southeast Asia and the importance of the lines of energy supply to Asia from the Middle East."

Though Australia embraced the term wholeheartedly, its widespread use in international diplomacy came five years later, after an October 2017 speech on US-India relations by former US Secretary of State



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with visiting US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Delhi on June 26. Jaishankar said the point he made was that the Indo-Pacific is 'for something, not against somebody'. Reuters

Rex Tillerson, who spoke of a partnership between the two countries in the interests of a "free and open Indo-Pacific". He spoke of India as more reliable than China: "We need to collaborate with India to ensure that the Indo-Pacific is increasingly a place of peace, stability, and growing prosperity—so that it does not become a region of disorder, conflict, and predatory economics."

India lavished praise on the speech, delivered at the height of the Delhi-Beijing tensions over several issues — the Doklam mil-

itary standoff, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor running through Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, and more generally over the entire Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

By the next year, Indo-Pacific was being used more frequently by the Trump Administration, entirely replacing the earlier "Asia-Pacific", a move recognised by analysts from Delhi and Beijing to Tokyo and Canberra as redefining the region away from China's economic and strategic dominance.

Already in the US National Security

Strategy of 2017, the Indo-Pacific had been described as a region where "geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions of world order is taking place" — China and North Korea on one side and all others on the other.

Cautious India

The move away from Asia-Pacific also seemed to elevate India to a position of prominence in the region, as a US ally that would help to contain China's dominance. Towards this end, the adoption of the term also appeared to challenge India to play a larger role in the region, for instance in the Quad, or the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue that informally brings together for strategic talks and military exercises, the US, Japan, Australia and India.

But India, quite aware of the inherent dangers of posturing in the region, has sought to bring its own vision to the definition of Indo-Pacific.

In June 2018, at the Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said: "The Indo-Pacific is a natural region. It is also home to a vast array of global opportunities and challenges... The ten countries of South East Asia connect the two great oceans in both the geographical and civilisational sense. Inclusiveness, openness and ASEAN centrality and unity, therefore, lie at the heart of the new Indo-Pacific. India does not see the Indo-Pacific Region as a strategy or as a club of limited members.

Nor as a grouping that seeks to dominate. And by no means do we consider it as directed against any country. A geographical definition, as such, cannot be. India's vision for the Indo-Pacific Region is, therefore, a positive one."

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's statement, during US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to Delhi earlier this week captured some of that caution.

"On the Indo-Pacific, the point — the big point — I made was that the Indo-Pacific is for something, not against somebody. And that something is peace, security, stability, prosperity and rules," Jaishankar said in his opening remarks at the joint press meet with Pompeo in New Delhi Wednesday.

It is unclear if India and US are on the same page on the definition of the Indo-Pacific. In the last US National Security Strategy document, in 2017, the Indo-Pacific is described as the region from the "west coast of India to the west coast of the United States". However, India looks at it as a wider region, which extends all the way to West Asia and the east coast of Africa. For India, as important as securing the east, is its western maritime security, where the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea meet — aside from the hostility with Pakistan, India's energy sources are all in west Asia, where Delhi's friendly ties with Tehran US-Iran hostility. Nor does the US definition take into account India's robust engagement with the Indian Ocean Rim Association countries.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

THE G-20 OUTING

PM Modi's engagement with world leaders underlined pragmatism and resilience of ties, disproved narratives of crisis

This year's annual G-20 summit held in Osaka, Japan, offered an expansive stage for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to kickstart his second international innings. If his first outing after the general elections — which gave him a massive mandate — to Maldives and Sri Lanka was about India's maritime neighbourhood, the three-day sojourn in Osaka provided an occasion to engage many of his global peers in multiple formats and address burning international questions. Launched in 2008 to cope with the global financial crisis, the G-20 has now become a forum for the discussion of all major international issues and a venue for bilateral exchanges between the world's top leaders.

Modi's meeting with the US President, Donald Trump, underlined the essential resilience of India's strategic partnership with the United States. It disproved the recent narrative that the relationship is in a crisis amidst a large number of contentions including trade, 5G, Iran and Russia. Trump's tweet, hours before he met Modi, demanding that Delhi withdraw its retaliatory tariffs against American duties on steel and aluminium imports, seemed to confirm the new volatility in bilateral relations. Official readouts from Modi's meeting with Trump suggested a more business-like discussion. The two leaders agreed to initiate high-level talks to resolve trade disputes and discussed potential collaboration on 5G technologies. The discussion on the Gulf offered the PM an opportunity to lay out India's interests in oil price stability and its contributions to regional security. Besides the bilateral meeting with Trump, Modi also sat down for a brief trilateral chat with the US President and the Japanese PM, Shinzo Abe.

Even as he sought to institutionalise the trilateral engagement with the US and Japan, Modi met with Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin in a trilateral format and again, in a broader BRICS format, with the presidents of Brazil and South Africa. This must not, however, be seen as some kind of a return to non-alignment. It merely reflects India's necessary pragmatism amid the current fluidity in great power relations. This was reflected in the effort by Xi and Trump to pause their trade war. Equally important was the fact that Russia, China and Brazil were happy to thunder against the US at the BRICS forum, but had no problem joining the Osaka Declaration on cross-border data flows sponsored by Japan. India decided to absent itself at the discussion on data along with Indonesia and South Africa. India's sherpa to the G-20, Suresh Prabhu, would not explain the decision except stating that the reasons for India's abstention had been conveyed to the Japanese leadership. On the face of it, the abstention is of a piece with India's recent drift to so-called "data nationalism". However, given the growing centrality of the digital economy for India's growth and Modi's visible isolation at Osaka, Delhi must take a fresh look at the assumptions behind its current approaches to data governance.

IMPUNITY IN INDORE

Akash Vijayvargiya's attack on a municipal officer, local BJP's celebration, high command's silence, send out disturbing signals

Akash Vijayvargiya, the 34-year-old MLA from Indore, and BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya's son, says he does not feel either guilty or embarrassed for assaulting, in public view, Indore Municipal Corporation officer, Dharendra Bayas, with a cricket bat. For Akash, the attack was "in the public interest". There is more than one reason why this incident and its aftermath is scandalous and should be seen to be so. First, an elected official assaulting a municipal officer shows, at its core, a disrespect for the administration, the front-line officials who form the backbone of governance. Second, that the local BJP unit has chosen to brazen out the assault, even celebrate it, indicates a disturbing mindset in a constitutional democracy: An elected legislator can flaunt the people's mandate to take on the rule of law, hit it out of the park with a cricket bat.

Out on bail, the MLA's justification has been that municipal officials "dragged women by their feet" from a building that was set to be demolished. While the attack has been caught on camera, Akash's allegations have not been proved. And even if they were true, a person holding constitutional office must know that it is for the police and the judiciary to investigate and pass judgment on criminal matters. His actions also betray a lack of confidence in his own party — the Indore Municipal Corporation is controlled by the BJP and the matter could surely have been looked into without resorting to violence. The building in question had been marked for demolition more than a year ago, as the dilapidated structure has been assessed as too fragile and dangerous for human habitation. By attacking an official for doing his job, the BJP MLA has further derailed the already fraught exercise of urban governance. In May 2018, for instance, an assistant town planner in Himachal Pradesh was shot dead for enforcing the demolition of buildings flouting construction laws. Now, after the assault, Bayas has received threats and asked for police protection.

The local BJP's celebration of the lumpenism on display in Indore is at odds with its outrage at political violence in West Bengal, where it made remarkable gains in the Lok Sabha elections. There, Kailash Vijayvargiya, as the party official in charge of the state, has led the charge against the Trinamool Congress for allegedly subverting the rule of law. The first principles behind that argument also apply to Madhya Pradesh and Indore. When elected representatives, leaders of their party, place themselves at odds with the administration in a violent manner, they send a message that trickles down to the grassroots political worker — that the instruments of the state can be subverted for political mileage. And that civil behaviour and basic public morality can be discarded with impunity.

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



Be soft, smart and quiet

India should use the diplomatic tools at its disposal to help de-escalate US-Iran tensions



VIKRAM S MEHTA

"THE MOST COMMON form of human stupidity is forgetting what one is trying to do." This Nietzschean aphorism finds sharp affirmation in the behaviour of the leaders of the US and Iran today. Both have forgotten what they are trying to achieve but both are engaged in verbal, economic and physical jousting that is generating sparks that could light up a regional bonfire. India would be severely impacted in such an event. Our leaders face a policy dilemma. Should they use their "soft" power to try and snuff out the sparks but risk an embarrassing rebuff? Or should they stay on the sidelines in the hope that disaster will not prevail? It is my view that the Indian government should do the former. It should deploy the "quiet" power of diplomacy to pre-empt the consequences of human stupidity.

The signals emanating from Washington DC and Tehran are confusing and blurred. They suggest that the leaders in these two cities have lost sight of their vital objectives.

Donald Trump says he does not want war; that he is not looking for a regime change but only a tighter nuclear agreement. He says his objective is to ensure Iran will never acquire the capability to develop nuclear weapons. But he has also tweeted the word "obliterate" to define the range of options that remain on his table and his National Security Advisor, John Bolton, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, have stated that war is an option. And that their preferred outcome is indeed regime change.

The Iranians are also conveying mixed messages. Their elected leadership wants to exercise "strategic moderation" and remain compliant with the JCPOA. They are hopeful that with the support of the Germans and the French, the crisis can be settled through negotiation. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), on the other hand, wants the government to breach the uranium stockpile limits agreed to in the JCPOA (the 2015 Iran nuclear deal) and to enrich uranium to 20 per cent purity (which is just one step away from weapons grade material). They also want to

signal through direct and indirect action that they will not be bullied by the Americans. The Ayatollahs generally keep their cards close to their chest but given that the Iranian economy is in free fall — the GDP fell by 4 per cent last year and an additional 6 per cent this year; inflation is running at 30 per cent; food is in short supply; the currency is on skids and unemployment is at record highs — they too are inclined to play the US "Satanic" card to divert public attention from the domestic crisis.

There is an explanation for this political amnesia. The leaders are wrestling to reconcile their international priorities with their domestic constituencies. The problem is that in the process, they are pushing the region towards large-scale conflict. And that is why their actions fit so neatly into the Nietzschean mould of stupidity.

Students of military history will not be surprised by this drift towards war. Trump is, alas, no such scholar. Had he been so, he might have remembered the forewarning contained in the unfinished magnum opus of the Prussian General Von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege* (On War), that "three quarters of the factors on which war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty". He may have noted the mind-boggling confirmation of this observation in the memoirs of the former Defence Secretary, Robert McNamara, who wrote "President Johnson authorised the bombing (of North Vietnam) in response to what he thought had been a second attack that had NOT occurred". The "attack" referenced was on the US Destroyer *USS Maddox* by North Vietnamese patrol boats on August 4, 1964, in the international waters of the Gulf of Tonkin. Two days earlier, the *Maddox* had been attacked by the North Vietnamese. The report of a second attack inflamed the US Congress, which then passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution — a de facto declaration of war against the North Vietnamese. It was later established that the report of a second attack was erroneous. This is difficult to believe but this means that the US went to war in Vietnam on the basis of erroneous intelligence.

gence.

The US-Iran stand-off is wrapped in a "fog of uncertainty". No one really knows what will happen but what we do know, based on our reading of Clausewitz and understanding of history, is that it could take no more than a false report, a miscalculation or simply an accident for the region to conflagrate into violent conflict.

India would be severely impacted in such an event. It imports 65 per cent of its crude oil from the region. Conflict would disrupt its oil supply lines and harden oil prices. Moreover, there are approximately eight million nationals living and working in the area. Many of them would need to be evacuated. This would present a major logistical challenge. But most worrying, and beyond these immediate ramifications, is that India and Indians would feel the tremors of the aftermath of such a conflict for a long time.

The question, then, for India is: Should it allow history to repeat itself? Or should it make an effort to stave off disaster beyond the opportunistic bilateral discussions with Pompeo and Trump. In my view it should take that extra step. This is not simply to safeguard its economic interests. It is also because it is strongly placed to arrest this dangerous drift. India has long-standing historical and cultural links with the Middle East and in particular with Iran. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has enhanced international stature because of his massive electoral victory and strong personal relations with his counterparts in the area. And Foreign Minister S Jaishankar is a superb and world-class diplomat. Together, this makes for a rare combination of "soft", "smart" and "quiet" power. India should deploy this combination towards one objective. To persuade Iran to revert to its original position of remaining within the framework of the JCPOA and to deny the hardliners on the American side the *raison d'être* for escalation.

The writer is chairman and senior fellow, Brookings India

THE WEAKEST LINK

Reservation has failed to address social inequities, create opportunities for all



M RAJIVLOCHAN

RESERVATION HAS PROVED to be one of the most useless of strategies to provide social equality, justice and opportunity. Indians remain bound to each other in mutual contempt in the name of caste. Reservation was supposed to provide more equitable access to scarce resources in education and employment. However, the lack of educational and employment resources was, and remains, so intense that instead of reducing caste discrimination it has unintentionally sucked out hope. Everyone feels cheated. Those who benefit from it and those who do not.

If the research of professors Sukhadeo Thorat, Gopal Guru, Jean Dreze and their associates is anything to go by, then one of the consequences of reservation has been that far from being empowered, those who use reservation to enter the portals of higher education and corresponding employment, continue to suffer from low self-esteem, and problems of asserting themselves in public life. People have even succeeded in replicating the same inequalities, indignities and unfairness, to fight which reservations had been provided in the first place. Privileged groups have come into existence which corner all the benefits of reservation. Women continue to be doubly disempowered within the reserved category, and targeted by families for marrying into a lower caste. Reservation seems to have done little to make society more equitable and fair, or in providing people with enough opportunities to grow out of the pernicious system of mutual contempt that goes by the name of

the caste system in India.

It was in October 1951 that Babasaheb Ambedkar had included the promise of reservation in institutions of higher education in the manifesto of his All India Scheduled Castes Federation. He had argued that "advanced education of (a) high order, both in this country and outside, will enable these classes to fit themselves for taking hold of administration". He promised to provide reservation in government appointments since "the services have become the monopoly of a few communities". This, Ambedkar said, had created great enmity between the "higher classes" and the "lower classes" which resulted in "murders, arson and loot that were committed by members of the lower classes against members of the higher classes in 1948 in certain parts of India after the murder of Mr Gandhi."

Giving "the lower classes higher education and to open to them the door of services is the only solution of this problem," Ambedkar would say as he laid out his scheme to raise "the lower classes to the level of the higher classes in the matter of education". This was in sync with the spirit of Articles 340, 341 and 342 of the Constitution that enjoined upon the government to make special efforts to "improve the conditions of the socially and educationally backward classes" in India.

It is a matter of fact that Ambedkar's party was comprehensively defeated in the elections that followed. Nevertheless, noticing the misuse to which caste could be put

by the existing power holders in India, on August 21, 1955, the meeting of the Working Committee of the All India Scheduled Castes Federation unanimously passed a resolution that "the provision for the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes in Parliament, in State Assemblies, in Municipalities and District and Local Boards be done away with immediately even before the next election".

The Congress government which came to power implemented reservation in government employment and in higher education, and decided to ignore Ambedkar's opinion on abolishing reserved seats in elected bodies. Seventy years have passed since then. Cases of murder, arson and loot by those whom Ambedkar called the lower class against the upper class have not been heard of. Rather, the opposite. There has been considerable empowerment of those from the lower castes. So much so that the successful among them have even created a Dalit Chamber of Commerce to help Dalit businesses understand and navigate the complicated and inefficient system of laws and regulations that hampers India. But this empowerment was not the result of reservation but of individual effort and opportunities. Creating more opportunities for everyone continues to remain the weakest link in India's journey towards becoming a more equitable society.

The writer is professor, Contemporary History, Panjab University, Chandigarh

JULY 1, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

DEFENCE PACKAGE

THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED a package of decisions to improve the terms and conditions of service of the members of the three armed forces. These include a longer tenure of service for jawans, airmen and sailors, broadening avenues of promotion for jawans, NCOs, JCOs and commissioned officers of the rank of majors and squadron leaders, and liberalisation of "two years" rank rule benefiting the armed forces personnel in the matter of pension, rehabilitation and welfare measures. In March last, Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram had announced that in order to deal with problems of congestion in the ranks of majors and squadron leaders, a spe-

cial exercise had been undertaken to devise appropriate and urgent solutions for these and some related problems.

DEMONETISATION

DEMONETISATION OF RS 100 notes was widely rumoured in New Delhi on June 30. Anxious enquiries poured in from Bombay too. The possibility of such a step by the government to contain the price spiral and bring out black money could not be discounted. The present situation is such that palliatives like credit squeeze or controls would not do. The government cannot escape further increases in prices of coal and petroleum products. In these circumstances, demonetisation of Rs

100-rupee notes would substantially curtail liquidity of money in circulation. However, the measure could pose a tremendous administrative task for banking agencies.

INDIGENOUS SATELLITE

A COMPLETELY INDIGENOUS satellite, "Apple", will be launched in the middle of the next year, according to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman S Dhavan. In a congratulatory message on the completion of the two-year Satellite Telecommunications Experiments Project (STEP) in Ahmedabad, Dhavan said the experiment had been an important landmark in satellite communications.



11 THE IDEAS PAGE

A digital power

Creating a digital interface between government and citizens has helped curb corruption, delays in service delivery. The next step involves digitising internal processes of government



RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD

THE VISIONARY INITIATIVE of Digital India was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 1, 2015. Digital India strives to bring inclusive growth and bridge the digital divide by leveraging technology solutions that are low cost, developmental, transformative and designed to empower ordinary Indians. Four years down the line, the success of Digital India is finding global resonance and its transformative character is being appreciated.

One of the largest digital infrastructures of the world was conceived to connect all the 250,000 gram panchayats by a high-speed optical fibre network. Today with 3.40 lakh km of optical fibre laid, Bharat Net has reached 1.29 lakh gram panchayats. India of 2019 is recognised as a country with the second largest internet user base, and which offers internet access, data and mobile at the cheapest tariffs in the world.

Digital services being offered by the government as well as the private sector have improved the life of every citizen. Gone are the days when getting a mobile phone SIM would require filling up forms, giving photocopies of documents and then awaiting activation after the KYC process. Aadhaar-based eKYC has made it easy to open bank accounts or to get instant mobile SIMs without any paperwork. There was a time when working professionals used to struggle to get their employee provident fund deposit transferred while switching companies for better prospects. The Aadhaar-linked universal account number (UAN) has made it a hassle free experience. The eHospital services have made it easy to take online appointments in 322 major hospitals. The UMANG mobile app has created a mega digital mobile platform where 362 services of 18 states and the union government can be accessed in 13 Indian languages. Online scholarships, e-Visa, soil health cards etc. have made the delivery of services faster.

The trinity of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) has facilitated direct benefit transfers of financial entitlements of various government schemes directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries. In the last five years, a total of Rs 7.44 lakh crore have been disbursed to beneficiaries of 439 schemes. This has resulted in saving of Rs 1.41 lakh crore of tax payers' money by plugging leakages, curbing corruption and eliminating fake beneficiaries.

The world's largest digital literacy programme, the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA), which aims to train six crore rural adults, has trained 2.21 crore beneficiaries. During a digital interaction with the prime minister, Poonam Sapera from Alwar district of Rajasthan, who comes from an economically and educationally backward community, spoke confidently about her ability to send emails and SMSs. This speaks of the profound impact of Digital India on inclusive growth and transformation of lives.

As a retired soldier, Brahamanand living in Dhanauri Kalan village of Gautam Buddha Nagar of Uttar Pradesh had never thought he would get rid of the cost and inconvenience of visiting a bank branch in town every month to withdraw his pension. Today Brahamanand and many others withdraw their pensions from common service centres in villages by making a simple biometric authentication. From merely 83,000 centres in 2014, common



Suvajit Dey

services centres have not only grown to reach 3.76 lakh, but have also started offering a wide variety of digital services like banking, insurance, utility bill payment, pension, MGNREGA wage payments, ticket booking, digital skilling, public Wi-Fi in villages, tele-medicine services and are playing a key role in developing digital villages. This has created a new breed of rural digital entrepreneurs across the country, and have created 12 lakh jobs locally.

Digital payments have grown at a staggering pace. The total number of digital payment transactions made through various modes in October 2016 was 79.67 crore. In March, 2019, the total number of digital payment transactions hit an all-time high of 332.34 crore. India's home grown fin-tech innovation, BHIM-UPI, whose humble beginning in December, 2016, is scaling new heights of popularity, and has registered 79.9 crore transactions in the month of March, 2019.

To promote the IT industry beyond a few big urban clusters, and to provide IT jobs to youth in semi-urban areas, a humble beginning was made under the BPO promotion scheme. Today 202 BPO centres at 100 locations across India are working from towns like Imphal, Kohima, Guwahati, Srinagar, Jammu, Bareilly, Unnao, Muzaffarpur, Patna, Sangli and Guntur giving jobs to thousands of young men and women.

Electronics manufacturing in India has doubled in last few years. India was home to only two mobile phone manufacturing units in 2014. But today, it stands tall in the global community as the second largest mobile phone manufacturer, with 268 mobile handset and accessories manufacturing units having started functioning in last five years.

Building on the achievements of Digital India in the last five years, the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi aims to scale up the digital revolution to a new level in the coming years. The PM has already expressed his vision to develop India into a \$5 trillion economy by 2024. The Ministry of Electronics and IT has also prepared a road-map to develop India as \$1 trillion digital economy.

Digital initiatives like smart cities, digitisation of governance, digital villages, high speed internet in every part of India, digital inclusion and digital empowerment shall be fueled by emerging technologies like the internet of things, data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Creating a faceless, paperless, cashless and digital interface between government and citizens has immensely helped in curbing corruption, delays in service delivery and leakages. The next level of digitisation in governance will strive to digitise internal processes of the government. The use of data analytics and artificial intelligence will

The trinity of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) has facilitated direct benefit transfers of financial entitlements of various government schemes directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries. In the last five years, a total of Rs 7.44 lakh crore have been disbursed to beneficiaries of 439 schemes. This has resulted in saving of Rs 1.41 lakh crore of tax payers' money by plugging leakages, curbing corruption and eliminating fake beneficiaries.

also help in effective monitoring of performance and develop system automation for future.

We aim to set up one lakh digital villages in the next couple of years. Digital villages will offer various citizen centric services in villages and reduce the need for visiting towns for their needs. For providing easy, economical and reliable internet access to citizens the government is also working on a model to liberalise public Wi-Fi hotspot services, which may revolutionise internet access in India.

The government led by the Prime Minister Modi, has recognised the great potential of startups in transforming the economy and unleashing tech-driven transformation. Besides friendly policies, the government shall strive to explore more ways to improve participation of India's startups in the digital transformation. Today there are close to 19,000 startups in India, of which about 7,000 are technology startups. Many of these are unicorns, having a valuation of over one billion dollar.

India's growing digital profile has made it a data powerhouse. Our government understands the potential of data for creating a vibrant data economy and is using it for empowering people while giving due respect to privacy concerns. Soon we will bring a personal data protection law that will not only address the privacy concerns of individuals, curb misuse of personal data, but will also be an enabler for creating a vibrant data economy. Data centres, data value addition, data startups, data exchanges, data anonymisation would be some of the crucial elements of the data economy, along with safeguarding the data sovereignty of India.

Changes in the economy due to growing digitisation is leading to changes in job roles, skills and human resources. The digital economy will also require frequent training and retraining of human resources. Keeping this in mind, the prime minister has launched the Future Skills online platform for training and retraining the country's IT workforce. Our government is working towards developing a more effective ecosystem for continuous skill development and upgrade of our workforce.

India has taken a leap towards digital transformation. Its successes in leveraging digital technologies for transforming governance and lives of ordinary Indians is being appreciated by the world. Building on this success, we will take this digital revolution to a new level for creating a strong, transparent and vibrant economy with rapid growth that is inclusive and empowering.

The writer is Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and Information Technology and Law and Justice

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The Istanbul vote should bring Erdogan up short and cause him — and his supporters — to ask whether they have created a viable path for the future."

— THE WASHINGTON POST

Ecological dharma

Religious notions of indigenous communities in India provide an understanding of the natural order, and resources to resist its degradation



IN GOOD FAITH

BY NAVINA Jafa

ASSERTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL citizenship by the people of India is the need of the hour. And it is the original citizens of India, the Adivasi (first citizens), who have had the courage to assert environmental citizenry, and deliberate Rta (Sanskrit for "truth" or "order") dharma. To protect their forests and sacred hills, the indigenous forest communities organised protests initiated by the Sanyukt Jansangraha Samiti against the mining of Deposit 13 of the Bailadila iron ore mine in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district. It is similar to the uprising a few years ago of the Dongria Kondhs of Odisha who eventually won a David-and-Goliath battle against mining giant Vedanta Resources.

The Hindu Vedic principle of Rta dharma — and similar principles in Sikhism, Sufism and religious thoughts of other indigenous communities in India — provides guidelines to counter the irresponsible decisions made in the name of development by governments and private stakeholders benefiting from environmental clearances. In the book *The Work of Nations*, author Robert Reich states that the nation that judiciously manages water, soil and other natural resources will be the global success story.

The Hindu concept of Rta dharma, explained by Kapila Vatsyayan in her essay 'Ecology and Indian Myth', states that the moral duty of communities is through karma towards sustaining and maintaining Rta (cosmic natural order). The same thought is reiterated in the Guru Granth Sahib: The book enunciates a concern for the environment as an integrated approach to life and nature by stating that air, water, earth, and life — all originated from the True Lord who resides in each one of us and requires protection. Islamic scholar Sigrid Nökel offers similar ideas through terms such as fitra creation as natural order; *tawhid* — that all things in the world are related to one another and are, as aspects of God, valuable and worthy of preservation; and, that khilafa refers to the role of mankind as the trustee of creation.

The inherent culture of entrusting sacred identities through the articulation of beliefs, rituals, art and myths form collective memories and ownership to protect the environment. The myth of Krishna punishing the serpent Kaliya, who polluted the river Yamuna, is one example. This traditional wisdom in the semantics of development is marginalised — building roads,

setting up industries, creating infrastructure spell short-term gains for the few and apocalypse for humanity as a whole.

Culture is the human response to a geographical context that dictates the way communities dress, eat, design houses, and celebrate. Even the manner in which language — sounds evolve — is inspired by natural environments. Social groups, traditionally, create livelihoods by harnessing available natural resources. Not factoring cultural wisdom to conserve natural environment impacts geographies and, in turn, reconfigures cultural responses.

Consider the importance given to the elements such as earth, water, air, and fire, in Vedic hymns, and in *gaathas* or myths. The tribal rising to protect their sacred mountains in Chhattisgarh or Odisha, is a recollection of the metaphor of the mountain that symbolises the mythical centre and the axis of the world as represented in the idea of Meru and Kailash; it is a physical form that harbours water, soil and vegetation. "The disturbance in water, earth, vegetation, river and mountain ecology system has threatened all manner of life, mythically, Seshnaga (the cosmic serpent in the sea) upholds the earth which is threatened," writes Vatsyayan.

The community ownership expressed in the protests in Chhattisgarh requires duplication in many more areas. The approaching national water emergency "is not because of lack of rains or water bodies, but mismanagement of resources on the ground," says water warrior Farhad Contractor. The Rta dharma towards water, for instance, is expressed in rituals to clean waterbodies in Rajasthan and to appease water spirits in Uttarakhand. Air pollution defies the concept of Vayu, the god of pure air, in the Vedic ethos. Cutting of trees, escalating construction without consideration to secure water catchment areas or aquifers, is letting loose the tamasic energies: Tamas, in Samkhya Hindu philosophy, refers to a proclivity to generate sickness, dullness and inertia. These *gaathas* need to be retold and understood by the community to assert environmental citizenry.

Citizens can no longer afford to wait for governments to address these life-changing issues. To counter government schemes which may create short-term jobs but lead to long-term and permanent damage to soil, water and land, there is only one alternative: Citizen action leading to community governance through "prakriti panchayats". There are precedents — in 2009, the Eco-Sikh Conclave strategised ways to address individual responsibility through groups. One-time protests such as the Chipko Movement or individual groups' uprising cannot be a permanent solution. A systematic citizens' network of environmental panchayats to promote Rta dharma is required. What is needed is the will to support, and to ensure, environmental protection for and by the people of India.

The writer is a cultural activist, an academic and a performing artist

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RURAL LEAP

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The right convergence' (IE, June 28). As per Census 2011 data, an overwhelming 68.84 per cent of India's population lives in rural areas. The rural economy has its own dynamics. Agriculture and allied industries thus acquire utmost significance. A functional synchronisation between all agriculture-related administrative departments would result in a better understanding of not just the agricultural supply chain but also the whole rural ecosystem. A thriving rural economy can create employment opportunities not just for the rural areas but also in the urban centres.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

PAKISTAN'S PLOY?

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Past & present' (IE, June 28). Everyone knows how Sikhs admire Ranjeet Singh and take pride in his legacy. Pakistan first started luring Sikhs with the opening up of Kartarpur corridor and now a bust of Ranjeet Singh has been unveiled in Lahore. While it may be a cynical approach, Pakistan's moves must not be taken at face value. With the Pakistan government under fire from the FATF over its terrorist training centres, the courting of Sikhs may be meant to confuse India.

Bholey Bhardwaj, Mumbai

BUDGETING GROWTH

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A budget wish list' (IE, June 28). The forthcoming budget will be keenly watched to see if it suggests a roadmap to revive the economy and address unemployment. The writer has suggested a great idea — linking fresh employment with tax

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301. Letter writers should mention their postal address and phone number.

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

soaps to companies.

Bal Govind, Noida

TONGUE TIED

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Speaking in many tongues' (IE, June 27). Students of states where neither Hindi nor English is the mother tongue have been disadvantaged. In Gujarat, we have been taught four languages and the result is we do not have mastery over a single one. In addition, such a curriculum leaves little space to learn maths and science in school. Instead, students should learn in their mother tongue and be able to choose another language — either English or Hindi.

Suchak D Patel, Ahmedabad

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



A weekly look at the public conversations shaping ideas beyond borders — in the Subcontinent. Curated by Aakash Joshi

JUDICIARY AND ARMY

WHILE MUCH of the conversation in and about Pakistan's curious de facto state structure has centred around the relationship between the civilian government and the army — whether through coups or "remote controlling" the government — there is little discussion about the relationship of the Pakistan "deep state" and the country's judiciary. An article by Faisal Siddiqui in *Dawn* asks whether there are now the beginnings of "judicial-military" conflict in Pakistan. Siddiqui writes: "The judicial side of this civil-military conflict has either been denied by contending that the judiciary has been the alleged 'B team' of the military or, if acknowledged, the judicial-military conflict has been perceived more as an aberration and less as an emerging trend. But is the judicial-military conflict an emerging trend? And are there any ways to mitigate this conflict?"

Till 1971, argues Siddiqui, Pakistan had a "colonial minded but independent" judiciary. With bouts of military rule, the structural conflict between the army and judiciary came to the fore: "On one side, protection of democracy and a democratic constitution guaranteed the tremendous power of the judiciary; on the other, the de facto power of the military elite was fundamentally threatened by both democracy and democratic constitutionalism."

With the "judicial murder" of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the Islamic-military dictatorship of Zia-ul-Haq, collusion between the judiciary and military became the norm. But since the "judicial movement" of 2007-2009, this has been changing. And lately, it seems the bench is standing up again: "The Faizabad dharna judgement dated Feb 6, 2019, authored by Justice Isa, contains a summary of what he thinks is wrong in Pakistan — violation of citizens' fundamental rights, illegal tactics used to achieve political agendas, lack of security mechanisms to protect citizens, violation of their constitutional role by the military and intelligence agencies, violation of media independence and inaction of Pemra, the weak role of the Election Commission and the misuse of Islam."

The judiciary, with Justice Khosa, has been arguing for a "dialogic approach" with the military. And this could bode well for Pakistan because "the underlying purpose of this inter-institutional dialogue is to bolster constitutionalism and the rule of law, strengthen democracy and create conditions for inter-institutional working towards the real issues of the citizens of this great country."

While such an approach may not make sense to those from countries where the independence of the judiciary is taken for granted, it is rooted in Pakistan's case in "legal realism, which realises the destructiveness of an all-

out institutional conflict between different state organs as well as the need for dialogue in order to ensure judicial independence, constitutional democracy, human rights and effective state authority."

GENERAL ECONOMIST

The June 30 editorial in *Dawn* takes umbrage at Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa's remarks about the economic (mis)management of the country by previous civilian governments and his endorsement of the PTI government led by Imran Khan.

In a subtly-worded, but unmistakable indictment, the editorial first gives credit to the armed forces for dealing with extremist violence since the horrific Peshawar attack, and securing in the last few years a "relative peace". But "nevertheless, recent terrorist incidents point to the tenuous nature of those gains". It adds: "The military leadership should not allow itself to be sidetracked from its core responsibilities — which include keeping the eastern and western borders secure — and instead apply its energies to its area of expertise. Maintaining the separation of powers as defined in the Constitution strengthens institutions and, in turn, the overarching governance framework. However, by endorsing the PTI government's

actions, the army chief is expressing an overt political opinion."

By appearing to be politically biased, Bajwa has diminished the military, which must be seen as above the political fray. Second, the armed forces play an important role in the conduct of elections in Pakistan, and as such must appear and be impartial.

MIGRATION QUESTION

The June 27 editorial in *The Daily Star* deals with a fundamental issue in Bangladesh's political economy, one which is pertinent across South Asia, including India. On the one hand, it argues, the remittances from citizens working abroad provide an important economic resource, especially foreign exchange. On the other hand, "the plight of those engaged in back-breaking labour" overseas "remains overlooked".

The problems of migrant workers include being duped by agents, racism and economic exploitation. As a first step, the editorial proposes that government step in regulate the out-migration sector to secure the rights of such workers. It must do so because it cannot "turn a blind eye to the sufferings of the expatriate workforce while continuing to be a beneficiary of their hard work and sacrifices".

12 ECONOMY

BANKING WATCH

FUND TRANSFER SET TO GET CHEAPER

Mumbai: Fund transfer through the real-time gross settlement (RTGS) and national electronic funds transfer (NEFT) systems is set to become cheaper from Monday after the Reserve Bank of India decided it will not impose any charges on such transactions. **PTI**

SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF GOODS AND SERVICES TAX IMPLEMENTATION

New returns system, single refund window, e-invoice ready for rollout

MoS for Finance & Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur to preside over Monday's event with key officials

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

AS THE indirect tax regime of Goods and Services Tax (GST) completes two years on July 1, the government has outlined measures such as the introduction of the new returns system, single refund window, electronic invoice system, composition scheme for services and single cash ledger in the current fiscal.

The Finance Ministry will mark the completion of two years of GST, with Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur presiding over the event alongside key secretaries and officials of various departments, the finance ministry said in a release on Sunday. The new returns system will be introduced on a trial basis from July 1 and on a mandatory

TRIAL OF NEW RETURNS SYSTEM FROM JULY 1

■ The new returns system will be introduced on a trial basis from July 1 and on a mandatory basis from October 1, with the finance ministry saying that "Sahaj and Sugam returns for small taxpayers are proposed"

■ With regards to single cash ledger, the government will

rationalise the ledger in such a manner that the previous 20 heads are merged into five major heads

■ Officers of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs will be awarded 'GST Commendation Certificates' by Thakur at Monday's event

basis from October 1. "Sahaj and Sugam returns for small taxpayers are proposed," the release said.

With regards to single cash ledger, the government will rationalise the ledger in such a manner that the previous 20 heads are merged into five major heads, it added. There is only

one cash ledger for tax, interest, penalty, fee and others.

A single refund-disbursing mechanism will come into play wherein the government which sanctions refund disburses all four major heads of refunds namely central GST, state GST, integrated GST and cess, the ministry said.

"Threshold limit of Rs 40 lakh is offered of suppliers of goods as per the choice of states. Introduction of composition scheme for small service providers up to an annual turnover of Rs 50 lakh with a tax rate of 6 per cent, electronic invoicing system in a phase-wise manner for B2B (business-to-business) transactions is proposed to be introduced and GST Appellate Tribunals are being established at various state headquarters and area benches also," it further said.

GST subsumed more than a dozen central and state levies like excise duty, service tax and VAT when it was implemented on July 1, 2017.

However, its implementation on five petroleum products - petrol, diesel, natural gas, crude oil and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) was deferred.

The government said GST has integrated India into a single common market by breaking barriers to inter-state trade and commerce.

By eliminating cascading of taxes and reducing transaction costs, it will enhance ease of doing business and provide an impetus to 'Make in India' campaign, it added.

"The introduction of GST was a game changer for the Indian economy as it has replaced multi-layered, complex indirect tax structure with a simple, transparent and technology-driven tax regime", it said.

A book on 'GST for MSME' will also be released during Monday's event. Officers of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) will be awarded 'GST Commendation Certificates' by Thakur, the release said.

Amid concerns over trade war & domestic growth, FPI inflow slows down in June

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

EVEN AS the ruling NDA government came back to power and the Bharatiya Janata Party secured a majority on its own in the general elections concluded on May 2019, domestic growth concerns, global trade worries and slow progress of monsoon in India weighed over the minds of foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) as they significantly reduced the pace of fund inflow into Indian equities in June.

While March this year witnessed the highest ever fund inflow into equities in a month by FPIs at Rs 33,980 crore, it stood at Rs 2,272 crore in June.

Between January and June, FPIs have pumped in a net of Rs 77,322 crore, the highest in the first six months in any year.

February, March and April witnessed strong FPI inflows, which declined a bit in May and then reduced further in June. The pace of FPI flows had a bearing on the stock market performance. While the Sensex at the BSE increased by 10.7 per cent in the three-month period between March and May, it fell marginally by 0.8 per cent in June 2019.

Experts say that both traders and investors are waiting for a series of events at this point of time, including the trade discussions on the sidelines of G20 summit in Japan. While the meeting of the world's 20 major economies is expected to calm the nerves across the global markets, India's discussions with the United States on the tariff issue would calm domestic sentiments. Besides, the market

FPI INFLOWS IN 2019	
Month	FPI equity inflow
January	-5,263.85
February	17,219.62
March	33,980.56
April	21,193.45
May	7,919.73
June	2,272.74

Source: CDSL; All figures in ₹ crore

EXPLAINED

Markets reflect slowing FPI inflow

BETWEEN JANUARY and June 2019, FPIs have pumped in a net of Rs 77,322 crore, the highest in the first six months in any year. The pace of FPI flows has, however, been slowing down. This has had a bearing on the stock market performance. While the BSE Sensex rose by 10.7 per cent in the three month period between March and May, it fell marginally by 0.8 per cent in June 2019.

would also be closely watching the forthcoming events, such as presentation of the Union Budget on July 5, and will see what steps the government takes to boost economic growth.

Looking at the much talked about debt crises and defaults, while the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) recently tightened the reins with stricter disclosures and stringent regulations to discipline investments by mutual funds, it remains to be seen as to what steps does the government announce.

Jimeet Modi, founder and CEO, Samco Securities, said, "The lacklustre vibe before the Budget can be the calm before the storm and markets are expected to remain muted and sideways, but there is likelihood of downward pressure. The auto sector is at the tipping point. Depending on how the government provides support, these stocks will either revive or fall off the cliff."

"Other sectors which are likely to benefit from the Budget would clearly be low cost housing, agriculture and infrastructure as the

government knows very well the multiplier effect to attain the growth and employment targets. Investors should still follow a wait and watch approach," he added.

With growing concerns both on global trade front and uncertainty in equities and debt, while investors are moving to safer havens such as gold, FPIs may also look for government's growth push before they regain confidence to park their funds in India.

Rationalisation of slabs, GST on fuel in industry wishlist

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

RATIONALISATION OF tax slabs with two-three rates and limited demerit goods in the peak 28 per cent slab, single registration window for service providers and inclusion of electricity, oil & gas, real estate and alcohol under its ambit are key suggestions put forward by the industry to the government for the second phase of Goods and Services Tax.

As GST implementation completes two years on July 1, industry bodies such as CII, FICCI urged the government to take further rationalisation measures to kickstart GST 2.0.

"GST 2.0 will take the Indian economy to the next growth level," CII president Vikram

Kirloskar said.

Stating that the teething troubles related to GST may have been resolved, FICCI president Sandip Somany said there is "now need to move forward to achieve the underlying objective of GST framework of creating a simplified indirect taxation system."

FICCI claimed it is generally observed that when members of the Advance Ruling Authority are officers of state tax and central tax departments, they tend to be a revenue-biased while interpreting provisions of the GST law and pronouncing a ruling.

The industry body said divergent rulings by different revenue officers in various states has created ambiguity, environment of uncertainty and chaos among taxpayers, suggesting the government should contemplate consti-

"We believe GST will be a forceful instrument for driving economic growth for India in years to come,"

CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE
DIRECTOR GENERAL, CII

tuting an independent high-level central body similar to the one under the erstwhile indirect tax regime as 'Authority of Advance Ruling' under the GST regime.

Former CII president Adi Godrej said in just two years, GST has consolidated and is delivering notable outcomes for smoother business, lower logistics costs, and easier payment of taxes in digital mode.

"We believe GST will be a forceful instrument for driving

economic growth for India in years to come," he added.

CII director general Chandrajit Banerjee said Indian industry was also really flexible in its approach and that helped in successful rollout of GST, while Kirloskar said the GST Council is proactively examining all issues facing industry and providing solutions.

Somany added the first step should be immediate inclusion of 5 per cent GST on natural gas. "Further, till the time petroleum products are brought within the GST net, suitable amendment should be brought in the excise and VAT laws to allow credit of GST paid on inputs/input services and capital goods against payment of excise duty/VAT to the manufacturers/suppliers of petroleum products," he said.

With stabilisation of revenues,

there is a need to further rationalise the 28 per cent category to only cover demerit goods. From a medium-term perspective, a rate structure of two-three slabs will be welcome and this can also address inverted tax issues, CII said.

It also suggested adopting a single registration process, with IGST for the respective states being paid by such centralised registrants and doing away with GST on cross-charge for services.

CII also recommended that electricity, oil and gas, real estate and alcohol should be included under GST at the earliest, which will lead to seamless input tax credit availability across all sectors, adding that issues in simplification of GST compliances and filing of returns, matching of invoices and getting seamless input tax credit needs to be taken up.

Need to cut centrally sponsored schemes, says N K Singh

PRESSTrust OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 28

FIFTEENTH FINANCE Commission Chairman N K Singh has said the number of centrally sponsored schemes currently exceeds 150 that needs to be reduced for better spending, as revenue buoyancy in indirect taxes remains weak.

"The central outgo is spread over 700 different outlay schemes. The number of centrally sponsored schemes exceeds 150. We need to thin this spread for better spending. Revenue buoyancy continues to be weak in the area of indirect tax," said Singh, at the SKOCH Summit on 'ModiNomics 2.0' held on Saturday.

He said the goods and services tax (GST) needs to be watched carefully in the years to come. Compliance needs to be raised and leakages minimised. "We cannot talk about macroeconomics leaving out important area of deep structural reforms which this economy needs," he added.

SpiceJet flight in Surat, AI plane in Mangaluru avert mishaps on wet runways

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 28

HEAVY RAINS saw two flights - an Air India Express plane in Mangaluru and a SpiceJet aircraft in Surat - veering off or overshooting wet runways Sunday. All passengers onboard the two flights escaped the incidents unhurt.

Earlier in the day, Air India Express Boeing 737 plane from Dubai, with 183 passengers on board, veered off the designated path in Mangaluru while vacating a wet runway after landing. According to an official, the flight's pilots made a failed landing attempt and went around before coming back again and landing, following which the aircraft veered off into soft ground.

"AI Express aircraft VT-AYA, operating IX 384, Dubai to Mangaluru on June 30, after Landing on Runway 24 while vacating the runway to the right side, has gone off the taxiway into soft ground. Tailwind and wet runway with inadequate braking action was reported. All passengers and crew are safe, and deplaned using step ladder," a spokesperson said.

183 ON BOARD AIR INDIA FLIGHT

■ Air India Express Boeing 737 plane from Dubai, with 183 on board, veered off while vacating a wet runway after landing in Mangaluru

■ SpiceJet's Bombardier Q400 coming into Surat from Bhopal overshoot the runway while landing amid rains

In the evening, SpiceJet's Bombardier Q400 coming into Surat from Bhopal overshoot the runway at the time of landing amid heavy rains at the airport.

"(Sunday) evening Bhopal to Surat SpiceJet flight overshoot Runway at Surat airport. All passengers and crew members are safe. Rescue operation is in progress and getting affected due to heavy rain." Surat airport director tweeted. A SpiceJet spokesperson confirmed the incident.

BRIEFLY

Coal supply by CIL to power sector falls 3%

New Delhi: Supply of coal to the power sector by Coal India (CIL) fell by 2.6 per cent to 80.9 million tonnes in the first two months of the ongoing fiscal, government data showed.

Divestment: IL&FS to form sub-panel

Mumbai: IL&FS has decided to constitute a sub-committee to oversee the process of divestment of its assets in light of the RBI's June 7 circular. **PTI**

340 infra projects show cost overruns of ₹3.3 lakh cr

As many as 340 infrastructure projects have shown cost overruns to the tune of over Rs 3.3 lakh crore, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's (MoSPI) report for March 2019 said

₹18,09,681.47 cr
Original implementation cost of 1405 projects

₹21,39,924.38 cr
Anticipated cost of completion of 1405 projects

₹3,30,242.91 cr
Overall cost overruns, i.e. 18.25 per cent of original cost

₹8,53,680.47 cr
Expenditure incurred on these projects till March

1405: Number of infrastructure projects monitored by MoSPI, each worth Rs 150 crore and above

340: Projects that reported cost overruns

381: Projects that reported time escalation; average time overrun of 43.17 months

■ 117: Projects delayed by one to 12 months



■ 63: Projects delayed by 13 to 24 months

■ 103: Projects delayed by 25 to 60 months

■ 98: Projects delayed by 61 months or more

REASONS REPORTED FOR TIME OVERRUNS:

- Delays in land acquisition
- Forest clearance
- Supply of equipment
- Fund constraints
- Geological surprises
- Geo-mining conditions
- Slow progress in civil works
- Shortage of labour

China's factory activity shrinks as US tariffs, slowdown hit orders

REUTERS
BEIJING, JUNE 30

CHINA'S FACTORY activity shrank more than expected in June, an official manufacturing survey showed, highlighting the need for more economic stimulus as US tariffs and weaker domestic demand ramped up pressure on new orders for goods.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) stood at 49.4 in June, China's National Bureau of Statistics said on Sunday, unchanged from the previous month and below the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction on a monthly basis. Analysts polled by Reuters predicted a reading of 49.5.

The weak manufacturing readings are likely to cast a shadow over the apparent progress US and Chinese leaders made at the G20 summit in Japan over the weekend in restarting their troubled talks over tariffs amid a costly trade war. They will also spark concerns about stalling



In June, China's factory output growth slowed, with the subindex falling to 51.3 from 51.7 in May. Reuters File Photo

growth in China and the risk of a global recession, despite slightly better-than-expected export and industrial profits data in May.

Many economists still expect the economy to face strong headwinds in coming months as domestic demand falters and external risks rise. "Although the outcome of the G20 summit (in Osaka) might boost confidence for some entities, organic growth in the economy is still insufficient, and counter-cyclical stimulus

policies need to be maintained," researchers at Huatai Securities wrote in a research note.

"The PMI index continued to fall across the board this month, and only the raw material inventory sub-index was up due to weak demand," the research note read. In June, China's factory output growth slowed, with the subindex falling to 51.3 from 51.7 in May while the contraction in total new orders accelerated to 49.6 from 49.8.

EARNs ₹23,621 crore, DESPITE SENSEX GAINING 5,417 POINTS IN THE FISCAL

LIC's FY19 profit from stock markets down 7.89%

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JUNE 30

LIFE INSURANCE Corporation (LIC) of India has realised a lower profit of Rs 23,621 crore from its equity investment during 2018-19, down 7.89 per cent from Rs 25,646 crore in the previous year. The life insurance behemoth had made a gross equity investment of Rs 68,621 crore during the year.

The profit of LIC from the market declined despite the volatile stock market index Sensex gaining 5,417 points at 38,672.91 in the fiscal ended March 2019.

Even though Sensex rose only 3,348 points in FY18, LIC booked a higher profit of Rs 25,646 crore from the stock market in the year. LIC, the largest stock market investor in India, made Rs 19,302 crore profit in 2016-17 while the Sensex gained 4,279 points.

The corporation, which is now the largest capital market investor in the country, has

At a time when the financial sector is facing a huge crisis amid rising non-performing assets in banking sector and defaults in debt payments by India Inc, LIC's growth in the investment income has risen by 5.17 per cent during 2018-19

kicked off 2019-20 with an investible corpus of Rs 348,692 crore, which will be invested in capital market instruments like bonds including government securities, corporate bonds and equities.

The market value of LIC's investment as at end of FY19 is Rs 28.74 lakh crore, as against Rs 26.46 lakh crore in 2017-18, showing a growth of 8.61 per cent. Moreover, the total assets of the corporation crossed the historic figure of Rs 30 lakh crore for the first time to Rs 31.11 lakh crore, a rise of 9.38 per cent.

As per provisional results, in 2018-19, the corporation invested more than Rs 2 lakh crore in central and state gov-

ernment securities with an average annualised yield of almost 8.25 per cent.

Currently, about 65 per cent of investments in life fund - total investment corpus accumulated over decades - of LIC are in central and state government long term securities with high interest coupons.

An investment of Rs 30,595 crore was made in corporate bonds with an average annualised yield of 9.11 per cent

As per the provisional accounts for 2018-19, LIC's total premium income - new premium along with the renewal premium - was Rs 337,185 crore, showing a growth of 6.08 per cent, while the total benefits paid amounted to Rs

250,936 crore, growing by as much as 26.66 per cent. LIC had mobilised a total new premium of Rs 41,086.31 crore in FY19. The total income of LIC, which includes total premium and investment income, was around Rs 560,784 crore in 2018-19, a rise of 7.10 per cent.

Such a robust income augurs well for the corporation's policyholders, who can continue to expect a decent bonus for 2018-19.

At a time when the financial sector is facing a huge crisis amid rising non-performing assets in banking sector and defaults in debt payments by India Inc, as a result of regular follow ups, LIC's growth in the investment income has risen by 5.17 per cent during 2018-19.

Over the last four years, LIC's investments income has risen from Rs 1.53 lakh crore to Rs 2.06 lakh crore up to FY19. "Over the years, barring one or two, LIC's expenses have been met with from the income generated from investments by way of interest and

dividends," LIC officials said. "Our investment portfolio remains untouched and continues to grow every year and is likely to cross Rs 30 lakh crore as at the end of the current fiscal," they said.

However, with LIC's declining market share in the domestic market, the company's performance has been an area of deep concern for its new top management.

According to the performance analysis by LIC's top management, headed by newly-appointed chairman M R Kumar, the corporation - except in pension and group scheme (P&G) - has missed its own targets in the most of the parameters during financial year 2018-19.

According to officials, one of the critical areas that glaringly stand out is that while the corporation still holds 74.71 per cent of the market share in terms of number of policies, its market share in individual non-single premium has fallen to 40.32 per cent in 2018-19.

MILITARY REFORM

Army dreamers

Xi Jinping wants China's armed forces to be "world-class" by 2050



Soldiers of the People's Liberation Army take part in a military parade in Inner Mongolia in 2017. Reuters

OVER THE past decade, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been lavished with money and arms. China's military spending rose by 83% in real terms between 2009 and 2018, by far the largest growth spurt in any big country. The splurge has enabled China to deploy precision missiles and anti-satellite weapons that challenge American supremacy in the western Pacific. China's leader, Xi Jinping, says his "Chinese dream" includes a "dream of a strong armed forces". That, he says, involves "modernising" the PLA by 2035 and making it "world-class"—in other words, America-beating—by mid-century. He has been making a lot of progress.

Organisational reforms may be less eye-catching than missiles that fly at Mach 5, unmanned cargo planes and electromagnetically powered superguns (all of which China has tested in the past year). Yet Mr Xi has realised that there is little point in grafting fancy weapons onto an old-fashioned force. During the cold war the PLA evolved to repel the Soviet Union and America in big land wars on Chinese soil. Massed infantry would grind down the enemy in attritional battles. In the 1990s Chinese leaders, alarmed by American prowess in the Gulf war of 1991, decided to focus on enhancing the PLA's ability to fight "local wars under high-technology conditions". They were thinking of short, sharp conflicts on China's periphery, such as over Taiwan, in which air and naval power would be as important as ground forces. Mr Xi decided that winning such wars required changing the armed forces' structure. He has done more in the past three years to reform the PLA than any leader since Deng Xiaoping.

Mr Xi's principal aim is to increase "jointness". This term, borrowed from Western military jargon, refers to the ability of different services—army, navy and air force—to co-operate on the battlefield quickly and seamlessly. Jointness is especially important for fighting wars that break out abroad. It can be difficult

for commanders at national headquarters to choreograph soldiers, sailors and pilots from a great distance. The different services must be able to work together without instruction from on high.

China's model is the United States, which—under the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986—drastically reformed its own armed forces in order to achieve this goal. The Pentagon carved up the globe into "combatant commands". No longer would services squabble among themselves. All soldiers, sailors and pilots in a given area, such as the Persian Gulf or the Pacific, would take orders from a single officer.

Mr Xi has followed suit. Before his reforms, army and navy commanders in the country's seven military regions would report to their respective service headquarters, with little or no co-ordination. In February 2016 Mr Xi replaced the regions with five "theatres", each under a single commander (see map). The eastern one based in Nanjing would prepare for war with Taiwan and Japan, for instance. The sprawling western theatre, in Chengdu, would handle India. The southern one in Guangzhou would manage the South China Sea.

As well as these geographic commands, two others were formed in 2015, each aimed at an American vulnerability. American forces depend on communications via satellites, computer networks and other high-tech channels. So Mr Xi created a new Strategic Support Force to target these systems. It directs space, cyber, electronic and psychological warfare. In 2018 it conducted exercises against five PLA units in what the Pentagon called a "complex electronic warfare environment". American military power in Asia also depends on a network of bases and aircraft carriers. Mr Xi took aim at these by establishing a new service called the PLA Rocket Force—an upgrade of what was previously known less rousing as the Second Artillery Corps.

He has also been trimming the armed forces'



bloated ranks, though they remain over 2m-strong. Since 2015 the PLA has shed 300,000 men, most of them from the land forces, which have lost one-third of their commissioned officers and shrunk from 70% of the PLA's total

strength to less than half (though happily the army has kept its dance troupes, which it had been told it would lose). By contrast, the marines are tripling in size. Navy and air-force officers have gained more powerful posts, including

leadership of two theatre commands. This reflects the PLA's tilt towards the seas—and the skies above them.

It is hard to tell whether the new PLA is more proficient on the battlefield. China has not fought a war in four decades. The last Chinese soldiers with experience of a large-scale conflict—a war with Vietnam in 1979—will retire shortly.

But there is evidence that the PLA is getting better at jointness. Some of China's growing number of forays beyond its borders, notably bomber flights around Taiwan and over the South China Sea, indicate increasing co-ordination between air and naval forces. "We see a lot of joint exercises to work out kinks in the system and get the services used to working with each other," says Phillip Saunders of the National Defence University in Washington, DC. Chinese war games were once highly scripted affairs. Now officers are assessed on the realism of their training, says Meia Nouwens of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. Before Mr Xi's reforms the "blue team", which simulates an adversary, would always ritually lose large-scale annual exercises known as "Stride" in Inner Mongolia. Now they usually win.

But China's troops may still be ill-prepared for complex warfare. In America promotions depend on officers' ability to work with other services. Their Chinese counterparts often spend their entire careers in one service, in one region and even doing the same job. Political culture is another problem. "The structures that China is trying to emulate are based on openness, on delegation of authority and collaboration," notes Admiral Scott Swift of MIT, who retired last year as commander of America's Pacific Fleet. He says modern warfare requires decentralised decision-making because cyber and electronic warfare can sever communications between commanders and units. "Military officers that are founded on democratic principles are going to be much more

adept at adapting to that environment," Admiral Swift suggests.

Mr Xi is an authoritarian who strives for centralised control. His predecessor, Hu Jintao, did not have a tight grip on the PLA, says Mr Saunders. That is because Mr Hu's own predecessor, Jiang Zemin, had appointed the two vice-chairmen of the Central Military Commission, a powerful body that oversees the armed forces. They stayed throughout Mr Hu's tenure, frustrating any efforts to reform the PLA and curb its endemic corruption and ill-discipline.

Mr Xi is determined not to suffer the same fate. His anti-corruption purges have ensnared more than 13,000 officers (three serving generals were demoted in June, according to the South China Morning Post, a newspaper in Hong Kong). Mr Xi slimmed down the military commission from 11 to seven members, kicking off the service chiefs and adding an anti-graft officer. The body was also given control of the paramilitary People's Armed Police, which in turn absorbed the coast guard.

Predictably, the restructuring has generated resentment. Senior officers are irked at losing privileges. Demobilised soldiers sometimes take their grievances to the streets—one reason why Mr Xi founded a ministry of veterans' affairs in 2016. But, says Ms Nouwens, younger ranks benefit from merit-based promotion, take pride in the growing prominence of the PLA in Chinese film and television, and admire Mr Xi's "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation". They will have an opportunity to show off on October 1st when a huge military parade will be staged in Beijing to mark the 70th anniversary of Communist rule. It will be the first such show in the capital since Mr Xi launched his reforms. Expect a world-class performance.

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LANGUAGE AND THE LAW

Silly sausages

Europe heroically defends itself against veggie burgers

THE EUROPEAN Union gets a lot of flak. All right, it isn't literally blasted with anti-aircraft fire, but you know what we mean. One ongoing battle (ok, nobody died) involves the use of words. Earlier this year, the European Parliament's agriculture committee voted to prohibit the terms "burger", "sausage", "escalope" and "steak" to describe products that do not contain any meat. It was inspired by the European Court of Justice's decision in 2017 to ban the use of "milk", "butter" and "cream" for non-dairy products. Exceptions were made for "ice cream" and "almond milk", but "soya milk" went down the drain, lest consumers as-

sume it had been extracted from the soya udder of a soya cow. The court has yet to rule on the milk of human kindness.

Greens are mounting a campaign against the committee's decision, which they suspect is supported not only by linguistic purists but also by the meat industry. This newspaper thinks the parliament is quite right to protect citizens from the confusion they would no doubt feel were they to find that no part of a "veggie burger" was made of the flesh of a dead animal. Indeed, this praiseworthy initiative needs to go further.

"Escalopes" pose a clear danger to consumers, who might well recoil in horror



The EU Parliament voted to prohibit the term 'burger' to describe any product that does not contain meat. NYT

when, taking a mouthful of one, they discover that it is made not of the scallops from which it got its name but of chicken or veal. "Sausages" should refer only to heavily salted meat, whence the term derives; for clarity, consumers should be informed that the item is encased in animal intestine. Steaks should be sold only on a pointed stick, on the grounds that most shoppers will rely on the proto-Indo-European etymology. Any confusion could be avoided if kebabs were, as their Arabic root suggests, always sold burned. The production of burgers should be restricted to the butchers of Hamburg, long ago deprived of their intellectual property by a shocking failure of linguistic regulation. The same right should be extended to makers of Frankfurter sausages—sorry, meat-filled gut. And "meat" itself should apply to all food, sweet or savoury, which would make the term historically accurate, if useless.

Nor should the parliament's reforming zeal be restricted to food. Any reference to the European budget should be confined to the money that the commis-

sioner for economic and monetary affairs, Valdis Dombrovskis, keeps on his person in a bougette, or leather purse. Only those banks which carry out their business on wooden benches (banco, in Italian) should be included in the banking union. Discussion of computers should be limited to clerks who do budgetary calculations, while that of the digital single market should apply only to sums that people can do on their fingers.

This linguistic rigour should be extended through both time and space. The Holy Roman Empire, as Voltaire pointed out, was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire; La Manche has no sartorial connections; the Mediterranean is not the centre of the Earth; there is no horticulture in the Big Apple. They need renaming.

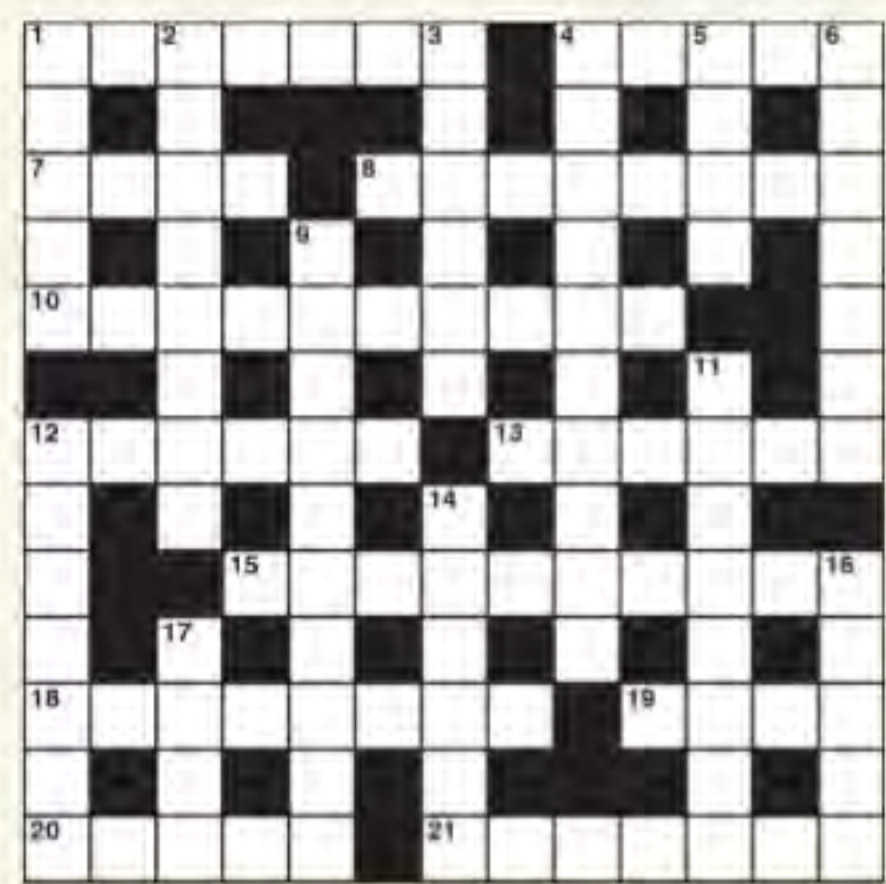
Greens are mounting a campaign against the committee's decision, which they suspect is supported not only by linguistic purists but also by the meat industry.

Not all the union's governing structures are taking their linguistic responsibilities seriously enough. When earlier this year Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, spoke of "concrete measures" to extend the single market and a "level playing field", listeners might reasonably have looked forward to a multi-billion-euro infrastructure project to shift French and Italian mountaintops to the low-lying bits around Brussels.

The Treaty of Rome speaks of the need to respect member states' culture (no, nothing to do with yogurt) and bind them together (please put the string away). In view of those aspirations, Europe's leaders need to get on board with this reform. Not literally, obviously. It's not a ship. Never mind.

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CROSSWORD 3846



- ACROSS: 1 Fish bone? (7), 4 He's certainly got something (5), 7 Affection means nothing (4), 8 People agree in thought (8), 10 Publicity man rates Verdi differently (10), 12 Turns out to have a game on board (6), 13 A financial return? (6), 15 I've acted on new indication of a deal (6,4), 18 See 6 Down, 19 Double figures (4), 20 Point out a French resort of relative importance (5), 21 Defeat the other side (7). Down: 1 Game in which Harry leads mother (5), 2 They bring new life to plays, for example (8), 3 Sort of cage holds fifty-one of the Celts (6), 4 Honestly devoid of cant? (2,3,5), 5 It runs out of line (4), 6 and 18 Across: Cherry and almond pie made by a writer (7,8), 9 An example of extreme wear (6,4), 11 Small battleship used in sporting contest? (3-2-3), 12 It's used for making chips (7), 14 Passenger ship has a built-in long, narrow look (6), 16 Result in a case of two men sued for damages (5), 17 Goodbye to depression (4).

Solutions Crossword 3845: Across: 1 Destination, 9 Implied, 10 Tot up, 11 Guys, 12 Et cetera, 14 Recast, 16 Leered, 18 Response, 19 Dido, 22 Neons, 23 Entrain, 24 At a distance. Down: 2 Empty, 3 Trim, 4 Nudity, 5 Tattered, 6 Outwear, 7 Fingerprint, 8 Ups and downs, 13 Espoused, 15 Cast out, 17 Osiers, 20 Isaac, 21 Etna.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue. Sleep is the golden chain that ties ___ and our ___ together - Thomas Dekker (6,6)

SVAAEE, AERDHL, HSIOT, DEELBH. Includes a grid for jumbled words and the answer: SLEEP.

Difficulty Level 1s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

SUDOKU 3894

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 2, 6, 8, 5, 4, 9, 3, 6, 3, 7, 1, 6, 9, 1, 5, 8, 5, 1, 2, 9, 8, 1, 1, 5, 4, 9, 2.

SOLUTION SUDOKU 3893

Sudoku solution grid with numbers 2, 5, 1, 3, 8, 6, 7, 4, 9, 4, 6, 7, 1, 9, 2, 8, 3, 5, 3, 9, 8, 5, 4, 7, 2, 6, 1, 5, 7, 6, 8, 1, 4, 3, 9, 2, 8, 1, 2, 7, 3, 9, 4, 5, 6, 9, 3, 4, 2, 6, 5, 1, 7, 8, 7, 8, 5, 9, 2, 3, 6, 1, 4, 6, 2, 3, 4, 5, 1, 9, 8, 7, 1, 4, 9, 6, 7, 8, 5, 2, 3.

Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

Horoscope section for ARIES, LIBRA, TAURUS, GEMINI, SCORPIO, SAGITTARIUS, CANCER, CAPRICORN, AQUARIUS, LEO, VIRGO, and PISCES.

Uttarakhand Government Procurement Portal notice for e-procurement of various items.

Uttarakhand Pejyal Sansadhan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam Tender Notice for construction work.

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY Tender Notice for materials management.

Maharashtra Airport Development Company Ltd. Tender Notice for consultant and advertisement rights.

Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar) website information.

National Bid/Notice Inviting Tender

Table with columns: S. No., Type of Carton/Tray, Qty., Cost of Bid Documents (Rs.), EMD (Rs.).

1. Period of Contract:- One year from the date of agreement. 2. Obtaining Tender:- Tender document can be obtained from Managing Director, Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar) and Dy. General Manager (E/M), Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board, Dehradun, after paying cost of bid document through DD in favour of Managing Director, Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar). 3. Tender document can also be downloaded from the website www.ukapmb.org. The downloaded document shall be treated as valid document for participation in the tender, but the cost of the tender documentation the form of DD in favour of Managing Director, Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar) is to be enclosed with the bid along with requisite Bid security & other documents, failing which the tender will be out rightly rejected. 4. The Interested parties should quote their rates for (anywhere in Uttarakhand) and inclusive of all taxes.

Note: It may be ensured that the DD of cost of tender form and DD of Earnest money should bear the date after the date of NIT.

GOA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD. BRIEF TENDER NOTICE (E-TENDERING MODE ONLY) NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS OF GTDC.

Government of Maharashtra Office of The Executive Engineer P.W. Department G.R. No. CAT2017/Pra. Kra.8/Building-2 Dt. 12.04.2017 Public Works Division No.1 Gadchiroli- 442605

E-Tender Notice No.02/2018-2019 Online Percent rate E-Tenders in B-1 form are invited by Executive Engineer, Public Works Division No.1, Gadchiroli for Sr.No. 1 work on behalf of Public Works Department of Government of Maharashtra for contractor registered in appropriate class of Public Works Department.

CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD. Tender Notice - CON/IT/2828/19/01 (E-TENDERING MODE ONLY)

Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. Bhopal COMMON MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (COPPER DIVISION) EOI Notice no. : CMM-Cu/EOI/2019-20/01

15 TALK ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

WEEK AHEAD



What We See

IN HIS solo exhibition titled "Delhi: Evolution through Flora and Time", artist Vidur Sodhani looks at the changing landscape of the Capital and how there has been a dramatic shift in its flora and fauna. On at India Habitat Center till July 31.



Delving into the Past

LISTEN TO Vinita Sinha, associate professor of English at Delhi University, and folk singer Malini Awasthi discuss "Folk Cultures and Intersemiotic Translations" as part of the series 'Revisiting classics with translation artists-VII'. The talk has been curated by Anand Khatri. At India Habitat Center on July 3, 7 pm.



Playing on Screen

WATCH FILMS like *Sleeplessly Yours* (pictured), *Fear and Body Deep* at the Malayalam Film Festival. The three-day festival, which is in its second edition, has been curated by film editor Bina Paul and is being organised in collaboration with the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy. At India International Center, from July 3 to 6, 4.30 pm onwards. Entry is free.



Celebrating Nature

VIEW WORKS of 30 artists, including Arpana Caur, S Paul, Himmat Shah and Arpitha Reddy, at the exhibition "Kalpavriksha". Curated by Uma Nair, the show pays homage to the eternal power of trees. At India International Center, from July 2-12.



Different Shades

KNOWN TO explore the relationship between objects and space, the works of modern Indian painter Prabhakar Barwe are being celebrated in the exhibition "Astivta: The Essence of Prabhakar Barwe". On at the National Gallery of Modern Art till July 28, 11 am to 6.30 pm.

His Journey

WATCH THE tale of a Malinese bus driver as he deals with his new life as a drug runner in *Wulu*. The French film has been directed by Daouda Coulibaly, a French-Malinese filmmaker. At Alliance Francaise, July 2, 10 am.



I got myself educated to show people that I'm as accomplished as they are. But it did not help because by then I had become a threat to the dominant culture of white America. So I thought of creating a character that can break these chains of oppression

NEMAT SADAT

The author in Delhi Tashi Tobgyal



'I have inherited the loss of that golden age of paradise'

Afghan-American writer Nemat Sadat on weaving a gay love story, living in a homeless shelter in the US and why he feels at home in India

SURBHI GUPTA

WRITER NEMAT SADAT turned forty last week and celebrated it with the launch of his debut novel *The Carpet Weaver* (Rs 399, Penguin Random House) at New Delhi's Imperial Hotel. Born in Afghanistan, he was only five when he fled to the US with his mother and siblings after the war broke out in 1979. Life in southern California went on as usual, till 9/11 happened. Soon Sadat moved to the East Coast and studied at Harvard and Columbia. At 23, he came out to himself as gay but the family was told seven years later. In the year 2012 the journalist was in the news for initiating an underground queer rights movement in Afghanistan, when he was teaching at the American University of Afghanistan. Now his book is a talking point. It tells the tale of Kanishka, 16-year-old son of a leading carpet seller in Afghanistan, who falls in love with his friend Maihan. They keep their romance a secret to avoid the death penalty meted out to those deemed to be *kuni* (a derogatory term for gay men). The book chronicles Kanishka's search for Maihan after the two are separated during the war. Excerpts from an interview with Sadat:

How did this book come up? Was there a trigger?

I think it was due to the rejection and persecution that I faced, not only for being gay but also for being an Afghan refugee. Coming from a Muslim background and being an immigrant in America, my identity seems to be a threat. After 9/11, it became worse. I got myself educated just to show people that I'm as accomplished as they are. But it did not help because by then I had become a threat to the dominant culture of white America. So I thought of creating a character that can break these chains of oppression and is empowered by his identity. That is what Kanishka does when he comes out to his mother and charts his own path. He doesn't cut off with his family. The story was jarring for the publishers because they

felt it is was not accurate. Over 450 agents rejected the manuscript on the grounds that there will be no market for it.

How did you develop the storyline?

I think Kanishka and I share the same core values. He is shrouded by fear and doubt in the beginning but overcomes that and finds the courage to speak up. It takes the readers through the plight of the family when the war is going on, when they end up in a refugee camp in Pakistan and their journey to the US. It also discusses the exploitation of children in the carpet weaving industry in Afghanistan. Carpet weaving is tied to the war economy. Pakistan was able to profit from the migration of talented Afghan carpet weavers who moved to the country. But the middle class does not want to get into carpet weaving, which is why Kanishka's father objects to the profession. This is also a coming-of-age story of an artist.

Why did you name it *The Carpet Weaver*?

I like the symbolism *The Kite Runner* had. Besides agriculture, in Afghanistan handicrafts have been a primary source of income for the population and carpet weaving has been a lucrative profession. The carpets were in great demand in the West. So I think the title weaves the history, culture, politics and literature of the place together.

How difficult was the process of writing the book?

It was incredibly difficult to write. Most of my peers in Oxford had read Russian and French classics at a very young age. I started reading seriously after high school, especially about Afghanistan and US foreign policy. Indian writers such as Arvind Adiga and Kiran Desai also had an influence on me. Kiran's richness and scope in the setting in *The Inheritance of Loss* really encouraged me. I think I have inherited the loss of that golden age of paradise. While growing up in the diaspora community of southern

California, we would hear stories from our elders. People question me about the little time I have spent in Afghanistan, but they don't know I am a household name in the country. I had essayed the role of a transgender in a play in the UK, and I had to cross dress. The photos were shared across social media by people in Afghanistan. I returned home after receiving a fatwa and death threats and was shunned by my near and dear ones. I cried last night (at the book launch party), as I feel that I've found a home with Indians. I've never felt integrated in the US by being Afghan, refugee, brown, gay, and from a Muslim background.

You started writing the book 11 years back. Why did it take so long?

I was inspired to write this book the day Barack Obama got the nomination instead of Hillary Clinton for the presidential election. I had this story bottled up inside me. It wasn't as much about creating a love story, as much as it was about creating an alter ego where Kanishka had his childhood friends who supported him — the kind of male friends I did not have. I grew up playing with my cousins and their dolls. It was kind of a radical escapist fantasy for me, where I am growing up in Afghanistan and romanticising. I thought if a biracial black man can win a nomination from such a powerful political party in the US, then I can surely write this book. For the next few weeks, I had an outburst of emotions and wrote over 45,000 words. It was a cathartic experience. After my stint in Kabul, nobody wanted to give me a job and my father did not allow me to come home. I could go home only if I returned to the closet. My siblings did not support me either, and I had to live in a homeless shelter. My sister wanted me to meet my twin nieces and it was then that my family saw my state — lice in my hair, damaged skin and weight issues. My mother asked me to move in with her, not find a job and only focus on *The Carpet Weaver*. I think this novel saved me, because there were moments when I wished I was dead, but writing kept me alive.



BEAUTY IN SIMPLICITY

Pop icon Ed Sheeran (pictured) has collaborated with singer Khalid for his latest song *Beautiful People*. Featuring a simple couple in Los Angeles, the song is part of the album *No. 6 Collaborations Project*, which will release on July 12.

For a Few Laughs

The judges of the second season of *Comicstaan* share what India finds funny



The show mentors young talent

ANUSHREE MAJUMDAR

AMAZON PRIME'S first Indian original, *Comicstaan*, a talent hunt show for the next big names in the Indian comedy scene, returns for a second edition in July. The eight-episode show will feature 10 contestants try and impress some of the biggest names in the Indian comedy industry — Biswa Kalyan Rath, Kaneez Surka, Kenny Sebastian, Sumukhi Suresh, Neeti Palta, Zakir Khan and Kanan Gill. After a press conference announcing the season, Rath, Surka and Suresh sit together at the Marriott Hotel in Juhu and chat about what India finds funny, mentoring young talent, and whether vulnerability has a place in comedy. Excerpts:

The show is returning for a second season, with new contestants and a few new judges. Is there anything that has surprised you?

BISWA KALYAN RATH (BKR): I'm amazed by how fast people can grow when they are put under pressure. Typically, a comic spends the first year producing five minutes of good content; the second year, it's a little more. Here, the contestants are producing five minutes a week.

KANEEZ SURKA (KS): Yes, and how they've adapted to so many different genres so quickly — from stand-up to improv and sketch — and doing it so well. They got it in one week and performed.

What does this show tell us about what India finds funny today?

SUMUKHI SURESH (SS): We're moving away from the standard jokes about sexism or cities, and the show is a chance to discover that there are a range of neutral topics to mine from.

BKR: There are two ways to answer this — one, by looking at the audience reaction, and the other from the judge's chair. The upcoming comics are the voice of India. Having said that, India is a very big country, it's very hard to say what the entire country finds funny. But we're lucky to be able to perform here, there's a fanbase for everything.

Can comedy be taught? If not, what is the mentor's role?

SS: I don't think it can be, but my role as a mentor is to help them further their skill set.

KS: The show is about the craft of comedy, which can't be taught. But something like improv can be taught — there are rules and guidelines.

BKR: You can't teach comedy as a concept, but you can debate a joke and elevate it. As mentors, we're mostly figuring out as well; it's mostly fixing, editing, restructuring, simple things like hold the mic closer.

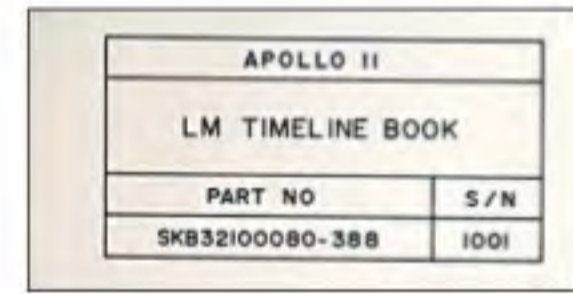
Almost exactly a year before, Hannah Gadsby's special, *Nanette*, broke the mould in stand up — it cut through the fat and showed us the white of the bone. Can that sort of intensely personal and visceral comedy work in India, a country that traditionally celebrates success and not our failures?

BKR: This is a tough question, because we have to try it first. I think it can work because people are the same everywhere, and the Indian audience is as good as the audience anywhere in the world. We don't need to wonder about what genre that will be, because it will be its own thing.

KS: The trend in comedy, globally, is changing and moving from being a showman to something more vulnerable. It's in vogue. When I do comedy, I'm not getting hung up on the laughs per minute, but it's something that I want to say. I think comedy should be more layered: the jokes must be funny but also try and tell you something at the same time. *Nanette* is important because for the first time, we saw a woman bring something new to stand up — men have dictated the genre since the beginning. Gadsby's show had a very female energy to it, and it is stand up, and that's what I would like to achieve as a stand up comedian.

SS: *Nanette* is also a show that is based on a narrative of over 12 years or so. There are shows that explore that kind of vulnerability, but in stand up, to get to a point where you can do that, will take some time.

SNAPSHOTS



From Outer Space

NEARLY 200 artefacts recording NASA missions of the '60s and '70s will be auctioned by Christie's next month. Titled "One Giant Leap: Celebrating Space Exploration 50 Years after Apollo 11", the auction's highlight is *The Apollo 11 Lunar Module Timeline Book* (pictured), used by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to navigate the lunar module Eagle in 1969.



In the Dark

ONE RARELY comes to know what happens in a theatre once the lights are turned off. Comprising over 1,000 photographs by Fraser Lee, the exhibition titled "Behind the Scenes at Birmingham Repertory Theatre" also takes the viewers backstage after the show is over. The exhibition at a private gallery in Birmingham is on till July 3.

ON THE LOOSE

Pomp vs Circumstance

Graduation Day is to celebrate students, not build 'Indian' pride



LEHER KALA

ONE OF the most enduring images marking the rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood are those of students wearing black capes and tasselled, stiff caps that they fling in the air when they receive their degrees at convocation ceremonies. Alas, the graduation robe will soon be a thing of the past in those Indian universities that followed this universal protocol, at least according to a fresh circular issued by the

University Grants Commission (UGC). The government wants students to wear regional attire made of Indian handloom when they receive their degrees. The letter, addressed to all public and private universities that fall under the UGC, said "using handloom garments would instill a sense of pride in being Indian".

In these times, one should be grateful that (so far) we're not receiving notices at home ordering us to cut a laddoo on our birthdays instead of cakes. Because, that too is a Western style celebration that could be questioned, if a senior UGC official can claim the black robe at graduation is a colonial relic that needs to go. However, what the UGC is missing is that some key events in an individual's life are made up of the same powerful symbols, world over, regardless of where they originated. Like the other important event in one's life, a marriage for example, that calls for a certain etiquette with

formal clothes, a feast, colourful decor—it may differ slightly based on geography but carries pretty much the same accompanying paraphernalia of festivity, everywhere. Similarly, the black robe has been an essential metaphor of (vetoed) knowledge since the 12th century, when scholastic monks donned them once their studies were over. Graduation day is a tradition that spread into the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, was adopted by hallowed institutions in Oxford and Cambridge, binding the human race in a sense, with the same, comforting finality to look forward to at the end of

Graduation day is a tradition that spread into the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, was adopted by hallowed institutions in Oxford and Cambridge, binding the human race in a sense, with the same, comforting finality

one's education. It is something to introspect on, that irrespective of the complex network of social histories we descend from, convocation ceremonies have a common aim, whether they're held in an engineering institute in Manipal or a liberal arts college in California. The idea is to honour students for their years of hard work, acknowledge the end of one stage of life, and new, auspicious beginnings: the transition from *Brahmacharya* towards *Grihastha*. When my toddler finished two years at her play school, the entire class of three-year-olds were given black cardboard hats and on the last day, they threw them magnificently and simultaneously in the air, providing, perhaps, the ultimate reference to how ubiquitous the grad ceremony has become. On a more serious note, in an Indian

context, receiving that important piece of paper has a special significance, considering the kind of pressure cooker atmosphere academics usually involves. Parents often make huge sacrifices to put their kids through school and when they do finish college, there is a need to celebrate.

Student life is odd in the way it eventually comes together, the angst, the growing up, the work ethic established in those early years often shaping lifelong careers. Cheesy though it sounds, this is one end that actually has a new starting point. One would have to be an exceptionally dour person, (or a UGC official) who thinks yet another life lesson in Indian pride needs to be taught at this stage; on the one day these young adults may sit back and reflect on their long process of maturation. Just a thought, these graduates should be deciding for themselves with what pomp they'd like to show themselves out into the world. My bet is it won't be in desi attire but like countless students everywhere, who have waited patiently to make that grand gesture of doffing their hats.

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Two horsemen and apocalypse

The 31-run defeat to England presented another prognosis of India's over-dependence on Sharma and Kohli, a weakness that could turn calamitous



'The boundaries weren't coming off'

Birmingham: Asked about Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Kedar Jadhav showing little intent in going for the target in the final few overs and being content with walking singles, skipper Virat Kohli said, "It's up to discussions with the two guys who were in there. I think MS was trying really hard to get the boundary but it wasn't coming off."

"(They) bowled in good areas and the ball was stopping, hence it was difficult to bat towards the end. We have to sit and assess and improve on things in the next game," Kohli added.

For the record, Dhoni and Jadhav collected seven dots, 20 singles, 3 fours and one six in their 31-ball partnership which was worth 39. The six came in the last over. **PTI**

MS DHONI and Kedar Jadhav must have kept the Pakistan Twitter accounts busy with conspiracy theories as they dawdled around at the end but Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma would know now that their work would be cut out in the future chases. That they can't pass the baton and watch. That one of them has to stay till the end.

It's good for India that this loss happened now. The listlessness in the end of the chase. The stutter after Sharma fell. Now, they know what the lower order is capable of, especially after Hardik Pandya falls. Anything good from here on from the lower order can be seen as a bonus. The pressure of expectation is off them and, who knows, they might just revel in it.

The responsibility comes back to the top three, though. The worry before the start of the tournament was what would they do if something like this happens in a knockout match and they are surprised. Now at least, they know.

Chasing 338 wasn't easy, especially when India's problems are multi-fold: KL Rahul at the top, and the middle-order muddle. There were three decisive moments. When Kohli fell in the 29th over, India were 146 for 2, 192 runs adrift of the target but Sharma was still in.

Sharma fell in the 37th over, India on 198 for 3 and 140 runs away. Game was over really but then there was Hardik Pandya, stirring some hope in Indian fans with his hitting. He played really well, picking gaps, not slogging yet getting the runs. But once he fell in the 45th over, that was that.

Rishabh Pant's inclusion was good. He didn't set the world on fire but would have learnt a thing or two about World Cup pressure and how to pace himself better. There were a couple of moments when it seemed he had it together but then he would slip into a rash of questionable shot selections. Sharma was magnificent in that partnership as the senior player.

One sensed he realised the importance of Pant, if not in this game, in the future ones at least. That for India to pull off chases like this, Pant needs to step up, because he can. Sharma was in his ear constantly – in the middle of overs, at the end of them, during bat changes, and water-breaks. Hands on Pant shoulder, Sharma would talk. Talk and nod, and so it went on.

Imprudent stroke

Sharma would perhaps be more disappointed with his own shot selection: It was a cross-batted slog but one can understand why he went for it. It was the first ball of Chris Woakes spell. Of all the bowlers out there, at that stage, it was Woakes who would have been easier for Sharma to hit. The pace on the ball that he likes.

Liam Plunkett had been picked solely for his ability to bowl a slew of cutters and take pace off the ball, which worked well

on this track. Jofra Archer had already showed in the middle overs that he could slip in quite a few slower ones and that he doesn't just ride on his ego. Ben Stokes isn't easy to hit on this pitch and there was Mark Wood, but he had already bowled three overs in that spell.

Sharma realised he probably had just one more, and he had to go against Woakes. The asking rate was rising, and so he went. Edged and gone.

It was a good knock until then. Not because it was his most fluid but because it wasn't. Somehow, he couldn't get his timing going in the early overs and resorted to stuff he doesn't do usually. Like running down the track to seamers or moving to the off side.

Nothing worked. Kohli was beside him, egging him on, and at times almost prancing after Sharma hit a boundary or two. Sharma was less visibly charged but also went for a chat when Kohli did something amiss. Together they revived India after a sluggish start and gave England a scare.

Lucky with Kohli

England got lucky with the Kohli wicket. With the ball on a length and well outside off, Kohli went for a cut he plays at times – neither horizontal nor a drive. And as it warmed backward point's palms, Kohli stood there, head down.

As much as it hurt India, it also allowed one to see what the others were capable of. Pant didn't quite do it but he must have learnt a lot from his effort in the chase. Mostly what not to do: don't panic-dash for non-existent singles, don't only rely on boundaries, don't just go for that leg-side pick-up shot off his hip. Nothing quite like a match situation to get more self-aware.

Pandya started well, getting into right positions to punch and fist but once the cutters and slower ones increased in frequency, he couldn't coast along. He had to do something else, something different – slog basically and he holed out.

By the time the final 10 overs began, the pitch had started to slow up. Even Pandya struggled. Dhoni, of course, did. And conspiracy theorists began to have a field day. One of those days in Birmingham: England swung from deliriousness to worry before they smiled, India went from worry to relief and to a brief phase of joy before they gave up trying.

■ A win over the Kiwis on Wednesday



OH CAPTAIN!

Kohli couldn't hide his disappointment as he steered a harmless Liam Plunkett delivery straight to backward point. Reuters

Ripple effect: Sri Lanka crash out of WC

New Delhi: The entire sub-continent was focused on the India-England clash, and it would have been disappointed with the result. England's victory ensured Sri Lanka's exit from the World Cup while it made the route difficult for teams like Pakistan and Bangladesh.

■ Victory was vital for the hosts to stay alive in the competition, as a third consecutive defeat would have made their passage improbable. Now, after winning against the only unbeaten side remaining in the tournament, they can go to Durham with confidence to take on New Zealand, who have gone off the boil lately with two successive losses.

■ Pakistan would have hoped for their neighbours to do them a favour. But now need to beat Bangladesh at Lord's on Friday and hope England lose to New Zealand at Chester-le-Street.

will take them to the last four, otherwise Eoin Morgan and his men will have one eye on results achieved by Pakistan and Bangladesh. India could have sealed a semifinal spot with two games remaining, but couldn't avail that opportunity. They need to win one of their remaining two matches – against Bangladesh and Sri Lanka – to make sure of their place, but would like to beat both, to finish as high as possible in the league table and to boost their confidence after their first defeat.

■ Pakistan would have hoped for their neighbours to do them a favour. But now need to beat Bangladesh at Lord's on Friday and hope England lose to New Zealand at Chester-le-Street.

■ New Zealand looked to be in cruise control less than a week ago, but now face almost a must-win situation against England. A defeat could leave them looking over their shoulders to Bangladesh or Pakistan, but their much better net run rate may work in their favour.

■ To stay in contention, Bangladesh must beat both India and Pakistan. But they also need the Kiwis to help them out by beating England. England's win over India has put Sri Lanka out of contention for a semifinal spot with two of their matches remaining. Their game against West Indies on Durham today is only of academic interest now as the men from the Caribbean too have just pride to play for.

SCORECARD >>>

ENG vs IND

Edgbaston | Toss: England

ENGLAND 337/7 IN 50 OV
J Roy c sub b Yadav 66 (57b, 7x4, 2x6)

J Bairstow c Pant b Shami 111 (109b, 10x4, 6x6)

J Root c Pandya b Shami 44 (54b, 2x4)

E Morgan c Jadhav b Shami 1 (9b)

B Stokes c sub b Bumrah 79 (54b, 6x4, 3x6)

J Buttler c & b Shami 20 (8b, 1x4, 2x6)

C Woakes c Sharma b Shami 7 (5b, 1x4)

L Plunkett not out 1 (4b)

J Archer not out 0 (0b)

■ Extras: (b 2, lb 2, w 4) 8

■ Fall of wickets: 1-160 (Roy, 22.1 ov), 2-205 (Bairstow, 31.4 ov), 3-207 (Morgan, 33.4 ov), 4-277 (Root, 44.1 ov), 5-310 (Buttler, 46.6 ov), 6-319 (Woakes, 48.1 ov), 7-336 (Stokes, 49.4 ov)

■ Bowling O M R W
M Shami 10-1-69-5
J Bumrah 10-1-44-1
Y Chahal 10-0-88-0
H Pandya 10-0-60-0
K Yadav 10-0-72-1

INDIA 306/5 IN 50 OV
KL Rahul c & b Woakes 0 (9b)

R Sharma c Buttler b Woakes 102 (109b, 15x4)

V Kohli c sub b Plunkett 66 (76b, 7x4)

R Pant c Woakes b Plunkett 32 (29b, 4x4)

H Pandya c sub b Plunkett 45 (33b, 4x4)

MS Dhoni not out 42 (31b, 4x4, 1x6)

K Jadhav not out 12 (13b, 1x4)

■ Extras: (lb 1, w 6) 7

■ Fall of wickets: 1-8 (Rahul, 2.3 ov), 2-146 (Kohli, 28.2 ov), 3-198 (Sharma, 36.1 ov), 4-226 (Pant, 39.1 ov), 5-267 (Pandya, 44.5 ov)

■ Bowling O M R W
C Woakes 10-3-58-2
J Archer 10-0-45-0
L Plunkett 10-0-55-3
M Wood 10-0-73-0
A Rashid 6-0-40-0
B Stokes 4-0-34-0

■ England won by 31 runs

SIX DROUGHT, SLOW START

01 India n batsmen hit just a solitary six, which came off MS Dhoni's bat in the very last over the match.

28 India could manage only 28 runs in the first 10 overs. England had scored 47.

POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	T	N/R	PT	NRR
Aus	8	7	1	0	0	14	1
Ind	7	5	1	0	1	11	.854
NZ	8	5	2	0	1	11	.572
Eng	8	5	3	0	0	10	1
Pak	8	4	3	0	1	9	-0.792
Ban	7	3	3	0	1	7	-0.133
SL	7	2	3	0	2	6	-1.186
SA	8	2	5	0	1	5	-0.08
WI	7	1	5	0	1	3	-0.32
Afg	8	0	8	0	0	0	-1.418

Fret, fume, moan... In the end England show composure to stay alive



Jonny Bairstow was in murderous form, belting six sixes and powering England to a breezy start with Jason Roy. Reuters

SRIRAM VEERA
BIRMINGHAM, JUNE 30

FOR FOUR years England have been building up to this. How to win an ODI championship. They did everything they could: made a stubborn aggressive Irishman as captain, overhauled all the pitches to make them batting friendly, agreed to release their players to go to IPL, and learned the ODI game.

Several decades after they first invented the one-day game, they tried to imbibe the mechanics. But as the moment arrived, they froze. Pakistan and Sri Lanka socked them before Australia punched them down—and all hell broke loose in heaven. It seemed India would shove them to the brink, and leave them hanging on the Pakistan ledge, but England hung on, clawed their way back, and won. Do google and check the Monday morning English newspapers, especially the tabloids—it should be fun.

No one moans better. No one does over-the-top better. Not many are as masochistic as them—which other country would call a referendum when it wasn't needed, then decide to leave, and then wring their hands over it for three years and refuse to leave? Radio waves crackle with annoyance, podcasts crib – and English feel at home. Same thing with cricket. Take this match.

They looked good for 375. Then 275 loomed. Oh, you should have heard the radio commentary here and the shows in sports stations that went on that time. 'End of world' dirges. You walked around the stadium, to the bars and to the stands: people were a touch concerned but the angst wasn't there. They kept shouting out encouragement. Stokesyyy or Rooooooot... Ben Stokes stirred, England stirred and suddenly 350 re-appeared. Sighs of relief.

The same story with the ball. "Woakesyyyyy" went the chants after he took out KL Rahul. India decided to tease and taunt the English. Rohit Sharma seemed to be out of touch, doing stuff he doesn't do normally: shimmying down the track but not connecting. Moving towards off stump but swatting weakly. Virat Kohli kept doing his thing. The crowd, English section of it, seemed happy and then suddenly in the 21st over, Sharma went berserk. Three fours. Three quality hits: a pull, a withering square-drive, and a gorgeous slice through point.

Fret re-entered the English air. The thing with English expectations and pressure and all that tripe is mainly from the cricketing community – former cricket players and members of clubs strewn across the country. The rest are fine actually. Really. The people in general, that is. Across the cricket cities, you hear what-has-happened-to-brave-new-English sighs or aren't-we-as-good-as-we-thought puzzle-

ment but there hasn't been the annoyance, shock, and outrage that is reflected in tabloids and former players' tweets. It's in football that the public goes overboard as we saw with the football world cup – cricket doesn't quite feature in their imagination much despite embarrassing efforts from the tabloids.

They screamed 'End of the world', 'Calamity Cricket' and such tripe after the loss to Australia. Someone should sit them with a chilled stout beer – Guinness if they want – and tell; Australia are a far better team. Under pressure in a chase, they have Mitch Starc to go to? With England, who? When several wickets fall, Alex Carey can come and do a Bevan. With England, who? That loss isn't as unexpected as it was made out to be.

Luck of the toss

It was a good toss to win. Flat track. Sun out. Go for scoreboard pressure. And most important of all, England had Jason Roy back. What a difference he made. Third ball of the day, he cracked one through covers. You should have heard the noise at the stadium, especially considering it was largely Indian. The English in the crowd found their lungs and cheered. They had identified the moment correctly. They knew the importance of it. They realised with Roy, the brave new English way can be re-found. They were right.

Roy allows this team to believe. He clears

all self-doubts and confusion. Jonny Bairstow can no longer worry about hanging around, he can swing his bat around. It allows England to soak up Eoin Morgan's failures without much worry. (Morgan better be prepared for bouncers just outside off from every team – twice in a row, he has gone down now). Roy allows Root to come later, not against the new ball where he remains an lbw candidate to in-dippers. Roy allows the middle order – Stokes and Buttler – to focus merely on the last 20 overs surge. Not to get bogged down with reviving an innings from a slump. He made 67 but it was like a huge shot of adrenaline and hope.

However, came a moment in the end overs when 375 looked distant and perhaps they had to settle down for 300. Help came from the most unlikely source. Mohammad Shami, who had bowled brilliantly, giving away just 25 runs in his first seven overs, bled 44 in his last three. Full tosses, length balls came in a flood and Stokes and Co. looted.

Everything hung on Sharma and Kohli in the chase. Once they fell, England were home – the game went on for a while after that but by the end when Dhoni and Jadhav were batting, there was a soporific air about it all. A sense of dullness, as 39 runs came in the last five overs. England must have known once Sharma fell, the game was theirs. But since it's England, they probably wouldn't have. Keep calm and keep moaning, but let the team do its thing.

A Venus clone, 15, takes on the icon

At around 11pm on Wednesday, in London, Cori Gauff took a science test remotely for her school in Florida. Some 12 hours later, she watched Greet Minnen strike a forehand long to give her a spot in the main draw of Wimbledon, and a match against idol Venus Williams.



Gauff is the youngest qualifier to make it to the main draw of Wimbledon.

Monday's first-round clash is the first time Gauff is coming up against either of the Williams sisters, yet the match-up itself has brought about an array of intriguing comparisons with them - both on and off court.

The match-up

The elder of the Williams sisters is 23 years, eight months and 24 days older than her opponent. The day Gauff was born, March 13, 2004, Williams was already a holder of two Wimbledon and two US Open titles. She had also risen to the world No.1 rank by then.

Currently though, Venus, ranked 44, is placed 257 places ahead of Gauff - who was granted a wild card to enter the qualifiers - but this is a tie the teenager was waiting for. After losing in the first round of the Miami Open - she would have met Venus in the second round - Gauff claimed: "I was more disappointed that I lost the round before I got to play Venus than that I lost in general." At her home in Florida, Gauff has a poster of Serena Williams and credits her love for tennis came from the Williams pair. "They're the reason I picked up a racquet," she said after her third qualifying match.

The playing styles

India's Ankita Raina played and lost 6-4, 6-4 to Gauff in the first round of qualifying at the French Open last month. Raina describes Gauff's game: "She has a big game. Serves big and for the receiver, the contact point is higher than normal. She's consistent and also aggressive. So she has an overall game to make it big." That's quite similar to the way Venus herself plays. And Raina isn't the only one to have noticed the similarities.

"It's going to be a big moment for Venus as well," said Serena. "She's playing against a player that actually reminds me of Venus, her body and everything."

The heritage

Both players had their father standing in as coach during their formative years - in Gauff's case, her father is still the 'head coach.' Born in Atlanta, Gauff's father was a Division 1 basketball player and her mother was once a gymnast before becoming a track athlete in college. Unlike the Williams though, Gauff's father Corey wanted his daughter to play the sport he played, basketball. Only, the youngster chose tennis.

"I like tennis because you can only blame yourself and you can only control yourself," she said in an interview. "Sometimes when I was on the basketball court I'd be trying to control other people - like, c'mon man, bring the ball up. I like the individual aspect - I like doubles too, but just one person on my team is enough." Gauff trains at the Mouratoglou Academy in France, just like Serena.

Gauff's haul

At 15 years and 122 days, she's the youngest qualifier to make it to the main draw of Wimbledon. En route, she became the youngest since Martina Hingis (in 1995) to win a match against a top 100 opponent when she beat world No.94 Aliona Bolsova at Roehampton. She was also the youngest finalist at the junior girls US Open final in 2017 - then 13. A year later, she'd win the junior French Open girls singles crown and the junior doubles title at Flushing Meadows.

SHAHID JUDGE

G.O.A.Ts out to feast on grass

World No 1 Djokovic, 8-time winner Federer and French Open champion Nadal primed to tighten Wimbledon grip

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON, JUNE 30

NOVAK DJOKOVIC, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal are set to tighten their private stranglehold on Wimbledon as rivals struggle to keep afloat as they bid to dethrone the sport's A-list stars.

World number one Djokovic is the defending champion and chasing a fifth title at the All England Club. Federer, promoted to second seed, can win a ninth crown while two-time champion Nadal is seeking to complete a rare back-to-back Roland Garros-Wimbledon double.

Twelve months ago, Djokovic arrived at Wimbledon with his career threatening to spiral into decline. Unable to shake off the effects of right elbow surgery, the Serb was ranked at 21, his lowest position for over a decade.

But two weeks later, Djokovic had captured the 2018 title to add to his 2011, 2014 and 2015 wins, becoming the lowest-seeded player to take the Wimbledon trophy since Andre Agassi in 1992.

Since then, he has been rejuvenated, going on to claim a third US Open and seventh Australian Open title. The only blip was a rain-hit semi-final exit to Dominic Thiem at Roland Garros, a loss which ended his attempt to become just the second man to hold all four Slams at the same time twice.

"Coming off from the surgery, being unable to have consistency with results, this was a huge springboard for me, the win at Wimbledon last



World No. 3 Federer, promoted to second seed, can win a ninth crown at Wimbledon. Reuters

year," said Djokovic, who will take a 10-2 career record over Philipp Kohlschreiber into their first-round clash on Monday. Federer, chasing a 21st major, first played Wimbledon in 1999. Pushing 38, he would be the oldest ever Grand Slam champion if he were to lift a ninth title. The Swiss star is also just five wins from becoming the first man to register 100 victories at the same Slam.

'Better because of each other'

But Federer is quick to praise the influence of Djokovic and Nadal - between them, the trio have won 53 of the last 64 Slams. "I think we definitely became better because of one another," he said.

Federer starts on Tuesday against South Africa's Lloyd Harris, who is making his Wimbledon debut. Nadal, meanwhile, arrives in London on the back

of a 12th Roland Garros title. His 18th career major also meant he moved within two Slams of Federer's all-time mark for the first time.

The Spaniard, ranked two but - much to his irritation - seeded three was champion in 2008 and 2010. He is now trying to join Bjorn Borg by achieving the Roland Garros-Wimbledon double for the third time. Nadal was desperately close to a third title in 2018. Having failed to get past the last-eight since 2011, the Spaniard was only defeated in an epic semifinal by Djokovic, 10-8 in the final set.

"I won here in 2010 after a very, very tough first couple of rounds. Sometimes that helps, especially in this event, that you arrive here without playing much on this surface," said Nadal, who starts his campaign against Japan's world number 258 Yuichi Sugita. After that looms a possible titanic clash with Nick Kyrgios, who shocked him in 2014, in the second round.

It's been 17 years since anybody not named Djokovic, Federer, Nadal or Andy Murray captured the Wimbledon title. That long-distant honour went to Lleyton Hewitt in 2002. The problem for the chasing pack in 2019 is their record at the tournament as well as various frailties in body and spirit.

Them, Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas, who occupy the next three spots in the world rankings, have yet to get past the last 16 on Wimbledon's grass. Kei Nishikori, the world number seven, was a quarter-finalist in 2018 while eighth-ranked Kevin Anderson, seeded fourth this year, was runner-up 12 months ago. Anderson saved a match point to beat Federer in the quarterfinals.

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Gallese denies Suarez as Peru beat Uruguay

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SALVADOR (BRAZIL), JUNE 30

GOALKEEPER PEDRO Gallese saved Luis Suarez's spot-kick as Peru beat Uruguay on penalties on Saturday to reach the Copa America semifinals, where they will face Chile. Edison Flores scored the decisive penalty as Peru, who were thrashed 5-0 by Brazil in their previous match, qualified for the semifinals for the third time in the last four editions of the Copa.

It was a remarkable turnaround for Gallese, who was the villain of that thumping by the hosts, gifting Brazil their second goal by clearing the ball to Roberto Firmino, while he was also partially at fault for the first and third scores.

But in Salvador he guessed the right way for the first shootout penalty to deny Barcelona forward Suarez, after which Peru's own penalty-takers were flawless. "I'm very proud of our team, I can't really put it into words," said Peru captain Paolo Guerrero. "A lot of people said we don't have the fortitude and guts. But we showed today on the pitch that we could take them on head-on. Peru has hunger, Peru is a warrior, Peru has guts."

It was the third Copa quarter-final to finish goalless and head to penalties after Uruguay had three goals ruled out for offside during normal time. Giorgian de Arrascaeta, Edinson Cavani and


Suarez had all put the ball in the net, only to be denied by a linesman's flag. "It's a bitter and sad feeling. We had high hopes to qualify, but simply couldn't," said Uruguay's captain Diego Godin.

"We lacked a goal. We tried, we looked for it... (But) three were disallowed."

Brazil beat Paraguay on spot-kicks on Thursday and champions Chile did likewise to knock out Colombia on Friday. In the only match to feature any goals, Argentina defeated Venezuela 2-0 on Friday. Peru will face Chile in the second semifinal in Porto Alegre on Wednesday, a day after hosts Brazil take on Argentina in Belo Horizonte. Copa winners in 1939 and 1975, Peru lost to Chile in the semifinals four years ago.

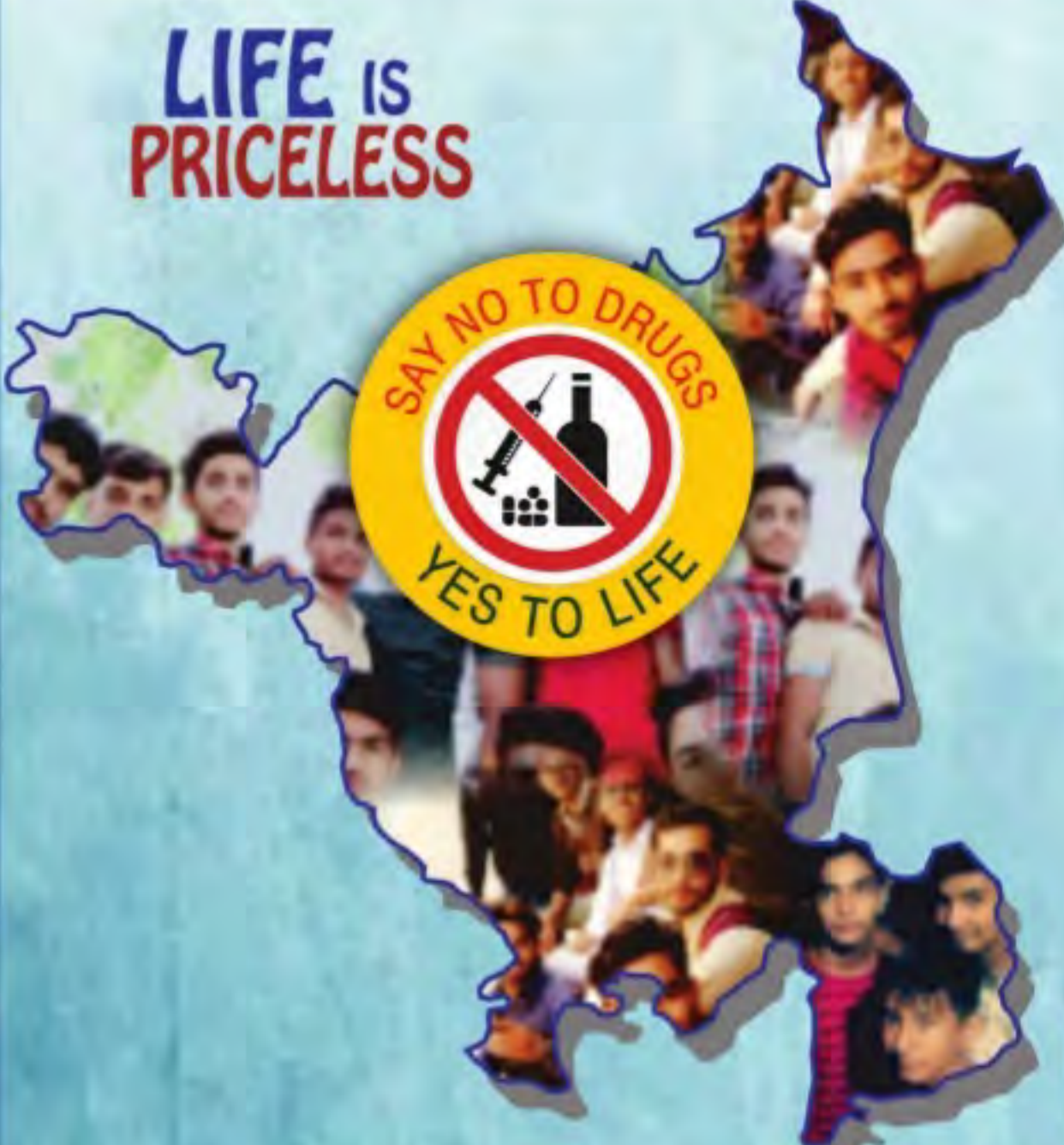
Incredible miss

After a slow opening, Uruguay burst into life on 15 minutes when Federico Valverde surged onto a loose Peru pass in their own half and picked out an unmarked Luis Suarez on the penalty spot, but the Barcelona forward couldn't keep down his header. In pouring rain, Uruguay looked set to take the lead on 24 minutes with a rapier counter-attack, but Cavani ballooned the ball into the sky from six yards after Gallese parried Suarez's shot, although it wouldn't have counted as the Barcelona forward was retroactively deemed offside when he received the ball.



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