



Rahul makes his first visit to Amethi after election defeat
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Dutee Chand sprints to 100m glory at World Universiade
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 AUSTRALIA vs ENGLAND
 VENUE: Edgbaston
 Live on STAR SPORTS 1, 2 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.



Federer faces Nadal in semifinals; Djokovic meets Bautista Agut
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NEARBY



Appointed CM on popular demand: Gehlot

JAIPUR
 In a surprise remark, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday said he was appointed to the CM's post for the third term "on popular demand", as villagers across the State had expressed their opinion in his favour during the 2018 Assembly elections. He said the then Congress president Rahul Gandhi had selected him in view of the strong public sentiments.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

Govt. fails to comply with NGT order, forfeits ₹5 cr.

NEW DELHI
 The National Green Tribunal has directed that performance guarantee of over ₹5 crore deposited by the Delhi government be forfeited as it has failed to comply with orders on two separate matters pertaining to pollution caused by dairies and illegal banquet halls in the city.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

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2 more Cong. MLAs quit in Karnataka

After situation turns tense, one legislator is escorted by the Police Commissioner to Raj Bhavan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 BENGALURU

The corridors of the Vidhana Soudha on Wednesday witnessed the unfolding of a political drama triggered by the resignations of Congress legislators K. Sudhakar (Chickballapur) and Housing Minister M.T.B. Nagaraj (Hoskote). It ended with the former having to be escorted out by the Police Commissioner to the Raj Bhavan, amid trading of charges by the Congress and the BJP.

On a day the BJP knocked on the doors of Governor Vajubhai Vala over Speaker Ramesh Kumar's decision to hold an inquiry before accepting the resignations of 11 Congress-JD(S) legislators, Mr. Sudhakar and Mr. Nagaraj tendered their resignations.

Soon, theatrics began with KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao, Social Welfare Minister Priyank Kharge and former MLC Nazeer Ahmed blocking Mr. Sudhakar near the back entrance of the Vidhana Soudha and restraining him from leaving. They took him into the chambers of Industries Minister K.J. George to convince him to withdraw his resignation.

BJP stages dharna

BJP leaders who had got wind of this rushed to the spot and staged a dharna in front of the closed doors, urging the Congress leaders to let go of Mr. Sudhakar. Another team of leaders led



Hopeful still: Karnataka Water Resources Minister D.K. Shivakumar, along with Congress leaders Murli Deora, left, and Sanjay Nirupam, right, waiting outside a Mumbai hotel where the rebel MLAs were put up, on Wednesday. ■ PRASHANT WAYDANDE

by BJP MLC Ravi Kumar approached the Speaker to seek his intervention. They also filed a written complaint with the Speaker's office.

Mr. Ravi Kumar also accused the Congress of "taking away" Chikkodi-Sadalaga legislator and Congress whip Ganesh Hukkeri, who also met the Speaker on Wednesday evening.

The situation became tense with the arrival of former Chief Minister and Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Power tussle reaches SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The battle for power in Karnataka reached the Supreme Court on Wednesday after 10 Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) MLAs jointly accused the H.D. Kumaraswamy-led coalition government of scams and maladministration.

They also blamed Assembly Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar of delaying the acceptance of their resignations in a bid to prolong the

life of the ruling dispensation.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi is scheduled to hear the petition of the MLAs on Thursday.

The MLAs said they were fed up with the maladministration and inner contradictions within the Congress-JD(S) coalition. Their decision to resign was as per their conscience, they claimed.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

High drama as police detain Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 MUMBAI/BENGALURU

The Karnataka political crisis spilled over to the streets of Mumbai with the detention and later forced departure of Water Resources Minister and Congress trouble-shooter D.K. Shivakumar, who had arrived in the financial capital to meet the 10 rebel Congress-JD(S) legislators on Wednesday morning.

Mr. Shivakumar was in Mumbai to convince the rebel MLAs to return to the party fold. The MLAs have submitted their resignations to the Speaker and moved to Mumbai, allegedly at the behest of the BJP, threatening the stability of the Congress-JD(S) coalition government.

As Mr. Shivakumar attempted to breach the police's security blanket to meet the legislators staying in Hotel Renaissance, he was held back and asked to wait on the road opposite the hotel by the Powai police led by ACP Milind Khetle.

He was eventually detained and taken to the Kalina campus of Mumbai University.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

10 Congress MLAs join BJP in Goa

Party strength down to 5 in House



Another shocker: Goa CM Pramod Sawant greeting former Opposition leader Chandrakant Kavlekar and other Congress MLAs in Porvorim on Wednesday. ■ ATISH POMBURFEKAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 PANAJI

Political instability in Karnataka spilled over into neighbouring Goa on Wednesday, with two-thirds (10 out of 15) of the Congress MLAs breaking away to merge with the ruling BJP.

The group, led by Leader of Opposition Chandrakant Kavlekar, met Assembly Speaker Rajesh Patnekar in the evening and gave him a letter, informing him about their split.

The MLAs include Atanasio Monserratte, Jeniffer Monserratte, Francis Silveira, Philip Nery Rodrigues, Cleofacio Dias, Wilfred D'Sa and Nilkant Halarnkar.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, who was present when the group reached the Assembly, said the 10 MLAs had merged with the BJP.

With the 10 MLAs changing sides, the strength of the

Congress in the House will be down to just five MLAs.

The BJP's strength in the Assembly has now gone up to 27. The Goa Forward Party has three MLAs while the NCP and the MGP have one each. There are three Independents.

To a question, Mr. Sawant said no new inductions in the Cabinet were on the cards.

Mr. Kavlekar said he and other MLAs decided to join the BJP as development works in their constituencies were suffering as they were in the Opposition.

"We have seen Mr. Sawant's working style. He is working for the progress of the State. We decided to join hands with him. Being in Opposition, our development works were also suffering," he said. The MLAs joined the BJP unconditionally, he claimed.

Warming up



The making of Ganesha idols is on in full swing at a workshop in Parel, Mumbai. The torrential rain last week had hampered the work for a brief period. Ganesha Chaturthi falls on September 2. ■ ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

Worker safety code Bill gets Cabinet approval

It seeks to merge 13 labour laws

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

A Bill that seeks to merge 13 labour laws into one code on occupational safety, health and working conditions that would apply to all establishments with 10 or more workers was approved by the Union Cabinet on Wednesday, paving the way for its introduction in Parliament.

The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Bill, 2019, which would impact "40 crore unorganised workers", was approved at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Information and

Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

The Bill was the second of four proposed codes that aim to merge 44 labour laws, with the Code on Wages Bill, 2019 that was approved on July 3 being the first, Labour and Employment Minister of State (independent charge) Santosh Kumar Gangwar said.

Mr. Gangwar added that the Wages Bill, which covers minimum wages and other wage issues, would be introduced in Parliament in "two or three days".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

SpiceJet technician dies in freak accident in Kolkata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 KOLKATA

In a freak accident, Rohit Pandey, 22, a SpiceJet technician, died after he got stuck in the hydraulic door flaps of the main landing gear of a Q400 aircraft he was attending to at the Kolkata airport on Wednesday.

The hydraulic doors "inadvertently" got closed, leaving Pandey trapped there, SpiceJet said in a statement. The landing-gear doors of the Bombardier Q400 aircraft



Rohit Pandey

had to be broken to rescue him but he was declared dead, it said. The accident happened at 1.45 a.m.

A complaint of "unnatural death" was filed at the Airport police station. A police team visited the accident

spot, an officer said, adding that forensic experts would now collect evidence.

Aircraft maintenance engineers *The Hindu* spoke to said such an accident was rare. "I have never heard of such a thing in my 26-year career. Either he did not follow the SOP or was instructed wrongly by a senior to get the work done quickly," a senior engineer said.

Hailing from suburban Mumbai, Pandey was the breadwinner of the family.

World Cup ends in agony for Kohli's men

Lose to New Zealand by 18 runs, fail to cross the semifinal hurdle yet again

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
 MANCHESTER

A World Cup semifinal spread over two days concluded with minutes that stretched between agony and ecstasy.

Under dull afternoon skies masked by low-slung clouds, India suffered an 18-run defeat to New Zealand at Old Trafford here on Wednesday. The Men in Blue failed to get past the World Cup's last-four stage, like in the previous edition at Australia in 2015.

Chasing New Zealand's 239 for eight, India stumbled right at the start, collapsing to 24 for four in 10 overs as seamers Trent Boult and Matt Henry (three for 37) bowled incisive spells. Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, K.L. Rahul and Dinesh Karthik fell quickly and the remainder of the clash was more about hitching hopes on Ravindra Jadeja's fiery 77 and his 116-run seventh-wicket partnership with M.S. Dhoni, who scored 50.



When the nation gasped: M.S. Dhoni gets run out during the World Cup semifinal between India and New Zealand at Old Trafford in Manchester on Wednesday. ■ AP

It boiled down to 52 from the last five overs, but with Boult dismissing Jadeja and Dhoni being run out, the miracle never happened, a de-

feat became inevitable and India finished at 221.

Finally, Kohli's words from the post-match press conference lingered: "To go

out on 45 minutes of bad cricket is heart-breaking."

HENRY SHATTERS INDIA'S DREAM ▶ PAGE 17

India can repeal Article 370 at will: Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The government informed Parliament that "no foreign government or organisation has any locus standi" in repealing Article 370 in J&K as matters relating to the Constitution were internal and only for the Indian Parliament to deal with.

While responding to a question on whether repeal of Articles 370 and 35A will in any way violate any United Nations regulation or any international obligation of the country, Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy said, "Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Matters relating to the Constitution of India are internal and entirely for the Indian Parliament to deal with. No foreign government or organisation has any locus standi in the matter."

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 12

IN BRIEF



AAP unhappy over EPCA report on transport

NEW DELHI
The AAP expressed "disappointment" over the latest EPCA report on the augmentation of public transport in Delhi asking how was it willing to go with the Centre's proposal of implementing only three routes of Metro Phase-IV despite the Delhi Cabinet clearing all the six routes proposed. The EPCA on Monday had asked the SC to allow work to begin on the three 'priority corridors' so that the city is not "deprived of crucial public transport."

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	148	Gurugram	138
Ghaziabad	159	Faridabad	106
Noida	154	Greater Noida	134

Good 0-50 Satisfactory 51-100 Moderate 101-200
Poor 201-300 Very poor 301-400 Severe >401

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

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Discussion on "U.S. - Iran tension and India's stake therein". Speakers: T.N.R. Rao, formerly, Secretary (Petroleum); Prof. K.P. Vijalakshmi, Professor, Centre for Canadian, US and Latin American Studies, JNU; Dr. Gulshan Dietl, former Professor, Centre for West Asian Studies, JNU; and Dr. John Cherian, Foreign Editor, Frontline. Chair: Ambassador K.P. Fabian at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Exhibition: "Vriksha", an exhibition featuring the work of 30 artists celebrating the eternal power of trees - painting, photographs, drawings, sculptures and ceramics, curated by Uma Nair at Main Art Gallery, Kamaladevi Complex, IIC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Journey of Life", a drawings show by Arunkumar Chatterjee at Art Gallery, IIC Annex, IIC, 11 a.m.

Exhibition: "A traveller in abstract universe" Solo painting show by Yashvant Singh at Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

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

Yamuna floodplain water storage project on fast track

Delhi Cabinet approves interdepartmental committee report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Cabinet on Wednesday approved an interdepartmental committee report on the Yamuna floodplain natural water storage project.

The Delhi government has claimed that the pilot project is the first of its kind in the country and has the potential to end the city's water woes. The project is expected to start in a month's time.

In a statement, the Delhi government credited Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's personal monitoring of the project "on an hourly basis" for the possible implementation of the project during the ongoing monsoon season.

The CM has given the Irrigation and Flood Department a month to make preparations for the pilot project, it added.

NGT approvals awaited

"The project aims at conserving water in the Yamuna floodplains and creating a mega reservoir between Palla and Wazirabad to deal with water shortage in Delhi, particularly during summer," the government said.

BJP questions infrastructure of Delhi government-run schools

Attacks authorities after ceiling fan falls on student

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Opposition BJP questioned claims of "world-class" infrastructure at Delhi government-administered schools after a ceiling fan fell on a student, injuring him, in Trilokpuri here on Wednesday.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari accused the AAP government of having become "a government of scams" even as he questioned the silence of its leaders on the accident. "In one of the government schools, which are claimed to be world-class today, a ceiling fan fell on an innocent child in Trilokpuri. He is fighting for his life in GTB Hospital. The Kej-



The project aims at conserving water in the Yamuna floodplains and creating a mega reservoir between Palla and Wazirabad to deal with water shortage in Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The project envisages the creation of small ponds in the floodplains that will catch water from an overflowing Yamuna during the monsoon, it said.

Most of the requisite approvals for the pilot project have been received barring two from the National Green Tribunal committees, which are expected "very soon".

"Soon after the Cabinet meeting, Mr. Kejriwal called up Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. The CM thanked the Minister

[Progress] of the pilot project has been fast-paced due to hourly monitoring by the Chief Minister

GOVERNMENT STATEMENT

for the quick approvals for the project by the Centre," the statement read.

Land on lease

"The pilot project has been fast-paced due to hourly monitoring by the CM. He

riwal government, which has committed corruption on a largescale, is responsible for this incident," Mr. Tiwari alleged.

"Today, a fan has fallen, tomorrow something else may fall on the children but the Delhi government is not serious about their security...Education Minister Manish Sisodia should apologise for this incident," he said.

Funds allocation

Mr. Tiwari further attacked the AAP government in relation to the funds allocated to the education sector in comparison to those under the BJP-ruled civic bodies.

"Of the ₹53,000-crore budget, the AAP has allotted

₹12,460 crore to education which is 23.51% of the total...There are 1,033 schools under the Delhi government, whereas for the 743 schools under the North Corporation, the Delhi government has allotted only 1.46% from the budget," Mr. Tiwari alleged.

"I want to ask the Chief Minister...Are not the children studying in municipal schools the children of Delhi," the leader said.

"We treat the entire world as one family but Kejriwal's politics is of discrimination. Since the BJP is the ruling party in the municipal corporations, the AAP government does not release funds to them," he alleged.

Juvenile held in auditor murder case

He had helped the murderer in carrying out the crime

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The police on Wednesday apprehended a 17-year-old boy in connection with the murder of a 43-year-old senior auditor whose body was found murdered at his house in Jaitpur of south-east Delhi on July 7.

DCP (South-East) Chinmoy Biswal said that four persons, including the deceased's wife and their son, were nabbed on Tuesday.

"We have detained a juvenile who helped the culprit in the murder," said Mr. Biswal.

The juvenile disclosed that the auditor's wife and her son had assigned the task to him and another man, Rishab, for ₹1.25 lakh. The two were told that they were going to kill the auditor's brother who used to sexually assault his sister-in-law. They did not know that the victim was actually the husband of the woman.

'No remorse'

"The deceased's son said that his father never loved him. He [father] never brought any gift for him and always demeaned his moth-

er in front of other family members," said a police officer.

The accused mother-son said they had no remorse as they were fed up with the behaviour of the auditor.

The police said that the auditor was stabbed around six times on back and neck.

On July 5 night, the mother-son called the duo to their house and asked them to hide on the terrace. The victim returned around 11.30 p.m. and was drunk. He slept without having dinner. Around 2.30 a.m., the accused killed the victim.

3 members of gang held for stealing U.P. MLA's bags

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Three men were arrested for allegedly stealing bags from the car of an Uttar Pradesh BJP MLA. The vehicle was parked on the premises of a private hospital in south-east Delhi, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused - Gurvayurappan (36), Prasath (26) and P. Surender (25) - all from Trichy in Tamil Nadu, are currently residing in Madangir area and are members of "note-phenk" gang, the police said.

Lured drivers

According to the police, on Monday around 5 p.m., the accused lifted three bags from the car of Hari Shankar Manohar, the BJP MLA

from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras.

The accused lured the driver, who was alone in the car, by throwing notes of ₹10 and ₹20 on the road. When the driver came out to pick up the notes, the accused's accomplice managed to lift three luggage bags from the car.

A complaint was filed by the Legislator's personal assistant Rajesh Kumar Singh on Tuesday.

The accused revealed that they worked for Murugan and Govindan. Both of them used to lure alcohol addicts and unemployed youths from Tamil Nadu and bring them to Delhi. They trained youths to steal bags from vehicles, the DCP said. Two Apple MacBook, ₹18,000 cash, foreign currency notes and one country-made pistol were seized, the police said.

BSF man arrested for stealing woman's purse at IGI Airport

Swift police action helps recover stolen jewellery from accused

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

An assistant sub-inspector with the Border Security Force (BSF) was arrested at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport for allegedly stealing jewellery from a woman's purse, the police said on Wednesday.

Acting swiftly, the police recovered the entire stolen jewellery within 45 minutes.

The accused, identified as Naresh Kumar, is a resident of Haryana, currently posted in Siliguri as an ASI.

The police said, on July 9 morning, a woman passenger arrived at the IGI Airport with her husband to board a flight to Srinagar. After completing the security check formalities with the airline, the couple reached Gate No. 41 and were waiting for boarding.

Security staff alerted

The woman sat on a chair and kept her purse under it. She fell asleep, while her husband was away. When she woke up, she found her purse, containing gold jewellery worth several lakhs, missing. After she failed to locate the purse, she reported the matter to the security



Naresh Kumar

personnel on the airport premises.

DCP (Airport) Sanjay Bhatia said that a police team all reached the area after being alerted by the airport security staff. Sub-inspector Ajay Mishra with other team members promptly reacted to the situation as several flights were about to take off and there were chances of losing the suspect.

CCTV footage

"After getting details from the woman passenger, the police team minutely scanned the CCTV camera footage to identify the suspect. In one footage, Kumar, sitting next to the woman, was seen taking away her purse and moving to another side of the premises," said Mr. Bhatia.

The suspect was traced in

In one footage, Kumar, sitting next to the woman, was seen taking away her purse and moving to another side of the premises

SANJAY BHATIA
DCP (Airport)

other CCTV footages. It was found that he entered a washroom with the purse and a few minutes later came out empty handed. "We recovered the purse from the washroom and got clarity about the suspect. Other security personnel at the airport were alerted. The suspect was nabbed just when he was about to board a flight to Siliguri," said Mr. Bhatia.

He was arrested under IPC Section 379 (punishment for theft) against an FIR registered at PS IGI Airport. The stolen items were recovered from his pocket during frisking after which he was held, added Mr. Bhatia.

Kumar had come home and was returning to resume work. Medical examination confirmed that the accused was drunk, said Mr. Bhatia.

AAP, BJP engage in spat at DERC hearing

Accuse each other of hooliganism and violence during the meeting

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) public hearing on Wednesday turned into a political battleground with AAP and the BJP accusing each other of hooliganism and violence during its proceedings here.

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Vijender Gupta, said he had filed a complaint at Lodhi Road police station against "AAP loyalists" since he was "forcibly prevented" from submitting his petition before the DERC.

AAP spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj claimed, "If he has any evidence in the matter, he should show it. In fact, we have proof that Devinder Kumar Sehrawat misbehaved with Rakhi Birla while Vijender Gupta snatched papers from her and tore it." In a tweet, Mr. Bharadwaj claimed that BJP MLAs came very late at the DERC hearing but wanted to speak first. AAP MLAs protested against BJP MLAs sit-



BJP leaders address the media at the party office in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ting in VIP area adding that they were not ready to sit with the public.

'Leader manhandled'

"At DERC, it all started with DERC inviting @NitinTyagiAAP to speak (first some first serve basis). And @OP-SharmaBJP interrupting MLA Nitin Tyagi. Then people asked BJP to reduce electric tariffs in BJP ruled states [sic]." Mr. Bharadwaj tweeted. He also alleged that BJP MLAs used "filthy language against woman MLAs of the AAP".

Mr. Gupta condemned the

"hooliganism of AAP MLAs, leaders and workers" at the DERC public hearing on tariff petitions alleging, "I was forcibly prevented from submitting his petition before DERC. AAP MLA Jarnail Singh went to the extent of snatching the petition from my hands and tearing it into two pieces. BJP MLAs O.P. Sharma and Jagdish Pradhan, Mr. Sehrawat and Anil Bajpai were manhandled." He also claimed that his personal assistant was badly beaten and his clothes were torn.

"Representatives of va-

rious RWAs were manhandled and maltreated. They were not allowed to present their case in the public hearing," the leader alleged. Mr. Gupta, in his petition to the DERC, demanded the AAP government to roll back the fixed charges, Power Purchase Cost Adjustment Charges, Surcharge and Pension Trust Surcharge.

Claiming that the Delhi government had increased the fixed charges on electricity bills by six times in just one year from ₹20 to ₹125 per connection, he demanded that the government compensates consumers.

Consumers complain

Some consumers complained that they did not get enough time to put forth their views due to the confrontation between representatives from AAP and the BJP. The DERC will analyse all suggestions and objections received during the hearing and consider it while determining new tariff rates.

I was shot at during event, claims AAP legislator

Prakash Jarwal files formal complaint; says his life is in danger

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

AAP MLA Prakash Jarwal on Wednesday alleged that three shots were fired at him during an event in south Delhi's Shani Bazaar on Sunday.

The police have denied the claim. A police officer said that a PCR call was received regarding the firing at

the AAP MLA in Sangam Vihar. "We verified the claims of firing from several people who were at the event, but all of them refused to verify the fact. We have checked CCTV footages also but nothing was found. The matter is under investigation," the officer added.

Mr. Jarwal, however, in-

sisted that he was shot at. The MLA added that after verbally informing the police, he filed a complaint at Neb Sarai police station.

The legislator claimed that he was shot at by an illegal alcohol distributor who had been chasing him for the past three days. Mr. Jarwal alleged that despite asking for

police security, no action was taken. "My life is in danger. I was attacked on Sunday after which I informed police, but nothing was done," he said.

In the police complaint, Mr. Jarwal said an AAP worker also got death threats by the same person over the phone.

Gurugram police return lost cell phones to owners

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Dundahera village resident Sushma Devi had lost her phone somewhere in her village three months ago. She reported the matter to the police, but there was no update for a long time.

However, she was surprised to get a call from the police recently saying that her phone had been recovered. Sushma was overjoyed when DCP (Headquarters) Sashank Kumar Sawan handed over the mobile at a function at Old CP office on Wednesday. She was among 100 people, mostly from Gurugram, who were handed over their lost phones.

In view of the inconve-

nience caused to the mobile phone users due to the loss of their sets, Gurugram Police Commissioner Muhammad Akil had recently directed the police to immediately lodge non-cognisable offence report in such cases and return it the phones to the owners after finding it with the help of technical surveillance.

In a first such instance, 65 mobile phones were returned to their owners this past month. Some of those were from outside Gurugram as well. Najafgarh's Karambir had lost his phone in Gurugram's Sector 7 around two months ago. He did not expect to get his phone back so easily.

Delhi govt. cracks whip on 'bogus dealers'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has launched a crackdown on alleged bogus dealers registered under the GST and allegedly involved in issuing fake invoices, according to an official statement issued by it here on Wednesday.

The move came after Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia directed the Trade and Taxes Department to take the strictest possible action against bogus dealers. In the statement, the department identified around 56,000 suspicious dealers on various risk parameters.

60 foreigners detained in Greater Noida

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOIDA

Sixty foreign nationals were detained on Wednesday during police searches in Greater Noida. They were allegedly found to be staying in the country without valid travel documents.

Almost all of those held are from eight African countries, including Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Angola. Twenty-eight of them are women, said the police.

“Sixty foreigners staying in Greater Noida on invalid or forged documents, and those suspected to have links with drug trafficking, were detained on Wednesday,” said Gautam Buddh Nagar Senior Superintendent of Police Vaibhav Krishna.

Inspections were conducted at four housing societies in Greater Noida’s P1, Beta 2 and Dadri.

The searches began at 5 a.m. under the 10th edition of ‘Operation Clean’, a special initiative of the district police, and continued till 8 a.m., said the police.

During the inspections, 3.5 kg of cannabis, six laptops and 114 SIM cards were seized.

Govt. fails to comply with NGT order, forfeits ₹5 cr.

‘Did not enforce green norms on illegal banquet halls, eateries’

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has directed that performance guarantee of over ₹5 crore deposited by the Delhi government be forfeited as it has failed to comply with orders on two separate matters pertaining to pollution caused by dairies and illegal banquet halls in the city.

A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel further directed that performance guarantee of ₹10 lakh each imposed on the three civic bodies also be forfeited as the municipalities have failed to check pollution from dairies.

‘Avoiding responsibilities’
Coming down heavily on the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), the Bench said: “Despite observations in the earlier order as well as repeated orders in a large number of cases, the DPCC seems to be avoiding its statutory responsibilities... and to cover up their inaction, is passing the order of imposition of fines on other statutory bodies, without



A plea in the NGT has contended that illegal establishments are causing air pollution in Mahipalpur.

any jurisdiction.”

“While the DPCC may take action on ‘polluter pays’ principle against polluting activities of any statutory body, it has no authority to recover compensation for alleged inaction by such statutory authorities,” the Bench stated.

Noting that a report furnished by the Delhi government on the action taken against illegal banquets and restaurants operating in Mahipalpur was “not exhaustive”, the green panel stated: “There is no comprehensive report about compliance of

waste management rules. It is pertinent to note that the problem of solid waste management in Delhi is assuming serious proportions due to increasing population.”

“No compensation is shown to have been assessed for the illegal withdrawal of groundwater for swimming pools, except saying that unlicensed pools were closed or that a report about illegal borewells was sent,” the Bench noted.

The observations came on a plea seeking remedial action against illegal banquets that are allegedly causing air pollution in southwest Delhi.

“The policy for enforcement of environment norms for places where social gathering takes place is necessary on account of there already being a high level of air pollution. Such gatherings should not result in further deterioration of the situation,” said the NGT.

In both cases, the NGT has warned of “appropriate coercive measures” against authorities if the orders are not complied with.

‘Advance timeline for waste-to-energy plant’

NGT order comes on plea alleging unscientific dumping of garbage in Sonipat

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following a plea alleging unscientific dumping of garbage in Sonipat, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Haryana Chief Secretary to advance the timeline for establishment of a waste-to-energy plant.

Directing authorities to furnish another report pertaining to the allegations made in the plea, a Bench

headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said: “We direct the Haryana Chief Secretary to take remedial steps so that the timeline of December 2021 for a waste-to-energy plant is appropriately preponed.”

Referring to an earlier order passed by the tribunal, the Bench also directed the Centre and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to issue guidelines at the State

level. “We direct the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to take initiative, in consultation with the CPCB and other experts, for specifying a mechanism to engage the service providers and indicate range of rates that may obviate the need for any time-consuming process. Service providers may be identified for waste collection, transportation, processing and disposal of

waste,” the Bench said.

The Ministry was directed to furnish the report within two months.

The directions came on a plea, which alleged that air pollution was being caused due to unscientific dumping of garbage, and was affecting public health.

Earlier, the NGT had sought a report from the Haryana State Pollution Control Board and the civic body.

IN BRIEF



Kejriwal may inaugurate RTR flyover next week

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is likely to inaugurate the Rao Tula Ram flyover on July 16. The flyover is expected to make commute from south Delhi and Noida towards IGI Airport hassle-free. Construction on the 2.7-km-long flyover, which branches out of the Munirka flyover, started in 2014.

MLA acquitted in case of misbehaviour with cop

NEW DELHI
A city court on Wednesday acquitted AAP MLA Sarita Singh in a case of alleged misbehaviour with a Delhi police officer in 2015. The court noted that Delhi Police, failed to probe the case against her. P11

Missing woman traced to Bengaluru

GHAZIABAD
A woman who went missing after leaving a note has been traced to Bengaluru, the police said on Wednesday. She was presumed dead after her car with the note was found near Hindon barrage on July 6. P11

Ambedkar University a backup option for many

Students wait for next DU cut-offs to switch university

NIDHI MISHRA

NEW DELHI
On the first day of admissions at Ambedkar University, several students turned up at the Kashmere Gate campus on Wednesday. But for many, enrolling at the university is an alternative as they wait for the next Delhi University cut-offs.

Sarthak Mishra, who scored 82% in his board exams and took admission in B.A. Economics (Honours) at the Ambedkar University (AUD) said, "I wanted to get into a North Campus college under Delhi University, but I did not get through as the cut-offs were high. So for now, I am enrolling myself at AUD. But I am hoping that the DU cut-offs will decrease so that I can take admission there."

"There is a lot to explore in DU as the university has better options," Mr. Mishra added.

Left-out students

Not securing a berth in North campus of DU is another reason why some are choosing to explore AUD. Sujeet, who scored



AUD reserves 85% of its seats for students from Delhi.

FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

87% in his board exams, had taken admission in B.sc Maths (Honours) at Pannalal Girdharlal Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (PGDAV) college.

Student politics

Student politics is another pull. Jaya Jha, who took admission in B.A. Sociology (Honours) at AUD, said that she wanted to be a "student politician" but was disappointed with the campus. However, she is not willing to dump her dream. She said that she would contest

elections there. "In Delhi University, students are more aware about the elections as it started in 1954 and have a long history as compared to Ambedkar University where elections started just a year ago", she added.

AUD reserves 85% of its seats for students from the National Capital Territory.

The last date for admissions at AUD is Thursday and the next Delhi University cut-off list will be released on Friday.

Students try their luck in 'divinity trials'

Aspirants judged on musical rendition, viva performance

SAURAV SINHA

NEW DELHI

Final 'divinity' trials for admissions to a few minority colleges of Delhi University held on Wednesday saw students trying their luck by putting up the best musical performance and answering questions on the "impact of Sikhism".

According to the university guidelines, to qualify for the divinity quota, introduced in 2017, candidates have to be thorough about the "elemental aspects" of Sikhism as well as its cultural aspects. The trials held at Kamala Nehru College were judged by a university observer, a convener and three professors.

17 in final round

While 17 candidates were selected for the final round of divinity trials, only 14 turned up on Wednesday morning. Participants are judged based on performance of religious musical rendition and viva-voce, that was given 75% weightage. For the remaining 25%, they have to submit certificates.

"Students are being assessed on the basis of their calibre, creativity and intellectual capability. After their



The trials held at Kamala Nehru College were judged by a university observer, a convener and three professors.

FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

performance, they were asked questions to test their technical knowledge of music and Sikhism," said Shuli Chaudhary, who was coordinating the trials.

Viva-voce round

When asked what kind of questions were thrown at them during the viva-voce round, some candidates said that they were simply asked to leave after their performance. But a few others were asked about the Sikh code of conduct, impact of Sikhism on the world, teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and some technical questions regarding their art form.

Shruti, a BA Psychology (Honours) aspirant at Mata

Sundri College said, "I have been preparing the 'Sorath' raag for a while now and I feel confident about my result."

Prabhjot Singh, another participant who aspires to study B.Com (Honours) at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, said his trials went well and he played a rendition of 'Malhar'.

But for some students, divinity was the last route to get admission in Delhi University. "I had no other option to get into the Delhi University except the divinity trials which they conduct. I love to play instruments though I am not so keen on the ideology of Sikhism," said a participant who did not wish to be named.

Nearly 4,000 cancellations after third list

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Nearly 4,000 students have cancelled their admissions to Delhi University's colleges after the release of the third cut-off on Monday.

So far, a total of 50,989 students had taken admission at the college and up to 4,061 cancellations had taken place in the last two days alone, a university official said. They also said that 1,165 admission withdrawals had taken place since the start of admissions.

This year, there are about 63,000 seats up for grab at DU under various categories. However, a majority of the students admitted have been under the unreserved category while only about 3% students have been admitted under the EWS and ST categories. Admissions under the third list will go on till Thursday.

The fourth cut-off list is scheduled to be released on July 15.

HC dismisses plea against free metro ride for women

Court imposes ₹10,000 as cost on petitioner

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday dismissed a petition opposing the city government's proposal to make metro ride free for women. The High Court noted that it is for the government to decide on giving concession to a particular class.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar while dismissing the petition imposed a cost of ₹10,000 on the petitioner. The HC also rejected petitioner's plea to reduce fares and to make 15 slabs of the ticket price instead of existing six.

"Fixation of fares is a statutory function and the process of fixation is complex which involves consideration of several factors, including cost. All these factors cannot be determined in a PIL (public interest litigation)," the Bench said.

The High Court said advocate Bipin Bihari Singh, the petitioner, failed to point out any illegality in fixation of fares.

Regarding the plea that Delhi government be directed not to take any step to make metro



ride free for women, the court observed that though this plea has been made, it has not been argued by the petitioner.

The Bench said it was left open for the authorities to give or not to give any concession to a particular class in metro ride fares.

Delhi government Additional Standing Counsel Sanjoy Ghosh said that the plea was premature as currently no such exemption has been given to the women to travel in the metro and the proposal is still under consideration.

Mr. Singh, in his petition, challenged the proposal of Delhi government to make metro ride free for women saying such a move would create a parallel arbitrary discrimination against other poorer sections of the society.

Redress issues in housing societies, L-G urged

BJP delegation calls on Baijal; to hold 'Mahasammelan' on the issue

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) delegation called on Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal here on Wednesday urging him for "immediate redressal" of issues being faced by residents of the Group Housing Societies.

There are an estimated 1,200 societies in the Capital housing over 10 lakh residents. Arguing that societies such as these were in "urgent need of redevelopment", the delegation, which consisted of BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel and West Delhi MP Parvesh Verma, announced that they would soon hold a "Mahasammelan" for Group Housing Societies.

The delegation submitted a memorandum to the Lieutenant-Governor to address the issues



Anil Baijal

immediately.

In a statement, Mr. Goel said that the development of Group Housing Societies in the city had begun in 1980 and its condition had become "deplorable" in the last forty years.

'Houses in shambles'

"These societies are in urgent need of redevelopment and it can be done as per the Master Plan of Del-

hi-2021. But strong decisions are expected from the government so that these colonies do not face issues of parking, community services, and other basic amenities post-redevelopment. Today lakhs of houses are in shambles," the statement said further.

Meanwhile, Mr. Goel announced that Delhi's "first Mahasammelan for Group Housing Societies" would be held at the Talkatora Stadium on Sunday. Besides addressing the "host of issues" facing the Group Housing Societies in Delhi, the Mahasammelan would also feature an open discussion on the Union Budget 2019.

L-G to hold meetings

The statement said, fol-

lowing the meeting with Mr. Baijal, it had been decided that the L-G would hold meetings with the MPs and office-bearers of the Federations of the Group Housing Societies.

"The societies demand separate water connections to the flats instead of single connection to the entire society. Besides, the issue of appointment of auditors by the Registrar of the Group Housing Societies too should be addressed," Mr. Goel said.

"This is for the first time such an event shall be held post-independence. The Mahasammelan would also feature the discussion on the failures of the Kejriwal government on several fronts, including pollution, electricity, water, traffic jams and healthcare," Mr. Goel added.

DDA flats surrendered due to location, size: Puri

4,711 returned within days of draw of lots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Thousands of applicants of the Delhi Development Authority's 2017 housing scheme surrendered their flats after allotment, with some citing dislike of the location and the size of the homes as the reason, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister of State (Independent charge) Hardeep Singh Puri told the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

In response to a question by Amar Singh, Mr. Puri informed the House that of the 12,617 flats offered by the DDA in the 2017 scheme, 4,711 flats were surrendered within 45 days of the draw of lots held in November that year.

"In majority of cases, the applicants have not provid-

ed any specific reasons for surrender. However, some of the reasons as reported are that applicants did not like the location of the allotted flats was small," the reply stated.

In order to address the issues, the DDA had taken some corrective steps, including starting a free shuttle bus service from the nearest bus terminal and Metro station at Narela, Siraspur and Rohini Sector 34 and 35 starting in December 2018 for the residents. In addition, DDA had allotted 23 shops for daily needs to NAFED at Dwarka Sector-23B, Rohini Sector-34 and Narela G-2 and G-8. It had also handed over porta cabins to Mother Dairy and Safal for outlets at Narela.

Now, file and track RTIs to East corporation online

North and South civic body yet to reopen portal

SIDHARTH RAVI

NEW DELHI

Online Right to Information (RTI) applications to the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) can now be filed and tracked through the Delhi government's online portal, officials said on Wednesday. The online service remained defunct for years and the EDMC has reopened it to make it easy for the applicants to get information at a mouse click.

An online RTI portal was started by the unified municipal corporation of Delhi in 2011. But it stopped working after the trifurcation of the MCD. In place of the portal, the page to submit the RTI application on websites of all three corporations has the message "submission of online RTI application has been sus-

pended due to updation of software".

The *Hindu* had earlier reported that the North and South bodies were approached by the Delhi government to reopen the portal, but did not take up the offer over questions of sharing the ₹10 application fee. The two corporations are yet to fix their RTI portals.

Commissioner, Varsha Joshi, currently in-charge of both the civic bodies, did not respond to messages in this regard. Earlier this month, she had tweeted that the issue would be fixed in six months time.

Routing applications

A senior official of the EDMC said that the corporation had been working with the Delhi government for the last three to four

months to set up a system to route online RTI applications through the government portal.

While RTI applications were earlier physically sent to the municipal corporation, the delays in transfer of files slowed down the process and affected those applying for information, the official said. To put an end to this, the PIO and the appellate authorities of all departments have been given unique login IDs to directly access the Delhi government portal, track replies and send status reports.

Though the EDMCs website still carries the software updation message, the official said that it would soon be linked to the Delhi government portal and people can file their RTI queries there.

Delhi girl bags ICJ internship programme

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi girl Isha Kanth is one of the two persons in the world to have bagged an internship programme at the International Court of Justice based in Hague. Ms. Kanth, who is currently pursuing a bache-

lor degree in Law from Queen Mary University of London, has earlier worked in rural Bihar spreading awareness on the right to education and women empowerment among children belonging to the marginalised sections.

'Right to sanitation lacks implementation of laws'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Retired Supreme Court Justice Justice Madam B. Lokur on Wednesday said there was lack of implementation of laws and court orders for the realisation of right to sanitation for all in the country.

Speaking at the launch of a book titled 'Right to Sanitation in India: Critical Per-

spectives' at India International Centre here, Justice Lokur said an area that needed to be looked at when sanitation is concerned, was prosecution aspect of the law.

"The laws provide for the bureaucrats, the executive to do some things. If they do not do it, what happens? The person goes to court, that is what public interest litiga-

tion is about. But how about prosecuting people who are not doing their jobs? Can we prosecute them? If we can, why aren't we doing it?" Justice Lokur said.

The other issue that Justice Lokur highlighted was the lack of implementation of laws. "You may have good laws, Supreme Court judgments, but if the government does not implement it, what

are the citizens or a manual scavenger supposed to do?" he said.

The book highlights key issues concerning the realisation of the right to sanitation for all, the scope of the right, its links with other rights, such as health, gender equality and environmental and issues of specific relevance in Indian context, such as manual scavenging.

Dust screen



Dust envelops Rajpath on a hot and humid Wednesday afternoon. The maximum temperature was recorded at 37.2 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature settled at 28.2 degrees Celsius, both a notch above normal. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Age: 62 years, Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 5'6", Built: Thin, Face: Round, White Hair, was wearing White Kurta and Pajama, was found in unconscious condition near Gate No. 4 LNJP Hospital on 24.06.2019 and admitted in LNJP Hospital where doctor declared him dead. In this regard a DD No. 46, dated 04.07.2019 has been lodged at P.S. IP Estate, Delhi.** Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO

P.S. IP Estate, Delhi

DP/6427/CD/19

Ph.: 011-23370928, 23378474

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General public is hereby informed that one male person was found dead in area of P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi on Dated 03.07.2019. In this regard a DD No. 42-A Dated 03.07.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Mehendra Park, Delhi.

The description of the dead body is given as under **Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Face: Round, Age: 58 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Wearing: Grey Colour Pant.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead person please inform the undersigned.



SHO

P.S. Mehendra Park, Delhi

DP/9135/NW/19

Ph.: 011-27632501

8750870228

DELHI Timings

THURSDAY, JULY 11

RISE 05:31 SET 19:22
RISE 14:20 SET 01:08

FRIDAY, JULY 12

RISE 05:32 SET 19:22
RISE 15:20 SET 01:47

SATURDAY, JULY 13

RISE 05:32 SET 19:22
RISE 16:19 SET 02:27

Delhi Weather max min

Delhi City	37	28
Safdarjang	37	28
Palam	39	28

Delhi Palam Today
37°C A hazy and comfortable morning is likely. Day will be very warm. Light rain is possible.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
38°C A rise in temperature is likely. Dry and very warm weather with partly cloudy sky will continue.

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THE HINDU
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Made CM on popular demand, says Gehlot

'Cong. chief selected me because of strong public sentiments'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR

In a surprise remark, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday said he was appointed to the CM's post for the third term "on popular demand", as villagers across the State had expressed their opinion in his favour during the 2018 Assembly elections.

He said the then Congress president Rahul Gandhi had selected him in view of the strong public sentiments.

"*Mera Mukhya Mantri banna banta tha... Log chahte the ki Ashok Gehlot hi CM baney* (I deserved to become the Chief Minister. People wanted that Ashok Gehlot should become CM)," Mr. Gehlot said at a press conference on the Assembly premises here after presenting the 2019-20 State budget.

Mr. Gehlot, whose ap-



ASHOK GEHLOT, Chief Minister, Rajasthan

pointment to the CM's post was finalised after several days of lobbying by rival factions in the State Congress in December last year, said it was "very clear by name who should become the CM and who should not". He said he was given the oppor-

tunity by respecting the public sentiments in his favour.

Mr. Gehlot did not make any reference to Pradesh Congress Committee president Sachin Pilot, who was perceived to be in the race for the CM's post and was made the Deputy CM after many days of intense deliberations in Delhi following the victory of the Congress in the Assembly polls.

'Highest priority'
While affirming that he remembered the people's affection for him, Mr. Gehlot said his government would accord the highest priority to sensitivity, transparency and accountability in administration.

"The State budget is based on our resolve to provide good governance. We are going to get our rightful share in Central funds," he said.

Minister, IAS officers named in mining scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered two cases in Uttar Pradesh mining scam, naming former Minister Gayatri Prajapati and four IAS officers as accused, and carried out searches at 12 locations in the State, officials said on Wednesday.

The agency's FIR names Prajapati, a former Minister in the Samajwadi Party government, and then Principal Secretary in the Geology and Mining Department Jiwesh Nandan, Special Secretary Santosh Kumar, then District Magistrate Abhay and Vivek, they said.

Mr. Nandan, a 1987-batch IAS officer of the U.P. cadre, is presently posted as an Additional Secretary in the Defence Ministry, while Mr. Kumar is posted as Greater Sharda Sahayak Samadsh Region Development Pradhikari in Uttar Pradesh.

No new taxes in Rajasthan budget, sops for farmers

Tax relief worth ₹301 crore extended to the people



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot presenting the budget in the State Assembly on Wednesday. ■ ROHIT JAIN PARAS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR

No new taxes were levied in the budget for 2019-20 presented by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in the State Assembly here on Wednesday, while tax relief worth ₹301 crore was extended to people of the State through various exemptions and amnesty schemes.

Mr. Gehlot termed it a "people's budget", which had incorporated the aspirations and suggestions of the common people.

Modified budget
Mr. Gehlot, who also holds the finance portfolio, presented the modified budget for the current fiscal after the Assembly passed the vote-on-account of ₹86,906 crore in February this year in view of the Lok Sabha election. The modified budget's estimates for total expenditure were ₹2,32,944.01 crore and those for revenue receipts were ₹1,64,004.64 crore.

Taking a major step for "ease of doing farming", Mr. Gehlot proposed the establishment of a ₹1,000 crore fund for farmers' welfare, which would be utilised for getting remunerative prices for agricultural produces. Natural farming will also be promoted to reduce input costs and encourage traditional methods with an expenditure of ₹10 crore.

Various schemes
The budget proposed various schemes in irrigation, renewable energy, water, transport, animal husbandry and health sectors and gave tax relief through new provisions for exemption in stamp duty and registration fee, electricity duty, motor vehicle tax and irrigation tax and amnesty schemes in mining, commercial taxes and industry sectors.

Mr. Gehlot announced a policy for new and renewable energy projects and set a target for disbursement of short-term crop loans worth

₹16,000 crore from cooperative banks. He said his government had given "complete benefit" of loan waiver to farmers by paying on its own the dues of ₹6,000 crore left over by the previous BJP regime.

The Chief Minister also announced ₹927 crore for State highways, Janata Clinics on the lines of Mohalla Clinics in Delhi, new policy for electric vehicles and exemption to micro, small and medium enterprises from obtaining various permissions for the first three years of their operations.

Government jobs
As many as 75,000 vacancies in various government departments will be filled to provide jobs to the youths, while 104 types of new medicines will be included in the State government's free medicine scheme. Loans worth ₹1 lakh each will be sanctioned to youths under the Chief Minister's Yuva Rozgar Yojana.

Farmers get major chunk in Madhya Pradesh budget

₹132 crore earmarked for cow welfare; social security pension for elderly, disabled doubled

SIDHARTH YADAV BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Finance Minister Tarun Bhanot on Monday increased the budgetary allocation for farmers by 145% over the previous year to ₹22,736 crore.

Presenting his maiden budget in the Vidhan Sabha here, he said, "Under the loan waiver scheme, the State government has waived loans to the tune of ₹7,000 crore of 20 lakh farmers in two months. For the remaining farmers, ₹8,000 crore will be set aside."

To resolve farmers' issues and implement schemes suc-

cessfully, Mr. Bhanot said the government has decided to set up a farmers' advisory council, comprising farmers' representatives. Moreover, under the Krishna Bandhu Yojana, farmers will be trained in farming techniques.

Horticulture scheme
To improve the income of those involved in horticulture and food processing, the State government has decided to launch a horticulture and food processing scheme, for which ₹100 crore has been earmarked. The government has decided to cover fishermen and she-



Finance Minister Tarun Bhanot presenting the budget in the Assembly. ■ A. M. FARUQUI

pherds under the Kisan Credit Card scheme.

For panchayat and rural development, ₹25, 015 crore has been set aside, which was 26% more than the pre-

vious year's allocation, he said.

Quoting scriptures to stress the importance of cows, Mr. Bhanot proposed to earmark ₹132 crore for cow welfare and three models to develop gaushalas in the State.

The government has also decided to hike grant to the State Waqf Board and Haj committee as well, he said.

The social security pension for elderly, widows and disabled has been raised to ₹600 per month from ₹300. This may benefit more than 42 lakh people, he said.

Stating the government

has decided to reserve 70% of vacancies for locals in new private firms, Mr. Bhanot said, "Immediately after assuming office, the Chief Minister had directed that changes be made in the industrial policy to this effect."

Industrial policy
As for industrial investment, he said, the government has approved a pilot project for a land pooling scheme and formulated a new industrial promotion policy. Mr. Bhanot said a new startup and a micro, small & medium enterprises policy has also been drafted.

CM reviews power situation as Sidhu yet to take charge

Congress leader was allotted Power Ministry in June

VIKAS VASUDEVA CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the State's power situation in the prevailing peak power demand season.

State Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu, who was allotted the Power and Non-renewable Energy Ministry after being divested of the Local Government portfolio on June 6, is yet to assume responsibility of his new charge amid a widening rift with Capt. Amarinder.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister ordered a crackdown on power theft, particularly in areas bordering Pakistan and Haryana, in a bid to check the huge losses suffered by the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited.

Total power demand in Punjab rose by 17.8% in June, and had further increased by 33.3% as of date, compared with the corresponding periods of the previous year, on account of the pro-



Amarinder Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu have been at loggerheads since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. ■ FILE PHOTO.

longed dry spell, delayed monsoon and higher power consumption in the agriculture sector.

Opposition attack
While the Opposition parties, including the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Aam Aadmi Party, have been targeting the Congress government over alleged power cuts during the ongoing kharif sowing season, Mr. Sidhu's absence at his Ministry has given them added ammunition to target the ruling

party.

Capt. Amarinder and Mr. Sidhu have been at loggerheads since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. It started with Navjot Kaur Sidhu, wife of Mr. Sidhu, accusing Capt. Amarinder of blocking her Lok Sabha ticket from Chandigarh. Later, the Chief Minister blamed Mr. Sidhu for not handling his department well, which he claimed had resulted in the Congress's "poor performance" in urban areas in the general election.

MLA's daughter fears for life after marrying Dalit man

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BAREILLY (U.P.)

The daughter of an Uttar Pradesh BJP legislator has alleged that her life is in danger from her father after she married a Dalit man and asked the police for security.

Sakshi Misra (23), who is the daughter of Rajesh Misra, the MLA from Bithari Chainpur in Bareilly district, uploaded a video on social media on Wednesday and informed about her wedding to Ajitesh Kumar (29) last Thursday, police said.

In another video, she has apprehended threat to her life from her father, brother and an associate, and urged the Bareilly Senior Superintendent of Police to extend security to them. Ms. Misra has also appealed to the MPs and MLAs of Bareilly to not help Mr. Misra as she alleged that her father and others were out to eliminate her. The BJP legislator could not be reached for comments.

U.P. Minister's vajrasana tip to sleepy drivers

To stay alert after heavy meal; advice comes following Yamuna E-way accident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LUCKNOW

An Uttar Pradesh Minister on Wednesday said bus drivers should "take a nap or practise vajrasana" following a heavy meal to avoid dozing off at the wheel. The advice came following a bus accident on the Yamuna Expressway on Monday in which 29 people were killed.

U.P. Transport Minister Swatantra Dev Singh said at a press conference here that an inquiry committee report into the Expressway accident on Monday has suggest-

ed that the driver fell asleep.

The inquiry committee constituted by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was asked to submit its report to the State government within 24 hours.

The Minister said he got the "vajrasana tip", a basic sitting posture in yoga, from a video made by Sadguru.

"I was watching a video yesterday and it instructed that if anyone is driving after a full meal, he should take a 30-minute break," the Minister told media persons.

"That is, when he eats, he

should either take a nap or sit in vajrasana for 20 minutes and then go," the Minister added.

Route change
When asked why the route of the bus was changed, Mr. Singh said there were no passengers for Ghazipur that day but several people were heading for Agra or Delhi.

"The driver of the ill-fated bus had joined after three days of leave. He had a good track record and was involved in only one accident in the past. He had an expe-

rience of eight or nine years," the Transport Minister said.

No action can be taken against the driver as he is dead. But if officials checking duty on the route were missing, action will be taken against them, he said.

Mr. Singh also suggested better training for drivers and regular health check ups.

"Apart from this, public awareness should also be done. The regional managers should ensure compliance of this," he said.

We will play central role in national growth: Naveen

CM elaborates on plan to make Odisha a \$1 trillion economy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

A vision report titled 'Economic possibilities for Odisha – towards a one trillion dollar economy', jointly prepared by JSW Group and PwC India, was released by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday.

"Odisha, having huge natural resources, is on its way to achieve this objective through its investment in friendly policies, infra connectivity and skilled manpower," said Mr. Patnaik at the report release function at the State Secretariat. Odisha will play a central role in driving national growth as a manufacturing hub, he added.

According to a press release issued on the occasion, the global economy has grown over three times in the past three decades, and it is projected to grow



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik releasing the 'Economic possibilities for Odisha – towards a one trillion dollar economy' in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday. • BISWARANJAN ROUJ

more than double in size by 2050.

Huge potential

"The potential of mineral-based industries in Odisha, along with other sectors like agriculture, food processing, creative industries, MSMEs and women entrepreneurship, will play an important role in making the State a one trillion dollar economy," the release said.

JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal emphasised the role of regional economies in making India a ten-trillion-dollar economy. He said Odisha is the "hidden gem" of the country.

The report also emphasised the unique competitive advantages of Odisha over other States and its "potential to become the export hub for metal products across the world".

Odisha to get up to ₹6K cr. in rail budget

ECoR announces 5 surveys for the State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

The total allocation in the rail budget-2019 for Odisha will be approximately ₹5,800-₹6,000 crore, including allocations for various projects, passenger amenities, track renewal and repairs, road overbridges, road underbridges, electrification and staff amenities.

Giving details of the allocations, East Coast Railway authorities said on Wednesday that as many as five new surveys were announced for Odisha. Passenger amenities have got an allocation of ₹180 crore, they said.

New projects

The new projects for which the funds had been allocated include flyover at Baghuapal, grant for maintenance of coaches, automatic coach washing plants at Bhubaneswar and new wheel lathe for Mancheswar Workshop, Angul Electric Loco Shed and

Bondamunda.

Five new surveys were also announced in the rail budget. These include Raja Athagarh to Kaipadar Road avoiding Bhubaneswar and Khurda Road; 10 flyovers at Titlagarh, Singapur Road, Haridaspur, Koraput, Sambalpur, Machhapur, Jajpur Road, Sambalpur City, Sarla and Gopalpur Port; chord line from Talcher to Angul through colliery to avoid engine reversal at Talcher; bypass from Titlagarh-Rahenbata to Sikir; and flyover at Cuttack for goods train to avoid congestion at Cuttack.

Besides, funds have been allocated for laying new railway lines and doubling of lines. While ₹400 crore has been allocated for Haridaspur-Paradeep new line, ₹350 crore has been allocated for Khurda Road-Bolangir new line, and ₹250 crore for Angul-Sukinda Road new line and ₹150 crore for Talcher-Bimlagarh new line.

3 killed in Assam flood, landslides

Over 2 lakh people displaced in 530 villages of 11 districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Three people have died in flood and landslides triggered by incessant rain across Assam.

A person each drowned in eastern Assam's Dhemaji and Golaghat districts while another was buried under earth due to landslide in Kamrup (Metropolitan) district that covers much of Guwahati, officials said on Wednesday.

A spokesperson of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said that 11 of the State's 33 districts have been affected by the flood with 2,07,098 people displaced across 530 villages.

13 relief camps

National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force teams have evacuated many of the flood-affected people. Some of them have taken refuge in 13 relief camps set up in four districts.

"The Brahmaputra and



People at the site of a landslide in Guwahati on Wednesday.

• PTI

tributaries such as Dikhou, Dhansiri, Jia Bharali and Beki are flowing above the danger level," the spokesperson said.

Heavy rainfall has also wreaked havoc in Arunachal Pradesh with three districts – West Kameng, East Kameng and Shi-Yomi – suffering the most due to bridges and stretches of strategic roads getting washed away.

Officials said hundreds of vehicles have been stranded along a 64-km stretch of the road to Tawang from eastern Assam's Charduar.

Border Road Task Force

officials said repairing the roads would take time because of the extent of the damage.

A woman has been reported missing in West Kameng district after their house on the bank of a river was damaged by a flash flood on Sunday. Efforts were on to locate her.

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Wednesday asked the authorities concerned to coordinate and work out a State emergency mitigation plan for minimising damage during the monsoon season.

Uddhav to skip Pandharpur visit with CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray will not accompany Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis during the annual Vitthal 'puja' in Pandharpur town, sources close to the former said on Wednesday.

Earlier, there were reports that Mr. Thackeray would accompany Mr. Fadnavis in performing the 'puja' on Ashadhi Ekadashi on Friday, when the pilgrimage undertaken by devotees from across the State culminates.

The response from the Sena came in the wake of criticism from Maharashtra Congress president Ashok Chavan, who slammed Mr. Thackeray over his plan and said his presence will set a new precedent.

"The official 'puja' is always done by the Chief Minister. Last year, Lord Vitthal did not wish the Chief Minister come to him," he said, referring to Mr. Fadnavis not going to Pandharpur against the backdrop of Maratha quota stir.

State must not allow new sugar mills in Marathwada: Raju Shetti

'Farmers should be encouraged for drought-resistant crops likes pulses, oilseeds'

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

While Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis is talking tough on those seeking permission to set up sugar factories in Marathwada, former MP Raju Shetti on Wednesday said the State must refuse to entertain any such proposal in the region in the future.

The farmers' leader told *The Hindu* that the government should instead encourage farmers to cultivate drought-resistant crops like pulses and oilseeds, which are not only conducive to Marathwada's climate but would retain moisture and aid in recharging groundwater.

Drip irrigation

Recently, commenting on the approval for new sugar units, Mr. Fadnavis had said that permission would be given only to those factories which agreed to use drip irrigation — a recommendation also voiced by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari at a sugar conclave held



Raju Shetti

in the city last week.

"Given the acute water crisis that grips the Marathwada region each year, the government should banish all thought of setting up sugar mills there. The rainfall pattern in this region is extremely volatile and there is no guarantee of regular water supply," Mr. Shetti said, adding the question of conditional approval does not arise.

Lack of monitoring

He said drip irrigation to cultivate sugar cane, which was made mandatory by the Fadnavis government in 2017, was rarely implemented ow-

ing to the plummeting groundwater level in Marathwada and lack of monitoring of the drip irrigation system.

Of the 190-odd sugar factories in the State, Mr. Shetti said, 70 units spread across the Marathwada and Vidarbha regions are beyond any hope of rehabilitation.

"It takes 150 'water days' to run a sugar factory successfully. Since, this amount of water is only available in western Maharashtra districts irrigated by the Krishna river basin, the idea of establishing sugar mills in Marathwada must be discouraged by the government," the Swabhimani Paksha leader said.

He expressed scepticism over Mr. Gadkari's views on the need for sugar factories to switch to ethanol production if they did not wish to close down.

"While Mr. Gadkari's idea of producing ethanol sounds good in principle, it is not a transformation that can be made overnight. While [Mr. Gadkari] talks about trans-

forming the public transport system of the Nagpur civic body by running buses on alternative ethanol-based fuels, I want to ask him why are these buses out of order today?" Mr. Shetti said.

Import of maize

He accused the Central government of operating solely for the benefit of traders and ignoring the interests of farmers by permitting the import of four lakh tonnes of maize at concessional import duty rates to meet the demand of poultry feed.

"There was no need to allow such a large quantity of maize to be imported when the crop is grown freely in the Marathwada region and is a vital economic lifeline of farmers there. This decision is going to hit them hard. Last year, owing to excess production, farmers were getting paid well below the minimum support price of ₹1,400 per quintal. Now, the Centre is importing by claiming shortfall in production," Mr. Shetti said.

Rehabilitate Tiwari dam breach victims, Pawar writes to Fadnavis

Highlights NCP-Congress govt.'s efforts during Malin landslide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

NCP president Sharad Pawar has written to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, seeking speedy rehabilitation of those affected by the Tiwari dam breach in Ratnagiri, and basic amenities to them.

Mr. Pawar visited the dam site on Monday. At least 18 people died while five went missing in the flood caused by the dam breach on July 2 due to torrential rain in the region. In his letter, dated July 9, Mr. Pawar demanded relief to the affected people through the funds of the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, and the national disaster management.

He said the previous Congress-NCP government in Maharashtra had helped the victims of the Malin landslide. Nearly 151 people were killed in the landslide in Malin village, located in the foothills of the Sahyadri mountain range in Pune district, in July 2014.

"The then government had undertaken relief work immediately after the Malin tragedy. Relief was provided



Causing devastation: A view of Tiwari dam that breached following incessant rain, in Ratnagiri, on July 3. ■ FILE PHOTO

to the affected families through the funds of the Chief Minister, Prime Minister, and the disaster management and in other ways," Mr. Pawar said in the letter.

"The existing government schemes were implemented on priority then. The demands of Tiwari villagers and affected people should be considered on the same ground," the former Union minister said.

He asked Mr. Fadnavis to properly rehabilitate the affected families and speedily re-establish the basic public amenities there.

Mr. Pawar said during his visit to the village, he observed large-scale loss of lives, property and livestock.

Not only crops, the farm soil also got washed away by the flooding last week, leading to concerns over the livelihood of local farmers, the NCP chief said.

He said the Chief Minister should ensure education and hostel facilities to children whose family members died in the incident. "The affected families should be rehabilitated at a safer location, away from the dam."

Award-winning German play comes to Pune

Paradies, a Marathi play to be enacted at conference on radicalisation among youth

JANICE SAJI
PUNE

Two powerful plays, one in German and the other in Marathi, will be showcased at a three-day conference on youth radicalisation in the city later this week.

Paradies, which was chosen as 'Play of the Year' in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, will be enacted at the conference titled, "Towards Peace" between July 14 and 16. The event is organised by the Maharashtra Cultural Centre and Max Mueller Bhavan.

The play, written by German playwrights Lutz Hubner and Sarah Nemitz, deals with the life of Hamid, a teenager who is lured by radical groups with false promise of riches in the afterlife. It is directed by Mina Salehpour, the youngest awardee of the German theatre prize, 'DER FAUST'.

The conference will also showcase 'Y', a Marathi play co-written by Vibhawara Deshpande and Shirang Godbole (directed by Mr. Godbole), which talks about the vulnerability of youth in drifting towards radicalisation. The play, introduced to audiences in 2017, will be returning to Pune for the conference.

"After our first collaboration, Ms. Deshpande, Mr. Godbole, and I decided to work on another play together. We had a workshop about political issues that have a



Real-life lessons: *Paradies* deals with the life of Hamid, a teenager who is lured by radical groups with false promise of riches in the afterlife ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

global impact, and chose to write about radicalisation in terms of religion and nationalism," Mr. Hubner told *The Hindu*. "We wanted to put the focus on the motives of a fanatic."

The story explores the mind of a radicalised young man, in the process looking at the fears, hopes, desires and emotions of young people, who want to fight and kill for an ideology, Mr. Hubner said.

The play goes a level deeper into unravelling why radical ideologies are so seductive. "We must understand why somebody decides to leave his normal life behind. It is easy to analyse what's negative in these decisions, but we can only understand it fully when we know what the

promises of these ideologies are. In case of the Islamic State, where the main topic is paradise, we thought that for many youngsters, it is a kind of pop phenomenon, that they are not really Muslims; they are just looking for adventure, being part of a group, fighting for something, that's bigger than them," he said.

Mr. Hubner said he found the Indo-German collaboration to be "extremely rich" and "interesting". He hoped they would serve as a platform for discussion and prove stronger than mere "enlightenment campaigns". The theme of youth radicalisation, he said, is as relevant in Germany today as it is in India.

Mr. Godbole said

youngsters are involved in terrorist activities and acts of extremism not just in Europe or West Asia, but throughout the world. "Even in India, we have the youth taking part in extremist activities like mass killings and lynching. And this is not just due to religion, it moves far beyond it."

The youth, especially those who are unemployed, are manipulated into being part of extremist groups since they are given a sense of belonging and feel empowered, he said.

"Radicalisation among them is what inspired us to write about it. 'Y' is basically a crossroad that the youth find in their life, to either choose radicalisation or an evolved and mature path," he said.

Five arrested for kidnapping schoolboy in Gondia

7-year-old student of zilla parishad school found abandoned, reunited with parents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GONDIA

Five people were arrested for allegedly kidnapping a seven-year-old boy for ransom in Gondia district, the police said on Wednesday.

The boy, kidnapped on July 3, was found abandoned the next day and reunited with his parents.

Vaibhav Prakash Wasnik (23), Shekhar Dulichand Shende (23), both residents of Ghatagaon in Sadak Arjun tehsil; Pravin Kailash Patil

(22), Rahul Namaji Gavad (19) and Saurabh Balkrishna Gaidhani (19), all residents of Deori, were arrested from Nagpur on Tuesday.

It was a joint operation of the Local Crime Branch (LCB) and the Duggipaar police, and all five have confessed to their involvement in the crime, Vinita Sahu, Superintendent of Police, Gondia, said. The boy, a resident of Ghatagaon, was kidnapped from outside the zilla parishad school, where he

studied, by two men who came on a scooter.

Ms. Sahu said she formed five teams of the LCB, besides increasing vigil on the roads leading out of the district. The kidnapers, probably in panic, abandoned the boy trussed up in a gunny sack near Shenda Putali village in Deori tehsil the next day. He was found and reunited with his parents.

In their hunt for kidnapers, the LCB and the cyber cell of the police got some

clues after speaking to the boy, and succeeded in nabbing the accused from various places in Nagpur on Tuesday, the SP said.

The accused had kidnapped the boy with the intention of extorting ransom from his parents, Ms. Sahu said.

The accused were all unemployed young men and none of them had any criminal record, she said. One of the accused, Rahul Gavad, is the son of a policeman.

IN BRIEF


BJP MP demands NRC in Karnataka

NEW DELHI
BJP MP Tejasvi Surya on Wednesday urged the Union government to extend the National Register of Citizens to Karnataka as he alleged illegal immigrants from Bangladesh had become a security threat to Bengaluru and the entire State. Mr. Surya said, "They have not only become a security threat but also an economic threat as they are taking away the jobs of locals."

A.P. releases White Paper on State finances

VIJAYAWADA
Ahead of the first Budget session, the Andhra Pradesh government released a White Paper on State finances, in which it accused the previous government of misgovernance and financial mismanagement. Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy said the State had inherited a huge debt of ₹3.62 lakh crore.

BJP steps up pressure on Speaker to accept resignations

Party leaders stage dharna, ask Governor to advise Kumar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

The BJP on Wednesday strongly backed MLAs of the governing coalition who had submitted their resignations and urged Governor Vajubhai R. Vala to advise Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar to accept the resignations at the earliest.

Party leaders staged a dharna in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the Vidhana Soudha premises in an effort to put pressure on Mr. Ramesh Kumar and later met him in his chambers.

In a memorandum submitted to the Governor, the BJP delegation, led by State president B.S. Yeddyurappa, alleged that instead of accepting the resignations, the Speaker had allowed the parties in the ruling coalition to



Karnataka BJP chief B.S. Yeddyurappa with party leaders protesting against the Karnataka government in Bengaluru on Wednesday. •K. MURALI KUMAR

remain in power and threaten the MLAs who had resigned.

Maintaining that the coalition government had lost its majority following the resignation of several MLAs, the BJP leaders appealed to the Governor to direct the State administration not to implement orders of the government, such as issuing any Government Order.

Addressing protesters, Mr. Yeddyurappa and other BJP leaders severely criti-

cised the Speaker for not accepting the resignations at the earliest.

After the BJP delegation met him, the Speaker said he would take a call on the resignations after hearing the MLAs concerned.

On the BJP's plea that he should ensure that a situation wherein the Finance Bill may get defeated in the House should not arise, the Speaker said the government would collapse if the Finance Bill was defeated.

Cong. leaders protest in Bengaluru

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

Congress leaders, along with their counterparts in the Janata Dal (Secular), held a protest in Bengaluru on Wednesday, in a public show of strength, against the BJP's alleged attempts to topple the coalition government in Karnataka.

At the protest in the morning, senior leaders of the JD(S) and the Congress launched a scathing attack against the BJP for alleged horse-trading, attempted to lay siege to the Raj Bhavan and were detained.

Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal, along with several party workers, staged a dharna on the road. They later courted arrest.



Former Chief Secretary K. Jayakumar, right, releasing a special volume on the Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple in Thiruvananthapuram by handing over the first copy to V. Ratheesan, executive officer of the temple. •S. GOPAKUMAR

Special volume on Padmanabhaswamy temple released

It has been published by *The Hindu*

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Former Chief Secretary and popular poet and lyricist K. Jayakumar released a special volume in Malayalam on the Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple brought out by the special publications division of *The Hindu* here on Wednesday.

Executive Officer of the temple V. Ratheesan received the first copy from Mr. Jayakumar, who is also the founding Vice-Chancellor of the Malayalam University, at a simple function organised in the forecourt of the temple. The temple shot into fame with the discovery of ancient treasures in its subterranean vaults.

Titled *Samskritihyude Sambath*, the special volume has articles, accompa-

nied by an array of pictures, on the traditions associated with the temple, its rich history, its amazing architectural splendour and the many rituals and festivities associated with it.

The collector's item also has a portfolio of photographs, including a few rare ones, from *The Hindu* photo archives.

First in Malayalam

The special volume is the first to be brought in Malayalam by *The Hindu* on a religious centre in Kerala.

The cover price of the 108-page volume is ₹300.

In March 2018, *The Hindu* had come out with a special volume, *Wealth of Heritage*, on the temple, the ninth in a series on religious centres in South India.

SC clarifies on scientist's civil suit

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday clarified that the comments made by it in a judgment against Kerala police officers and authorities for destroying the career of space scientist Nambi Narayanan in the infamous ISRO spy scandal case would not affect ongoing civil suit proceedings against some officials.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar said the civil suit for ₹1 crore compensation filed by Mr. Narayanan against State officials would be tried on its own merits and not be influenced by the September 2018 judgment of the Supreme Court. The application was filed by former Kerala ADGP Siby Mathews. In its September 2018 judgment, the court said the spy case was a criminal frame-up based on "some kind of fancy." Over 24 years after Mr. Narayanan's career got "smothered" in the infamous case, a three-judge Bench led by then Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra found him a victim of trumped-up allegations of espionage by the police.

In the judgment, the court ordered Kerala to pay him ₹50 lakh as compensation for loss of his fundamental right to live with dignity and self-respect for all these years since his arrest on November 30, 1994.

The court had even agreed with Mr. Narayanan that a mere compensation in money could not serve him complete justice. Mr. Narayanan had argued that the prosecution launched by the police had a "catastrophic effect" on his career and personal life, besides setting back the technological advancement in space research.

5 killed as two buildings collapse in Bengaluru

Under-construction structure caves in; basement and first floor of an adjoining residence gave way



Fire and Emergency Services personnel and the NDRF team carrying out rescue operations at the site. •SUDHAKARA JAIN

STAFF REPORTER BENGALURU

Five people, including a three-year-old girl, were killed and four others were injured when an under-construction building in the core city area collapsed causing the basement and first floor of an adjoining residential building to give way. That building started tilting onto a third adjacent apartment. The incident took place around 1.55 a.m. on Wednesday in Pulakeshinagar. More than 35 people from eight households escaped un-

harmed, and have been asked to look for alternative accommodation.

Narayan, 26, who worked as watchman, his wife Nir-mala, 20, and their three-year-old daughter Anushka, who lived in the basement of the residence Sai Adi Ambal were killed.

This building began to tilt towards an adjacent apartment even as residents watched in horror.

Almost all the buildings on the road were constructed with barely any space between them.

According to the police, six labourers from Bihar and West Bengal were sleeping in the under-construction building. While two labourers Khagen Sarkar, 39, and Shambu Kumar, 38, died, Fire and Emergency Services personnel rescued the other four workers. Civic officials said that work on the building had started six months ago.

Civic officials who were at the spot said the owner of the under-construction building had not adhered to approved plans.

HSL in race for Navy's submarine project

Company says it is a strong contender for the ₹45,000-crore programme

SANTOSH PATNAIK VISAKHAPATNAM

Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), along with its two public sector consortium partners, is gearing up to submit its bid for the construction of six conventional submarines, for which the Expression of Interest (EoI) notification has been issued by the Indian Navy.

This will be followed by another EoI for Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM).

The Indian strategic partner has to design and construct the submarines in the country under the Make-in-India initiative.

The proposal, taken up under Project-75 (I), is moving to the next level after the re-election of the NDA government at the Centre.

Keeping the Navy's requirement in mind, HSL formed the consortium with Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and Mishra



HSL will harness the complimentary expertise of the three giant organisations, says a senior official. •K.R. DEEPAK

Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI) in May to provide a credible domestic alternative. This was cleared by the Defence Acquisition Committee.

The Navy is going for the second strategic partner model to achieve self-reliance after the project to acquire III Naval Utility Helicopters. For the OEM to be selected by the Ministry of Defence, transfer of technology

to the Indian partner will be a pre-requisite.

A senior official of HSL told *The Hindu* that with robust technical and financial backup, the consortium formed by them would be a strong contender for the ₹45,000-crore deal.

Informed sources said that apart from HSL, the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Larsen & Toubro would also submit their bids.

Both HSL and Mazagon are public sectors, while L&T constructs nuclear-powered Arihant class submarines at the Ship Building Centre in the city.

"We will harness the complimentary expertise of the three giant organisations," the HSL official said.

HSL, which is strategically located on the east coast in an area of 117 acres in an agronomic layout with large outfitting quay, hull construction facility, slipways and fully covered building dock, also has a submarine repair facility.

The yard, which was set up in 1941 by the Scindia Steam Navigation Co. Ltd, has rich experience in shipbuilding, ship repairs and refit of submarines.

At present, INS Sindhuvir submarine is undergoing a refit at the yard.

The shipyard was brought under the Ministry of Defence from Shipping in 2010.

Standing tall



Mirror image: A model of Burj Khalifa, a skyscraper in Dubai, being set up at Swarajya Maidan in Vijayawada on Wednesday. It will be the top attraction in the exhibition to be organised on the grounds. •CH. VIJAYA BHASKAR

Truck hits, injures wild elephant on Kerala-Karnataka border

Jumbo develops compound fracture on right shoulder

STAFF REPORTER KALPETTA

A she-elephant sustained injuries after a truck knocked it down at Ponkuzhi on the Kerala-Karnataka border under the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary on Tuesday.

Sanctuary officials arrested truck driver Sameej, 30, at Balussery in the Kozhikode district, in connection with the incident, which occurred around 7.30 p.m. As a herd of elephants was crossing the Kozhikode-Kollegal National Highway 766 inside the sanctuary, the steel rack-laden truck rammed the elephant, sanctuary sources said.

Though the truck driver did not stop the vehicle after the incident, the sanctuary



Veterinary experts examining the she-elephant after tranquillising it. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

officials arrested him later at Thakarappady and seized the truck.

A team of experts led by forest veterinary surgeon Arun Zachariah examined the jumbo and gave first aid after tranquillising it.

The elephant had a com-

ound fracture on the right shoulder and its ribs might also be broken, the sources said. The animal was administered a revival injection to which it responded well. A special team was constituted to monitor the movement of the herd, the sources said.

'Govt. cannot shirk duty towards schools'

Kerala High Court says State must restructure schools as required by RTE Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOCHI

A Full Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday held that the State government could not shirk its duty to establish schools with Classes I to V within every 1 km, and Classes VI to VIII within every 3 km, as specified in Rule 6 (f) of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act.

The Bench comprising Justice V. Chithambaran, Justice Alexander Thomas and Justice Ashok Menon made the observation while deciding on upgrading issues related to lower and upper primary schools under the RTE Act referred to it by a Division Bench.

The Bench further observed that the State government could not wriggle out



The HC slammed the Kerala government for the latter's stand that it was not feasible to upgrade existing schools.

of its obligation under the Act on the premise that a child could get a transfer to another school for completing his or her elementary education, and that the head teacher or teacher in charge of the schools where the child had studied should immediately issue transfer

certificate.

The court said the State government could not refuse permission to add Class V to lower primary schools and Class VIII to upper primary schools. Restructuring of all schools with uniform Classes from I to VIII was the scheme envisaged by the Act, which could not be trampled upon by any State.

The Bench slammed the government for the latter's stand that it was not feasible to upgrade existing schools or start new schools, and that the provision of transportation facilities for students to reach other schools would suffice.

The court pointed out that the government could not take refuge under Rule 6(4) of the Rules (Provision for ensuring transport facility) from establishing schools for

elementary education as mandated.

'Not tossed about'

The court observed that a child was not to be treated as "a chattel to be tossed about from one school to another for the completion of elementary education."

The Division Benches had held that there was no lapse in the implementation of the RTE Act and that the provision of easy transport of children to another school was sufficient, instead of establishing new schools or upgrading existing ones.

The Full Bench also ordered the government to deal with the applications given by various school managements seeking to upgrade their existing schools in the light of its observations.

Anthrax scare sends officials into a tizzy

STAFF REPORTER VISAKHAPATNAM

Health Department officials of Andhra Pradesh are on their toes after two suspected cases of anthrax were reported from Madagada village of Araku mandal in Visakhapatnam district.

Two persons aged around 30 to 35 years from Madagada village experienced anthrax symptoms after allegedly consuming unprocessed meat sold in a weekly shandy about a week ago.

The officials shifted the duo to the King George Hospital here after initial treatment at Araku.

The hospital authorities have sent the samples to the microbiology department for tests.

IN BRIEF



Swara Bhaskar takes Twitter user to task
MUMBAI Actor Swara Bhaskar reached out to the Mumbai Police on Wednesday after a Twitter user, Deepak Tiwari, made derogatory comments. The police assured her of prompt action. "I am now in the process of filing an official complaint with my local police station," she wrote.

Dalit man killed by upper caste in-laws in Gujarat
AHMEDABAD A 25-year-old Dalit man was murdered by his wife's father and other relatives in Varmor village of Ahmedabad district. According to police, Hareesh Kumar Solanki was killed by eight men outside his wife Urmila's house in the presence of a women's helpline team.

Receiving threats after complaint: Manisha Gulati
CHANDIGARH Punjab State Commission for Women Chairperson Manisha Gulati on Wednesday said that after the police complaint against singer Honey Singh for vulgar lyrics, she had been receiving threats on social media.

BJP MLA dances with guns in hands
DEHRADUN The BJP has issued a notice to its suspended BJP MLA from Uttarakhand, Kunwar Pranav Singh Champion, after a video showing him dancing with guns in hands during a get-together went viral. In the video, he is purportedly seen dancing to a popular Bollywood number.

School gets show-cause notice for road blockade

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI
The Hailakandi district administration in southern Assam has served a 48-hour show-cause notice to a private school for letting its students take part in a road blockade. The students of Blue Flowers English Medium Higher Secondary School blocked Halkandi's Rabindra Sarani road on Tuesday, where the school is located, demanding its repairs. However, officials said that the Public Works Department had already given a written assurance to the school to repair the road by July 31.

Further, the chairperson of the district's Child Welfare Committee filed an FIR against the school principal for violation of child rights under the Juvenile Justice Act. Four other schools were also issued show-cause notices for making their students participate in the rally.

IAF to adopt ASRAAM missile for fighter fleet

DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI
The Indian Air Force (IAF) is looking to adopt a new European visual range air-to-air missile across its fighter fleet. The Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile of European missile-maker MBDA has been approved for Jaguar jets. The IAF was looking to integrate it on the Su-30 MKIs and the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft as well, defence sources said. "The ASRAAM has been chosen for the Jaguar and is currently undergoing integration. First firing is expected by year-end," a defence source said. It would be the first over-the-wing-launched missile in the IAF inventory. All missiles are now fired from un-

Bengal port records country's highest sea level rise in 50 years

Four ports in India recorded a higher sea-level rise than the global average

SHIV SAHAY SINGH KOLKATA
Of the major ports in India, Diamond Harbour in West Bengal located at the mouth of river Hooghly has recorded the maximum sea level increase, according to data tabled in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Earth Sciences. While recent studies reveal that sea level rise in the country has been estimated to be 1.3 mm per year along India's coasts during the last 40-50 years, at Diamond

Harbour the rise was almost five times higher at 5.16 mm per year. The mean sea level rise for Diamond Harbour was based on recordings over the period between 1948 to 2005. This is followed by Kandla port in Gujarat where the sea level rise was 3.18 (1950 to 2005), followed by Haldia in West Bengal, which recorded a sea level rise of 2.89 mm a year (1972 to 2005). Port Blair also recorded a sea level rise of 2.20 mm per year (1916-1964).



Sea fury: Rising water levels and coastal erosion pose major threats to people living in coastal areas. • THULASI KAKKAT

Sea level rise is said to be linked with global warming and as per the fifth assessment report of the International Panel on Climate Change, the global sea level was rising at an average rate of 1.8 mm per year over the

last century. Going by the data from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, four ports – Diamond Harbour, Kandla, Haldia and Port Blair – recorded a higher sea level rise than the global average. Chennai and Mumbai recorded a sea level rise far below the global and the national averages at 0.33 mm per year (1916-2005) and 0.74 mm (1878-2005) respectively. "Rising sea levels can exacerbate the impacts of coastal hazards such as storm surge, tsunami, coastal floods, high waves and coastal erosion in the low lying coastal areas in addition to

causing gradual loss of coastal land to sea," the Ministry said in response to a question by MPs Saugata Roy and Anto Antony. The sea level rise is higher in West Bengal, particularly in the Sunderbans delta because of the deltaic sediment deposition as a result of the mixing of fresh water and saline water, according to experts. In response to another question related to global warming by Lok Sabha MPs Shivkumar C. Udas and Kankamal Katara, the Ministry of Earth Sciences explained that global warming not only

causes melting of ice and glaciers, but also leads to internal expansion of water in oceans and thus a rise in the sea level. On results of studies on the impact of global warming, the Ministry said heavy rainfall and temperature extremes like heat waves and shifts in semi-arid regions were some recent findings which may have linkages with climate change and global warming. "Studies over Indian region have shown a warming trend of 0.6°C on all India average basis, mainly contributed by maximum temperatures," the Ministry said.

Single tribunal to hear water disputes

The Inter-State River Water Disputes Bill also proposes to resolve such conflicts within 18 months

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Cabinet has approved the Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 that will help adjudicate disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers and river valleys. A version of this Bill was first introduced in the Lok Sabha in 2017 but it subsequently lapsed. The Bill seeks to amend the Inter State River Water Disputes Act, 1956 to streamline the adjudication of inter-State river water disputes. **Adjudication process** A key feature of the Bill is the constitution of a single



Reality check: A file photo of officials inspecting water level in the Cauvery near its entry point in Tamil Nadu.

tribunal with different Benches, and the setting of strict timelines for adjudication. "When any request under the Act is received from any State Government in respect of any water dispute on the inter-State rivers and the Central Government is of the opinion that the water dispute cannot be set-

tled by negotiations, the Central Government constitutes a Water Disputes Tribunal for the adjudication of the water dispute," said a press note. There are about a dozen tribunals that now exist to resolve disputes among States on sharing water from rivers common to them. The standalone tribunal so envisaged will have a permanent establishment, office space and infrastructure so as to obviate with the need to set up a separate tribunal for each water dispute - a time consuming process. The Bill also proposes a Dispute Resolution Committee set up by the Central Government for amicably resolving inter-State water disputes within 18 months. Any dispute that cannot be settled by negotiations would be referred to the tribunal for its adjudication. The dispute so referred to the tribunal shall be assigned by the chairperson of the tribunal to a Bench of the tribunal for adjudication. The Bill can also affect the composition of the members of various tribunals, and has a provision to have a technical expert as the head of the tribunal. Currently all tribunals are staffed by members of the judiciary, nominated by the Chief Justice.

OTHER KEY DECISIONS

Bill to tackle ponzi scams

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019, to tackle the menace of ponzi schemes in the country. The Bill, which will replace the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019, will be introduced in the ongoing session of the Parliament. "SEBI and RBI approved deposits will be allowed," Union Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

Green light for rural roads

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the third phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-III) under which 1.25 lakh km of roads in rural areas will be upgraded at an estimated cost of ₹80,250 crore by 2024-25. "This would facilitate easy and faster movement to and from Gramin Agricultural Markets (GRAMs), higher secondary schools and hospitals," an official statement said.

RPF set to get Group A status

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Cabinet accorded Organised Group A Service status to the Railway Protection Force. "Grant of status to RPF will end stagnation, improve career progression of the officers and keep up their motivational level," an official release said. Earlier this month, the benefits were extended to Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police and Sashastra Seema Bal.

Death penalty for child abuse

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Cabinet approved an amendment to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The Bill, which had been introduced earlier but lapsed in Parliament when the Lok Sabha was dissolved in May, was approved by the Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said. The Bill provides for stringent punishment, including death, for sexual assault of children.

Support for transgender

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Cabinet approved the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, a previous version of which had lapsed when the Lok Sabha was dissolved in May. The Bill looks at providing social, economic and educational empowerment to transgender persons, a statement said. Sending the Bill to the Parliament again was on the first 100-day agenda of the Narendra Modi government's second term.

Contempt plea against IMA, Centre for June strike

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
A contempt petition has been filed in the Supreme Court against the Indian Medical Association for calling – and the Centre for not preventing – a nationwide

strike by doctors on June 17, 2019. The strike was held to demonstrate solidarity with the junior doctors of West Bengal in their protest against assault on two junior doctors at the NRS Hospital

in Kolkata. The petition filed by an NGO, People for Better Treatment, said that the strike was in violation of a 2014 order by the SC which had "categorically held that doctors should not resort to strike under any condition."

The petition said that despite the 'repeated and clear calls from the highest court of the land,' doctors across India have continued to resort to strikes, disrupting medical services across the country.

Article 370: SC may consider early hearing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it would consider the plea seeking urgent hearing of a PIL petition challenging the constitutional validity of Article 370 which grants special status to Jammu and Kashmir and limits Parliament's power to make laws for the State. A Bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose took note of the submission of BJP leader and lawyer Ashwini Upadhyay that his PIL be listed for an urgent hearing. "File a memo. We will see," the Bench said. On February 18 this year as well, he had mentioned the PIL for urgent listing for the hearing.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Thursday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places over West Uttar Pradesh and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura; heavy rainfall at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Gangetic West Bengal, Coastal & South Interior Karnataka and Konkan & Goa.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.3	31.2	26.4	Kozhikode	81.4	28.2	22.0
Ahmedabad	38.4	26.5	25.7	Kurnool	36.2	25.7	25.7
Aizwal	30.0	22.9	19.9	Lucknow	20.8	29.2	24.4
Allahabad	13.3	29.2	26.0	Madurai	0.2	40.6	25.6
Bengaluru	29.6	21.1	21.0	Mangaluru	66.9	30.1	21.0
Bhopal	32.1	24.4	25.6	Mumbai	7	28.3	26.2
Bhubaneswar	17.7	25.6	19.7	Mysuru	29.0	29.0	19.7
Chandigarh	29.1	31.8	27.0	New Delhi	0.4	37.2	28.2
Chennai	4.4	39.2	26.4	Patna	61.6	30.8	25.4
Coimbatore	33.0	22.0	23.0	Port Blair	31.6	25.3	24.6
Dehradun	42.0	33.7	23.0	Puducherry	30.6	37.0	24.6
Gangtok	3.6	20.0	18.1	Pune	11.8	27.2	22.2
Goa	34.8	31.5	23.9	Raipur	32.7	24.8	24.4
Guwahati	50.3	28.2	24.4	Ranchi	31.6	24.4	17.8
Hubballi	24.0	21.0	17.8	Shillong	192.4	19.7	17.8
Hyderabad	34.3	24.3	17.0	Shimla	2.2	24.5	17.0
Imphal	6.8	23.7	26.0	Srinagar	32.2	19.7	19.7
Jaipur	38.0	27.6	23.2	Trivandrum	3.8	29.6	23.2
Kochi	10.2	31.4	24.4	Tiruchir	39.0	26.4	26.4
Kohima	2.8	22.0	17.4	Vijayawada	39.1	28.5	28.5
Kolkata	34.3	28.1	28.1	Visakhapatnam	31.4	28.4	28.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)
Pollutants in the air you are breathing
CITIES SO₂ NO₂ CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE
Ahmedabad 42 159 70 69 69 In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana, recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 279, indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Pune, Maharashtra, recorded a healthy AQI score of 19.
Bengaluru 27 43 70 96
Chennai 7 24 52 72
Delhi 17 32 41 86 259
Hyderabad 5 15 23 32
Kolkata 8 48 13 62 86
Lucknow 9 22 110 53
Mumbai 23 100 19 43
Pune 8 23 14 14
Visakhapatnam 13 50 45 59 123
Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters by making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease



Caution needed

Supreme Court decision on the Rohingya's status must protect those fleeing persecution

The Supreme Court's decision to examine the question whether illegal immigrants are entitled to refugee status needs to be welcomed, but with caution. It is debatable whether the Centre is right in claiming that this has emerged as a substantial question of law in the context of the Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar. For, it is fairly obvious that those escaping persecution in their home country are invariably undocumented. It logically follows that those fleeing conditions of war or conflict will have to be treated as refugees first before their cases can be examined in detail, and deemed fit for deportation as illegal entrants. It will be strange if any court holds that no illegal immigrant is entitled to refugee status. That would amount to a perverse denial of the very existence of refugees as a class. What the government is perhaps looking for is a decision holding that it can choose the class of illegal immigrants it wishes to treat as refugees; and that it can deny that status to any section it deems a threat to national security or is likely to strain local resources. The court's decision to go into the issue, therefore, offers an opportunity to clarify India's approach to the refugee question, which has generally been favourable to vulnerable entrants, but is stridently hostile to the Rohingya.

India is not a signatory to the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees, 1951, and a Protocol adopted in 1967 on the subject. However, since Independence it has by and large adhered to the larger humanitarian principles underlying these instruments. In this backdrop, it is astonishing that the present regime is determined to deport the Rohingya, in utter disregard of the danger to their lives in Myanmar, and in violation of the principle of non-refoulement, the norm that prohibits states from forcibly returning refugees to conditions that caused them to flee their homes in the first place. It will be amoral and unjust if this most vulnerable group from Myanmar's Rakhine state, numbering about 40,000 in India now, is denied refugee status. With the Centre taking a stand against treating them as refugees, a positive ruling is needed from the apex court to prevent their forcible deportation. The government's keenness to deport the Rohingya is rooted in the technicalities of its citizenship law. It defines "illegal immigrant" as any foreigner entering India without valid travel documents, or overstays a permitted period of stay. It rules out giving citizenship by registration to such illegal immigrants. The amendments it proposes to the Citizenship Act do not cover Muslim immigrants and are limited to persecuted Afghan, Bangladeshi and Pakistani minorities. India should work with the world community on the voluntary repatriation of the Rohingya and not besmirch its fine record of humane treatment of refugees by pursuing the deportation option without relent.

Grecian churn

Greece under Mr. Mitsotakis is set for a period of stability and continuity

The verdict in Sunday's Greek elections affords a rare comfort for Europe's centrists, who, arguably with the exception of Spain in April, have of late ceded ground to populist forces. The conservative centre-right New Democracy party of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has won 158 out of the 300 seats. The left-wing Syriza party of outgoing premier Alexis Tsipras was left with 86 seats. Critical support for Mr. Tsipras could not be ruled out from MeRA25, the Greek wing of Europe's anti-establishment DiEM25, of ex-finance minister Yanis Varoufakis; it has nine seats. But there is another dimension to this overall sense of political balance and stability in Parliament. Golden Dawn, the anti-Muslim party that ranked third in the last elections, has been convincingly rejected by voters, with less than the requisite vote share to enter the legislature. The potential for mischief from hardline nationalist parties was on display only recently. In January, Mr. Tsipras's government narrowly survived a vote of confidence after Independent Greeks, a coalition partner, withdrew support, refusing to back the renaming of the former Yugoslavian state as Northern Macedonia. Given the influx of immigrants and the refugee crisis, the ruling New Democracy and Opposition Syriza party both have a moral responsibility to consolidate the middle ground. Mr. Mitsotakis has assumed charge under relatively benign conditions. Four years ago, Greece was bearing the brunt of an international bailout, biting austerity measures and a collapsing banking system while on the verge of being ejected from Europe's single currency zone. That prospect is way behind, as the general consensus is that the euro is destined to succeed, for failure would be too costly.

Athens last year managed to exit the €86-billion bailout programme, but conditions in 2019 are far from ideal. Economic growth is at a tepid 2% rate as the population continues to be weighed down by reforms to the once generous pension system and spending cuts to the education and health-care budgets. The roughly 18% unemployment rate is by far the highest in the European Union. Mr. Mitsotakis, the Harvard-educated former banker, is said to be well regarded in the Brussels establishment. The inference is that the economic path of the past four years would not be derailed. The concern for Greeks is over whether Mr. Mitsotakis can navigate what seems a difficult road ahead without overly adding to their woes. Athens's strategic Mediterranean location lends greater heft to the EU's approach on the external policy front. Mr. Mitsotakis must leverage the goodwill he apparently enjoys with Brussels to shape an asylum policy underpinned by enlightened self-interest and humaneness. As Greece makes a fresh start, its leaders should temper the expectations.

A demographic window of opportunity

In India, investing in the laggard States will ensure their role as being the greatest contributors of the future



SONALDE DESAI

Last month, the United Nations released the 26th revision of World Population Prospects and forecast that India will overtake China as the most populous country by 2027. The only surprise associated with this forecast is the way it was covered by the media. Is this good news or bad news? Is it news at all?

Is this news? Not really. We have known for a long time that India is destined to be the most populous country in the world. Population projections are developed using existing population and by adjusting for expected births, deaths and migration. For short-term projections, the biggest impact comes from an existing population, particularly women in childbearing ages. Having instituted a one-child policy in 1979, China's female population in peak reproductive ages (between 15 and 39 years) is estimated at 235 million (2019) compared to 253 million for India. Thus, even if India could institute a policy that reduces its fertility rate to the Chinese level, India will overtake China as the most populous country.

The element of surprise comes from the date by which this momentous event is expected. The UN revises its population projections every two years. In 2015, it was predicted that India would overtake China in 2022, but in the 2019 projections it is 2027. The UN has revised India's expected population size in 2050 downward from 1,705 million in 2015 projections to 1,639 million in 2019 projections. This is due to faster than expected

fertility decline, which is good news by all counts.

Like it or not, India will reign as the most populous country throughout most of the 21st century. Whether we adjust to this demographic destiny in a way that contributes to the long-term welfare of the nation or not depends on how we deal with three critical issues.

Population control

First, do we need to adopt stringent population control policies? History tells us that unless the Indian state can and chooses to act with the ruthlessness of China, the government has few weapons in its arsenal. Almost all weapons that can be used in a democratic nation, have already been deployed. These include restriction of maternity leave and other maternity benefits for first two births only and disqualification from panchayat elections for people with more than two children in some States along with minor incentives for sterilisation.

As demographer Judith Blake noted, people have children, not birth rates and few incentives or disincentives are powerful enough to overcome the desire for children. Ground-level research by former Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Nirmala Buch found that individuals who wanted larger families either circumvented the restrictions or went ahead regardless of the consequences. As one of her informants noted, "The sarpanch's post is not going to support me during my old age, but my son will. It does not really matter if I lose the post of sarpanch."

Second, if punitive actions won't work, we must encourage people to have smaller families voluntarily. There are sharp differences in fertility among different socio-economic groups. Total Fer-



tility Rate (TFR) for the poorest women was 3.2 compared to only 1.5 for the richest quintile in 2015-16. To get to TFR of 1.5, a substantial proportion of the population among the top 40% must stop at one child.

In western societies, low fertility is associated with the conflict that working women face between work and child rearing and the individual's desire to enjoy a child-free life. Not so for Indian couples. In India, couples with one child do not consume more nor are women in these families more likely to work. My research with demographer Alaka Basu from Cornell University shows that it is a desire to invest in their children's education and future prospects that seems to drive people to stop at one child. Richer individuals see greater potential for ensuring admission to good colleges and better jobs for their children, inspiring them to limit their family size. Thus, improving education and ensuring that access to good jobs is open to all may also spur even poorer households into having fewer children and investing their hopes in the success of their only daughter or son. Provision of safe and easily accessible contraceptive services will complete this virtuous cycle.

Population and policy

Third, we must change our mindset about how population is incor-

porated in broader development policies.

Population growth in the north and central parts of India is far greater than that in south India. What should we do about the old policies aimed at not rewarding States that fail to control population growth? These policies include using the 1971 population to allocate seats for the Lok Sabha and for Centre-State allocation under various Finance Commissions. In a departure from this practice, the 15th Finance Commission is expected to use the 2011 Census for making its recommendations. This has led to vociferous protests from the southern States as the feeling is that they are being penalised for better performance in reducing fertility.

There is reason for their concern. Between the 1971 and 2011 Censuses, the population of Kerala grew by 56% compared to about 140% growth for Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. A move to use the 2011 Census for funds allocation will favour the north-central States compared to Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

However, continuing to stay with a 1971 Census-based allocation would be a mistake. Cross-State subsidies come in many forms; Centre-State transfers is but one. Incomes generated by workers in one State may also provide the tax revenues that support residents in another State. The varying pace of onset and end of demographic transition creates intricate links between workers in Haryana today and retirees in Kerala and between future workers in Uttar Pradesh and children in Tamil Nadu.

Demographic dividend provided by the increasing share of working age adults is a temporary phase during which child dependency ratio is falling and old-age

dependency ratio is still low. But this opportunity only lasts for 20 to 30 years. For States such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu which experienced fertility decline early, this window of opportunity is already past.

As the United Nations Population Fund estimates, over the next 20 years, the window of opportunity will be open for moderate achievers such as Karnataka, Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir. As the demographic window of opportunity closes for these States, it will open for Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other States that are the last to enter fertility transition. This suggests that workers of Bihar will be supporting the ageing population of Kerala in 20 years.

The focus areas

In order to maximise the demographic dividend, we must invest in the education and health of the workforce, particularly in States whose demographic window of opportunity is still more than a decade away. Staying fixated on the notion that revising State allocation of Central resources based on current population rather than population from 1971 punishes States with successful population policies is shortsighted. This is because current laggards will be the greatest contributors of the future for everyone, particularly for ageing populations of early achievers. Enhancing their productivity will benefit everyone.

It is time for India to accept the fact that being the most populous nation is its destiny. It must work towards enhancing the lives of its current and future citizens.

Sonalde Desai is Professor of Sociology, University of Maryland and Professor and Centre Director, NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre. The views expressed are personal

Turning down the heat

There is enormous potential in mitigating climate change through forest restoration



SUJATHA BYRAVAN

During the run-up to the Paris climate change meeting in 2015 (COP-21) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, each country decided the level and kind of effort it would undertake to solve the global problem of climate change. These actions were later referred to as nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

India made a number of promises that would lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or mitigation, and actions to adapt to living in a warmer world, or adaptation. Many of its described programmes and plans were intended to enable India to move to a climate-friendly sustainable development pathway. Primarily, by 2030, there will be reductions in the emissions intensity of the GDP by about a third and a total of 40% of the installed capacity for electricity will be from non-fossil fuel sources. India also promised an additional carbon sink – a means to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere – of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by the year 2030. Trees and other vegetation fix carbon as part of photosynthesis and soil too holds organic carbon from plants and animals. The amount of soil carbon varies with land management practices, farming methods, soil nutrition and temperature.

Enhancing green cover India has yet to determine how its carbon sink objectives can be met. In a recent study, the Forest Survey of India (FSI) has estimated, along with the costs involved, the opportunities and potential actions for additional forest and tree cover to meet the NDC target. Given that forest and green cover already show a gradual increase in recent years, one might use this increase as part of the contribution towards the NDC. Or one might think of the additional 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent sink as having to be above the background or business-as-usual increase.

Natural forests

A recent study in *Nature* by Simon Lewis and colleagues provides insights into what works well with regard to green cover. Locking up the carbon from the atmosphere in trees, ground vegetation and soils is one of the safest ways with



will be by restoring forests and afforestation on wastelands, with a modest rise in total green cover.

The FSI study has three scenarios, representing different levels of increase in forest and tree cover. For example, 50%, 60% or 70% of impaired forests could be restored. The total increase in the carbon sink in these scenarios could be 1.63, 2.51 or 3.39 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2030, at costs varying from about ₹1.14 to ₹2.46 lakh crore. These figures show that the policy has to be at least at a medium level of increase to attain the stated NDC targets.

Restoration type is key

Taken together, these studies indicate that while there is enormous potential in mitigating climate change through forest restoration, the amount of carbon stored depends on the type of forest restoration carried out. The most effective way is through natural forest regeneration with appropriate institutions to facilitate the process. Vast monocultures of plantations are being proposed in some countries, including in India, but these hold very little carbon; when they are harvested, carbon is released

which to remove carbon. If done correctly, the green cover increase will provide many other benefits: it will improve water quality, store water in wetlands, prevent soil erosion, protect biodiversity, and potentially provide new jobs. The authors estimate that allowing land to be converted into forests naturally will sequester 42 times the carbon compared to land converted to plantation, or six times for land converted to agroforestry.

Another study in *Science* by Jean-François Bastin and colleagues estimates that it is possible to add 0.9 billion hectares of canopy cover worldwide, potentially mitigating up to two-thirds of historical greenhouse gas emissions. This would then prevent or delay the worst impacts from climate change.

Restoration type is key

Taken together, these studies indicate that while there is enormous potential in mitigating climate change through forest restoration, the amount of carbon stored depends on the type of forest restoration carried out. The most effective way is through natural forest regeneration with appropriate institutions to facilitate the process. Vast monocultures of plantations are being proposed in some countries, including in India, but these hold very little carbon; when they are harvested, carbon is released

as the wood is burned.

Besides, some of the trees selected for the plantations may rely on aquifers whose water becomes more and more precious with greater warming. Such forms of green cover, therefore, do not mitigate climate change and also do not improve biodiversity or provide related benefits. India, therefore, needs first to ensure that deforestation is curtailed to the maximum extent. Second, the area allocated to the restoration of impaired and open forests and wastelands in the FSI report should be focussed entirely on natural forests and agroforestry.

While using a carbon lens to view forests has potential dangers, involving local people and planting indigenous tree varieties would also reduce likely difficulties. Instead of plantations, growing food forests managed by local communities would have additional co-benefits. Once natural forests are established, they need to be protected. Protecting and nurturing public lands while preventing their private enclosure is therefore paramount. Active forest management by local people has a long history in India and needs to expand to meet climate, environmental and social justice goals.

Sujatha Byravan is a scientist who studies science, technology and development policy

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Reining in hate

The law-enforcers being mute is what ends up emboldening the fringe to tease, torment and even take a toll on lives (Editorial page, "The growing power of the lumpen", July 10.) The episodes of lynching are a blot on the face of a free, democratic India. If the new slogan of the government, 'Sab ka saath, Sab ka vikas, Sab ka vishwas' is to have any meaning, quick steps need to be initiated to win back the trust of all who are being targeted.

C.V. ARAVIND,
Bengaluru

Those from the minority community are beaten up, forced to chant a religious slogan and, then lynched. What response do such incidents evoke in the hearts of the right-thinking Indian? Strong and peaceful protests are needed. The government

has worked on predictable lines: first denial, then symbolic arrests, later customary baills, protracted trials with endless adjournments and, finally, a much-delayed conviction, if at all. Public memory is short and a young son lost. Who will compensate his family for the irretrievable loss? So far no senior minister or even the Prime Minister has spoken out consistently to reassure the minorities. Civil society must make its presence felt especially as the Opposition is in disarray.

Dr. KURUVILLA VARKEY,
Oddanchatram, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

Malnutrition trap

The chest-thumping around the vision of a \$5 trillion economy for India has no meaning if it doesn't touch the poorest and the deprived in a positive way (OpEd page, "The malaise of malnutrition", July 10) The grim fact that only 16% of

funds allocated under POSHAN Abhiyaan was used by governments betrays the sheer insensitivity of the authorities towards the malnutrition-afflicted. The cascading tendency of a transmission of poverty from mother to children continues, which is proof enough that the government's efforts have had only peripheral impact.

AYYASSERI RAVEENDRANATH,
Aranmula, Kerala

The inherited dehumanising poverty explains the persistence of malnutrition on a large scale. Children born in impecunious circumstances suffer the most from malnutrition. It is all the more reason for governments to intervene to provide adequate nutrition to all. Funds for food to all yield great returns and help in unlocking the full potential of citizens besides

strengthening the workforce. Governance can be termed 'good' only when it banishes hunger and starvation. The poor must also be valued like the rest of the population since attaching less value to their lives is one unstated reason why their nutritional needs are not taken care of as they should be.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

What about recycling?

Ever since the Union Budget laid out the path for electric vehicular transportation, there has been debate on how this will affect the automobile industry and its associated peripheral markets. However, there has been little debate on the importance of (lithium) battery recycling and the issue of tackling solid waste. If EV technology is to have a bright and sustainable future in India, there has to be a complete product lifecycle

system in place. Recycling must go hand-in-hand with market, production and job opportunities.

SREENJ C.M.,
Thalassery, Kannur, Kerala

Elephant repellent

Elephants are afraid of bees and there are numerous case studies across the world to show that the world's largest land-based animal is terrified of the tiny insect. While a bee sting does not affect the thick hide, it is the stings to the elephant's most sensitive areas, namely its trunk, mouth and eyes, that hurt the most. Research has shown that in Africa, placing beehives every 30 m or so is effective in keeping 80% of African elephants away from farmland. A paper in *Current Biology* (2018), titled "Wild Sri Lankan elephants retreat from the sound of disturbed Asian honey bees", has shown that the Asian elephant is also scared of

bees. Therefore, using bees has potential as a control strategy in Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and Thailand.

Beehive fences are gaining popularity in Africa, costing a fraction of what an electrified fence would, according to an *NYT* article. Farmers also have a new source of income from selling honey besides boosting the role of bees as top pollinators. As far as the strategy of sound amplification is concerned, which has been elaborated in the report, "Honour for 'Plan Bee' that helped save jumbos" (July 10), the fact is that elephants are smart and quickly learn that the threat from a recording of buzzing bees is unreal. Therefore investing in the real thing works best as a few stings reinforce its efficacy.

NADIKERIANDA CHINNAPPA,
Bengaluru

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Nehru and the Kashmir quandary

The former PM erred in having too much confidence in the sense of justice of his successors



D. SHYAM BABU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah earlier this month held India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, responsible for the country being deprived of one-third of Kashmir. Except for those who deify Nehru, most others readily agree to the obvious fact that Nehru was not infallible. However, it is ironical Mr. Shah and his party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, focus on an area of Nehru's alleged culpability – his handling of the Kashmir question – on which the latter perhaps deserves their indulgences and empathy.

What must one, then, think of when one thinks of Kashmir? Is it a stolen land? Or a symptom of Hindu-Muslim rivalry? Or a case of cross-border terrorism? Or perhaps a battleground for two nuclear rivals?

Kashmir is all these and much more. However, there are some aspects to the muddle that have been ignored for far too long.

Nehru, the Kashmiri Pandit

First, given Nehru's well-known secular credentials, we tend to treat him as less of a Hindu, if not looking at him as an outright anti-Hindu. In reality, on Kashmir, he acted not only as a Hindu determined to protect his co-religionists, but as a Kashmiri Pandit.

In 1947, the immediacy of the crisis in Kashmir – the procrastination of Maharaja Hari Singh to join either India or Pakistan and Pakistan's invasion of the state – dictated that Nehru and the Government of India do everything to prevent the impending genocide of the Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir.

Wouldn't a secular Nehru have also acted in a similar way? Indeed. But a secular Nehru would have liberated the rest of Kashmir, including Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), as well. Because India could either claim the whole of Jammu and Kashmir or nothing. Ignore, for the time being, the purported reluctance of Indian Army to proceed further due to the operational constraints that forced Nehru to agree to a ceasefire.



A measured handshake: Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru with Kashmir's Maharaja Hari Singh in Srinagar in May 1948. • THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

Further, if one were to examine Nehru's actions in solely communal terms, one wouldn't be able to visualise a better strategy for the Hindus in the State than the one he chose. It must surely have crossed Nehru's mind that if he liberated PoK, it would create a situation where Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir were further relegated to a minority.

Here, it is not difficult to count the benefits of Nehru's calibrated inaction. A unified Jammu and Kashmir would have meant that even a brilliant gerrymandering of political topography would not have helped the Kashmiri Hindus. Hence, the BJP's criticism of Nehru's actions comes across as ironical.

The Hyderabad parallel

Prior to 1947, Jammu and Kashmir and Hyderabad State were mirror images of each other: an autocratic ruler from a minority community having put a heavy yoke on the majority population.

We are far too willing to accept the gory details of Hyderabad Nizam's misrule but squeamish in shedding a similar light on Kashmir. This has distorted our understanding of the Kashmir problem in two ways.

One, the current angst among the Kashmiri Muslims is explained away as the people's anti-India sentiments or the machinations of Pakistan.

There is truth in both explanations. But they also mislead us into believing that the Kashmir problem started after 1947. The fact is that the cross-border terrorism started much before the Partition of the subcontinent when Muslims in British India used to slip into the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir in solidarity with fellow Muslims, who were getting a raw deal from their ruler. Had we been cognisant of this fact, we would have focussed more on good governance and ensuring basic liberties to the people in Kashmir.

Two, after its accession into India, Jammu and Kashmir was pushed into adopting democracy whereas it never had the institutions, the cultural temperament and the robust civil society so essential for democracy to take roots and flourish. Recall how Hyderabad State (now Telangana) suffered for decades from left-wing extremism which was a counter to its feudal set-up.

Leaving aside a few honourable exceptions like the princely States of Travancore, Baroda and Kolhapur, most areas under native rule prior to Independence proved to be fallow for democracy, whereas British India enjoyed a whiff of rules-based governance.

Understanding the parallels between Hyderabad and Kashmir would give us a whole new way of dealing with the root cause of the problem,

rather than just its symptoms. The Maharaja's delay in choosing between India and Pakistan prompted Pakistan to resort to military intervention. That its troops were dressed up in mufti should not distract us from that fact.

On a fire-fighting mode

After accepting the Maharaja's instrument of accession, Nehru's main task was to secure the safety of Hindus, especially in the Valley. Having accomplished his goal, he had to end the war at a time and place of his choosing. How else could he have achieved it without going to the United Nations?

He was right in his likely assessment that Hindus wouldn't be safe in Pakistan and Muslims would be better off in India. His assessment was proved right during his time. But the fire-fighting nature of Nehru's actions in 1947-48 should have been additionally followed up with measures of restoration and rehabilitation, keeping Kashmir's history and culture in context.

Nehru and India had three policy options at their disposal during the initial years of the problem. They were: a) Use the window of opportunity to relocate Hindus away from the Valley; that would have avoided communal strife though democracy would have taken more time to fructify; b) Usher in secular and liberal democracy which would take care of the interests of everyone; or c) Put in place an autocratic system that would be managed from New Delhi.

The first option (evacuation) was never attempted as the government thought it was not necessary and the Centre was supposed to be following the second option (democracy) but *de facto* ended up following the third one (direct rule).

Unfortunately, for Nehru, taking possession of Jammu and Kashmir – minus the 'one-third' – was an end in itself but not the beginning of a long process of integration. Further, he had too much confidence in the superiority of India's liberal polity, which he believed Kashmiris would happily embrace. He also had too much faith in the sense of justice and equanimity of his successors. His faith proved to have been misplaced.

D. Shyam Babu is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research. Views are personal

Deepening #MeToo

A year after an actor inspired women to speak up against harassment, it's critical to assess the gains and challenges



DAMINI CHOPRA

In the mid and late-1800s, social movements in Europe for equal rights for women threw up the word 'feminism', which traces its origins to French. The suffrage movement in Britain in the early part of the 20th century was another component of women's fight for equality across the world.

Over the years, this fight has gained momentum, often with varying goals depending on the cultural traditions and the degree of prevalence of patriarchy in different societies. Various instances have inspired women to collectively get together and assert their rights – to create a combined voice that strongly advocates the impending need to view them as equal to men.

In the current world, there are strong stances that women are taking to support causes, such as the #MeToo movement that started in the U.S. and took down power players like Harvey Weinstein and Roy Price and is now a force to reckon with in India.

Why it is needed

The abuse of power by men in high offices has been an open secret. Many women across industries have been subject to lewd remarks, suggestive behaviour and assault – and have often been penalised for rejecting such advances.

Tanushree Dutta's decision, in September 2018, to speak out against her alleged exploiters from a decade ago gave courage to many women to be able to openly speak up against bullies who coerce them into compromising situations.

Many other women have been empowered by the #MeToo platform to be able to take on powerful bullies. A big boon for feminism, #MeToo has also given women a tool against oppressors in influential positions. As sexual harassment is considered a serious offence when proven beyond reasonable doubt, the men stand to lose their sources of income as well as public reputation. Social media has, thus, been a huge platform in helping women to be able to express their ordeal as well as find solidarity and support.

A corollary to the same is the apparent misuse of these tools by some for personal agendas.

Many women are choosing to lash out at ex-lovers and blame them for harassment. Consent is imperative in every relationship; however, a mutual relationship (irrespective

of the state of it) cannot be comparable to exploitation of women employees at workplaces by men in senior positions.

Settling personal scores

Former Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, Sujata Manohar (who was part of the bench that penned the Vishakha guidelines against sexual harassment at workplaces), observed that many women were misusing the #MeToo movement to shame men on social media and to settle personal scores. Adding allegations of a personal nature dilutes the essence of a very powerful and necessary movement.

Further, a lot of women anonymously share stories about their harassers but refuse to take further legal or police action. This raises questions on the ingenuity of their claims. In a recent example, an aspiring actor filed a complaint against a noted director, but then withdrew it.

Such actions not only allow the men in question to go scot-free, but also cast a shadow on the veracity of the victims' claims. If an untoward incident did occur, the sufferer must be willing to follow the proper channel to lodge a complaint and seek support for the same. It takes immense courage for a survivor to come out in public and relive her ordeal, and she must be believed and supported.

In such an atmosphere, false claims by a few women cast a net of suspicion on all allegations. Using social media to name and shame an alleged perpetrator just to settle a personal score under the garb of #MeToo is a disservice to women who genuinely need the aid of the movement.

To achieve a balance, it is important fairly assess each situation while taking a neutral approach in dealing with both the parties involved – the man and women.

This article does not attempt to undermine the need for women to assert themselves. Neither does it aim to question the legitimacy of all the complainants rallying behind the #MeToo movement. It only aims to argue that as we propose to create a more equal society, we must not let the oppressed assume the role of the oppressors. While there are great tools at our disposal, they also come with great responsibility.

For #MeToo to retain its moral clarity, it is important that we now look at ways to strengthen the processes at workplaces and the legal framework in general, so that cases of sexual harassment are speedily settled, and not left to a 'she-said-he-said' aftermath that extends the trauma of the innocent women and, sometimes, the men concerned.

Damini Chopra is an actor

A case for nutrition counselling

It is a low-cost measure that offers lifelong benefits

BJORN LOMBORG
SHIREEN VAKIL

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is one of the world's largest programmes for early childhood care and development. Now, a new study suggests that nutrition and health counselling delivered under the programme's auspices is one of the best possible investments that can be made by any government.

This timely, non-partisan report is by India Consensus, a partnership between Tata Trusts and Copenhagen Consensus, which has undertaken a first-of-its-kind analysis of 100 government programmes. These were identified by NITI Aayog for their role in supporting India's efforts to achieve the Global Goals.

The Global Goals have a dizzying array of 169 targets, such a long list that no country on Earth can achieve all of them. That's why the unique India Consensus economic analysis approach is vital: it adds new knowledge about costs and benefits. This way, it can be clearer which programmes achieve the most good for every rupee spent.

Researchers have identified twelve programmes that have phenomenal benefits for every rupee spent. Among the top programmes is nutrition and health counselling.

The average cost of counselling sessions for each woman was estimated at ₹1,177 and ₹1,250 for Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively. Based on previous studies, it is estimated that counselling leads to a 12% reduction in stunting. This leads to better cognitive skills.

Quantifying the benefits

Quantifying the increase in earnings shows that the per unit benefit for Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan comes to ₹71,500 and ₹54,000.

What these figures mean is that the investment generates returns to society worth ₹61 and ₹43, respectively, for every rupee spent. While the analysis will differ for other States, these results show that nutritional counselling is a phenomenal investment. It's relevant to note that these figures take into account the challenges of nutrition counselling: it's a relatively difficult intervention to implement and ensure that every person is reached. But even if India's implementation problems were worse than other countries studied by researchers, it is unlikely to make the investment less impressive. The take-away point is that, among all the ways that the Indian government

is spending money to achieve Global Goals targets, adding additional resources to nutrition counselling would be a phenomenal investment. The preliminary results of this analysis show that there are many policies that can achieve amazing outcomes. If India were to spend ₹50,000 crore more on achieving the Global Goals, focussing on the most phenomenal programmes identified so far by India Consensus would create extra benefits for India worth ₹20 lakh crore – more than the entire Indian public consumption.

With returns like this at stake, there are compelling reasons to look favourably at approaches including nutrition counselling.

Bjorn Lomborg is president of the Copenhagen Consensus Center.

Shireen Vakil heads the Policy and Advocacy unit of the Tata Trusts

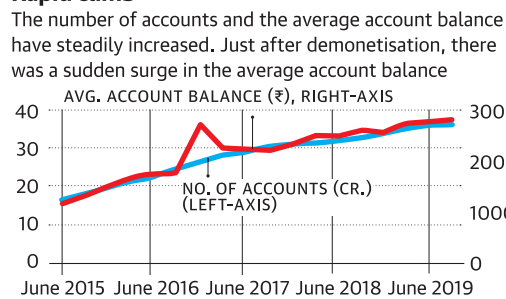


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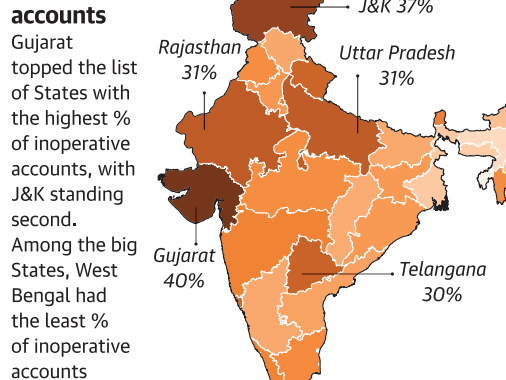
Banking up better

The cumulative account balance in zero-balance bank accounts opened under the PM's Jan Dhan Yojana scheme crossed the ₹1 trillion mark on July 3. The average balance in each account now stands at ₹2,787. However, as of December 2018, 23% of the accounts were inoperative. By Varun B. Krishnan & Sumant Sen

Rapid climb

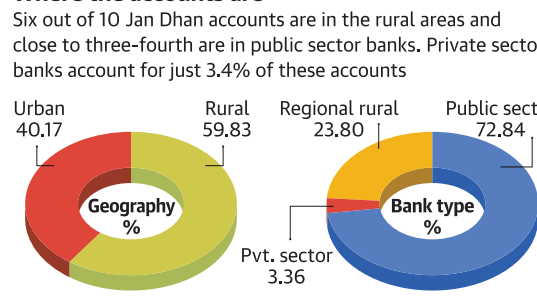


State of accounts

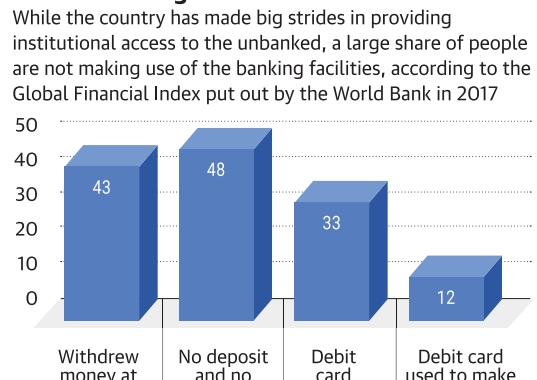


Source: PM Jan Dhan Yojana archives, Parliament Question Hour, With inputs from Siddharth Rao T.

Where the accounts are



Measure of usage



*In the year preceding the survey. Above numbers in percentage, for 2017. Respondents were aged 15+ and had a bank account

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 11, 1969

Immigrants to Malaysia

Malaysia to-day [July 10] tightened its immigration regulations and called on all non-citizens above 12 years of age to call at the Immigration Office before September 15 to furnish fresh particulars about themselves. There are an estimated 700,000 non-citizens among Malaysia's 10 million population, nearly a quarter million of them are Indians. The more rigid immigration regulations which will come into effect next Tuesday [July 15] is part of the emergency declared in the country when racial riots broke out on May 13. The regulations known as Essential (Modifications of Immigration Laws) Regulations 1969 were gazetted to-day [July 10] and will remain in force for the duration of the emergency. The new regulation requires travellers to leave Malaysia only at authorised points. Under the present regulations, travellers are only required to enter the country at such points but could leave from any spot. Authorised points are airports, ports, Johore causeway and immigration and customs check points at the Malaysia-Thailand border in Kedah and Kelantan.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 11, 1919.

Chamber on Currency Crisis.

The Committee of the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau in Bombay, submitting to the Government of India their views relating to exchange and currency questions, strongly urge the the fixity of exchange with-in gold points and suggest the introduction of a token coin, valued at two rupees or three, in which the percentage of silver shall be so small that there may be no appreciable loss even when silver is seventy pence. They also advocate the issue of coins to an unlimited extent. A point which the committee desire most to urge is the penalising of Indian Exports by the raising of exchange and the undue advantage which it gives to imports from foreign countries. The committee advocates the strengthening of a gold exchange standard, believing that a gold exchange standard has proved from the beginning disastrous to the country, and that in gold standard only lies its salvation. In order to make gold standard a success, the Committee recommend that establishment of a gold mint in India on the same terms as those given to the British dominions. Both the gold standard and paper currency reserve should be entirely located in India. Council Bills must be sold meanwhile for stated amounts.

FROM PAGE ONE

Two more Congress MLAs quit in Karnataka

The crowd swelled in the corridors with workers and leaders from both parties gathered outside. They raised slogans against each other while BJP legislators sat on a dharna and tried to force their way inside the chambers.

Outside the Vidhana Soudha, former BJP Minister Renukacharya and Urban Development Minister U.T. Khader got into a verbal spat that threatened to spill out of control. Police, who were taken by surprise, shut the gates of the Vidhana Soudha and deployed addi-

tional personnel to prevent any untoward incident.

Nearly two hours after Mr. Sudhakar was taken into the chambers, he was finally escorted out by Mr. Kharge and Bengaluru Police Commissioner Alok Kumar amid sloganeering against the BJP by Congress workers. Mr. Kharge, downplaying the incident, said, "He is not a child. I did not drag him but only requested him to meet the KPCC president and he obliged." Later, Mr. Sudhakar met the Governor and handed over his resignation letter to him too.

Karnataka power tussle reaches Supreme Court

The Speaker's ploy to stall their resignation process was anti-democratic and a violation of the Constitution, the MLAs said.

The petition was mentioned for urgent listing by senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi and advocates Subhanshu Padhi and Devanshi Singh before Chief Justice Gogoi on Wednesday. Mr. Rohatgi said "time is of great essence in the case and the petition should be heard today or tomorrow."

The petition has been filed by Pratap Gouda Patil, Ramesh Jarkiholi, Byrati Basavaraj, B.C.Patil, S.T.Somashekhar, Arbaal Sivaram Hebbur, Mahesh Kumathalli, K.Gopaliah, H.D.Vishwanath and Narayan Gowda.

Chief Minister Kumaraswamy, the Speaker and the Centre have been made parties along with the State of Karnataka through its Chief

Secretary. Administration in the State came to a standstill since the time Mr. Kumaraswamy took oath as Chief Minister, the petitioners alleged, adding that the government had "lost miserably before the electorate."

Hurt by scandals

Chief among the various scandals that rocked it were the IMA ponzi scam, in which "thousands of people have been cheated of their hard-earned money", and the JSW land scam, in which "land has been given at throwaway rates to industrialists," the MLAs said.

The petition claimed that, in all, 14 MLAs of the Congress and the JD(S) have resigned. It also mentioned the resignation of MLA Anand Singh on July 1 and two other legislators on July 8. The government was in minority in the 222-strong Assembly, it said.

High drama as police detain Minister

He was accompanied by former Mumbai Congress presidents Milind Deora and Sanjay Nirupam and other party workers. After three hours of drama outside the guest house on the campus, Mr. Shivakumar was taken to the airport for a flight back home late in the evening. He was being "forced to leave under pressure by unknown forces", he said.

The police said its action was based on the complaints of the rebel MLAs even as it was forced to impose prohibitory orders under section 144 of the Cr.PC, restraining gathering of four or more persons.

Prior to this, it was hours of drama outside the Mumbai hotel with Mr. Shivakumar staying put, despite pouring rain and insisting that he be allowed to go inside as "he had a room reserved in his name."

BJP supporters, meanwhile, shouted slogans asking Mr. Shivakumar to go back. As Mr. Shivakumar displayed his hotel booking confirmation, a letter from the hotel was also being circulated that said his reservation was cancelled due to "some emergency."

"I have come to meet my friends who I have been associated with for three to four decades. They are un-

happy with us for some reason. It does not mean all is over," he said, insisting on a meeting.

Meanwhile, speaking to the media from inside the hotel, the rebel MLAs refused to meet him. MLA Ramesh Jarkiholi said, "We do not want to meet him. We are firm and four more will join our group," he said.

Another MLA S.T. Somashekhar said: "Friendship and politics are different. We will meet you (Shivakumar) later in Bengaluru but not today. We will not be able to see you in an embarrassing position. Please go back. You have played a vital role in moulding our political career."

Complaint to police

In their complaint to Police Commissioner Sanjay Barve, the legislators had claimed they feel "threatened" and do not wish to meet the Minister, who must be "stopped from storming into the hotel."

Signed by the 10 MLAs, the letter said: "We have heard that Mr. Shivakumar and others are going to storm into the hotel. We feel threatened by the same. We do not want to meet him. Kindly request help in the matter and do not allow them to enter the premises."

Worker safety code Bill gets Cabinet approval

The occupational safety Bill will be introduced "in the ongoing session."

"The decision will enhance the coverage of the safety, health and working conditions provisions manifold," a government statement said.

While the code will be applicable to all trades, including IT establishments and service sector, where more than 10 workers are employed, it will be applicable to mines and docks that em-

ploy even one worker. The code also framed rules for women workers working night shifts.

"Women permitted to work beyond 7 p.m. and before 6 a.m. subject to the safety, holidays, working hours or any other condition as prescribed by appropriate government in respect of prescribed establishments. However, only after taking their consent for night work (sic)," the statement said.

Karnataka row stalls Parliament

Democracy being destroyed in the State, says Congress leader Adhir Ranjan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday told the Lok Sabha that Karnataka Minister D.K. Shivakumar was not allowed to enter a Mumbai hotel because the rebel Congress MLAs lodged their safety.

Parliament was disrupted for the third day in a row over the political crisis in Karnataka.

The Rajya Sabha was adjourned four times. In the Lok Sabha, the Opposition staged a walkout as they were not allowed to raise the issue.

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said democracy was being destroyed in Karnataka, and accused the BJP and the Union government of hatching a conspiracy to overthrow the government in the State.

Slogans raised

As Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla did not allow Mr. Chowdhury to further speak on the issue during Zero Hour, Congress members came to the Well and started shouting slogans that democracy was being crushed in the State.

Mr. Joshi, meanwhile, displayed a letter written by the



On their feet: Opposition members protesting in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. ■RSTV/PTI

MLAs lodged in the Mumbai hotel, and said it was on their request that the police were guarding the premises.

"I would like to put this on record that the MLAs staying in a hotel in Mumbai have written to the City Police Commissioner that there is a threat to their life from Shivakumar," Mr. Joshi said.

The Rajya Sabha was adjourned twice before lunch. Congress members stormed into the Well after their demand for a debate on Karnataka was rejected by House Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu forcing an adjournment.

When the House met at noon for Question Hour, Congress members were again on their feet.

Chairman's plea

"This is not the way. The Question Hour is very important. So much money has been spent on this. The entire country is watching us," the Rajya Sabha Chairman said, urging members creating the din to allow the House to function.

After the lunch break, the Rajya Sabha was set to start a debate on the Union Budget, but slogan shouting by Con-

gress members forced an adjournment within five minutes. The House reconvened at 3 p.m.

Deputy Chairman Harivansh asked Congress MP P. Chidambaram to open the debate on the Budget, but he refused.

Then Mr. Harivansh asked Suresh Prabhu of the BJP to begin the debate.

Mr. Prabhu spoke for over 50 minutes amid pandemonium.

The House functioned till 4 p.m. It was decided that the debate on the Budget will be reinitiated on Thursday.

India can repeal Article 370 at will: Centre

Minister says UN or any country has no say

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government informed Parliament that "no foreign government or organisation has any *locus standi*" in repealing Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir as matters relating to the Constitution were internal and only for the Indian Parliament to deal with.

Minister of State for Home



G. Kishan Reddy

G. Kishan Reddy said in a written response in the Rajya Sabha that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India.

While responding to a question on whether repeal of Articles 370 and 35A will in any way violate any United Nations regulation or any international obligation of the country, Mr. Reddy said, "Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Matters relating to the Constitution of India are internal and entirely for the Indian Parliament to deal with. No foreign government or organisation has any *locus standi* in the matter."

Home Minister Amit Shah recently told the Lok Sabha that Article 370 was a "tem-

porary provision". Mr. Reddy said, "At present, Article 35A is contained in the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954 which was added through the Constitution Order issued by the President of India under Article 370."

The two provisions let the J&K legislature decide the "permanent residents" of the State, prohibits a non-J&K resident from buying property in the State and ensures job reservation for its residents.

Replying to a separate question, Mr. Reddy said

that after the Pulwama terror attack, 93 terrorists had been killed in Jammu and Kashmir.

On February 14, 40 CRPF personnel were killed when a car-borne bomber of Jaish-e-Mohammad rammed a CRPF bus in Pulwama.

The Minister said that when compared with the corresponding period of 2018, the first half of this year has witnessed a reduction in terrorism by 28%, reduction in net infiltration by 43% and increase in neutralisation of terrorists by 22%.

(With PTI inputs)

HC seeks response from Centre on validity of NIA Act in J&K

Plea questions the role of the agency in the State

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Jammu & Kashmir High Court has directed the Union Home Ministry, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the J&K Government to submit its objections to a plea questioning the functioning of the NIA in the State.

Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, father of Haris Mushtaq Khan, 24, a resident of the Gopalpora village of Wathoor in Budgam, who was arrested by the NIA, has filed a writ petition questioning the NIA Act and its implementation in J&K.

Hearing the plea of Mr.

Khan, Justice Tashi Rabstan, heading a Bench, issued notices to the Union of India through its Secretary to Government, Ministry of Home Affairs; Director General, NIA; Investigating Officer concerned NIA Jammu & Kashmir State; Principal Secretary to the government Home Department, J&K; and the Station House Officer of Kothi Bagh, Srinagar.

Mr. Khan's son was arrested on November 24, 2018 and was lodged in the District Jail, Jammu, "even though the offence was alleged to have taken place at Srinagar". "The NIA Act is *ultra vires* to the Constitu-

tion of Jammu & Kashmir as the Parliament of India lacked legislative competence of such an enactment, which otherwise falls within the exclusive legislative domain of the State of Jammu & Kashmir," advocate Salih Pirzada pleaded before the Bench on Tuesday.

The advocate argued that the NIA Act "manifestly encroaches upon the exclusive legislative domain of the J&K and is thus beyond the legislative competence of the Parliament, hence liable to be declared *ultra vires*." The plea also questioned the *suo moto* transfer of cases to the Director General, NIA.

NIA attaches separatist leader's Srinagar house

'Represents proceeds of terrorism'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The National Investigative Agency (NIA) has attached the Srinagar house of Kashmiri separatist leader Asiya Andrabi as "proceeds of terrorism". This is the first time the agency has attached the property of a separatist leader.

The NIA order pasted outside the house of Ms Andrabi said the agency had reason to believe that the "property represents proceeds of terrorism and has been used in furtherance of terrorist activities of proscribed organisation Dukhtar-e-Millat (DeM)."

An NIA official said the at-



Asiya Andrabi

tachment was done as per provisions of law.

"The approval was granted by DGP, J&K as required under the law. Consequently to attachment, the property cannot be sold, transferred or otherwise dealt with in any manner without the express permission of officer making the order," the agency said.

Banks delaying PMAY(U) subsidies, admits govt.

Complaints being addressed: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government has received complaints of banks either not sanctioning or delaying disbursement to applicants of the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister of State (independent charge) Hardeep Singh Puri admitted in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Under the scheme, applicants of economically weaker section (EWS), low income group (LIG) and middle income group (MIG) can get subsidies on the interest to be paid on housing loans.

Replying to a question

from BJP MP T.G. Venkatesh, the Minister admitted that "some complaints have been received about Primary Lending Institutions (PLIs) not sanctioning credit linked subsidy or delaying the subsidy under CLSS component of PMAY (U)."

He added that the Ministry had reviewed the issues that had arisen with the two nodal agencies - National Housing Bank and Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd. (HUDCO) - and put in place a "grievance redressal mechanism".

So far, subsidy of ₹14,482 crore had been disbursed to 6.43 lakh beneficiaries under CLSS.

In fierce Opposition battle, Trinamool wins ESIC post

Dola Sen gets the most votes after efforts at consensus fail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties, already in disarray after the Lok Sabha election debacle, were caught in a keen contest among themselves for the post of member in the general council of the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).

As a norm, a Rajya Sabha member is selected through consensus and no elections are held for the post. But on Wednesday, Congress's Pradeep Bhattacharya, Trinamool Congress's Dola Sen and CPI(M) candidate Elamaram Kareem were in the fray for the post.

Ms. Sen won the contest



Dola Sen

with 90 votes and Mr. Bhattacharya was the runner-up with 46. Mr. Kareem got only eight votes.

The total votes cast were 156, of which 12 votes were declared invalid.

Sources said an attempt was made by the Trinamool

Congress to reach out to the Congress and the CPI(M) on Tuesday night to avoid an election. It proposed that the CPI(M) be allowed to take the seat.

"The Congress refused. They said that they will win and later resign from the seat," a senior Opposition leader said.

The Trinamool has only 13 members in the House, while the Congress has 46 and the two Left parties together have seven members.

"This lack of synergy between three leading Opposition parties further shows the state of incoherence we are in," a top Opposition leader said.

'Martial law' in Mumbai: Congress

Says BJP is holding MLAs in captivity

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Maharashtra had imposed conditions similar to "martial law" in Mumbai to prevent their leaders from meeting rebel MLAs, and accused the ruling party of "dismantling democracy" in the country.

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury told presspersons that the Congress MLAs were "being held captive" by the BJP in a Mumbai hotel.

"The democratic edifice of Karnataka has been deliberately dismantled by the ruling regime in order to grab power in Karnataka. In a deliberate and predetermined manner, they have engineered defection in the ruling party. So now, a number of MLAs have been under the captivity of the ruling party," said Mr. Chowdhury, after leading a walkout from the Lok Sabha over the Karnataka situation.

"Inducement or intimidation are being deployed by the ruling regime with the single objective of capturing power in Karnataka," he al-



Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury

leged. Questioning the police action against Karnataka Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar, who was denied permission to enter the hotel where the rebel MLAs were staying, Mr. Chowdhury said, "It appears that in Mumbai, especially, for the Congress, a martial law has been imposed only to prevent the MLAs who are in the captivity of the ruling party to come forward and talk to Mr. Shivakumar."

The Congress leader alleged that it was a "gross violation" of Mr. Shivakumar's fundamental right as he had a valid hotel booking but the Maharashtra government forced the hotel management to cancel it.

"We have raised the issue inside Parliament to draw the attention of the people," he said.

'FinMin curbs on media arbitrary'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after the Finance Ministry came out with a statement "clarifying" that even the accredited journalists will be allowed inside the Ministry only with an appointment, the Editors Guild of India called it an "arbitrary decision." The Guild on Wednesday demanded that the order be withdrawn with immediate effect.

"The Guild has no dispute with the Ministry that journalists should behave with restraint and responsibility while enjoying their access to the Finance Ministry. But a blanket order is not the answer," it said in a statement.

"This order is a gag on media freedoms and can even result in a further fall in India's global press freedom rankings, especially as the contagion can easily spread to other Ministries as well," the Guild said.

It said that if the Finance Ministry feels inconvenienced by journalists' access to government offices then the system could be improved in discussions with journalists. "The Guild urges the Finance Minister, Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, to reconsider her decision and withdraw it."

Lok Sabha gives nod to arbitration Bill

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday cleared the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre Bill, 2019. The Bill, which replaces an Ordinance promulgated in March this year, provides for the incorporation of the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC) for creating an autonomous regime for institutionalised arbitration.

The Bill, moved by Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, has a provision to declare the NDIAC as an Institution of National Importance. The Minister said the Centre will be headed by a chairperson, who has been a judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court or an eminent person having special knowledge and experience in the administration of arbitration.

IN BRIEF



Congress names whips, committee members

NEW DELHI
The Congress on Wednesday named Tamil Nadu MP Manickam Tagore and Assam member Gaurav Gogoi (in photo) as party whips. Goa MP Francis Sardinha and Kerala member K. Muraleedharan have been chosen for the parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance. Kerala member K. Sudhakaran will be on the committee on OBCs, Ravneet Singh Bittu, Punjab MP, on PSUs and Santokh Singh Chaudhary on SC/STs.

No martyrdom status for Pulwama CRPF victims

NEW DELHI
There is no official nomenclature to accord martyrdom status to CRPF personnel killed in the Pulwama attack in Jammu and Kashmir, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday. Minister Nityananda Rai said the Ministry had issued instructions to issue "Operational Casualty Certificate" to the next of kin of the Central Armed Police Forces and Assam Rifles personnel killed in action.

NATO ally status unlikely now

U.S. House to vote on diluted Bill on defence cooperation with Delhi

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

The U.S. House Committee on Rules voted on Tuesday night to send a watered-down version of an amendment to enhance defence cooperation with India to the full House floor for a vote.

The new India NDAA amendment, a part of the House's version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) FY 2020, replaces a significantly stronger amendment (the "Sherman Amendment") that sought to place India on a par with the U.S.'s NATO allies by amending the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), a U.S. law that governs the sale of high-end defence equipment to other countries.

Concerns over India's purchase of the S-400, turf battles between the Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees and some State Department opposition are likely to have contributed to the watering down of the amendment. Nevertheless, what passed the Senate and what is being considered by the House, provides some direction to the executive with regard to bolstering India-



It's always disappointing when strong bipartisan legislation on India doesn't get across the finish line. Policymakers should understand that we need to boost India as a counter to China and that we can't let India's relationship with Russia get in the way

MUKESH AGHI, CEO, U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum

U.S. defence cooperation, although falling short of the original legislative goal. This comes days after Secretary of State Michael Pompeo travelled to New Delhi to push for stronger U.S.-India ties across the board.

The original House amendment was submitted by Brad Sherman, a California Congressman who is co-Chair of House India Caucus and heads the Asia Pacific subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Despite having bi-partisan support and co-sponsors from both sides of the aisle, the amendment did not make it to the House Rules Committee – a fate similar to the corresponding amendment in the Senate, submitted by Mark Warner (Democrat, Virginia) and John Cornyn (Republican, Texas)

which also sought to give India NATO-equivalent status for arms sales.

A source outside Congress who had worked on the legislation said India's plans to purchase the S-400 Triumf missile shield from Russia made some in the Senate (and House) wary and came in the way of the original amendment making it to the final package in both legislative chambers. This view was supported by at least one person in Congress.

"It's hard to go after Turkey for the S-400 purchase and allow India a boost in the same Bill," a Congressional aide, who did not want to be named, told *The Hindu*. The NDAA Bills (House and Senate versions) limit transfer of F-35 aircraft to Turkey unless Turkey can provide assurances that it is

not accepting delivery of the S-400.

"It's always disappointing when strong bipartisan legislation on India doesn't get across the finish line. Policymakers should understand that we need to boost India as a counter to China and that we can't let India's relationship with Russia get in the way," Mukesh Aghi, president and CEO of the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum, told *The Hindu*. The original AECA amendments also became a casualty of turf-related issues between the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Committee on Armed Services and the corresponding committees in the Senate.

AECA is the statute which authorises the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program through which the U.S. sells arms abroad and the procedure is less complicated if the purchaser is a NATO ally or Japan, South Korea, Israel, Australia or New Zealand.

The Sherman amendment in the House and Warner/Cornyn amendment in the Senate, sought to add India to the list of non-NATO allies listed above.

Tariff tensions top U.S. agenda in meetings today

United States Trade Representative team to meet officials

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

In the first such formal engagement since the U.S. decided to withdraw India's preferential trade status in March, a team from the office of the United States Trade Representative will arrive in Delhi on Thursday for meetings with officials of the Commerce and External Affairs Ministries.

Officials on both sides have stressed that the talks are not yet a resumption of the trade dialogue, but are "talks about talks". They will explore steps to resume dialogue as mandated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump after their meeting last month in Osaka.

The conversations in Delhi are expected to lay the ground for a meeting between USTR Robert Lightizer and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal in the next few weeks, as New Delhi and Washington try to pick up the pieces of the trade dialogue that went off the rails after the U.S. announced a review of India's Generalised



Trade ties have been hit due to public comments by President Donald Trump.

System of Preferences (GSP) status last April.

The final announcement of the withdrawal came on June 1.

In retaliation, India imposed higher tariffs on 28 U.S. products, that it had been holding off on since last April.

Trade ties have been further hit by a series of tweets and public comments by Mr. Trump, whose latest tweet on Tuesday called Indian tariffs on American products "no longer acceptable".

In a Congressional hearing in June, Mr. Lightizer also told members of the House Ways and Means Committee, that the U.S.'s

GSP decision was only the first of many possible punitive measures against what he called a "series of problems" with India.

"We made literally no headway on the issues over the course of months and months and months," Mr. Lightizer said.

'Sudden' changes

Apart from higher tariffs on IT products and services and automobile and agricultural products, the U.S. is expected to raise what it calls "sudden" and "unexpected" changes in rules and standards applied in India.

The government's new rules on financial data localisation and e-commerce have upset many U.S. IT and e-commerce companies including Amazon and Walmart operating in India.

In May 2019, the decision of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to ban biofuels went down badly in Washington.

Indian and U.S. experts say it is unlikely that the two sides will be able to retrace their steps to last year.

Rahul reaffirms Amethi connect

Says he won't abandon the constituency and will continue to visit it

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AMETHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday reaffirmed his personal connection with Amethi on his maiden visit to the Uttar Pradesh constituency after suffering a humiliating defeat in the Lok Sabha election.

"I am happy to be in Amethi. It feels like coming home," he tweeted.

Earlier, addressing Congress workers at the Gauriganj Guesthouse in Amethi, Mr. Gandhi assured them that though he was elected MP for Wayanad in Kerala, he would not abandon the U.P. constituency and would continue to visit it.

"Don't think that Rahul Gandhi is not yours," he told them in an indoor meeting.

He said he would continue to raise the shortcomings of the Union and the State governments regarding Amethi in the Lok Sabha.



Back in action: Congress president Rahul Gandhi with party workers in Lucknow on Wednesday. •PTI

Mr. Gandhi explained to the workers that it was his responsibility to develop Wayanad, but he would also give time to Amethi.

"Don't you think I won't

come here. I will keep coming here," he said to loud claps from party workers.

The Congress leader advised his party workers to start doing the job of the Opposition in the constituency. Referring to corruption and the state of the economy and trade, he said there was no

shortage of issues. "It is more fun doing the work of the Opposition. It's easier," Mr. Gandhi said in a lighter vein.

Sarvesh Singh, who was the chairman of the Congress election committee in Amethi, said the meeting lasted two hours and was attended by over 1,200 people.

Mr. Singh said that while there was no discussion on the factors behind his defeat, Mr. Gandhi told the workers that there may have been "shortcomings" from both ends, his and the workers, leading to the defeat. Victory and defeat are a part of life, he told the workers.

Mr. Gandhi ignored the workers' requests to continue as party president, Mr. Singh said.

Centre outlaws outfit for pro-Khalistani activities

'Sikhs for Justice' is based abroad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

The Union Home Ministry has banned the Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), a group advocating secessionist and pro-Khalistani activities in India. The group was advocating Referendum 2020, an online campaign for Khalistan, a separate land for the Sikhs.

Its founder Avtar Singh Panu was seen shouting slogans and wearing a T-shirt that said "Khalistan Zindabad, Referendum 2020" at the India-New Zealand cricket match in the U.K on Wednesday.

A senior Ministry official said the SFJ's online supporters were over 2 lakh but physically it was only a group of eight to 10 people. The Punjab government

gave crucial information to help ban the group, the official said.

The official said 11 cases were registered against the SFJ in the past four years and 39 people were arrested. The group also funded certain activities.

"The Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave its clearance to declare SFJ, a fringe organisation run by radical Sikhs in U.S., Canada, U.K, etc. as an unlawful association under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967," the official said.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said the Centre's decision to declare Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) an "unlawful association" was a "welcome step".

Al-Qaeda releases its first video on Kashmir

Calls for 'unrelenting blows' on Army

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Al-Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri has released a video asking its cadres to inflict "unrelenting blows" on the Indian Army and the government in the Kashmir Valley to "bleed" the economy and make the country suffer.

This is the first time Zawahiri has issued a video specific to Kashmir.

A senior government official said it seemed to be an act of desperation on the part of the outfit in the wake of recent action by security agencies in Kashmir Valley.

The video was posted on the As-Sahab channel, an in-house production of Al-Qaeda. While Zawahiri did not mention Zakir Musa, a ter-



Ayman al-Zawahiri

rorist killed in May by security forces in Kashmir, his photo flashed on the screen. Musa was the founder of the Indian cell of Al-Qaeda, titled "Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind." The Al-Qaeda chief warned terrorists not to fall into the trap of Pakistan, which he termed a puppet of the U.S.

As Pak. Army dithers, PoK family awaits son's body

Location to hand over body not decided

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The body of an eight-year-old boy from Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), who was found dead four kilometres inside Kashmir in the Kishenganga river on Tuesday, was moved over 200 km on Wednesday as the Pakistan Army kept changing the site to hand over the body.

"The two Armies (India and Pakistan) established contact (on Tuesday) after a video was uploaded by the family living in PoK's Minimarg across the river. The boy was identified but the location for exchange kept

changing on Wednesday," Shahbaz Ahmed Mirza, Deputy Commissioner, Bandipora, told *The Hindu*.

The family of Abid Sheikh, a student in PoK, in a video uploaded online, said the boy had left for school on July 8 but did not return home. They suspect he fell off the cliff into the river and was washed four km across the LoC in J&K's Gurez valley.

"My only appeal to people of India is to help in returning the body of my son. I will be indebted. Our Army chief should also play a positive role," Nazir Sheikh, the boy's father, said in a video.

Assam mulls 10 centres for those excluded from NRC

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

The Assam government has sent a proposal to the Centre for fast-tracking the establishment of 10 detention centres across the State to house people who would be excluded from the final National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The Supreme Court-monitored register, being updated on the basis of its 1951 avatar, has to be published by July 31.

NRC exclusion

About 40.07 lakh people out of 3.29 crore applicants had been excluded from the

draft NRC published on July 30, 2018. Another 1.02 lakh people were removed from the draft list of citizens on June 26.

"We have sent the proposal for 10 new centres in various places for NRC-excluded people," Kumar Sanjay Krishna, Assam's Additional Chief Secretary (Home and Political) told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

As per the blueprint, a detention centre each would be established in Barpeta, Dima Hasao, Goalpara, Kamrup (Metropolitan), Karimganj, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Nalbari, Sivasagar, and Sonitpur districts.

IN BRIEF



New Greek Prime Minister promises tax cuts

ATHENS
Greece's new Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said in Cabinet on Wednesday he would honour a pledge to cut taxes. Mr. Mitsotakis said a tax bill would be submitted by the end of the month. **AFP**

U.S., China negotiators resume trade talks

WASHINGTON
Top U.S. and Chinese negotiators held phone talks on Tuesday as the world's top two economies seek to resolve their trade war, more than a week after they declared a truce. A White House official said the talks "went constructively". **AFP**

France says its missiles were found in Libya

PARIS
France confirmed on Wednesday its missiles had been found at a Libyan base used by forces loyal to strongman Khalifa Haftar, raising fresh questions about its role in the conflict. **AFP**

British envoy resigns after Trump leak

U.S. President had called him stupid after Ambassador Darroch termed the administration inept

STEPHEN CASTLE
LONDON

Kim Darroch resigned on Wednesday as Britain's Ambassador to the United States after the leak of his candid observations on the Trump administration, a ferocious response from President Donald Trump and the failure of the likely next Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to support the British envoy.

Sir Kim submitted his resignation in a letter that said the situation was making it impossible for him to carry out his role. "Although my posting is not due to end until the end of this year, I believe in the current circumstances the responsible course is to allow the appointment of a new ambassador," he wrote.

Leaked email

On Monday, Mr. Trump said the White House would no longer deal with Darroch after the leak of confidential emails written by the Ambassador that had described the Trump administration as

"clumsy and inept." The President described the Ambassador as "wacky," a "very stupid guy" and a "pompous fool," and called Prime Minister Theresa May "foolish" for ignoring his advice on Brexit, Britain's plan to leave the European Union.

The dispute has cast a shadow over ties between London and Washington and taken center stage in the Tory leadership contest to succeed Ms. May as Prime Minister, which Mr. Johnson is heavily favoured to win.

During a TV debate on Tuesday night, Mr. Johnson, the former Foreign Secretary, ignited a firestorm by refusing several opportunities to say that he would keep Sir Kim in his post until a scheduled departure date in January. He also declined to criticise Mr. Trump, stressing his good relationship with the White House and playing down the rift. Within hours, the Ambassador had submitted his resignation.

Mr. Johnson's failure to back the Ambassador was



In hot water: Kim Darroch said the situation was making it impossible for him to carry out his role.

met with withering criticism from opponents.

"The fact that Sir Kim has been bullied out of his job, because of Donald Trump's tantrums and Boris Johnson's pathetic lickspittle response, is something that shames our country," said Emily Thornberry, the Opposition Labour Party's shadow Foreign Secretary.

Even Mr. Johnson's rival in the leadership race, Jeremy Hunt, the current Foreign Secretary, described Mr. Trump's comments as "un-

acceptable" and said during the debate that he would keep Sir Kim in his job.

Mr. Johnson said on Wednesday that he regretted Sir Kim's departure, and that whoever leaked the Ambassador's messages should be "run down, caught and eviscerated."

With Mr. Johnson intent on Britain leaving the European Union in October, the "special relationship" with Washington is of particular importance given that Mr. Trump has promised a trade

agreement with Britain.

"I think the reality was that in light of the last few days his ability to be effective was probably limited," Vice-President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Marc Short, said on Wednesday morning in Washington. "So it was probably the right course."

Support for Sir Kim

In response to Sir Kim's decision, Ms. May paid tribute to him in Parliament and said that the whole Cabinet had rightly given him its support.

"Good government depends on public servants being able to give full and frank advice. I want all our public servants to have the confidence to be able to do that, and I hope the house will reflect on the importance of defending our values and principles, particularly when they are under pressure," she said. Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the opposition Labour Party, said of Sir Kim, "the comments made about him are beyond unfair and wrong." **NY TIMES**

Pakistan curbs on news channels slammed

Brazen censorship: media watchdog

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISLAMABAD

A global media watchdog has slammed Pakistani authorities over the removal of three television channels from the country's airwaves, saying the move was "indicative of disturbing dictatorial tendencies" as pressure mounts on journalists in the South Asian nation.

The statement from Reporters Without Borders (RSF) comes days after Abbot TV, 24 News, and Capital TV all had their broadcasts cut, after screening a press conference with Opposition leader Maryam Nawaz.

Pakistani authorities say the channels were unavailable due to "technical issues", but RSF described the outage as an act of "brazen censorship".

"Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is appalled to learn that three Pakistani TV news channels have been suspended from cable networks at the behest of

the authorities in reprisal for broadcasting an Opposition leader's news conference," the watchdog said late on Tuesday. It went on to pin the removal of the channels on the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, saying "the all-powerful broadcast media regulator" takes its lead from the country's "military establishment".

Maryam interview

A senior official with knowledge of the case confirmed the move against the channels, saying the broadcasters had violated Pakistan's "code of conduct" and been warned against airing the press conference with Maryam Nawaz.

Ms. Nawaz is the daughter of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif - who is currently behind bars for corruption - and her press conference featured a judge claiming he had been blackmailed into convicting the former premier.

Iran warns U.K. of 'consequences'

President Rouhani terms seizure of tanker 'a foolish act'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEHRAN

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani warned Britain on Wednesday of "consequences" over the detention of an Iranian oil tanker off the coast of Gibraltar.

"I point out to the British that you initiated insecurity (on the seas) and you shall grasp the consequences of it later on," Mr. Rouhani said in comments to the Cabinet broadcast by state TV.

Iran's President called the seizure of the tanker "a foolish act."

The 330-m *Grace 1* tanker,



Hassan Rouhani

capable of carrying two million barrels of oil, was halted on Thursday by the police and customs in Gibraltar - a tiny British overseas territory on Spain's southern tip - with the aid of a detachment

of British Royal Marines.

Iran condemned the detention as an "illegal interception," but Gibraltar officials said the cargo was believed to be destined for Syria, which is subject to European sanctions.

'Somewhere else'

Iran denied this, saying that the destination "was somewhere else."

"The port named in Syria does not even have the capacity for such a supertanker to dock," Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday.

Sri Lanka government faces no-confidence vote

'Failed to prevent attacks despite intel'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Parliament on Wednesday began debating a no-confidence motion against the government for failing to prevent Easter suicide bombings that killed more than 250 people.

The Opposition Marxist Peoples' Liberation Front submitted a motion accusing the ruling coalition of failing to prevent the April 21 attacks despite the "fact that proper information had been made available regard-

ing suicide terrorists."

Voting on the motion is expected on Thursday.

Anura Dissanayaka, the leader of the Peoples' Liberation Front, said the attacks occurred because the government failed to fulfil its responsibility. "People have no confidence in this government," he said.

Minister of Economic Reforms Harsha de Silva rejected the allegation. "If we knew about it, we would have taken preventive measures."

News anchor shot dead in Pak.

He was gunned down over personal enmity, say police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI

A news anchor of a prominent Pakistani channel was shot dead over personal enmity here, the police said on Wednesday.

Bol News anchor Mureed Abbas had a heated argument with some people over a monetary dispute which escalated into a violent clash in the Khayaban-e-Bukhari area on Tuesday night, they said.

The accused opened fire, killing the anchor and his friend, DIG South Sharjeel Kharal said.



Mureed Abbas ■ FACEBOOK

Abbas sustained multiple bullet wounds in the chest and abdomen, he said.

The police raided the house of the suspect and caught him attempting sui-

cide. "The suspect shot himself in the chest," he said. He was admitted into hospital in a critical condition.

Report sought

Sindh Inspector General of Police Kaleem Imam directed the concerned Deputy Inspector General to furnish a report. He also directed the concerned officials to conduct a forensic examination of the evidence.

Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah, who was on a visit to Iran, issued directions to maintain law and order following the incident.

Now is the time for peace, says Ghani

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

Now is the "right moment" for peace in Afghanistan, President Ashraf Ghani said on Wednesday as he once more called on the Taliban to negotiate with his government.

The Taliban has steadfastly refused to discuss peace with Mr. Ghani, whom it considers a U.S. stooge heading an illegitimate regime. But a series of talks in recent days seems to have shifted the needle in Afghanistan's war, with the U.S. and the Taliban claiming to have made significant progress during a summit in Doha.

"In the past 18 years the time was not right for peace, for a realistic peace. Today is the right moment," Mr. Ghani said at an EU anti-corruption conference being held in Kabul.

"If we lose this opportunity then the responsibility (for the loss) is big."

Biden earned over \$15 mn after leaving White House

Disclosure dents his working class aura

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, took in more than \$15 million since leaving the Obama White House, according to newly released documents, catapulting the Democratic presidential candidate into millionaire status and denting the working-class aura he's developed over decades.

Long fond of describing himself as "Middle Class Joe" while he took in little more than his government salary, the former Vice-President stressed his working-class roots from the very beginning of his bid for his party's 2020 presidential nomination. But federal tax returns and a financial disclosure released on Tuesday show that since Mr. Biden left public office, his income has surged thanks to a lucrative book deal and constant publicity tours that brought in more than \$4 million.



Joe Biden

Mr. Biden's disclosure showed that he also made at least \$2.7 million in business income as part of his publicity tour and writing and took a \$425,000 salary from CelticCapri Corp., the business entity the Bidens used for their post-White House work.

Mr. Biden and his wife signed a multibook deal with Flatiron Books valued at \$8 million, according to Publishers Weekly. He earned \$540,000 as a professor and namesake of the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement.

Twitter to curb hate speech against religion

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Twitter is moving to filter out inappropriate content based on religion as part of its effort to curb hate speech.

In a policy update on Tuesday, Twitter said it would take down "dehumanizing language" that targets specific religious groups. Examples shown by Twitter that would be removed would be description of members of a religion as "disgusting" or "filthy animals."

"After months of conversations and feedback from the public, external experts and our own teams, we're expanding our rules against hateful conduct to include language that dehumanizes others on the basis of religion," the Twitter safety team wrote. "Starting today, we will require tweets like these to be removed...when they're reported to us."

Taliban targets Afghan soldiers' kin

In 'retaliatory' attacks, insurgents kill family members and burn down homes

DAVID ZUCCHINO
FAROOQ JAN MANGAL
KABUL

Muhammad Didar Mukhlis Afghan, a sergeant serving at a remote Afghan Army base, was pleased when his nephew invited his wife and son to his wedding back home in eastern Afghanistan.

The sergeant pitched in almost \$400 to help with the nephew's wedding costs. But instead of a wedding, the event became a murder scene. The nephew, Qari Aziz, was among a group of Taliban fighters who killed the sergeant's wife and son inside Aziz's home in May.

"They attacked my wife and son because I am serving in the ranks of the Af-



The attacks continued even as U.S. and Taliban negotiators reported progress in talks. ■ AP

ghan National Army," Mr. Afghan said.

The killings were the latest in a series of retaliatory Taliban attacks against the families and homes of Afghan soldiers and police officers.

They have continued even as U.S. and Taliban negotiators have reported progress in talks.

Taliban infiltrators have repeatedly joined government units, then spiked soldiers' or police officers' food with drugs and shot them dead as they slept. In some rare instances, government infiltrators have done the same to the Taliban.

Equally disturbing for many Afghans is the Taliban tactic of burning the homes of soldiers' families while the men are serving elsewhere.

In Kandahar, an Army Colonel, Zahir Jan Abdali, said the families of at least seven soldiers and police officers had been burned out of their homes in recent months.

Among them was Khano Slimanzai, a border police officer who said his unit retreated from his village, Slimanzai, during a Taliban offensive.

Mr. Slimanzai said he arranged for a relative to help his wife and children flee their home, in their bare feet, to a dry river bed outside their village as the Taliban approached.

Less than 30 minutes later, he said, Taliban fighters burned the home and destroyed the family's belongings, he said.

Another effective Taliban tactic is dressing in Army or police uniforms and driving stolen, explosives-laden Humvees into government outposts. **NYTIMES**

MARKET WATCH

	10-7-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	38,557	-0.45
US Dollar	68.58	-0.10
Gold	34,870	0.00
Brent oil	66.39	3.42

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	405.00	0.00
Asian Paints	1322.95	1.95
Axis Bank	769.25	-16.95
Bajaj Auto	2740.40	-46.00
Bajaj Finserv	7658.20	-197.20
Bajaj Finance	3429.00	-174.05
Bharti Airtel	358.55	-3.75
BPCL	349.60	-10.50
Britannia Ind	2769.55	6.90
Cipla	544.95	-3.85
Coal India	233.35	3.75
Dr Reddys Lab	2584.65	-14.20
Eicher Motors	18751.00	-287.60
GAAL (India)	144.95	-2.15
Grasim Ind	913.45	2.50
ITC	1018.90	-1.85
HDFC Tech	2227.75	-5.05
HDFC Bank	2388.75	9.60
Hero MotoCorp	2400.00	-44.10
Hindalco	193.65	-4.25
Hind Unilever	1718.60	-21.65
Indiabulls HFL	659.60	-27.50
ICICI Bank	430.90	2.40
IndusInd Bank	1487.25	-4.85
Bharti Infratel	259.95	-0.75
Infosys	717.25	1.75
Indian Oil Corp	148.15	-3.25
ITC	273.15	0.05
JSW Steel	254.90	-7.45
Kotak Bank	1475.85	13.00
L&T	1499.55	-27.05
M&M	621.65	-11.05
Mauriti Suzuki	5927.90	-17.55
NTPC	129.05	-0.50
ONGC	151.65	-1.75
PowerGrid Corp	205.30	0.55
Reliance Ind	1278.85	-1.25
State Bank	354.20	-5.30
Sun Pharma	392.20	5.80
Tata Motors	151.65	-4.15
Tata Steel	454.80	-13.65
TCS	2108.20	-25.15
Tech Mahindra	674.85	-1.05
Titan	1101.20	2.25
UltraTech Cement	4480.70	-18.00
UPL	634.85	-5.20
Vedanta	160.00	-1.50
Wipro	266.95	1.45
YES Bank	93.00	1.65
Zee Entertainment	332.75	1.00

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 10

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	68.37	68.69
Euro	76.67	77.03
British Pound	85.31	85.72
Japanese Yen (100)	62.75	63.04
Chinese Yuan	9.94	9.99
Swiss Franc	68.87	69.20
Singapore Dollar	50.21	50.45
Canadian Dollar	52.10	52.35
Malaysian Ringgit	16.51	16.60

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

July 10 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	41	(40.8)
22 ct gold (1g)	3270	(3264)

Markets set for damp quarter

'Top-line growth likely to be lowest in a decade'; global concerns to hit IT sector

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR
MUMBAI

With companies all set to re-leaseresults for the first quarter of the current financial year, market participants appear to be unanimous in predicting a subdued quarter for most sectors.

According to most brokerages, the overall slowdown that is affecting consumer demand will impact a numbers of sectors such as automobiles, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and consumer durables, while global concerns could see software majors getting affected.

Further, analysts are pegging the overall top-line growth for the first quarter at single digits – a sharp moderation from the double digit growth in the last financial year.

Banks, however, are expected to report healthy



Bleak outlook: What stands out is the slowdown's breadth across sectors, says an Edelweiss report. •REUTERS

numbers on account of decent loan growth, better margins and lower provisioning amid a consistent fall in bad assets.

Driven by financials

"The Q1-FY20 earnings-report season will likely be a repeat of Q4-FY19, with financials driving the perfor-

mance single-handedly," stated Motilal Oswal Financial Services in its latest report.

"Corporate banks will account for the entire growth in the Nifty... autos will have another lacklustre quarter. IT sector profit growth will come off in this quarter. Consumer sector is also

expected to report a muted quarter," it added.

In a similar context, Edelweiss Securities is of the view that the first quarter would be a "soft quarter" with the profit of Nifty companies growing a meagre 7%.

"What's worrying is the sharp moderation in top-line growth to just 3% (18% in FY19 and 7% in Q4-FY19)," it said. It added that the top-line growth is likely to be the lowest in a decade if commodities are excluded.

"What stands out is the slowdown's breadth with even IT and industrial companies, which had posted mid-teen profit growth in FY19, likely to report mere 4% and 10% profit growth, respectively, in Q1-FY20," it explained. Edelweiss believes that cement, retail banks and pharmaceuticals will be the few sectors where profit growth would likely hold up at reasonable levels.

Outward FDI drops to \$820 million

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

India Inc.'s foreign direct investment (FDI) in June fell by over two times from a year ago to \$820.36 million, data from the Reserve Bank of India showed Wednesday.

The outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) by the Indian firms stood at \$2.29 billion in the same month the previous year, according to the RBI data on OFDI.

In May, Indian companies had invested over \$1.56 billion in their overseas ventures.

RBI panel moots change in timings for foreign exchange market

Mixed views on extension of timings, says draft report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

An internal committee of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which was set up to review timings of different financial markets, suggested that the foreign exchange market could function from 9 am to 9 pm at present, the currency market works from 9 am to 5 pm.

"Calibrated extension of market hours, and to begin with, revised market timings of 9 am – 9 pm, may be considered to gauge demand and potential benefits," the

draft report of the committee said.

The report noted that there are mixed views on the benefits of extension of market timing.

Higher costs

"While the extension of market timings is expected to provide benefits such as better pricing of post market hours information/data, improved onshore price discovery and a possible shift of offshore volumes to onshore, there is a view that it may entail higher costs to

stakeholders," it said.

Since the central bank is in the process of reviewing and rationalising foreign exchange regulations to provide flexibility regarding products, participation and positions, both for residents and non-residents, extension of market hours would complement these policy measures, the draft said.

The panel suggested call money market timings could be extended till 6 pm instead of the 5 pm now, to facilitate liquidity management by banks.

GDP growth rates in Economic Survey, Budget consistent with each other: FM

The two use different base figures, says Nirmala Sitharaman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday clarified that the Economic Survey and the Union Budget project different rates of nominal GDP growth for 2019-20 because they use different base figures. However, she added that the two rates were consistent with each other.

While the Union Budget presented on July 5 projected a nominal GDP growth of 12% for financial year 2019-20, the Economic Survey pegged this figure at 11%. Opposition leaders in the Lok Sabha highlighted this discrepancy and demanded why there were so many different numbers being issued by the government.

The Opposition also walked out of the lower House during Ms. Sitharaman's reply to the concerns over the Budget, protesting the Budget's announcement of a hike in the duties



Near, yet far: The Centre holds the CEA's Economic Survey at a 'respectful arm's distance', the Minister said. •REUTERS

and cess rates on petrol and diesel.

"The growth rate in the nominal GDP for 2019-20 in the Budget document has been projected at 12% over the advance nominal GDP estimates of ₹1,88,40,731 crore for 2018-19," Ms. Sitharaman said during her reply. "The advance estimates of 2018-19 were released on Jan. 7, 2019."

"The growth rate of nominal GDP for 2019-20 in the Economic Survey has been projected at 11% over the provisional nominal GDP estimates of ₹1,90,10,164 crore of 2018-19," the Finance Minister added. "The Provisional Estimates of 2018-19 were released on May 31, 2019."

"Both the projections are consistent with each other

as each of them project the nominal GDP of ₹2,11,00,607 crore for 2019-20," she said, adding that the government holds the Economic Survey, which is produced by the Chief Economic Advisor, at a "respectful arm's distance."

Her explanation for the lower GDP base being used in the Budget was that this was the same number used in the Interim Budget presented in February.

"A lower GDP base of 2018-19 has been used in the Budget document as the same GDP base was used in the interim Budget presented in February 2019," Ms. Sitharaman said. "Using the same GDP base ensures comparability from Budget to Budget, interim Budget to regular Budget, and this Budget to last year's Budget." She said that using the same base ensures comparability of the deficit ratios used in the July Budget and the interim Budget.

'CSO must rethink informal sector estimates'

Current method no longer accurate due to greater automation: Pronab Sen

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) needs to rethink how it estimates the growth of the informal sector as the current method is no longer accurate, former Chief Statistician of India Pronab Sen said on Wednesday.

"Using the corporate sector data to estimate the activity in the non-corporate sector, as is being done, works only as long as the technologies being used in both sectors are reasonably similar," Dr. Sen said while speaking at a session on GDP data organised by the National Council of Applied Economic Research.

"However, this is no longer the case," he added. "In-



The CSO could better estimate informal sector activity using employment data, says Pronab Sen. •R.V. MOORTHY

dian corporates, especially the large ones, have seen greater technology being used and this is not the case for the non-corporate sector. The CSO needs to rethink this."

Dr. Sen further said that the data for the last few years showed that there

was an increasing trend of companies using technology instead of labour.

"The data implies that there are many companies that are replacing many low-skilled workers with a few highly-skilled, highly paid workers," Dr. Sen explained. "This is because

they are using technology instead. All those people who are concerned about the future use of automation and its impact on labour, well, the automation is already happening."

One way in which the CSO could better estimate the informal sector activity is to use employment data, he added.

Former Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian again highlighted his misgivings with the GDP growth data for the period 2011-12 to 2016-17.

He also said that India was well placed now to incorporate Goods and Services Tax data to arrive at an expenditure side estimate of GDP growth.

IndiGo stock tanks 11% as promoters' feud escalates

Bhatia group's clarification follows Gangwal's letter to SEBI

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

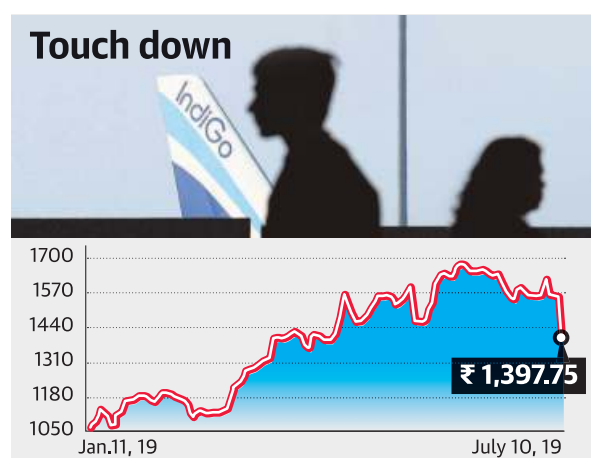
The escalating feud between the Rakesh Gangwal (RG) Group and InterGlobe Enterprise (IGE) Group of Rahul Bhatia, the two promoter groups of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd., (IGAL) that runs IndiGo, resulted in the company's shares crashing in the stock market on Wednesday.

Shares tanked by 19% to ₹1,291 during intra-day trade to its lowest since March 2019 to finally close with a loss of 10.73% at ₹1,397.75 on the BSE. The company's market cap was wiped out by over ₹6,000 crore to ₹53,765 crore.

This forced InterGlobe Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. (IGE), the holding company of IndiGo co-founder Rahul Bhatia's family, to clarify its stance on the alleged Related Party Transactions (RPT) entered with IGAL as levelled by the other co-founder Rakesh Gangwal in his complaint to SEBI on Tuesday.

Denying the allegations, InterGlobe Enterprises in a statement said, "The existence of RPTs was disclosed at the time of the IPO in 2015 in the public domain. Post the IPO, many of the RPTs have ceased to exist while others have been renewed on an arms' length basis as part of the normal course of business."

"The IGE Group has ensured that no entity of the group should take any advantage under RPTs. Without exception, IGAL has received more favourable treatment from the IGE Group entities as compared to their other customers. The materiality of the transactions for IGAL is not sig-



nificant as is evident from the table above, it is only 0.53% of IGAL's consolidated turnover for FY 2018-19," it said. Currently the RPTs are confined to real estate, simulation training, GSA commission, and crew accommodation in Accor Hotel and the total expenses in FY19 was to the tune of ₹150.2 crore.

Defusing anxiety

The IndiGo management also stepped in to defuse the anxiety of employees.

"The issues between them will eventually get sorted out, but I want to stress that these issues have nothing to do with the airline and its functioning," Ronojoy Dutta, CEO, IndiGo, said in a letter to employees.

"Our mission, direction and growth strategy remains unchanged, and firmly in place. As such, it is very important that we all remain focussed on running a high performance airline," he said. Mr. Dutta added, "Absolutely nothing has really changed for any of us, I will just go about doing my job to the very best of my abilities, and I know I can count on you to do the same."

Even as the sharp differences between the two promoters is playing out in the open, material submitted by Mr. Gangwal to the SEBI bring to the fore the acrimony that has been building up between the two factions for the past one year.

Sample this letter to the board on June 12, 2019, by Mr. Bhatia on Mr. Gangwal.

"So, here is a man who took full advantage of the situation and the opportunity offered to him 14 years ago, when he was generously allotted 50% equity; did not mind that the IGE Group was taking the entire economic risk, which at peak exposure [between redeemable preference shares, unsecured loans, and personal guarantees] was in excess of ₹1,100 crore [almost sixfold the IGE Group's contractual obligation of ₹200 crore in the understanding with Mr. Gangwal]; happily agreed to the fundamental proposition that the IGE Group will have control; obliged himself to support the IGE Group in maintaining control through a voting rights agreement embedded in the SHA and in the AoA of the company."

IN BRIEF

**OBC cuts MCLR by up to 10 basis points**

NEW DELHI
Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) has cut the marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) by up to 10 basis points (bps) for various tenors effective Thursday. For the 3-month, 6-month and 1-year tenor loans, MCLR is now 5 bps lower at 8.45%, 8.55% and 8.65%. Earlier this week, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said he expected faster transmission of the three successive repo rate cuts totalling 75 bps. **PTI**

OYO becomes world's third largest hotel chain

BENGALURU
OYO Hotels & Homes on Wednesday said it had emerged as the world's third largest hotel chain, as per room count, as of June 2019. Over a period of six years, OYO has expanded to over 800 cities, nearly 23,000 OYO-branded hotels and 8,50,000 rooms, surpassing the scale of traditional and established hotel chain brands in the world, the company said. It has presence in 25 destinations and 85 hotels in U.K. and 68 hotels across 40 U.S. cities.

Insolvency plea against RHC Holding dismissed

NEW DELHI
The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal on Wednesday dismissed a petition by HDFC to initiate insolvency proceedings against RHC Holding, an entity promoted by billionaire brothers Malvinder Mohan Singh and Shivinder Mohan Singh. A two-member bench headed by Chairman Justice S.J. Mukhopadhyaya upheld the order of the principal bench of the National Company Law Tribunal which had rejected HDFC's plea.

Industry jittery as auto sales' slide continues

SIAM seeks measures to save jobs in a sector that employs close to 37 million people

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With domestic automobile sales continuing on a downward spiral, the industry on Wednesday cautioned that if immediate concrete measures are not taken by the government to help arrest the fall, job cuts may soon follow in the sector that employs nearly 37 million people.

In June, total vehicle sales in the country declined by 12.34% to over 19.97 lakh units, as per data released by Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

PV sales drop

Passenger Vehicle (PV) sales fell 17.54% to over 2.25 lakh units. The PV sales had been declining for the past 12 months, barring a slight uptick in October 2018.

Additionally, passenger

Rugged terrain

The industry has been experiencing its worst phase, says SIAM



Segment	Domestic Sales*	Growth (%)	Exports*	Growth (%)
Passenger Cars	1,39,628	-24.07	42,818	-7.59
Utility Vehicles	72,917	-0.99	13,611	35.3
Vans	13,187	-18.7	300	53.06
Total Passenger Vehicles	2,25,732	-17.54	56,729	0.24

* NUMBER OF UNITS

SOURCE: SIAM

car production stood at over 1.69 lakh units last month – the worst since June 2013, when it had dropped to over 1.64 lakh units. “This is the worst phase of the industry.

We have not seen such kind of prolonged slowdown ever. There have been patches of de-growth earlier but that lasted for one or two quarters at most. Nothing like this

has happened before,” said Rajan Wadhwa, president, SIAM. He added that the industry doesn't see this improving “as it is linked to the overall GDP figures... the economic survey is talking of the last quarter of 5.8% growth.” Expressing disappointment that the industry's concerns were not addressed in the Budget 2019, particularly the demand to reduce GST on automobiles, he added that if the de-growth continues, it is bad for everyone and industry will need to take “critical” “measures to stay afloat” and “conserve resources”

“...in the short-term, if we don't arrest it [the decline], the de-growth will continue. It is already affecting us financially... if we have no work, then there will be no new jobs and the current

jobs will also start going down,” he cautioned.

Asked if there have been any job cuts over the past year, he said, “I don't think that phase has started, but we are very close to that. We can't survive at this moment. At SIAM, we support the electric vehicle plan of the government, but at the same time, we must survive during that plan.”

“... Reduction in the GST, which unfortunately has not happened, would have been the biggest enabler to start the demand... We have been making the presentation to the government saying that this de-growth affects the GST revenues as well. If we de-grow by 20%, the overall GST also is less by 20%. We are really very concerned. We need very concrete measures,” Mr. Wadhwa added.

Provide policy guideline to help auto sector: ALL

‘Strategy, roll-out plan in place for EVs’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Commercial vehicle manufacturer Ashok Leyland has urged the Centre and industry bodies to provide long-term direction or a policy guideline to help the auto sector, said its chairman Dheeraj G. Hinduja.

“It is important that the government and the industry bodies provide long-term direction or a policy guideline to the auto sector that include policy pronouncements such as vehicle scrappage, cab code or bus body code,” Mr. Hinduja said in a message to shareholders.

“This would provide the impetus to the Indian commercial vehicle sector to transit to the global premier league and also help opti-

mise resources,” he added.

With regard to the commercial vehicle industry, he said: “In the short-to-medium term, we anticipate continuance of investment in infrastructure, revival of defence mobility spending and the much needed relief to the liquidity challenges of NBFCs.”

Regarding the company's preparedness for the BS-VI, he said it was a steep challenge for both original equipment manufacturers and the ancillary sector to transform from BS-IV to BS-VI norms in just three years. “Our status of readiness is next to none in emission conformance and fuel performance.”

On the firm's EV strategy, he said that the strategy and roll-out plans were in place.

NCLT admits plea against Chennai firm

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Special Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Chennai admitted insolvency proceedings against New Chennai Township Pvt. Ltd. for default in payment of dues worth over ₹400 crore. The petition was filed by Phoenix ARC Pvt. Ltd. The company is behind Marg's flagship project Swarnabhoomi.

NCLT noted the case was filed before November 10, 2017 and since then, no change has been seen in the requests for adjournment by the firm, except saying that if more time were given it would resolve it through settlement talks.

Coffee growers' meet may bring a cuppa cheer for India

Some important topics for discussion include how to replicate Brazil's success of domestic coffee consumption

MINI TEJASWI
BENGALURU

The World Coffee Producers' Forum (WCPF) is scheduled to discuss a range of issues critical to the economic sustainability of coffee farmers round the globe at its two-day conference that commenced on Wednesday.

WCPF is a not-for-profit entity that represents over 25 million coffee-growing families across 60 countries.

Direct impact on growers

Some of the topics scheduled for discussion and that would have direct bearing on over 2.50 lakh coffee farmers in India, include how to replicate Brazil's success of domestic coffee consumption, how to protect farmers from current market mechanisms



Green shoots: The forum will push for adding value to coffee in producing countries and also increase consumption. **• REUTERS**

that harm their incomes and how to improve transparency and traceability from seed-to-cup to ensure better price premium for their pro-

duce. One of the key highlights will be a paper on “Economic and political analysis to improve small coffee growers' income” presented

by Prof. Jeffrey D Sachs, director, Center for Sustainable Development of the Institute de la Tierra of Columbia University. Juan Esteban Orduz, president, Colombian Coffee Growers Federation Inc. told *The Hindu* that the forum would push for cooperation between all key stakeholders, including the New York Stock Exchange and consumers, to ensure a sustainable income for farmers, add value to coffee in producing countries and also increase consumption in producing countries.

Working on problems

“The current price crisis affects all producing countries alike. Our goals and objectives are to work on main

problems such as price and demand creation,” said Mr. Orduz who is also the president of North American subsidiary of the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation.

As per Vanusia Nogueira, executive director, Brazil Specialty Coffee Association – BSCA, the key objective of WCPF was to focus on actions that would eventually improve the economic condition of all coffee producers around the globe.

Till recently, large coffee fairs and expos were all organised and held in importing/consuming countries and had discussion agendas with topics of interest to these countries; there were no important coffee fairs or gatherings driven by producing

countries. At that time, international markets were increasingly interested in environmental and social sustainability, to the point of demanding social and environment sustainability certification for coffees. International markets were less interested in, and unwilling to bear the cost of, or even discuss, the issue of economic sustainability, she said.

“Producers would be required to provide environmentally and socially sustainable coffees at whatever price the market dictated, even if that price was below their own cost of production,” added Mr. Orduz while explaining the context under which a global body for coffee growers was set up in 2017.

Henry's triple blow stuns the top-order, shatters India's dream

Despite Jadeja's incredible knock and his gallant century stand with Dhoni, the Men in Blue fall short by 18 runs to crash out in the semifinals



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

The bugles were silenced, drums got discarded and disbelief reigned. For the Indian fans, a boisterous morning slipped into an afternoon of melancholy despite Ravindra Jadeja's incredible knock, as New Zealand stunned Virat Kohli's men in the World Cup semifinal at Old Trafford here on Wednesday.

Efficiency trumped flair and Kane Williamson's men showed that they could win without a snarl. Pursuing New Zealand's 239 for eight, India finished with 221 in 49.3 overs. Jadeja's 77 (59b, 4x4, 4x6) was pulse-pounding but it was fated to end in tragedy while the Kiwis snatched an 18-run victory.

Modest targets can be tricky and India needed a solid start but, instead, a nightmare ensued. Rohit Sharma nibbled at a Matt Henry (three for 37) delivery, the edge was grazed, wicket-keeper Tom Latham caught with glee and boom, the World Cup's most prolific batsman departed.

Joy in waves

Joy for the Black Caps came in waves. For the addition of a single run, India lost two wickets. Kohli missed some from Trent Boult as the left-armed's angle was tough to counter. The speedster then got one to straighten and Kohli, who tends to shuffle a bit more in his initial tenure, did that while trying to wrist one to the leg-side. The Indian captain missed, the pad got struck and Boult's appeal bellowed from the pit of his stomach. Kohli was adjudged out, he promptly sought a review and though the replays hinted that the ball was going over the bails, it was an 'umpire's call' decision and the agitated batsman left.

At five for two, the queasiness in the Indian dressing room worsened as K.L. Rahul fell to Henry. The delivery hovering near the off-stump rose and Rahul, who



Gone with the wind: Virat Kohli gives vent to his frustration after getting dismissed cheaply by Trent Boult. •AP

was riding the bounce, failed to withdraw his bat and Latham found another welcome thud into his gloves. India five for three and the fires raged.

Magic on the turf

Rishabh Pant and Dinesh Karthik tried to resist, the former driving, the latter stone-walling and going 20 balls without a run. Karthik then clipped a four off Boult and just as the initial nerves eased, James Neesham sprinkled magic on the turf. Karthik sliced Henry and as the ball raced beyond backward-point, Neesham dived to his left, and his left hand reflexively darted out and plucked a catch for the ages. India 24 for four in 10 overs and in dire straits.

The game is a leveller though and when Pant flicked Lockie Ferguson, the uppish stroke popped out of Neesham's hands at short mid-wicket! Pant and Hardik Pandya shared a 47-run fifth-

INNINGS SCAN

NZ	IND
2	5
15	13
1	5
68 (2nd)	116 (7th)
4.78	4.46

PROGRESSION

NZ	IND
27/1	24/4
73/2	70/4
113/2	92/5
155/3	150/6
239/8	---

TOP SHOWS

For	Batting	Bowling
New Zealand	Taylor 74 (90b, 3x4, 1x6)	Henry 3/37 (10)
India	Jadeja 77 (59b, 4x4, 4x6)	Bhuvneshwar 3/43 (10)

wicket alliance but India was always behind the Duckworth-Lewis par score. And then Pant tried to deposit a left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner over mid-wicket, except that he found Colin de Grandhomme. India 71 for five in the 23rd over and the crowd yearned for a miracle.

M.S. Dhoni (50) and Pandya nudged the scoreboard but as the required rate went

past seven, the pressure was bound to tell. It did emphatically when Pandya miscued a slog-sweep off Santner and a patient Williamson tumbled and still held on. India 92 for six, down for the count and in walks Jadeja with rebellious ideas.

Stirring act

While Dhoni remained calm, Jadeja turned aggressor, loft-

SERVO CRICKET TRIVIA
Mithali Raj is the second Indian after Rohit Sharma to score the most number of runs in T20 international matches.

ing Neesham and Henry for sixes and the crowd was alive. A stirring act took shape and when Jadeja etched his 50, besides the usual Rajput twirl of the bat, he gesticulated towards the commentary box, perhaps, an admonition to Sanjay Manjrekar, who recently made some critical remarks.

Jadeja rode his luck as a few shots teased the fielders but a massive six off Ferguson showed that the battle wasn't over yet and a hope-gifting partnership enthused the audience. Jadeja and Dhoni added 116 off 112 deliv-

STAT SPHERE

1 For the first time in this tournament, none of the top three Indian batsmen scored a half-century

2 The number of times Rohit and Kohli have been dismissed for a single-digit score in the same ODI in the last two years, the earlier occasion being the Champions Trophy 2017 final against Pakistan (India lost by 180 runs)

0/3 Kohli failed to cross double-figures in his last three WC semifinal appearances (9 vs Pakistan, 2011, 1 vs Australia, 2015, 1 vs New Zealand, 2019)

3/3 Kohli has been dismissed by left-arm pacers (Wahab, Johnson and Boult) all three times in the semifinals

5/3

India's score is the lowest for the loss of three wickets in WC semifinals, the previous one being Australia's eight (for three) against West Indies in the 1996 edition

MS Dhoni scored his 73rd ODI half-century in the match against New Zealand

5 New Zealand is the fifth team to reach consecutive World Cup finals (2015, 2019), Australia (1996, 1999, 2003, 2007), West Indies (1975, 1979 and 1983), England (1987, 1992) and Sri Lanka (2007, 2011) are the other sides to accomplish the feat

24 India's PowerPlay 1 total, the lowest in this edition, beating New Zealand's 27 (both in the semifinal)

74 Taylor's knock against India is the third highest by a Kiwi batsman in the WC semifinals after Martin Crowe's 91 (Pakistan, 1992) and Grant Elliott's 84 not out (South Africa, 2015)

77 Jadeja's score is the highest by a batsman batting at No. 8 or lower in WC knockout games. Holder's 42 (WI vs NZ, 2015) was the previous best

116 Dhoni and Jadeja's partnership is the second century association for the seventh wicket or lower in WC chases. The 117-run stand between Zimbabwe's Iain Butchart and Dave Houghton also came against New Zealand (1987 edition)

COMPILED BY ANANTAJITH RA.

SCOREBOARD INDIA VS NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND
Martin Guptill c Kohli b Bumrah 1 (14b), Henry Nicholls b Jadeja 28 (51b, 2x4), Kane Williamson c Jadeja b Chahal 67 (95b, 6x4), Ross Taylor run out 74 (90b, 3x4, 1x6), James Neesham c Karthik b Pandya 12 (18b, 1x4), Colin de Grandhomme c Dhoni b Bhuvneshwar 16 (10b, 2x4), Tom Latham c Jadeja b Bhuvneshwar 10 (11b), Mitchell Santner (not out) 9 (6b, 1x4), Matt Henry c Kohli b Bhuvneshwar 1 (2b), Trent Boult (not out) 3 (3b); Extras (lb-5, w-13): 18; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs): 239.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-1 (Guptill, 3.3 overs), 2-69 (Nicholls, 18.2), 3-134 (Williamson, 35.2), 4-162 (Neesham, 40.6), 5-200 (Grandhomme, 44.4), 6-225 (Taylor, 47.6), 7-225 (Latham, 48.1), 8-232 (Henry, 48.6).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 10-1-43-3, Bumrah 10-1-39-1, Pandya 10-0-55-1, Jadeja 10-0-34-1, Chahal 10-0-63-1.

INDIA

K.L. Rahul c Latham b Henry 1

(7b), Rohit Sharma c Latham b Henry 1 (4b), Virat Kohli lbw b Boult 1 (6b), Rishabh Pant c de Grandhomme b Santner 32 (56b, 4x4), Dinesh Karthik c Neesham b Henry 6 (25b, 1x4), Hardik Pandya c Williamson b Santner 32 (62b, 2x4), M.S. Dhoni run out 50 (72b, 1x4, 1x6), Ravindra Jadeja c Williamson b Boult 77 (59b, 4x4, 4x6), Bhuvneshwar Kumar b Ferguson 0 (1b), Yuzvendra Chahal c Latham b Neesham 5 (5b, 1x4), Jasprit Bumrah (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (lb-3, w-13): 16; Total (in 49.3 overs): 221.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-4 (Rohit, 1.3), 2-5 (Kohli, 2.4), 3-5 (Rahul, 3.1), 4-24 (Karthik, 9.6), 5-71 (Pant, 22.5), 6-92 (Pandya, 30.3), 7-208 (Jadeja, 47.5), 8-216 (Dhoni, 48.3), 9-217 (Bhuvneshwar, 48.6).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Boult 10-2-42-2, Henry 10-1-37-3, Ferguson 10-0-43-1, de Grandhomme 2-0-13-0, Neesham 7.3-0-49-1, Santner 10-2-34-2.

Toss: NZ. **MoM:** Matt Henry. *New Zealand won by 18 runs.*

Dhoni's final bow?

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

When M.S. Dhoni trudged away following a run out at Old Trafford here on Wednesday, a question lingered in the press box: "Are we seeing him for the last time in the blue shade?" With speculation over a probable retirement swirling in the air, it was understandable that the former captain came up for discussion in the post-match media interactions.

First up, Kane Williamson was asked to comment on Dhoni's strike-rate and then the reporter questioned derisively: "Would you have

picked him in your team?" The New Zealand skipper looked perplexed and countered: "He is not eligible to play for New Zealand, isn't he?" And when the correspondent persisted, Williamson praised Dhoni: "He is a world-class player and if I was the Indian captain I would have picked him. His contribution was excellent. Is he looking to change his nationality? We might consider him (grins)."

Later, when Virat Kohli was probed about any input from Dhoni specific to his career's conclusion, the Indian captain categorically said: "He hasn't told anything."



What's up? Speculation is rife about Dhoni's future. •AFP

'The game changed in the first 40 minutes'

Kohli 'proud of the way the team played through the tournament'

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

India's batting heart was flung aside in the first 10 overs as New Zealand speedsters Trent Boult and Matt Henry pegged away with wickets and maidens. Virat Kohli conceded that the phase when his team was reduced to five for three and then 24 for four, had repercussions that lasted through the World Cup semifinal which Kane Williamson's men won at Old Trafford here on Wednesday.

"The game pretty much changed in those first 40 minutes and credit to the New Zealand bowlers, the pressure they created was immense and they bowled in the right areas," the Indian captain said in the post-match press conference.

"You obviously feel bad about the result and everyone wants to win. In hindsight you can think differently. We are sad but we are not devastated. Today we were not good enough, a bad day at the knockouts and you are



Fine innings, but... Jadeja drew praise from skipper Kohli who termed the left-hander's innings 'his best.' •REUTERS

out of the tournament," he added.

Speaking about the dismissals, Kohli said: "Rohit (Sharma) got a really good ball, the ball I got was pretty decent. Yes in some cases shot selection could have been better. For the first seven or eight overs we didn't get a ball to drive, it was the

perfect spell of fast bowling."

Pant will learn

Asked to comment on Rishabh Pant's manner of exit through a shot that was struck straight to a fielder in the deep, Kohli became the protective senior: "Look, Pant is an instinctive player and his partnership with

(Hardik) Pandya was commendable. In hindsight he will learn, he is young. When I was young I made many mistakes. I am sure he will reflect on it and become stronger."

Kohli was also satisfied with the run rate that Ravindra Jadeja and M.S. Dhoni maintained through their partnership: "The way they batted together I felt it was the perfect tempo. MS (Dhoni) was given that role of coming in a bad situation and taking control."

Jadeja's innings drew praise from his leader and Kohli said: "I have been watching him for 10 years and this was his best knock. At that point (in the slog) we felt that we could close the game. Jadeja has been an under-rated cricketer but he is priceless."

Visibly disappointed, Kohli, though, drew some cheer from the 'semifinal appearance' and said that he "is proud of the way the team played through the tournament."

'It wasn't a 300-wicket, 240 or 250 was ideal'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANCHESTER

Kane Williamson often does a shy half-smile, not for him are the extremes of unbridled joy or soul-numbing anguish. After marshalling New Zealand well and springing a shock-defeat upon India in the World Cup semifinals here at Old Trafford on Wednesday, the skipper was measured in his words, mixing guarded praise with dry wit. *Excerpts:*

A tough game

It was important to maintain our vitality and we know what a class side India is. We thought close to 240 was competitive on a pitch like this and it was an incredible game. We had a great starting point when we got those wickets and then the rebuilding phase gets tricky. We had some good deliveries there, sometimes they don't take the edge, but today they took (it).

The Jadeja special

The innings that (Ravin-

dra) Jadeja played was as if he was playing on a different pitch. It was a brilliant innings and India showed what a class side it is and we had a very good game of cricket spilling over two days.

Dhoni's run out

We all know the game is a fine line. We have seen (M.S.) Dhoni finish games earlier and to get him run out with a direct throw was excellent.

A staggered contest

I think the guys slept pretty well. We were focusing on what we could achieve on this surface. It wasn't a 300-wicket, it was a mid-200 wicket, 240 or 250 was ideal. And then it was a brilliant start with the ball.

The catching philosophy

Just watch the ball and catch it. Just watch it, (perhaps say) 'someone please catch it' (grins) and if it is mine then catch it.

The final

Anybody can beat anybody, so it is important to put your feet on the ground.

England will need to be at its best

Defending champion Australia has proved its credentials

WORLD CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BIRMINGHAM
England seems primed to win its maiden title but it will take a special effort to upstage arch-rival and defending champion Australia in the second semifinal here on Thursday.

Considering the fire-power the host possesses, many current and former players have said it is England's World Cup to lose, a trophy it has not been able to lift despite making the final in 1979, 1987 and 1992.

On the other hand, Australia has been so consistent in the mega event that it is yet to lose a semifinal, having won six and one being a dramatic tie against South Africa in the 1999 edition.

Not many would have put their money on Australia as recent as four months ago but Aaron Finch and his team have made a phenomenal comeback that began with a rare series win in India in March.

England may have won 10 out of its last 12 meetings against Australia but knows well that the piece of statistic counts for little heading into the semifinal, especially after the Eoin Morgan-led side's 64-loss to in the league stage.

But England is back to its best since that loss to Australia as it beat India and New Zealand in their final two league games.

The squads:
Australia: Aaron Finch (Capt.), Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Pat Cummins, Peter Handscomb, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, Glenn Maxwell, Kane Richard-



Impact player: Jason Roy will be key to England's fortunes against Australia. • DAVID ROGERS/GETTY IMAGES

	Mat	Aus	Eng	Tied	NR
Overall	148	82	61	2	3
World Cup	8	6	2	0	0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

THE FACE-OFF
AUSTRALIA vs ENGLAND
EDGBASTON
HEAD-TO-HEAD

Finch vs **Morgan**

son, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, David Warner and Adam Zampa.

England: Eoin Morgan (Capt.), Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Jonny Bairstow, Jos Buttler, Tom Cur-

ran, Liam Dawson, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, James Vince, Chris Woakes and Mark Wood.

Match starts at 3 p.m. IST.

It's a Federer-Nadal semifinal as scripted

The Swiss records his 100th win at SW19; Djokovic crushes Goffin; Agut in maiden Slam semifinal



N. SUDARSHAN LONDON

More than a decade after their momentous Wimbledon final in 2008 – a match for the ages that ended under semi-darkness – Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal will lock horns again, this time a round earlier.

The two won their respective quarterfinal matches on Wednesday against Kei Nishikori and Sam Querrey to set up their 40th head-to-head meeting on Friday. While Federer came through a tense four-setter 4-6, 6-1, 6-1, 6-4 for his 100th win at SW19, Nadal doused a spirited challenge from the service-heavy American 7-5, 6-2, 6-2.

"Well, we have a lot of information on Rafa and so do they about us," said a smiling Federer about facing Nadal. "We can all talk tactics for the next two days or just say it's grass court tennis and I am going to attack. If he can defend, it's good for him or it's good for me. I mean, people hype it up, just like in the French Open. It was a joy to play on his court. Now, I'd love to play on grass. Let's see what happens."

Toughing it out

The eight-time Wimbledon champion, though, had to tough it out against Nishikori. The Japanese broke early in the first set forcing the Swiss to play catch-up. Federer pounced in the second right at the beginning, just when Nishikori appeared to switch off, and maintained the lead throughout. He



Sublime: Novak Djokovic lost just six games – his least ever at Wimbledon – during his dismantling of David Goffin. • REUTERS

broke open the contest at 3-3 in the third set and never looked back.

"The beginning was brutal," Federer said later. "Kei was smashing returns and I had to make adjustments and stay with him. I had to get the lead and protect it in the second and then start a normal match at one-set all. I served well from there. It was a good serving performance against a great returning player."

The day's honours, however, went to World No. 1 Novak Djokovic, who dismantled David Goffin 6-4, 6-0, 6-2. A lot had to go right for the 21st seed if he was to threaten Djokovic. At just an inch under six feet, he doesn't necessarily intimidate his opponents. His serve-speed doesn't rank

Thursday's schedule

Women's semifinals

Centre Court
7-Halep vs 8-Svitolina
(5.30 p.m. start)
followed by
11-Serena vs 5-Strycova

high enough to give him the first-mover advantage that can be crucial on grass.

But he covers for his shortcomings with clever changes of pace, court-speed and persistence. He appeared to maximise these talents for a fleeting while, going up a break in the first set and serving at 4-3, before bearing the full brunt of the Djokovic onslaught.

The six games that Djokovic lost were his least ever at Wimbledon, bettering the

seven he conceded to Yen-Hsun Lu in 2010. He will now take on Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut, who defeated Argentine giant-killer Guido Pella 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 to make it to his maiden Slam semifinal.

The turnaround from Djokovic in the first set was swift. After having broken the defending champion in the seventh game, Goffin lost his rhythm from 30-0 up. A double fault and an unforced error brought the Serb right back before a decision by the umpire to award a point to Djokovic instead of a replay following a contentious line call seemed to throw the Belgian off.

He would save the break point with a fine volley but couldn't do much when Djokovic drew him into a long

rally and dealt the killer blow with a volley of his own. From thereon, the four-time champion won 15 of 17 games, including eight on the bounce, to drain the Centre Court of all its energy and with it any lingering suspense of an upset.

THE RESULTS

Men's singles: Quarterfinals: 1-Novak Djokovic (Srb) bt 21-David Goffin (Bel) 6-4, 6-0, 6-2; 23-Roberto Bautista Agut (Esp) bt 26-Guido Pella (Arg) 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; 2-Roger Federer (Sui) bt 8-Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4; 3-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt Sam Querrey (USA) 7-5, 6-2, 6-2.

Mixed doubles: Third round: 1-Bruno Soares (Bra) & Nicole Pietrangeli (USA) bt Andy Murray (GBR) & Serena Williams (USA) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2.

Sagan takes the fifth stage

TOUR DE FRANCE

REUTERS COLMER
Peter Sagan burst into life on the Tour de France when he claimed the fifth stage at the end of a 175.5-km bumpy ride from St. Die des Vosges on Wednesday.

The three-time World champion from Slovakia beat Belgian Wout van Aert and Italian Matteo Trentin in a sprint finish to strengthen his grip on the points classification as he looks to secure a record-breaking seventh green jersey.

Sagan has 144 points in the points classification with Australian Michael Matthews in second place on 97.

France's Julian Alaphilippe retained the overall leader's yellow jersey.

Poland show not accurate gauge of India's chances

Better indicator would be the World Championships

ATHLETICS

UTHRA GANESAN NEW DELHI
Touted as a strong prospect for India at the Tokyo Olympics, Hima Das is currently the toast of the nation for winning back-to-back races in the first week of July.

Hima is part of the elite Indian quartermilers training for more than two months in Spala, Poland, along with a few javelin throwers and shot-putter Tejinder Pal Singh Toor. However, it is important to put things in perspective.

The most common refrain for going abroad is quality competition that is not possible in India. That, however, does not bear out. At Poznan, there were just a handful of Jamaicans and Thai runners across all events,

none among the top runners from their respective countries. Even the top Polish athletes were missing.

Hima won the 200m in 23.65 seconds, far from her personal best of 23.10 while V.K. Vismaya was third in 23.75, a personal best. Mohd. Anas Yahya was the only one who came close to doing his best, registering a season's best timing of 20.75 (his record is 20.63) in 200m to finish third.

All-India race

In the women's 400m, it was an all-India race that saw all four time over 54 seconds. The best-placed Indian male quartermiler was K.S. Jeevan with 47.25s. Kunhu Mohammed managed 47.48, a far cry from even his season's best of 46.47 at the Federation Cup earlier this year.



Hima Das. • BEN HOSKINS/GETTY IMAGES

Tejinderpal Singh Toor could not cross the 20m mark.

At Kutno, the Indians ran amongst themselves and against club athletes from

around Poland. Hima and Vismaya slipped to 23.97 and 24.06 respectively but still completed a 1-2 for India. For the record, her gold-winning performance in Poznan will not put her among the top-300 in the world today.

"The federation itself is realistic. These competitions are mainly in and around the athletes' training base in Spala and are entered into for experience. They are not part of the official annual calendar," an AFI official admitted.

However, it may be noted that the Sports Ministry has approved ₹65.93 lakh for competitions in Spala and around, probably including the Czech Republic, for nine athletes and two coaches during the period 15 June to 15 August.

With club level competi-

tion and falling standards, one wonders about the supposed gains for the Indian athletes in such long camps abroad without adequate international competitions.

It's not just the runners whose performances raise questions. Javelin thrower Shivpal Singh, who managed an impressive 86.23m at the Asian meet, has been slipping gradually, his last outing being 76.90 in Poland. Vipin Kasana has not participated at all during this time while Davinder Singh Kang and Rajinder Singh have had poor outings in one event each.

A more accurate reflection of India's chances and standards would be, therefore, at the World Championships in September-October. Till then, it would do well to temper hopes and adulation.

Tajikistan stuns Syria

INTERCONTL. CUP

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA AHMEDABAD

Tajikistan brightened its title-round chances, shocking fancied Syria by two second half goals, in the Intercontinental Cup at the EKA Arena here on Wednesday.

Striker Komron Tursunov found the lead before Ilhomjon Barotov netted the second to help Tajikistan reach six points after two matches.

The Tajiks, who had surprised India in the opener, just need a draw against DPR Korea to make the final. Syria created a few chances in the first half but was unlucky not to find the net as three of its attempts came off the framework.

Tajikistan enjoyed greater possession, but could not make inroads into the Syria box. Despite keeping its playmaker Firas Alkhatib

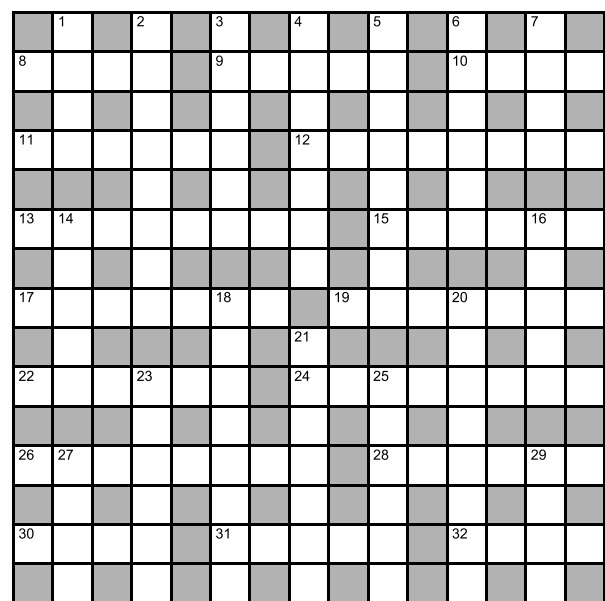
on the bench in the first half, its two men in attack – Shadi Al Hamwi and Mohammad Almarmour – troubled the Tajik defence a lot.

After Hamvi saw his 13th minute effort saved well by Tajik goalkeeper Rustam Yattimov, Syria kept working on the flanks, earning three golden opportunities, but failing to capitalise on them. Tajikistan came back strongly in the second half, going ahead immediately after the break. Tursunov found the target off a spectacular long-ranger that beat Syrian custodian Ibrahim Alma.

Even before Syria could regroup, Tajiks doubled the lead in the 67th minute when Ilhomjon Barotov tapped home an assist from Panshanbe Ehsoni.

The result: Tajikistan 2 (Komron Tursunov 46, Ilhomjon Barotov 67) bt Syria 0.

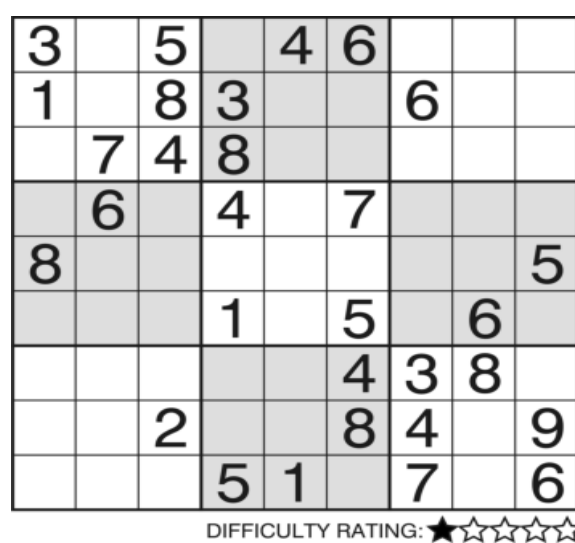
THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12675



- ACROSS**
8 Shake stone (4)
9 Fuses stink badly (5)
10 Agree, god makes ladies' fingers (4)
11 Reply, "Solution" (6)
12 US lecher may be a strongman (8)
13 Partially photograph a rise extraordinarily for a hypocrite (8)
- DOWN**
1 Low at the beginning of night and behave listlessly (4)
2 Deer running behind South London garden's impaled (8)
3 Goes around in feminine clothes (6)

- (set by Incognito)
- 15 Tells, letter by letter, "Magic incantations" (6)
17 Bringing down a plane on flat area above step (7)
19 Order naval officer without hesitation (7)
22 Write: A no-good city (6)
24 Svelte redhead on board ship slides (8)
26 Scold maid, "Nosh is bad" (8)
28 Crafty daughter followed small animal (6)
30 For starters, no earthing is lying – He took a giant step for mankind! (4)
31 Wined dancing astronaut (5)
32 After first half of June, heartless lady produces "Seventh Month" (4)
- 4 Claim he is abnormal saint (7)
5 El Salvador media's love for some coffee (8)
6 Moulded model contains uniform segment (6)
7 No charges for Liberty (4)
14 Hurl that chap on little boulevard (5)
16 Left district in Himachal Pradesh at end of September to get something related to 1 (5)
18 General returns, followed by another general carrying policeman's night dress (8)
20 A ham jar is broken by a ruler (8)
21 Shuns chess we played (7)
23 A referendum by old Greek god (6)
25 Begins an enterprise that is, to some extent, mad (6)
27 Sketched actor Barrymore (4)
29 Law broken by king and tramp (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12674

S	C	O	R	O	B			
S	U	E	Z	B	R	E	A	K
B	A	T	P	L	O	E		
S	P	A	R	T	H	A	T	C
O	I	I	H	S				
S	E	N	T	I	N	E	L	O
N	O	E	M	T				
N	A	R	W	H	A	L	R	A
S	E	T	T	E	R	S	W	A
T	T	E	R	H	C			
T	U	R	N	C	O	A	T	Q
I	E	R	R	U	R	G		
S	E	R	E	N	G	E	T	I
O	E	E	T	O	N			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Life and death

The Gita teaches humanity to outgrow limitations and make full use of the gift of human birth to attain liberation from the cycle of samsara, pointed out Srimati Prema Pandurang in a discourse. A jivatma has the faculty to meditate on the Supreme Brahman and if one is able to be steeped in Brahman at the moment of death, he is sure to attain Brahman, say the scriptures. Krishna points out to Arjuna that whoever at the time of death gives up his body and departs thinking of Him alone comes to His status of being. The Lord assures that one need not have any doubt in this.

The story of King Bharata who renounces his kingdom and is engaged in peaceful penance in solitude somehow gets attached to a deer and when he sheds his mortal frame his thoughts are preoccupied with the deer. He is born a deer and lives for some time in this form. But, owing to his previous samskara as a great devotee of the Lord, in his next birth he is born as Jadabharata and finally attains salvation. Krishna says that by dedicating one's mind and buddhi to Him even when one is engaged in one's duties and dharma, one can be sure of attaining Him. But what is the guarantee that one may think of God during one's last moments, since failing senses, deteriorating health etc may lead one to lose consciousness.

With great foresight, realised souls such as Adi Sankara, Kulasekhara Azhwar, Periazhwar, etc, focus on 'antima kala Smriti', that is, the thoughts that pass through the mind of a person in one's last moments that would decide the future of the atma. They teach us to pray to God to be with us and guide us at that time. Constant practice of meditation on God throughout one's lifetime alone can help to fight the strong distractions from outside world.

TV PICKS

ICC World Cup: Star Sports 1, 2 & Select 1 (SD & HD), 3 p.m.
Wimbledon: Star Sports Select 2 (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Five Brazilians in Copa team of tournament

PORTO ALEGRE
Five Brazilians have been selected in the 2019 Copa America's team of the tournament by the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL). Goalkeeper Alisson, right-back Dani Alves, centre-back Thiago Silva, midfielder Arthur and forward Everton featured in the competition's best XI, published by CONMEBOL on social media. The remainder of the team comprised Uruguayan centre-back Jose Gimenez, Peru left-back Miguel Trauco, Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes, Chile midfielder Arturo Vidal, Colombia playmaker James Rodriguez and Peru striker Paolo Guerrero. IANS

McLaren retains Sainz, Norris for 2020 season

LONDON
McLaren will keep the same driver pairing for the 2020 Formula One season after confirming Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris will retain their seats next year. "McLaren is pleased to confirm that Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris will continue as McLaren F1 drivers for the 2020 FIA Formula 1 season," McLaren said in a statement. AFP

Pique handed €2.1 million tax bill

MADRID
Barcelona's Gerard Pique will be forced to pay €2.1 million to Spain's tax authorities after his conviction for rights-image fraud was confirmed, a legal source told AFP on Wednesday. According to a May 13 decision the country's National Court rejected Pique's appeal against the 2016 sentence which required the former Spain international to pay €1.5 million in tax arrears and a €600,000 fine. The tribunal concluded Pique had faked the handover of his rights images to his Kerad Project company to pay less tax for 2008, 2009 and 2010. AFP

Saniya Sheikh finishes 30th

SPORTS BUREAU
LONATO (ITALY)
Former National champion Saniya Sheikh had the best finish, in skeet, among the Indian women, as she finished 30th with 112 in a field of 61 shooters in the Shotgun World Championship on Wednesday. Saniya had a series of 22, 23, 23, 22 and 22. Areeba Khan, who had shot 70 out of 75 overnight, faltered with rounds of 22 and 17 on the second day, and was 47th with a total of 109. Kartiki Singh Shaktawat shot 108 for the 50th spot among 61 shooters. In junior men's skeet, Gurnihal Singh Garcha (109), Ayush Rudraraju (107) and Arjun Thakur (104) were placed 31st, 32nd and 35th in a field of 36 shooters. **The result: Junior men's skeet:** 1. Daniel Korcak (Cze) 55 (120); 2. Andrea Lapucci (Ita) 54 (121); 3. David James Sneedon McNeill (GBR) 41 (118).

Gursimar and Amandeep share lead

SPORTS BUREAU
BENGALURU
Gursimar Badwal and Amandeep Drall shot identical scores of three-under-par 67 to share the lead on the opening day of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour (Leg 10) at the Bangalore Golf Club on Wednesday. Ananya Datar (68) was one stroke behind the leaders in third. **The scores (top six after round one):** 67: Gursimar Badwal, Amandeep Drall; 68: Ananya Datar; 71: Sonam Chugh, Ridhima Dilawari, Neha Tripathi.

Dutee clinches 100m gold

Becomes the first Indian to win a sprint gold in a global event

WORLD UNIVERSIADE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAPOLI
National record holder Dutee Chand became the first Indian woman track and field athlete to clinch a gold medal in the World Universiade after she won the 100m dash event here.

The 23-year-old Dutee clocked 11.32 seconds to win the gold as she led the race from start to finish. Running at lane No. 4, Dutee was the first one out of the eight athletes to blast off the starting blocks and she made most of it to fend of a late challenge from Del Ponte (11.33) of Switzerland.

Lisa KwaYie of Germany took the bronze in 11.39 seconds in the race run past midnight Indian time on Tuesday.

The Odisha runner, whose National record stands at 11.24 seconds, thus became the first Indian to win a 100m gold in a global event.

She has now become only the second Indian sprinter to win a gold in a global event after Hima Das, who clinched the top spot in 400m in the World Junior Athletics Championships last year.

Earlier on Tuesday, Dutee qualified for the final with a time of 11.41 seconds in the semifinal, which had made her the first Indian sprinter to make it to the final of World Universiade. On Monday, she had advanced to the semifinals from the heats with a time of 11.58 seconds.

Pat from the President

President Ram Nath Kovind congratulated Dutee on her feat.

"Congratulations @DuteeChand for winning the 100m sprint at the Universiade, the World University Games, in Naples. This is India's first



Commanding show: Dutee Chand clocked 11.32 seconds to win a start-to-finish race. • FISU/TWITTER

A fighter to the core

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

'Pull me down, I will come back stronger'. Perhaps, this tweet by sprinter Dutee Chand, after winning the gold.

"This is truly special given the backdrop I entered this event. And more so because it gives me the tag of 'World' which is so important and invaluable for any athlete," Dutee told *The Hindu* from Napoli. "Honestly, I was expecting a third or a fourth place in my second appearance in these Games. But, when I qualified for the final, I decided to give it all and it was a very close race separating me and the

silver medalist," she said.

No pressure
Was there pressure before the final? "Not at all, for I knew that the University people would not say anything even if I didn't win any medal," the 23-year-old athlete said.

"But, the desire to come up with something special was there certainly as I am preparing for the Doha World championship later this year," says Dutee, who won two silvers in 100m and 200m in the Asiad last year. "The focus will be on 100m for sure even as I dedicate this medal to the Achyuta Samanta sir (founder of Kalinga

Institute of Technology, Odisha) for all their support," she said.

Dutee's coach-cum-commentator Nagapuri Ramesh of SAI says the gold is the result of lot of efforts at Gachibowli Stadium and thanks the initiative of the Gopi Academy-Mytra Foundation.

"In sprints, a champion is one who knows when to accelerate and when to relax without reducing the speed. She is really good off the blocks. This is the reason why I made her go through the drills of speeding up to 30m and then relax for 20m with cones on the track and this seemed to have worked really well," Ramesh said.

such gold and a moment of immense pride for our country. Please keep up the effort, and look to greater glory at the Olympics," the President tweeted.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijju also applauded Dutee's efforts. "I've been passionately following since my childhood but it never came. Finally, for the first time, a

gold for India! Congratulations @DuteeChand for winning the 100m sprint at the Universiade, the World University Games, in Naples," Rijju said in his tweet.

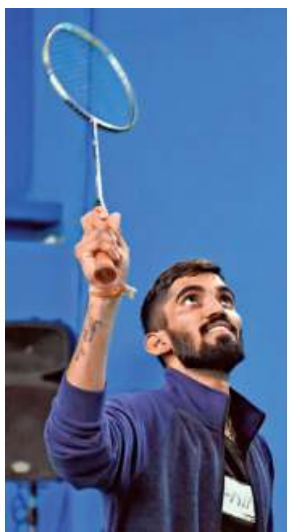
Srikanth focused on qualifying for Tokyo

Ace shuttler says it has been a great season for him so far

S. PRASANNA VENKATESAN
CHENNAI

Ace Indian badminton player K. Srikanth said here on Wednesday that he's been focusing on the upcoming tournaments and qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics.

"There's a year left (for the Olympics). It's about playing the tournaments before the Olympics and qualifying. I think there are 15 tournaments until April next year. I would like to do well, probably win some and just try to improve," said Srikanth after inaugurating the VSR Sports Academy in Mogappair. The 26-year-old shuttler, who won four Super Series titles in 2017 and got to the World No. 1 ranking last year, said it's been a "great season" for him so far,



K. Srikanth. • M. KARUNAKARAN

and was looking forward to the rest of the year.

"I haven't been playing for the last two months, but

it's still been a great year. There are many more tournaments coming up, so I'm looking forward to doing well," said the World No. 9.

Asked if he feels there's been a slump in his form – when compared to 2017 – and subsequently his confidence, he said, "I think I've been doing well. I'm really confident about how I'm playing against all the top players. So, it's just about the moments.

"I haven't really lost very easy matches in the past few months. So, it's about pulling off those crucial points and, if you can get one or two of those, it can really change the whole course of the match. It's just about (owning) those moments and you have to keep working until you get that (right)."

Small margins of error cost us, says Gayle

Believes the ICC should go back to the old format of the World Cup

G. VISWANATH
MUMBAI

Chris Gayle has turned out in maroon colours for the West Indies in five World Cups, starting from 2003 in South Africa. But the 39-year-old swashbuckling opener, who calls himself the 'Universe Boss', has not been able to show the way for the Caribbean team in the context of winning the World Cup.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Gayle who is the brand ambassador for adda52.com, India's online poker gaming site, said that the West Indies as a team believed it had the wherewithal to qualify for the semifinals, but was left disappointed in the end.

When asked to sum up his team's display, Gayle said: "Absolutely disappointed not making the last four. I should not be here. But that's life; in as much as we built the hopes of being in the semifinals, we could not. Given the start we had in the



Failed mission: Chris Gayle said West Indies believed it had the wherewithal to qualify for the semifinals. • VIVEK BENDRE

first game against Pakistan, everybody was pumped up and believed that the team would advance to semifinals. We should have gone for the kill against Australia and after losing this match we went a bit flat. We could not find the gear to come back. When one looks at the overall West Indies performance, we beat ourselves. We had some four or five games that were very close. We made small mar-

gins of error and that cost us."

Gayle believes that the ICC should go back to the old format of the World Cup. "Twelve teams split into two groups from which six teams play the Super Six and then the knockout from quarterfinals," Gayle said.

Passion still there

The Jamaican, who made his international debut in 1999,

has not announced his retirement and has shared his thoughts with the West Indies skipper Jason Holder. "I still have the passion for West Indies cricket and the process of playing cricket as well. I will continue to play as long as possible and share my experience with the players. They all want me to be involved with West Indies cricket. Contract or no contract, it doesn't matter to me," said Gayle, adding that the home series against India would be close and interesting.

Eleven years ago, during the inaugural IPL, the dashing West Indian was introduced to poker by Rohan Gavaskar and he enjoyed playing the card game with Ashoke Dinda and Manoj Tiwary. "Now I am addicted to it. I am an amateur now, but would like to play some professional tournaments. I am here to build relationship with adda52.com," he said.

Coach Reid keen to work on 'collective defending'

Wants to establish his style of attacking hockey

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
BENGALURU

If Graham Reid's first three months in his role as India's Chief Coach have been about familiarizing himself with the job, the next four will be slightly more crucial. India will have to be in top form going into November's Olympic qualifiers, and Reid is aware that there is no room for slip-ups.

First on the agenda, as the Indian men's hockey team reconvenes for the National camp at the SAI here this week, is defence.

With the assistance of former Australia defender Fergus Kavanagh, Reid will hope to work on 'collective defending' – something that has become a catchphrase of his. "I have talked about the collective defensive mindset that we need," he said.

"Irrespective of whether you are a midfielder or a striker or defender, you have to tackle, get the ball off the opposition, and put pressure on them. That is what we are focusing on in the first week. Later on, we will look into the attack and what we do with the ball bit more."

The next six weeks, leading into India's Olympic Test event in Tokyo, will be an



New ideas: Graham Reid feels Indian needs to get better on the conversion rate. • K MURALI KUMAR

opportunity for Reid to firmly establish his style of play.

Attacking game

"I love attacking hockey and high-pressing and getting the ball off the opponent, which is the smartest way to defend. I would like to have a passing game, which we need to work more on. We need to know when to dribble as well. The great thing is that these players have great skills, but now the question is how to get them to do it when required," he said.

If defence is the current area of focus, there is much to work on at the other end of the pitch too. "We need to get better on the conversion

rate," said Reid. "We are getting into the 25 and the circle pretty well; now, we need to convert those opportunities into more quality scoring chances. That is the key."

Communicating with his players has not been a problem for Reid.

"There are players who can speak English, those who can only understand it, and those who can't speak or follow the language," he said. "Whatever I have to say gets translated. Communication has to be always clear; so I would like to get some English lessons started as well. But it's not been hard to get my message across to the team."

Angad bags a bronze

SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU
NAPOLI

Angad Vir Singh Bajwa held on to his good form to clinch the men's skeet bronze in the 30th Universiade on Wednesday.

Asian champion Angad, who had a world record 60 out of 60 in the final, shot 44 in the final and missed a better medal by one point. He had qualified for the final in third place with 122 out of 125. "I am upset that I missed the silver, but happy with the qualification," said Angad.

Coming back from ill-health, when he missed two World Cups, and competing in a top competition, it was an impressive performance by Angad.

"I was ill before this, had not trained much and needed a break after a hectic season. Before this competition, I got to prepare the way I wished, on my own and with the right intensity," said Angad.

He was pleased with the way he handled the scrutiny, and hoped that "this competition will be a stepping stone to the World Cup in Finland."



Angad.

It will be the last World Cup in shotgun to win Olympic quota places. Thereafter, it will be the Asian championship for the Olympic quota for the Indian shooters in their quest for a berth in Tokyo 2020.

It was the third medal for the Indian shooters, following the individual silver and team bronze by Elavenil Valarivan in women's air rifle.

The results:
Men's skeet: 1. Nicolas Vasiliov (Cyp) 56 (119); 2. Timi Vallone-mi (Fin) 54 (121); 3. Angad Vir Singh Bajwa 44 (122); 17. Indreshwar Sekhon 101.

Ankita enters second round

SPORTS BUREAU
VERSMOLD (GERMANY)

Ankita Raina, the fourth seed, beat Natalija Kostic of Serbia 6-1, 7-6(1) in the first round of the \$60,000 ITF women's tennis tournament on Wednesday.

Other results:
\$100,000 ITF women, Contrexeville, France: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Tamara Korpatsch (Ger) & Diana Marcinkevica (Lat) bt Nigina Abduraimova (Uzb) & Prarthana Thombare 6-2, 5-7, [10-5].
\$25,000 ITF women, Getxo, Spain: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Valeriya Strakhova (Ukr) & Rutuja Bhosale bt Malalen Morante Oyague & Irati Urbaneja Salazar (Esp) 6-2, 7-5.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hua Hin, Thailand: First round: Sowjanya Bavisetti bt Ayaka Okuno (Jpn) 6-4, 6-4.
Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Patcharin Cheapchandaj (Tha) & Zhuoma Ni Ma (Chn) bt Nana Kawagishi (Jpn) & Snehal Mane 6-0, 6-2; Mana Kawamura & Himeno Sakatsume (Jpn) bt Mio Kozaki (Jpn) & Saumya Vig 6-1, 6-0.

€69,280 Challenger, Braunschweig, Germany: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Nicola Kuhn (Esp) & Daniel Masur (Ger) bt Jamie Cerretani (US) & Sriram Balaji 7-6(1), 6-4.

Vijender looks forward to his first pro fight in the US

I don't believe in big talk, says the champion boxer

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Vijender Singh is excited ahead of his first professional fight in the USA and banks on the support of local Indians to make his mark there.

The former Olympic and World championships bronze medalist was to make his USA debut in April, but had to postpone his fight after receiving a cut on his eyebrow during sparring.

Vijender used the opportunity to make his debut in politics. However, he said he never quit boxing.

Back in training

"I was back to training soon after the elections were over and trained for one-and-a-half months.

"I trained with my trainer Lee Beard in Manchester for six-seven weeks before reaching here on Sunday," Vijender told *The Hindu* from Newark.

The unbeaten 33-year-old Indian star, who has remained unbeaten in his 10 professional bouts with seven knockout wins, will take



Vijender Singh.

on American Mike Snider at the Prudential Centre in Newark, on the undercard of Shakur Stevenson vs Franklin Manzanilla, on Saturday.

Not a problem

Vijender, who last appeared in a bout against Ernest Amuzu of Ghana in Jaipur in December, 2017, said his comeback was not a problem. "I have trained hard, done a lot of sparring and worked on my technique. I have concentrated on my basics. I will handle the next bout with my experience."

Throwing light on his approach, Vijender said, "I

need to be more patient. I will rely on my footwork and skills as it will be a long duel of eight rounds."

Vijender looked forward to feel at home against the 38-year-old American, who has a win-loss-draw record of 13-5-3, including eight knockout victories, in the super middleweight contest.

"The difference of fighting in the UK and the USA is that I have received a lot of messages from the Indians based here.

"I hope many of them will be here to support me."

Even as Snider warned the Indian of a "rough and ugly" contest, Vijender gave his familiar reaction. "I don't believe in big talk. I believe in doing my job well. "A door has opened for me. I am in the USA for a fight after eight years.

"Last time I had won a gold medal in the World Police Games in New York and this time I will be the winner as well. I look forward to achieving my long-standing dream of tasting success at the Madison Square Garden sooner than later," he said.

Bira 91 goes to Britain

In a five-year partnership with the International Cricket Council, the India-at-heart beer company takes on two world cups — now in the UK, and four years later, in India

SUNALINI MATHEW

We stand under a large tent at the British High Commissioner's residence, in sweltering Delhi weather. The oversized screen plays out the India-England cricket match, the coolers giving some relief, the beer a lot more. It's an irony that's not lost on most, even if no one articulates it, because the only beer that's being served on this little bit of British soil is Bira 91.

Originally named after the Punjabi word for brother, Bira, the 91 is derived from the country code you dial for India. Ankur Jain, founder-CEO, describes the beer as "smart and fun at the same time, but not pretentiously so." "Can't be a Delhi-ite," I think, as he says it, though the brand debuted in Hauz Khas Village.

From the once-quiet alleyways surrounding a medieval monument and lake in the Capital, Bira is now at The Oval, at Lord's, at Old Trafford, as the official beer being served at the cricket world cup. The brand launched in the UK with the event, having signed a partnership with the International Cricket Council for the next five years. This means they're the exclusive beer poured at this year's event as well as the next world cup, in India, and other tournaments: all formats of the game and some women's matches as well.

Besides the in-stadium branding, seen on screen (for those of us who weren't lucky enough to make it there), there's also what marketeers call activation: live spaces that bring alive the brand (they serve beer, sell merchan-

dise, offer face tattoos). There's a beer garden at all India and England matches and partnerships with bars and restaurants screening the world cup in India and England. Plus there's the 'digital amplification' because you can't go far without it, especially with a product that's meant to be "not too serious", with its inverted B and monkey logo.

"The intent is to speak the language of this generation of consumers, and also have a really active conversation with them," says Ankur, of people in their 20s and 30s, who drink for taste, and the enjoyment of an experience. Bira, a craft beer, came at a time (in 2015) when a new generation of drinkers had entered bars: they weren't looking at the alcohol content on the bottle, and were perhaps happier drinking less even if at a higher price. Ankur cites the change across other categories, like coffee.

Today, he says, "Premium is taking away share from the mass-market segment. Volumes are going up five to seven per cent year on year; premium by 20%." He says they went keg-first into neighbourhoods, connecting with people. "Over the last two or three years we've discovered pillars we're executing on: food, music, and now cricket."

The April Fools' Fest in Delhi this year, for instance, featured entertainment (music, comedy) with food and beer. With seven variants, there's something for everyone, and in February this year Boom was introduced, to compete with the lower-priced



beers. Coming up this month is a stout and IPA (India Pale Ale).

An important part of the brand story is the India link, with nationalistic millennials consciously picking a product that has its roots here. Bira calls itself "Imagined in India"; they

brew in Nagpur, a location near Indore, Kovur near Rajahmundry, and abroad in upstate New York and Belgium. "It precedes Make in India," says Ankur, adding that the thought and identity is from our soil. In an interview, he tells us a little more about the partnership.

Why cricket, considering people in their 20s are more into soccer?

● While it is true that some younger consumers will be watching other sports like soccer, or tennis or basketball, I think cricket captures the imagination of most Indians, young or old — it's unparalleled. It's a fairly obvious choice for a brand that has aspirations beyond a small niche.

What are you expecting from it?

● The main objective is to build awareness for our brand with Indian consumers. Now, we are at best known to 20 or 30 million consumers, most of them in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, and some of the other larger markets. With this type of partnership we have the potential to be known by almost 100% of consumers in the country, given that everybody's watching the world cup. Over the next five years, we

BEER-FOOD PAIRING

Thomas Hartman, VP, Brewing and Innovations, says that the key thing to note is intensity. "One would want to keep the flavour intensity in the beer about equal to the flavour intensity in the dish. Also, either compliment or contrast the flavours in the beer and the dish," he says. Here, he offers food pairings.

BIRA 91 WHITE: Pairs well with lighter dishes, as the beer has a delicate balance and is highly drinkable.

Vegetarian: A fresh salad. Also, a dish with some herbs, and a citrus or fruit element.

Non-vegetarian: It is excellent with mussels, clams, oysters, even crab.

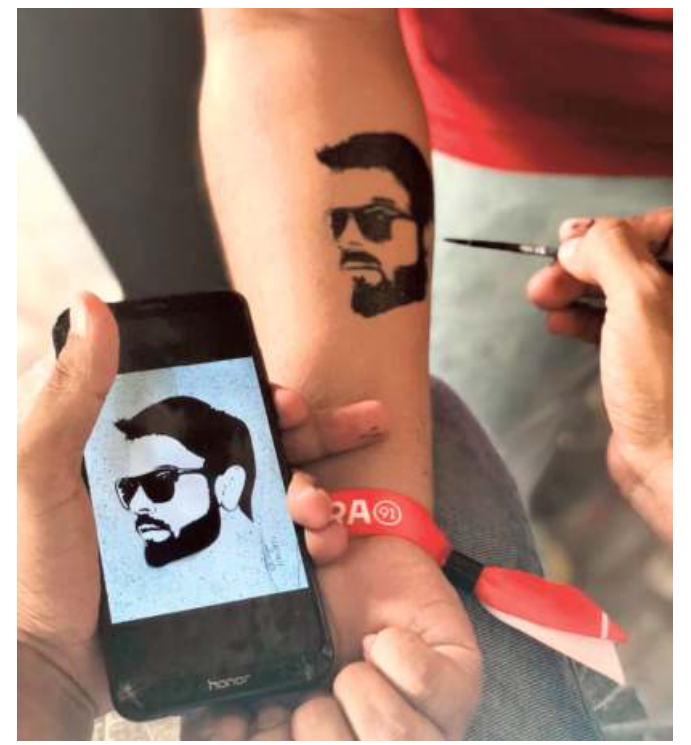
BIRA 91 BLONDE SUMMER LAGER: A very versatile beer as the clean malty flavours with the balancing hoppiness can serve to cut through fatty or spicy dishes, compliment roasted chicken, or pair well with grain dishes.

BIRA 91 STRONG: This beer is all about rich malty character and yeast aromatics, with a big body and higher alcohol. It can stand up to high intensity, rich, or spicy food well.

expect to be known as a brand that's synonymous with national culture in some way, and cricket is a great way for that.

How would you use digital content you have access to?

● These are images and video content from the matches that we would have a right to use. To give you an example, if you go on Twitter, ICC is posting a recap of the sixes that have been hit. That's branded as Bira 91 content.



Winning formula The Indian craft beer is making its presence felt at the ICC World Cup; (left) Ankur Jain ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Do you see a future where sport and alcohol will not be associated?

● Hard to say. When it comes to beer there's been a lot of innovation around healthier alternatives as well, so if you look at marathons, especially in Germany, are sponsored by alcohol-free versions of beers. So there's a change in the way beer companies are approaching sporting partnerships overall, which is not out of the realm of possibility in India either.

FACT OF THE MATTER

Beer helped Joseph Priestley discover oxygen. He noticed gases rising from the big vats of beer at a brewery and asked to do some experiments.



IN OUR BACKYARD

The Jacobin Cuckoo heralds the monsoon in north India

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

The Jacobin Cuckoo is one lucky bird indeed. At least according to Indian myth. Also known as the Pied Cuckoo or Chatak, this bird heralds the onset of the monsoon in India.

Being an agricultural economy the rainy season is considered one of the most auspicious seasons in the country. And so, the Pied Cuckoo in North and Central India is a welcome sight.

It is a bird with black and white plumage (pied) with a fancy crest on the head. Its scientific name is *Clamator jacobinus*. The genus 'Clamator' literally translates to being a shouter, a bird which is quite vocal, so you'll hear yourself surrounded by the calls close to the monsoon. The word 'jacobinus' relates to pied birds.

There are two populations of the Pied Cuckoo in India. One is a resident in the southern part of the country. The other, according to tracking by birders, makes its way to North and Central India



from Africa by crossing the Arabian Sea, along with the monsoon winds. When the monsoon arrives in all its majesty, its sighting also spreads widely.

The bird is primarily arboreal, which means that it mostly lives on trees but often forages for food in low bushes, and sometimes even on the ground. Considering its arboreal nature, it prefers forests, well-wooded areas and also bushes in semi-arid regions. These

birds are primarily insectivores and feed on grasshoppers, beetles and are also often seen feeding on fruits and berries from trees.

The species, like all cuckoos, is a brood parasite. It lays its eggs in nests that belong to other birds, preferring similar-sized birds like babblers and bulbuls, as their 'hosts'. The hosts are often distracted by male cuckoos, and the females quickly lay their similar-sized and coloured eggs into the

hosts' nests. The hosts then take care of the eggs and the chicks that hatch from them, as their own. The parasitic chicks are fed by the hosts and then leave the host parents once they are ready to be on their own.

A few years ago, birdwatchers set out to test the truth behind whether the bird does signal the coming of the monsoon. We began a monitoring process, collecting data around bird sightings, and

Harbinger of rains Jacobin Cuckoo in its habitat

■ ABHISHEK GULSHAN

other habits. This is being documented online on ebird.org, an Ivy-League initiative for bird-watchers all around the world.

A large number of birdwatchers reported the sighting of the Pied Cuckoo on the online documentation forum, and when these dates of sightings were compared to the monsoon's arrival, as available with the Indian Meteorological Department, the results were fairly clear. Pied Cuckoos did indeed arrive before the monsoon in most parts of central and northern India. In a few areas, it was also observed that wherever the monsoon was to arrive earlier than usual, the Pied Cuckoo also showed up a few days earlier. So the Chatak is not an old wives' tale anymore.

To join a trail in Mangar, Haryana this Sunday and spot the Jacobin Cuckoo, email ninox.edu@gmail.com

The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl about Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He formerly led a programme at WWF India as a naturalist, and is the Delhi-NGR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds in the region

PRODUCT

Untangled



SoulTree, the certified natural and organic beauty brand, now has an Intensive Hair Therapy Oil made with curry leaves and hibiscus, both of which have therapeutic value. The treatment product is based on Ayurvedic recipes, and is meant to repair damaged hair, especially strands constantly exposed to dust, humidity, and pollution. Apart from its main ingredients, there are also medicinal herbs that are a part of the formulation: Bhingraj, Brahmi, Methi Seeds, Triphala, and Nagarmotha.

Available at soultree.in; ₹675 for 100ml

For a listing or to be featured here, email us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



GIG

Rock
Pelican Shuffles, a Kolkata-based rock & roll band, will perform tonight. While they play originals, they are also known for covering the likes of the Beatles and Coldplay. The band is Varun Gujadhur on vocals and guitar, Shubhamoy Mitra on bass, and Aditya Dutta on drums.
VENUE: The Piano Man Jazz Club, B 6-7/22 Safdarjung Enclave Market.
TIME: 9 p.m. - 11:50 p.m.



DANCE

Double Bill recital
There will be two dance performances at the IIC Double Bill dance recital. The first one will be a Kathak recital by Arunima Sengupta Basu, a disciple of Pt. Rajendra Gangani. This will be followed by a Bharatanatyam duet by Archana and Chetana, disciples of Guru B. Bhanumati and Guru Sheela Chandrasekhar.
VENUE: C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, IIC
TIME: 6 p.m.



FOOD

Dakshin delights
The all-day Blooms Restaurant is hosting Dakshin delights, a festival dedicated to South Indian food. On till July 13, the dishes offered as part of the festival menu are made with traditional mustard seed seasoning and rich spices. There will also be fresh coconut curries, Nilgiri style steamed fish, and Malabar chicken curry.
VENUE: Blooms Restaurant, Nehru Place
TIME: 12 Noon-3 p.m. and 7 p.m.-11 p.m.



MUSIC

Shradhanjali
IHC, in collaboration with Antardhwani Cultural Society, is hosting a shradhanjali in honour of two classical musicians: tabla maestro Prof. Lalji Srivastava and flute player Pt. Bholanath Prasanna. The will feature a violin recital by Shubham Sarkar, flute recital by Ajay Prasanna, and a vocal recital by Ritesh and Rajnish Mishra.
VENUE: Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre
TIME: 7 p.m.



CONCLAVE

Academic
Today, Oxford University Press is hosting the third edition of its South Asia Conclave. This one-day meet will bring together various political leaders, academics, civil servants, and journalists to deliberate on crucial issues such as democracy, national security, and economic growth.
VENUE: Shangri-La's Eros Hotel, Ashoka Road
TIME: 8:15 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

JOSEPH ANDREWS

The maximum time we generally spend on boats would be a couple of hours. So the prospect of spending two full days on a country boat, that too on one of the mightiest rivers, seemed definitely appealing.

We first heard of the boat trips on Mekong River, from some travel blogs; some had found it interesting, while for some others it was a trifle unappealing. Mekong-style slow-boats ply between Luang Prabang and Huay Xai in Laos, taking two days to cover the 300-odd kilometres (boats are not run on the Mekong River in the night, as it is too risky, with many rocks present). Speed boats cover the distance in one day, but are generally considered too dangerous, and were definitely not for us.

We decided to go upriver from Luang Prabang, as it suited our itinerary better. We were picked up from the hotel and brought to Luang Prabang port, a few kilometres outside the city, before 7 am. It did not seem to be a good day for the tour company, as there were only six passengers on board the big boat, including us. The seating was comfortable and the boat was equipped with two clean, modern toilets.

It did not take us long to realise that the boat was a family affair. The owner of the boat was



Backpacking in brown water

the driver, with his wife being in charge of cooking and house-keeping, while the elder son helped around. The cute, young-

chap seemed to be enjoying himself, driving his remote-controlled toy car all over our feet! The family lived on the boat, in

Take a slow boat down the muddy waters of the Mekong, ticking off historical sights, mysterious caves and unusual foods on your list



How to reach

Luang Prabang can be reached by air from India, with a stopover at Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, or Singapore. Huay Xai is connected by a single flight to Vientiane. Huay Xai and Luang Prabang are connected by overnight buses as well.



How to book

The cruise can be pre-booked online with many agencies like nagiofmekong.com or mekongsmilecruise.com. The fare is US\$120-140 per person, which includes meals, and one-night hotel stay enroute. It is said that much better rates can be availed, if you get to the Luang Prabang port before 7 am, and just board a departing boat.

the living quarters at the rear.

An hour after we left, we stopped for a quick visit at the famous Pak Ou caves, located right by the river. It is a Buddhist shrine, which was patronised by the erstwhile royals of Laos, housing more than 4,000 idols of the Buddha. The count increases every year, as more are added by devotees, during the yearly festival. There is a lower and an upper cave, with the latter being reached by climbing a flight of steep steps. The upper cave houses the king's idols, and was exclusively used by the royal family in days of yore.

The steep banks of the river are mostly covered with thick

evergreen forests. There is very little habitation on the river, barring a few stray villages, an indicator that Laos has the lowest density of population among Southeast Asian nations.

We left Pak Ou caves at around 8 am, and the boat did not stop till it reached Pak Beng around 5.30 pm, manned single-handedly by our driver.

Pak Beng is a small riverside hamlet where all boats stop after Day 1, the economy of which seems to be primarily driven by tourists halting here, during their upward and downward journey along the Mekong. We found quite a few eateries, and guest houses. Next day, we

boarded the boat at 6.30 am, when the river was still partly shrouded in mist. Shortly after Pak Beng, we saw extensive road-construction on one side of the river, which seemed to be causing ecological damage. Our guide told us that it is a road being constructed by China, to support the construction of a dam which Laos is planning to build on the Mekong, so that they can generate hydro-power and export to China. This means that the boat trip that we were doing now will not be possible after a few years.

Shortly, we started seeing scores of people wearing straw hats, squatting by the side of the river, and sieving water, in the hot sun. They were panning for gold; another humble source of

income for the poor, which could be destroyed by the dam.

There was a customary stop at an isolated tribal village on the river, where the guide tried to give us a glimpse of a traditional lifestyle. No communication was possible with the villagers though, as none knew a word of English.

Till now, we had Laos on both sides of Mekong. A little past noon, at a certain point, Laos territory ends West of the river, and Thai territory begins. From here onwards, the Mekong forms the natural boundary between Laos and Thailand. The Thailand side looks more developed and prosperous than the Laos side.

Extensive banana plantations, stretch for kilometres on the Laos side of the river. Our guide explained that these huge plantations are run by Chinese companies, on leased land. The fruit, however, found no favour with the locals because of the use of pesticides.

The Mekong has a lot of traffic, be it in terms of speedboats, ferrying both locals as well as tourists, cargo boats, and passenger boats like ours. Local markets function right along the route, something that is bound to change when lifestyles change.

The boat ride is perhaps the most unhurried activity you will do anywhere in South East Asia. And, it becomes all the more precious when you know it may not be possible for long.

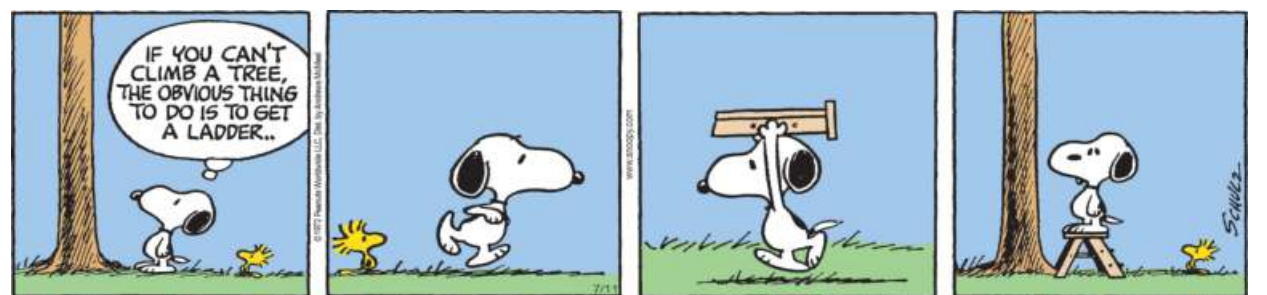


Life's a boat (Clockwise from below) Cruising down the river, a temple at Luang Prabang
• GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



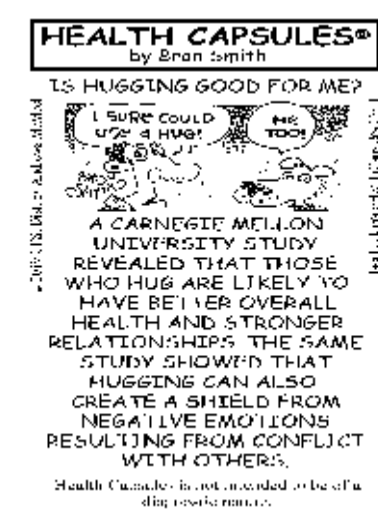
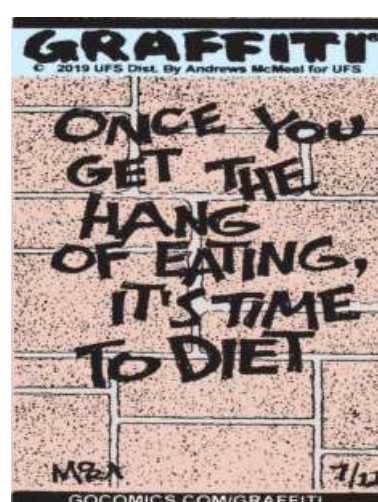
TIGER



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13119

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Across

- 1 Charades, for example (7,4)
- 9 Embedded (9)
- 10 Junk (3)
- 11 Soil's organic component (5)
- 13 Ledger for recording transactions as they occur (7)
- 14 Sudden arrival (of people or water?) (6)
- 15 Kiss and cuddle (6)
- 18 US state — Black Sea state (7)
- 20 Regal (5)
- 21 Sign of the zodiac (3)
- 22 Large broad-bladed weapon (9)
- 24 Men's underwear (5,6)

Down

- 2 Snake (3)
- 3 Negotiates between parties (7)
- 4 Disordered (6)

5 Devout (5)
6 Legends and sagas, in general (9)
7 The Lady with the Lamp, d. 1910 (11)
8 Person or organisation with an interest in something (11)
12 Venetian travel writer, who may (or may not) have served Kublai Khan, d. 1324 (5,4)
16 Dark cherry (7)
17 Carnivorous insect, which rests as if in prayer (6)
19 Part between sloping sides of a roof (5)
23 Relevant (3)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated July 12, 2019.

Solution No. 13118

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IN BRIEF

**Nine deer dead in Japan after eating plastic**

TOKYO
Nine deer have died after swallowing plastic bags in Japan's Nara Park, a wildlife group said on Wednesday, warning that a surge in tourism may be to blame. The Nara Deer Preservation Foundation said that masses of plastic bags and snack packets were found in the stomachs of the deer which died between March and June this year. AFP

**New dome over destroyed Chernobyl plant unveiled**

CHERNOBYL
Ukraine on Wednesday inaugurated a metal dome encasing the destroyed reactor at the infamous Chernobyl plant. Branded as the world's largest moveable metal structure, the New Safe Confinement seals the remains of the fourth reactor at the nuclear plant that was the site of the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. AFP

**Thousands of animals saved in crackdown**

LYON
Police across the globe have seized thousands of wild animals, including primates and big cats, and arrested nearly 600 suspects in a vast crackdown on illegal wildlife smuggling, Interpol said. The operation was carried out in 109 countries.

'Doctor' Alexa to the aid of Britons

NHA teams up with Amazon to provide medical advice for common ailments

**REUTERS
LONDON**

Britain's state-run health service is teaming up with Amazon to provide medical advice for common ailments such as migraines and flu via the tech giant's voice assistant Alexa, aiming to help more patients at home and cut down on costs.

The plan is to give patients – especially the elderly, blind and those unable to access the internet through traditional means – access to information verified by the National Health Service (NHS) by using voice commands, the government said.

Cutting health costs

The deal could ease pressure on the NHS by reducing the need to visit a doctor.

It also marks the latest move by Amazon into healthcare following its purchase of online pharmacy PillPack last year and a tie-up with Berkshire Hathaway and JPMorgan Chase & Co in the U.S. aimed at cutting health costs for hundreds of thousands of their employees.

British Health Secretary Matt Hancock said millions of people were already asking Alexa and other voice assistants about health matters, and he wanted to make sure they received the very best advice in response.

He said the service would be backed by strong privacy rules to protect patient confidentiality.

The NHS is a cherished institution for many Britons, providing services from rou-



Patients get access to information verified by the NHS. • GETTY IMAGES/VETTA

ting unwell in Britain. Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, said voice-assisted technology could free up more doctors' appointments for patients who need them most. "It has the potential to help some patients work out what kind of care they need before considering whether to seek face-to-face medical help, especially for minor ailments that rarely need a GP appointment," she said.

Affordability an issue
"But we must be careful not to create a 'digital divide' between those patients who can afford it and are able to use it, and those who can't." Alexa-enabled devices such as Echo and Echo Dot range in price from about £50 to more than £200.

First port of call

A general practitioner (GP), often referred to as "family doctor", is usually the first port of call for a person feel-

Neighbour says he killed New Zealand's 'First Cat'

PM's feline came under his car

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WELLINGTON**

A guilt-ridden neighbour of New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern revealed on Wednesday that he was responsible for accidentally killing the nation's "First Cat" Paddles while reversing out of his driveway.

Paddles died in November 2017, shortly after Ardern won office, but the full circumstances of the death were never publicly revealed, leading to curiosity about who killed the cat.

The much-loved feline was a popular member of the prime ministerial household, with a Twitter account set up in her name, @First-CatofNZ, attracting more than 11,000 followers.

Paddles, who was "poly-



Paddles • TWITTER

dactyl", with extra toes that looked like thumbs, also once interrupted a phone call between Ms. Ardern and U.S. President Donald Trump by jumping on a table.

Ms. Ardern's neighbour, identified only as Chris, said that he was rushing back to work from a lunch break in his Auckland home when the moggy ran into the path of his reversing car.

Splendid portrait



Artist Fin Dac, second from right, working on 'Magdalena', a mural in honour of Mexican painter Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo in the month of her birth in Guadalajara, Mexico. • AFP

France to end homeopathy funding

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

France will stop reimbursing patients for homeopathic treatment from 2021, the Health Minister said in an interview, infuriating manufacturers but also disappointing doctors who wanted an immediate halt.

Health Minister Agnes Buzyn, a former prominent doctor who has vowed to place scientific rigour at the heart of policy, said she had made the decision after a damning verdict on homeopathy by the national health authority published in June.

Mr. Buzyn said the re-funds will be phased down to 15% from the current 30% in 2020 and then to zero in 2021.

Some birds love to dance, have fun just like humans

Study shows cockatoo capers voluntarily



A file photo of Snowball tapping her feet. • AP

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON**

Snowball, a sulphur-crested cockatoo, shot to YouTube stardom a decade ago for his uncanny ability to rock out to the Backstreet Boys.

Now, Snowball is back after having taught himself a dizzying array of new moves that might put you to shame.

His rhythmic body-rolls, headbangs, shimmies, and many variations thereof were documented in a new paper published in *Current Biology* on Monday.

"This shows for the first time that another species truly dances to human music, spontaneously and without training, just based on its own development and social interaction with humans," senior author Aniruddh Patel, a psychologist at both Tufts and Harvard universities, said.

This is not the first time Snowball has rendered his services for the noble pursuit of scientific discovery.

An earlier study by Mr. Patel in the same journal confirmed our feathered friend could groove to the beat – though at the time, his dancing was confined to head bobbing and lifting his feet, actions long associated with courtship.

Soon after, Snowball's owner Irena Schulz, who takes care of him at a bird sanctuary in Duncan, South

Carolina, noticed he was making movements to music she hadn't seen before.

The development was all the more remarkable for the fact that she hadn't attempted to train him, save for providing some verbal encouragement with words like "Good Boy!" as she swayed back and forth and waved her hands.

Had Snowball lifted his game to another level and taught himself some slick new moves?

To answer this vital question, the scientists played him the 1980s classics *Another One Bites the Dust* and *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, each three times, for a total of 23 minutes.

The study's lead researcher, R. Joanne Jao Keehn, a cognitive neuroscientist as well as a trained dancer, then studied video footage frame-by-frame.

She confirmed that he had indeed acquired a diverse repertoire of 14 distinct moves, and two combination moves. "Here, we're looking at highly complex movements, many of which are not part of natural parrot behavior," Mr. Patel said, adding that this suggests cognitive planning of actions and the willingness to choose between alternatives to respond to a stimulus.

"I wish I could dance like Snowball," he added.

For this London pub, charity begins at home

Pub-goers can donate at Rampersad's Green Vic, which employs homeless, people with disabilities



People walking past the Green Vic, which is aiming to be the world's most ethical pub, in Shoreditch, London. • REUTERS

**REUTERS
LONDON**

Employing the homeless and offering beer brewed from leftover bread, "The Green Vic" in London's trendy Shoreditch district is aiming to be the world's most ethical pub.

Open for an initial three months, founder Randy Rampersad has secured enough funding to buy second-hand furniture, soap made by the blind, toilet rolls

from recycled paper and drinks supplied by social enterprises that donate to charity.

He launched the project hoping to enable the average pub-goer to give to charity without having to change their daily routine. The pub employs the homeless and those with disabilities. Food is all plant-based and it avoids sending anything to landfill by recycling and composting.

"Every single drink you buy goes towards a different charity," Mr. Rampersad, 35, said.

The drinks menu has ties to over 40 different charities. For instance, a Brewgooder craft lager, for £4.90 (\$6.14), is produced by a non-profit organisation that donates all its money to clean water projects in Africa.

The Toast Ale, at £5.50, is brewed with fresh surplus bread.

Nicki pulls out of Saudi concert

Says she supports the rights of women and LGBTQ community

**REUTERS
LOS ANGELES**

U.S. rapper Nicki Minaj said on Tuesday that she was pulling out of a concert in Saudi Arabia next week, citing her support for the rights of women and the LGBTQ community.

Homosexuality is banned in Saudi Arabia.

Ms. Minaj was due to headline the Jeddah World Fest music festival on July 18, but her plan to appear was criti-



Nicki Minaj

cized last week on social media.

"While I want nothing more than to bring my show to fans in Saudi Arabia, after better educating myself on

the issues, I believe it is important for me to make clear my support for the rights of women, the LGBTQ community and freedom of expression," she said.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Foundation (HRF) last week urged Ms. Minaj to cancel her performance, saying her appearance would be at odds with the rapper's participation in festivities in New York marking Gay Pride month in June.

Wear this headset for on-the-job training

HoloLens, which blends digital imagery with real world, caters to firstline workers

**KAREN WEISE
CHILLICOTHE**

When Toby Bouska Jr. started assembling cabs for Kenworth semitrucks last year, he learned the ropes by observing longtime workers at the factory. But it wasn't exactly engaging, and he didn't get much practice doing the job himself.

"It's them doing the job, and you just have to watch," said Mr. Bouska, 21, who works at Kenworth's plant in Chillicothe, Ohio, U.S. "I'm not really good at just sitting there watching."

But then his managers had him train in a new way: with a high-tech headset. They gave him a Microsoft HoloLens, a device that blends digital imagery with the real world. When he wore the headset, it overlaid digital arrows and diagrams over the parts he was looking at, helping to guide his work.

New opportunity

After the success with Mr. Bouska's training, Kenworth's parent company, Paccar, has ordered 50 of the devices. Five will be coming to the Chillicothe plant, which employs more than 2,000 workers, and the



Workers' gizmo: Manufacturing operations under way at Kenworth Truck Co. in Chillicothe, Ohio, U.S. • NYT

manager plans to use them to train employees on at least two dozen tasks.

High-tech devices have played a central role in white-collar workplaces for decades, with a screen in front of nearly every face. Now, companies like Microsoft see a multibillion-dollar opportunity to get more personal technology, including the HoloLens, in the hands of workers who don't sit behind a desk.

The new push goes beyond tools to perform a particular task, like a clerk ringing up a customer with a tablet or a robot moving materials around a factory. It is meant to integrate the tools

into the corporate life of a company, like training, scheduling and regular communications. The efforts are enabled by cloud computing, which makes it easier to deliver information via a smartphone app or a mixed-reality headset.

Google is going after the market, as is Salesforce, with its acquisition of Quip.

Perhaps no tech company, though, is more aggressive than Microsoft at pursuing so-called frontline or firstline workers, who do the actual production, sales and service work for customers.

Microsoft estimates that 2 billion frontline workers have access to fast internet

connections and are, in theory, potential customers. In a call with investors this year, Satya Nadella, Microsoft's Chief Executive, said selling products for firstline workers expanded the market Microsoft could tap into.

Open playing field

Emma Williams, a Microsoft executive who develops productivity tools for various industries, like health care and retail, said there was a big, open playing field.

Technology already surrounds many frontline workers, but many of these workers do not even have a corporate email account, so they create workarounds to communicate. Team Inc., a company that performs maintenance and repairs at industrial sites, realised last year that almost half of its field technicians used personal email accounts and cell phones to communicate, said Tracy Terrell, Team's chief information officer. The company's leaders decided that was too risky.

"We don't want to be emailing to Yahoo accounts or sending information via text, because that's kind of our trade secret," Ms. Terrell said. NY TIMES

300-member all-woman voyage to fight ocean plastic

The research will focus on finding tailored solutions

**REUTERS
LONDON**

More than 300 women will join a round-the-world voyage launching in October to highlight the devastating impact of plastic pollution in the oceans and conduct scientific research into the escalating crisis.

Millions of tonnes of plastic, from food packaging to fishing gear enters the sea each year, leading some marine experts to warn that there could be more plastic than fish in our oceans by 2050.

The two-year all-female voyage comprises scientists, teachers, filmmakers, product designers, photographers and athletes. It is organised by eXXpedition, a non-profit focusing on marine pollution.

They will collect samples from some of the planet's most important and diverse marine environments to build a picture of the state of the seas.

Circulating currents

The 38,000 nautical mile trip will cover the Arctic, the Galapagos Islands, the South



Plastic trail: Marine experts have said that there could be more plastic than fish in the oceans by 2050. • AFP

Pacific islands and central ocean areas where plastic accumulates because of circulating currents.

"One of the things that still gets me is when you are 1,000 miles from the nearest human being and then you see a toothbrush float past," mission director Emily Penn said, adding that 8 million tonnes of plastic ended up in the sea every year where it broke down into tiny fragments, the same size as plankton.

"There's a misconception that there are islands of plastic out there that you can see, but it's more like a soup. It's fine fragments," said Ms.

Penn. She said the solution was to "turn off the tap" on land and stop the plastic entering the sea in the first place. The research will focus on identifying the types of plastic and finding tailored solutions.

"There's not one silver bullet solution. We need to be working from every sector, from every angle.

"We need design of new materials, we need policy change, we need education, we need the arts to be shifting mindsets, we need engineers. The only way we are going to solve it is by all working together," Ms. Penn said.

Lab-grown burger could come cheap

**REUTERS
MADRID/ZURICH**

Lab-grown meat, first introduced six years ago in the form of a \$2,80,000 hamburger, could hit supermarket shelves at \$10 a patty within two years, European start-ups said.

Consumers concerned about climate change, animal welfare and their own health are fueling interest in so-called clean meat, with the number of associated business start-ups climbing from four at the end of 2016 to more than two dozen two years later, according to the Good Food Institute market researcher.

Plant-based meat alternatives are also booming. It was Dutch start-up Mosa Meat's co-founder Mark Post who created the first "cultured" beef hamburger in 2013 at a cost of \$280,400.

Biotech Foods co-founder Mercedes Vila also highlighted the importance of moving from lab to factory.

She said the average cost of producing a kilogram of cultured meat is now about €100, significantly below the \$800 cited a year ago.