



on Sunday



ISRO all set for Monday's launch of historic moon-landing mission
page 9; explainer: page 14



No transgression by China in Demchok sector, says Army chief
page 10



Halep blows away Serena, clinches her first Wimbledon title
page 18



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NEARBY

Floods, landslips cause havoc in northeast

GUWAHATI
Flood and rain-induced landslips have claimed eight lives across the northeast in the past 36 hours. While five persons died in Meghalaya, two drowned in Mizoram's Lunglei district and one in Assam's Dhemajai district.

NATION ▶ PAGE 9

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Five more Cong. MLAs move SC

'We're intimidated into supporting Kumaraswamy'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Five more rebel Congress MLAs urgently moved the Supreme Court on Saturday, saying they were being "threatened and intimidated" into supporting the H.D. Kumaraswamy government in Karnataka during the proposed floor test.

The legislators — Anand Singh, Dr. K. Sudhakar, N. Nagaraju, Munirathna and Roshan Baig — said they were in an identical situation as the 10 MLAs who had earlier approached the court against Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar and Mr. Kumaraswamy. They have also tendered their resignation from the Assembly, but their resigna-



Congress MLA N. Nagaraju, extreme right, with Minister D.K. Shivakumar and others in Bengaluru. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tions are yet to be accepted by the Speaker.

The MLAs said that despite having submitted their resignation, they were being forced to support the government "on the threat of disqualification" in a floor test announced by Chief Minister Kumaraswamy on July 12.

Leaders make all-out efforts

Leaders of the ruling Congress-JD(S) coalition and the Opposition BJP went all out to guard their MLAs at the weekend, before the Assembly session resumes on Monday. Late on Saturday, N. Nagaraju of the Congress said he has decided to withdraw his resignation. ▶ PAGE 8

to resign from their office is their fundamental right to a citizen as well as a public representative... The Speaker is acting in violation of their fundamental right," the MLAs said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10
BJP TRIES TO KEEP MORALE OF REBELS HIGH ▶ PAGE 8

'A fundamental right'

"The MLAs wish to resign, acting in accordance with their conscience. The right

Sawant inducts 3 former Cong. MLAs into Cabinet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

Days after 10 Congress MLAs in Goa joined the ruling BJP, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Saturday reshuffled his Cabinet, dropping three members of the ally Goa Forward Party (GFP) and an Independent MLA as Ministers.

Michael Lobo, who had resigned as Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, and three of the 10 MLAs who joined the BJP on Wednesday — Chandrakant Kavlekar, Jennifer Monserratte, Philip Neri Rodrigues — were sworn in as Ministers.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10



Xi Jinping

Xi-Modi meet in Varanasi on October 12

ATUL ANEJA
BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi are set to hold their second informal summit in Varanasi on October 12, as part of a fresh drive to energise ties following their meeting last month in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.

A Chinese official said the decision to hold the second informal summit, following the Wuhan meeting last year, is in line with Beijing's decision to celebrate the 70th anniversary of China's diplomatic relations with India. Besides, it is based on the "consensus" between Mr. Xi and Mr. Modi to raise bilateral ties to a higher level, especially after the Doklam military stand-off in the summer of 2017.

BOAT RIDE ▶ PAGE 10

India builds 250 homes in Myanmar to assist Rohingya

But rebuilding refugees' trust is tough



Friendly gesture: Pre-fabricated houses built by India at Nan Thar Taung in Myanmar. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Two years after more than 700,000 Rohingya fled to camps in Bangladesh alleging ethnic cleansing by Myanmar forces, the Indian government says it is stepping up efforts to help them return to their villages.

On July 9, Ambassador to Myanmar Saurabh Kumar handed over 250 completed pre-fabricated homes to the Myanmar government for use by the refugees when they return.

Part of 2017 pact

The project is part of an agreement signed by the two governments in 2017, under which the government had committed to

spending \$25 million over five years. The houses, measuring 40 square metres each, are designed to survive quakes and cyclonic storms, according to a presentation by the Ministry of External Affairs.

The 250 houses, built in three clusters, are in the Shwe Zar, Kyein Chung Taung and Nan Thar Taung areas that saw some of the worst cases of violence, including mass murder, gang-rape of women and children and burning of thousands of homes. They have cost about ₹10 crore. However, there are no signs yet that the Rohingya will return at any specific date.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Three dead in Delhi factory fire

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Three persons, including two women, suffocated to death when a massive fire broke out in a factory in the city's Jhilmil industrial area.

The victims have been identified as Shoaib Ali (19), Sangeeta Devi (46) and Manju Devi (50), all workers at the factory.

"The fire broke out around 9.15 a.m. Over 10 pe-

ople were trapped inside, of whom three were found dead and the rest rescued," Delhi Fire Services chief Atul Garg said.

Fire tenders to the rescue
Thirty fire tenders were pressed into service and the fire was doused by 2.45 p.m.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Meghna Yadav said the factory co-owner, Naeem Ahmed, has

been arrested.

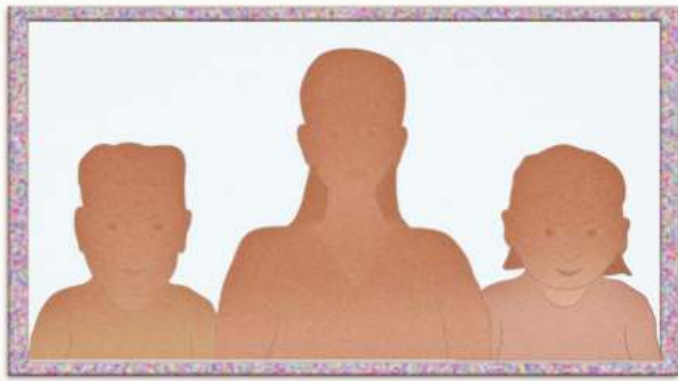
"An FIR has been registered under Sections 304A and 285 of the IPC. The factory is owned by two brothers. The role of the other brother is being ascertained," she said.

The East Delhi Municipal Corporation said it will conduct a detailed investigation into the incident.

REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 2

Anatomy of a meltdown

Between April 20 and July 5, four gory incidents of late-night killings rocked Delhi-NCR. Unsuspecting wives and children were murdered by men who were supposed to protect them. Are these isolated incidents or do they suggest a dangerous bent of mind? **Hemani Bhandari, Ashok Kumar and Saurabh Trivedi** try to connect the dots



Upendra Shukla, Mehrauli
“He did not seem like a man who could do something as gory as this,” said Bittu, a neighbour of Upendra Kumar Shukla, the 42-year-old private tutor who admitted to killing his wife and three minor children.

“He sat next to the bodies for an hour thinking how to kill himself. He first tried to slit his wrist and then popped some pills and lost consciousness. He regrets not dying,” said an investigator who spent more than 24 hours with Upendra in the hospital before he was produced in the court.

The tutor allegedly fed sedative-laced milk to his wife Archana, their eight-year-old daughter, six-year-old son and a month-old baby boy on the night of June 22 and then slit their throats. The bodies were found early morning by Archana's mother Lalita Devi.

Shri Prakash, Gurugram

The story of Shri Prakash, a scientist with a pharmaceutical firm, stands apart for the extent of brutality inflicted by the man on his wife Sonu Singh (52), daughter Aditi (22) and 14-year-old son on the night of July 1.

Station House Officer, Sector 50, Shahid Ahmed, who investigated the case, said it was difficult to imagine that a man could murder his own wife and children with such brutality. Their autopsy revealed that the wife had maximum 19 injuries and her throat was slit. The son had 12 injuries and the daughter had eight. It is suspected that the three were not given any sedatives before being bludgeoned to death.

According to

the police, the daughter was perhaps murdered in her sleep, but the mother and son were awake and tried to escape. How Prakash overpowered them and why he killed them so mercilessly find no mention in the note he wrote before hanging himself in the living room.

Pradeep Kumar, Ghaziabad

On July 4, Pradeep Kumar (37), an unemployed man, went about his day normally. He woke up early morning and left for his training at a garment factory at Vishwas Nagar. He returned home in Ghaziabad's New Shatabdipuram around 4 p.m., and rested for a while.

His wife Sangeeta (40), a nurse at a de-addiction centre, came home around 7 p.m. with three new bicycles for their three daughters – the eldest one was eight-year-old, the second one was five and the youngest one only three years old. Pradeep took them out on the street and taught them how to ride the bicycles.

Around 5 a.m. on July 5, Pradeep's sister Reena and parents Feru Ram and Sheela Devi heard the children crying. They asked Pradeep to open the door. He said, “Wait... I am talking to Sangeeta. I am talking to the kids.” The three at the door could hear some rumblings inside the room. A few minutes later, all went silent.

Pradeep ham-

mered his wife to death and smothered his children using a black duct tape. He then used the same tape to kill himself.

Sumit Kumar, Ghaziabad

Sumit Kumar, a software engineer from Gyan Khand area of Indirapuram, thought he had a fool-proof plan to eliminate his family and then take his own life. Years of drug addiction and his inability to continue in a job for long had made it impossible for him to take care of his wife Anshu Bala (32) and three minor kids – a five-year-old son and four-year-old twins (a girl and a boy). On the night of April 20, Sumit offered them a drug-laced beverage. He slit the throat of his eldest son first because he “loved him the most”.

Sumit made a video on his mobile phone confessing to the crime and posted it on the family WhatsApp group. He told the police he had stolen ₹20,000 to buy cyanide from a medicine shop owner he knew closely. The poison, however, turned out to be fake and he failed to kill himself. Not knowing what to do, he fled the house but was arrested two days later.

Financial burden

The circumstances of the four incidents may have been different but the reason for the murders seem to be the same – financial stress and inability to cope with pressure.

The scientist had resigned from his job a month ago due to ill-health and had incurred losses in two ventures he started with his wife – a crèche in Sector 49 and a school in Palwal. SHO Ahmed said Prakash had confided in his business partner that he had unpaid loans of ₹1.5 crore, including ₹85 lakh home loan. The loss of job had added to the financial woes of the family, said Mr. Ahmed.

The tutor, on the other hand, had been advised by doctors to keep his blood pressure in check and his wife had been diagnosed with diabetes during her pregnancy. He was worried about the well-being of his family, given his limited income.

In the other two cases, the men were struggling to find a stable job and bear the expenses of their families.

Dr. Arti Anand, clinical psychologist at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said the men in all the four

cases had lost the will to continue. “This happens when a person is in severe depression and when they experience extreme hopelessness. Also, when they see that nothing is going to solve their problems, they resort to the extreme step,” she said.

The doctor said that the possible reason behind killing the family members was to spare them the trauma of living without him. “In the Mehrauli case, the man [Upendra] saw no hope, if he would have, he would have taken some steps to find some solution,” she said.

Health concerns

The officer who investigated Upendra's case said the tutor “cared so much for his family that he killed them all”.

Upendra had been taking medicines for blood pressure and insomnia for the last one and a half months. “Something very strange had got stuck in his head. His mother in Bihar and his wife had advised him not to step out in the heat because of his blood pressure problem. He started thinking that if he will not go out in the afternoon, how will he take tuitions and earn for his family. The thought gave him sleepless nights,” the officer said.

“Archana was diagnosed with diabetes during her third pregnancy. After delivering the baby, she fell ill and started behaving erratically. She blamed the baby for her health problems. Two days before the fateful night, she stopped feeding milk to him. At that point Upendra started worrying about the future of his kids,” the officer said.

“This man had lost all hope. In fact, we feared that he might do

something untoward, so we didn't leave his side [in the hospital],” the officer said.

Upendra was financially sound and used to take care of his niece and nephew's education too, the officer said. “In our investigation, no violent incident in his past has come to the fore,” he said.

Did Upendra ever seek medical help for his wife or himself? The investigator said that the man took his wife to government and private hospitals to seek help for her mental condition. He, however, never sought help for himself or believed that he needed it.

Dr. Anand stressed the need for awareness about depression in men. “In our society men are taught to be tough. They are expected not to show when they are sad. This stops them from communicating and taking treatment. Awareness regarding depression and mood disorders has to be spread in a big way,” she said.

Drugs and depression

Even when signs of disturbed behaviour are apparent, family members, at times, tend to play them down or ignore them. In Sumit's case, Anshu Bala learnt about his addiction soon after their marriage in 2011, but did not raise an alarm.

“One day my sister saw Sumit injecting himself with some drug. She asked him about it but he did not answer. Later, she found out about his addiction but asked us not to discuss it with Sumit as she was confident of making him quit,” said Anshu's brother Pan-kaj Singh.

Sumit changed seven jobs after his marriage. “He used to lie about his work but one day a company sent the termination

letter home and my sister caught his lie,” added Mr. Singh.

The officer investigating Sumit's case said he was a drug addict since his college days. “He used to purchase drugs from a particular medical store in Indirapuram. He had asked the store owner to get him cyanide but the man handed him some non-poisonous liquid,” said the officer.

In some cases, people suffering from mental stress exhibit absolutely no sign for others to read what's going on in their head.

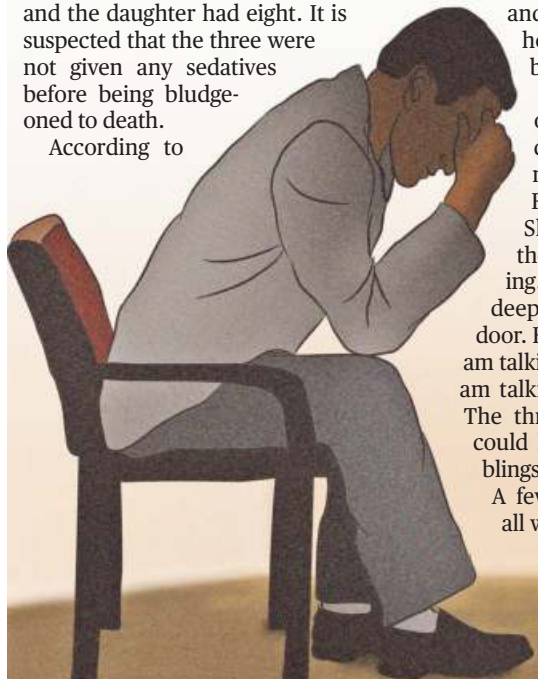
Pradeep's sister Reena believes he behaved normal the day before the murders because he didn't want them to know about his plan. “If we had the slightest idea, we would have at least saved the children,” said Reena.

A seven-page note, the police claimed, was recovered from Pradeep in which he wrote that he loved his wife but suspected that she was having an affair. The couple's relationship allegedly strained after the entry of a man who has been arrested on charges of abetment to suicide. The family knows him as Luv, but the police say his name is Kapil (22). Reena said Sangeeta brought him home claiming he was her ‘muh-bola bhai’ (like a brother) but their proximity bothered the husband. Pradeep was never stable in his profession. His father, a retired Chief Petty Officer in the Indian Navy, had been taking care of the household. Pradeep's drinking habit which he picked up about three years ago added to the couple's troubles. But Reena maintained her brother loved Sangeeta and wanted her to care for him the same way.

Dr. Rajat Mitra, another criminal psychologist, argued that the murders are never an outcome of love. “When you kill, you kill with a lot of anger and intense rage you have towards the other person. Research does not show that people who love their families do anything like that. They get violent because of disturbances, delusions and false beliefs in their head,” he said.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday (10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)

ILLUSTRATION: RITESH KUMAR



Factory was running without licence: EDMC official

Permit was not renewed after expiry; unit was not equipped with firefighting measures, say officials

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The factory in Jhilmil industrial area did not possess a no-objection certificate (NoC) and was not equipped with firefighting measures, the fire department said on Saturday.

East Delhi Municipal Corporation said that they will be conducting a detailed investigation into the case. Ranen Kumar, Deputy Commissioner, Factory Licence Department of EDMC, said that the licence of the factory had already expired and it was not renewed.

NoC norms

“The factory was operating in the area of 110 sq metres and a fire NoC is not required for the area below 250 sq metre as per norms,” he said.

A factory worker who was inside at the time of the incident and did not wish to be named said that there were about 40-50 people inside the factory when the fire broke out.

The factory comprises

basement, ground floor and three floors above.

“The workers had just started coming in as the factory opens at 9 a.m. and we saw smoke. Everyone started panicking and leaving the building from the main entry,” he said, adding that the factory has been running for the last 20 years.

Packaging material

The supervisor, Pradeep, said that packaging material, including cardboard, used to be kept on the ground floor in a godown while manufacturing of taps used to take place on the first, second and third floors.

The police said that the fire broke on the first floor and spread massively to second and third floors.

“Two victims were recovered from the first floor and one woman from the second floor. It was revealed that one of the victims Sangeeta had come downstairs and was about to exit the building but went back to get her mobile phone which she had forgotten,” said a fire official.



Fire personnel douse the blaze at a factory in Jhilmil industrial area in New Delhi on Saturday.
R.V. MOORTHY

CM announces ₹5 lakh relief each to kin of fire victims

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a compensation of ₹5 lakh each for the families of three victims who died in a factory fire at Jhilmil industrial area here on Saturday.

The Opposition BJP, while expressing grief over the incident, demanded the initiation of an awareness campaign regarding fire safety norms and “foolproof measures” to prevent such incidents in future.

Expressing his grief over the incident, Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari said, “Such incidents of fire are taking place one after another in the city. The Delhi government does not take preventive steps.”

Accusing the Delhi government of not being “serious” about preventing such incidents, the BJP leader accused the party of coming into action only after such incidents had taken place.

Cong. leader meets new block observers

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress working president Rajesh Lilothia, along with the 14 district observers, held a meeting with the 280 newly appointed block observers here on Saturday.

The block observers who would suggest the names of the new Block Congress Committee presidents, have to submit their reports through the district observers to Delhi Congress chief Sheila Dikshit within 10 days, the party said.

Ms. Dikshit, acting upon the recommendations of the five-member committee appointed by her to go into the reasons for the defeat of the seven Congress candidates in the recent Lok Sabha election in Delhi, had dissolved all the 280 Block Congress Committees, for appointing fresh faces as BCC presidents.

Meanwhile, AICC in-charge for Delhi P.C. Chacko and three working presidents of the party wrote letters to Ms. Dikshit, objecting to the announcement of district and block-level observers.

Mr. Chacko said Ms. Dikshit's decision to dissolve the 280 block committees was already “stayed” by him so appointment of block observers was not only “unauthorised” but would create “differences and conflict”.

Also, as many as 29 party leaders participated in a signature campaign and wrote to former Congress president Rahul Gandhi alleging what they termed a state of “complete confusion” in the Delhi unit.

DELHI Timings

SUNDAY, JULY 14

RISE 05:33 SET 19:22
MOON RISE 17:17 SET 03:12

MONDAY, JULY 15

RISE 05:33 SET 19:21
MOON RISE 18:12 SET 03:59

TUESDAY, JULY 16

RISE 05:34 SET 19:21
MOON RISE 19:03 SET 04:49

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	40	31
Safdarjang	40	31
Palam	41	31

Delhi Palam Today

39°C A dusty and windy warm morning. A very warm day. A partly cloudy sky. Chances of dust storm and thundershower at some places.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow

37°C Fall in day temperature. Increase in humid conditions. Day will warm with cloudy sky. Short spell of light rain and thundershower will occur.

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Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	275	Gurugram	193
Ghaziabad	357	Faridabad	176
Noida	346	Greater Noida	346

■ 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

Dance: Bharatanatyam dance arrangement of Adhuna Sharma, a disciple of Guru Usha Rao at Triveni Kala Sangam, 205 Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.

Music: Sitar recital by Pt. Arup Ratan Mukherjee, accompanied by Pt. Shalendra Mishra on the tabla at Amaltes Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Exhibition: “Beyond colours 3”, a painting and sculpture exhibition at Open Palm Court Gallery, IHC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Exhibition: “Artistagram”, a group exhibition of paintings and sculptures at Visual Arts Gallery, IHC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Exhibition: “Insight - Unravel the untold”, a group exhibition by Neeru Poddar and Ravish Choudhary at Convention Centre Foyer, IHC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

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

Blaze engulfs dreams and hopes of three families

Mother of 19-year-old claims her son died because of ‘negligence’, two women workers suffocated to death in the fire

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Among the victims who suffocated to death, when the fire broke out in a factory in Jhilmil industrial area, is a 19-year-old only son, a mother of three who took care of her children's education with her salary and a mother of five.

Sangeeta Devi (46), hailing from Bihar and a resident of Krishna Vihar, used to work in the packaging department at the taps manufacturing

factory for the last eight-nine years.

Her son had come visiting the parents after writing his Class 10 examination in Bihar.

Meagre income

“My brother Rohit (12), sister Munni (23) and I stay and study in our village in Bihar. I had come to Delhi for a vacation about a month ago. We had to visit our relatives on Sunday in Noida,” said Sangeeta's son Sunny.

“My father works in a factory in Krishna Vihar only but does not earn much. My mother used to get ₹8,500 a month and was taking care of our education”.

Sangeeta's relatives also said that she was unwell and had planned to take a day off on Saturday but decided against it fearing loss of pay.

Standing next to Sangeeta's family were relatives and son of another victim Manju Devi (50), a resident of Loni, who had been working in the

factory for the last 15 years.

Manju's son Manish (17) said that his father was suffering from a liver infection and had been hospitalised about three months ago for 20 days.

Father unwell

“My mother used to earn ₹6,000 a month and her income was stable. My father's work is unstable as he often falls ill. My mother had also got my brother join this factory about a month ago,” he

said.

Recalling his last conversation with his mother, Manish said that he asked her for ₹100 before she left for work on Saturday as he owed the amount to someone.

19-year-old victim Shoaib Ali's mother Fatima Begum was inconsolable outside the GTB mortuary and continued to blame those who did not inform the family on time.

“They killed my son. He died at 9 a.m. but they in-

formed us only at 1 p.m. Nobody saved him,” she said.

Shoaib was the only son of Fatima Begum and Wahid Ali, a tailor in Seelampur. Their 18-year-old daughter is pursuing her graduation.

Make cash memos

“He had completed his graduation and used to make cash memos in the factory. He started working about a year and a half ago and used to get ₹10,000 a month,” the father said.

DU releases fourth list, admissions closed for several UG streams

Marginal dip seen in cut-off for some courses; next list expected on July 20

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi University released the fourth list of cut-offs to merit-based undergraduate courses, on its website on Saturday. With this, more colleges shut admissions to different streams while others saw another marginal dip.

Admissions to B.A. (Honours) Economics surprisingly remain open at several colleges, including the university's North Campus colleges such as at Miranda House, Hansraj, Kirori Mal, Hindu College and even at Shri Ram College of Commerce where the course has been reopened for admissions under the unreserved category.

Similarly, other colleges also reopened admissions for certain courses.

Lady Shri Ram College, B.Com (Honours), which has got some of the highest number of admissions across colleges remains open with a cut-off of 97.50% down by 0.25% from this third list.

In total, the university has taken in about 52,000 students so far. University officials had earlier said that up to around 63,000 seats would be up for grabs this year. This was an increase from about 56,000 seats of-



ferred in the last few years on account of expansion of the intake to accommodate 10% reservation for students from Economically Weaker Sections.

DU to increase intake

Next year, the university will increase its intake further to complete the expansion process.

Admissions under the third list will take place between July 15 and July 17 till 1 p.m. Applicants are required to approach colleges with their documents to have them verified and receive final approval from the college principal. Those wishing to change colleges are advised to check if they are eligible for admission at a certain college before withdrawing admissions to the college they had initially chosen. Students are likely to be notified of the next cut-off list on July 20.

Changes to English syllabus at DU opposed

'Bajrang Dal, RSS shown in bad light'

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

The inclusion of study material relating to the role of the RSS in the Gujrat Riots and the use of Hindu deities in reading of queer literature, proposed by the Delhi University's English department were opposed at a Standing Committee meeting, to review undergraduate syllabus on Thursday.

In "Manibein alias Bibijaan" a story on the background of the Gujrat Riots, organisations related to the Sangh, including the Bajrang Dal and the RSS are shown in a bad light, said Rasal Singh, member of the Standing Committee on academic matters.

'Portrayed as attackers'

"They are being shown as the attackers in the Gujrat Riots," he said.

Mr. Singh also took objection to what he said would be depiction of Hin-

du deities as queer, "references for which will be given from Bhagvath Puran, Sankar Puran, Shiv Puran" he said.

Mr. Singh also said that he has placed his objections before the committee and was informed that his disagreements would be addressed by the English department at the Academic Council meeting on Monday.

He also highlighted changes made in the Choice Based Curriculum System where, he said, the syllabus had been entirely changed instead of 30% that was called for.

'Literature and caste'

"The Communication Skills paper has been filled with literature," Mr. Singh said, adding that instead of a paper on Indian Writing in English, "Literature and Caste" and "Interrogating Queerness" were being introduced.

Metro Phase-IV: CM wants to shake hands with Centre

Expresses hope that the project's three corridors will get the green light this time

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday sought the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre's cooperation in completing the Delhi Metro Phase-IV and expressed hope that it would soon approve the project's three corridors which it had not earlier.

This, even as the Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Vijender Gupta accused the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government of harbouring an "anti-people attitude" towards commuters and deliberately delaying the project over three years.

The Union Cabinet had in March approved three of the six corridors proposed by the Delhi government, sidelining conditions imposed by it. Work, however, could not begin due to difference in opinion between the two governments which are equal partners in the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC).



The Supreme Court on Friday ordered the commencement of construction work after the Delhi government said it had agreed to give its go-ahead to the project. Mr. Kejriwal tweeted, "I hope that the Centre will soon approve the rest three corridors. People want the construction work on Phase-IV to start at the earliest."

"The work is stuck for several years. We should not get into who was at fault and when. Rather all should come together to complete it as soon as possible. This is what is in public interest," the Chief Minister also wrote.

The three corridors approved by the Union Cabinet

The Chief Minister should apologise to the people of Delhi for his stubborn attitude on expansion of the Delhi Metro

VIJENDER GUPTA
Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly

are Mukundpur-Maujpur (12.54 km), Janakpuri West-R.K. Ashram (28.92 km) and Tughlakabad-Aerocity (20.20 km).

The three corridors not approved by the Centre are Rithala-Bawana-Narela, Indelok-Indraprastha and Lajpat Nagar-Saket G Block.

The Delhi government had objected to the Centre's decision, alleging that the Union government made some "unilateral changes" in the project, without communicating any reasons. On its part, the BJP demanded that Mr. Kejriwal apologise to citizens for his "stubbornness" regarding the project and questioned as to why the Delhi go-

vernment waited for judicial intervention in the matter before agreeing to it.

"Why does his government need intervention by courts for every work of public interest that ought to be done by it? The Union government requested Mr. Kejriwal time and an again...but every time he created hurdles in its way," Mr. Gupta alleged.

'Anti-people attitude'

"Due to his anti-people attitude, Delhi Metro Phase-IV has been delayed by three years and it will also lead to escalation of the cost of construction... The Chief Minister should apologise to the people of Delhi for his stubborn attitude on expansion of the Delhi Metro... He did his best to stop the works and now when the Delhi Vidhan Sabha election is approaching and also after the court intervened into the matter, he has immediately given ascent," Mr. Gupta added.

Man killed for intervening in couple's fight

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 20-year-old youth was allegedly stabbed to death after he intervened in a couple's fight in south Delhi's Greater Kailash on Saturday, the police said. The accused has been arrested, they said.

DCP (South) Vijay Kumar said that victim Sanjeev Pandey was a part-time security guard who also worked at a tea shop. He was allegedly stabbed by accused Jitin Bora (30) who works as a housekeeping staff in a farmhouse.

Sanjeev lived in Jamrudpur near Greater Kailash while Bora lives with his wife Rukmani Devi, a house help, and a nine-year-old child in an adjacent room. "Sanjeev was in his room when Bora and Devi started fighting over some issue. Sanjeev intervened in the fight, tried to pacify them and then returned to his room. Bora later entered Sanjeev's room with a knife and stabbed him in the chest and thigh. Sanjeev collapsed on the floor and Bora fled. He was later declared brought dead at a hospital.

IN BRIEF

Ritu Maheshwari is new Noida Authority CEO

NOIDA
IAS officer Ritu Maheshwari has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Noida Authority, according to a government order which also effected several other transfers. Ms. Maheshwari, who was serving as the Ghaziabad District Magistrate, replaces Alok Tandon, who has been relieved as the Noida Authority CEO but will continue as its chairman, said the Uttar Pradesh government order issued on Friday night. PTI

49 vehicles impounded for violating rules

NOIDA
Forty-nine vehicles, including 11 four-wheelers, without number plates or forged number plates were impounded from parking areas of residential societies in Noida and Greater Noida on Saturday, the police said. The action was carried out from midnight till 3 a.m. as part of the 12th edition of the Gautam Buddha Nagar police's 'Operation Clean'. PTI

2 members of Namaste gang arrested

NEW DELHI
Two members of the Namaste gang identified as Javed alias JD and Ikrar alias Bhura, both residents of Mustafabad, were arrested, the police said on Saturday. While Javed was arrested from Surat on July 8, Ikrar was arrested on Saturday morning. The two were wanted in a MCOCA case and were involved in several robberies across the Capital. They used to greet and divert the attention the victims before robbing them.

Flyover accident: girl succumbs to injuries

NEW DELHI
Two days after a 33-year-old man and his three-year-old niece fell off the Badarpur flyover, the girl succumbed to injuries on Friday night, the police said on Saturday. On Thursday, the man and his niece were on a motorbike when they fell off the flyover. The family claimed that the man fell off the bike because a kite string got stuck around his neck while riding.

Harassed by classmates, law student kills self

20-year-old was being bullied by four accused since June 14

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GHAZIABAD

A 20-year-old law student, who was allegedly being harassed by his classmates, was on Thursday found dead at his home, the police said Saturday.

The deceased's father, a police head constable, filed a complaint at Kavi Nagar police station against his son's four classmates for mentally torturing the youth since June 14, Superintendent of Police (City) Shlok Kumar said.

The father also gave the police the mobile phone of the deceased. The phone

A case of abetment to suicide has been registered. It is being probed as to how the student was being harassed by his classmates

DELHI POLICE

has a recorded video clip of the deceased in which he alleges that he was harassed by his friends and that led him to take the extreme step, SP Kumar said.

As per the complaint filed in the case, the student had told his mother about the harassment he was fac-

ing but she asked him to focus on his studies instead. She later informed her husband about the matter who then called the accused and warned them not to disturb his son, the police said.

A case under Section 306 (abetment of suicide) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered. The matter is being probed as to how the deceased was being harassed by his friends, they said.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health (011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)

3,800 cases pending in different courts disposed of in Lok Adalat

₹4.31 crore has been collected as settlement amount

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Around 3,800 cases pending before the district and sessions and labour courts here under various categories were disposed of during a day-long Lok Adalat on Saturday and ₹4.31 crore collected as settlement amount.

Of the total 5,555 pending cases taken up under various categories, the highest number of cases (2,215) were under the Motor Vehicles Act – mostly issuance of challans for traffic violation. Of these, 1,215 cases were disposed of with the settlement amount of ₹2.43 lakh.

Similarly, 48 cases out of the total 200 Motor Accident Claim Tribunal (MACT) cases were disposed of involving the settlement amount of ₹3.95 crore. Besides, 1,333 cases under The Negotiable Instruments Act, 38 labour dispute cases, 1,076 electricity and water bills cases, four matrimonial disputes

We were involved in this exercise for around a month. Notices were sent to the persons concerned, the lawyers and the companies involved were being chased. It was a mammoth exercise

NARENDER SINGH

Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Secretary, District Legal Services Authority

and 17 other civil cases were also settled. Of the total 140 pending criminal compoundable cases taken up, 113 were disposed of.

Around ₹33.64 lakh was received as settlement amount for the labour dispute cases.

Besides the 3,844 pending cases, 1,017 cases at pre-litigation stage, including non-payment of crop loans, were also settled.

Chief Judicial Magistrate-

cum-Secretary, District Legal Services Authority Narender Singh said around 1.5 lakh cases were pending before the district and sessions court and the disposal of around 4,000 cases in a single day was no mean feat.

"We were involved in this exercise for conducting the Lok Adalat for around a month now. Notices were issued to the persons concerned, the lawyers and the companies involved were being chased. It was a mammoth exercise," said Mr. Singh.

He said that around 11,000 notices were issued for violators under the MV Act. Mr. Singh said a couple of MACT cases were pending for several years and it was very satisfying for all involved that they were eventually settled. He said that more than a thousand cases were also resolved at the pre-litigation stage before they could add to the burden of the court.

Sehwag's wife complains against business partners

Claims they forged her signatures

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police has registered a cheating case based on former Indian cricketer Virender Sehwag's wife Aarti Sehwag's allegation. She has accused her business partners of forging her signatures to avail a loan of ₹4.5 crore, the police said on Saturday.

A senior police officer said that Ms. Aarti, a partner in SMGK Agro, alleged that her partners in the firm took a loan of ₹4.5 crore from M/s Lakhnupal Promoters and Builders Pvt. Ltd., by forging signatures and later defaulted on payments. The case was registered in Economic Offences Wing of the Delhi Police on Friday.

In her complaint, in which she has named seven persons, Ms. Aarti alleged

that the two partners influenced the other company by using her husband's name.

"It was alleged in the complaint that the accused did not seek consent of the complainant and she had no knowledge of the loan. The accused also forged the complainant's signatures and later defaulted on payment," the officer said, adding that the accused had also issued two postdated cheques to the firm from which they took the loan.

Ms. Aarti claimed that she came to know about the matter after M/s Lakhnupal Promoters and Builders Pvt. Ltd. approached the court.

"A case under relevant sections of IPC has been registered and investigation is under way," the police officer said.

Luxury car carries out stunts at Vijay Chowk

Police begin probe as video goes viral

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A video of occupants of a luxury sports car performing stunts, near the Parliament House and the Rashtrapati Bhavan, before zooming away from the spot, has gone viral on social media.

The police have taken legal action in the case and begun probe.

In the 41-seconds video, the car can be seen performing burnout and drifts stunts at Vijay Chowk in the high-security area.

Owner identified

After the video was brought to the notice of police, a case under Section 184 of Motor Vehicle (MV) Act was registered and a massive manhunt for the occupants of the vehicle has been



The luxury car that was used in carrying out stunts near Parliament House.

*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

launched.

"The exact time of the stunts is not known, but the CCTV footage shows it to be around 4.30 a.m. The vehicle and owner of the vehicle have been identified. The challan has been served to them," said a senior police officer.

Court convicts man for stabbing woman in 2017

Victim had raised objection when the accused was abusing her husband

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has convicted a man for stabbing a woman when she raised objections to his abusing her husband, under the influence of liquor, in north-east Delhi's Harsh Vihar in 2017.

Though the victim's husband, also the complainant in the matter, failed to identify the knife in the trial with which the accused had attacked his wife and the police had recovered it at his instance, the court ignore this lacuna, stating that the attack weapon was not planted as alleged by the counsel for the accused.

"The complainant's hus-



band at whose instance the knife used in the commission of offence was recovered has refused to identify the knife produced before the court. However, he admitted that he pointed

out the knife used in the commission of offence lying at the corner of the gali and the police took the knife with them," Additional Sessions Judge Sanjeev Kumar Malhotra said.

'Knife not planted'

"In these facts when at the instance of witness police took the knife, which was used in the commission of offence in their possession, I do not find any force in the contention of defence counsel that the knife is planted upon the accused," the judge stated.

"Complainant/injured has given a consistent statement on material aspects,

which is duly corroborated by her husband and the evidence of witnesses of investigation and medical examination. Complainant has specifically deposed that it was accused, who gave her knife blows and caused injuries. The injuries were caused on the vital part of complainant," the judge further said.

"In view of the above discussion, the prosecution has proved its case beyond shadow of reasonable doubt. Accordingly, accused is held guilty and convicted for the offence punishable under Section 307 IPC," the judge stated in his order.

OBITUARY &
REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Mr. V.V. Madhavan (80), Retired Deputy Editor, The Hindu, Chennai, passed away on 13-07-2019. Address: 304, 4th Floor, Anjanadri Aakruthi Apts. before Jakkur Bescom office, Jakkur Bengaluru 560064. Contact : 9880230105

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Two killed, 30 hurt as bus overturns in Kurukshetra

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KURUKSHETRA**

A private bus travelling from Delhi to Jammu overturned on National Highway 44 after hitting a road divider here on Saturday, killing two people and injuring 33 others.

The bus belonged to a private transport company in Uttar Pradesh.

After overturning, the bus caught fire and many passen-

gers jumped out by breaking the windowpanes, said the police.

The victims were identified as Gita Devi, 74, and Hardeep Singh, 40, both from Delhi. Out of the 33 injured, 14 are critical.

A case of rash driving and causing death by negligence has been registered against the bus driver, who is absconding.

M.P. e-tender scam: 43 more cases of tampering uncovered

Investigators to sift through tenders floated since 2013

**SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL**

After scanning e-tenders floated by the Madhya Pradesh government in the last six months, the State's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has discovered tampering of 43 tenders in various departments that benefited certain private firms – months after tinkering in nine e-tenders came to the fore.

"We filed an FIR against seven persons on April 10 in the first set of cases... during the course of the investigation we realised more tenders had been tampered with. Thereafter, we cast a wider net over tenders floated in the previous six months and identified the new cases. Now, we have decided to backtrace all e-tenders floated since 2013," said K.N. Tiwari, Director General of the State EOW.

In July 2013, the Madhya Pradesh State Electronics

There were other third-party companies managing e-procurement for the State before 2013. We will not go into their tendering processes for now

K.N. TIWARI
Director General of the State EOW

Development Corporation (MPSEDC) had contracted Tata Consultancy Services and Antares System Limited, Bengaluru, as tender-opening authorities to manage hardware and software components of the e-procurement process. Antares assigned the task of auditing its performance to OSO IT Solution, Bhopal.

A nexus

"OSO engaged brokers, connived with officials of the MPSEDC, private companies and government officials to

tamper with the tenders. There were other third-party companies managing e-procurement for the State before 2013. We will not go into their tendering processes for now," said Mr. Tiwari.

No government official or politician has been named in the FIR that was registered in April.

"Details of the accused who may be discovered in the future will be subsumed in the FIR. Roles, responsibilities and conduct of some government officials who may be involved in the tampering of the nine tenders, discovered earlier, is under the scanner. Once we have enough evidence, we will chargesheet them. Simultaneously, we are investigating tampering of the 43 tenders and possible role of patrons in sheltering frauds," he said.

The estimated value of the scam has not yet been calculated.

Probe ordered into use of pellet guns against tribals, says Kamal Nath

Four farmers were injured in Burhanpur district on July 9

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOPAL**

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath said on Saturday that an inquiry by a magistrate has been ordered into alleged use of pellet guns against tribals in Burhanpur district, and no guilty person will be spared.

Four tribal farmers were allegedly injured in the incident on July 9.

According to the district police, a forest department team opened fire in self-defence at Sival village when villagers hurled stones at

them.

The team had gone for plantation on forest land but the villagers claimed that the land belonged to them and attacked the officials, said Burhanpur Superintendent of Police Ajay Singh.

Senior Congress leaders Digvijaya Singh and Jyotiraditya Scindia raised the issue after party MLA Hiralal Alawa wrote to Mr. Nath, seeking action against officials.

"The incident is against the policy of the current government... It should take immediate action against

the guilty officers," Mr. Singh said in a tweet, which had Mr. Alawa's letter tagged to it.

Mr. Scindia too commented on Twitter: "Progress and welfare of the tribal population is the priority of the M.P. government. The unfortunate incident in Burhanpur is condemnable."

Mr. Nath tweeted a response that said: "Magisterial inquiry was ordered day after incident... There will be a fair investigation of the incident, no guilty will be spared."

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Cop beaten to death in Rajasthan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

A police head constable investigating a land dispute case in Padmela village of Rajasthan's Rajsamand district was beaten to death allegedly by a mob on Saturday. The unidentified men allegedly beat him with sticks and rods and fled, leaving him seriously injured. He later succumbed to his injuries in a local hospital.

Abdul Ghani, 48, had gone to the village in Bhim block's Brar gram panchayat for investigation into a case related to encroachment. The mob allegedly attacked him after an argument. Some villagers spotted the profusely bleeding policeman and rushed him to the community health centre, where he died. Bhim Circle Inspector Labhu Ram said police were trying to identify the assailants.

Churu SP removed over custodial death

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan government has removed Churu Superintendent of Police Rajendra Kumar, asking him to await his new posting orders, and suspended a Circle Officer in connection with the death of a theft accused in police custody.

An internal probe has found that the deceased was tortured to death.

Nemi Chand Nayak, arrested in a theft case on July 6, died in a hospital where he was admitted by the police the same night. His sister-in-law has alleged that she was also kept in police detention illegally and sexually assaulted.

When Nayak's death came to light, Mr. Kumar suspended the Sadarshahar police station SHO and six other policemen earlier this week and sent 26 police officials to the Police Lines as a punishment.

In the latest action, the SP was removed and Sadarshahar Circle Officer Bhanwar Lal was suspended on Friday night.

Police said a statement would be obtained from the victim woman and suitable action taken.

Mayawati seeks pan-India law to curb lynching

Welcomes draft Bill by the U.P. Law Commission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

Welcoming the Uttar Pradesh Law Commission-drafted Bill against lynching, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Saturday pitched for a stringent, pan-India legislation to arrest the spread of this "dreadful disease".

'Dreadful disease'

In a statement issued by the BSP here, Ms. Mayawati said, "Mob lynching has emerged as a dreadful disease (*bhayanak bimari*) across the country, and the loss of lives in it is a matter of serious concern."

"In this regard, there is a strong need for a stringent countrywide law, but the Centre's approach towards it is lackadaisical," she said.

She welcomed the submission of a draft Bill by the



Mayawati ■ FILE PHOTO

U.P. Law Commission in this regard, which recommended up to life imprisonment for the crime.

Taking cognisance of incidents of mob lynching, including those by cow vigilantes, the Uttar Pradesh Law Commission on Wednesday submitted to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath the draft Bill recommending up to life imprisonment for the crime.

"This disease is a gift of the intention (*niyat*) and policy (*niti*) of the governments

This disease is a gift of the intention and policy of the governments of not allowing to establish the rule of law

MAYAWATI
BSP chief

of not allowing to establish the rule of law. As a result, not only the Dalits, tribals or the religious minorities, but also people from all sections of the society and police are becoming a victim to it," she said. "In this situation, the submission of a draft Bill is welcoming," she added.

Giving a piece of advice to the BJP, Ms. Mayawati said, "Along with drafting strong laws, the BJP will have to develop a strong willpower like the BSP, to strictly enforce the laws. Only then will this disease will be curbed."

Alternative to Lakshman Jhula soon: Rawat

Its closure was the only option: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand government has decided to build a bridge across the Ganga in Rishikesh as an alternative to the iconic Lakshman Jhula which was closed due to safety reasons, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said on Saturday.

Dilapidated condition

The bridge was in a dilapidated condition and not capable of sustaining the load of traffic, Mr. Rawat said, adding that its closure was the only option left.

Keeping the bridge open to traffic could have been risky, especially in view of the upcoming Kanwar mela during which thousands of devotees cross it daily, he said.

The bridge was closed on Friday on the recommendation of a team of experts from IIT-Roorkee. They had recommended immediate closure of the bridge to all traffic and pedestrian movement.

"A decision has been taken to construct a bridge over the Ganga in Rishikesh soon as an alternative to Lakshman Jhula," Mr. Rawat said.



Trivendra Singh Rawat ■ FILE PHOTO

The opinion of experts will be taken on how to preserve the Lakshman Jhula as a cultural heritage site, he said.

Built in 1923 over the Ganga, Lakshman Jhula is located 5 km northeast of the town and connects the two villages of Tapovan in Tehri district on the western bank of the river and Jonk in Pauri district.

One of the main attractions for tourists and devotees coming to Rishikesh, the pedestrian bridge has also been used by two-wheelers.

It was named after Hindu mythological character Lakshman as it stands where he is said to have crossed the river with the help of jute ropes.

Launch direct flight to Dubai: Odisha CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday urged the Centre to take steps for launching direct international flight between Bhubaneswar and Dubai to meet the growing need of travellers.

The State has been witnessing rise in traffic to various international destinations due to increase in industrial investments and tourist footfall, Mr. Patnaik said in a letter to Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri.

"Various international airlines have evinced interest to start international flight operations from Biju Patnaik International Airport here to Dubai," he said.

However, restriction on landing rights has been a deterrent to such operations by international airlines, Mr. Patnaik said.

In the absence of direct flights from the State to international destinations such as Dubai and other countries in the Middle East, passengers face difficulties to go to their desired places, he said.

BJP wins 85% rural seats uncontested

Tripura Opposition CPI(M), Congress allege threat to their candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AGARTALA

The BJP has won 85% of the seats uncontested in panchayat polls in Tripura, amidst allegations of threats to candidates of the Opposition parties.

The rural polls are scheduled to be held in the State on July 27.

"Of the total 6,646 seats comprising gram panchayats, panchayat samities and zila parishads, the BJP has won 5,652 seats uncontested," State Election Commission secretary Prasenjit Bhattacharya said.

Counting on July 31

Tripura has a total 591 gram panchayats having 6,111 seats, 35 panchayat samities with 419 seats and eight zila parishads having 116 seats, he said.

The last date for withdrawal of nominations was July 11 and the counting will take place on July 31.

White ballot papers would be used for gram panchayat polls, pink ones for panchayat samities and green for zila parishads

PRASENJIT BHATTACHARYA
State Election Commission secretary

Altogether, 12,03,070 voters, including 6,16,893 males and 5,86,176 women will exercise their franchise at 2,623 polling stations between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the polling day.

"White ballot papers would be used for gram panchayat polls, pink ones for panchayat samities and green papers for zila parishads," Mr. Bhattacharya said.

The Opposition CPI(M) and the Congress have alleged that their candidates were "threatened and attacked" by the "BJP-backed goons".

They have also accused

"armed gangs" of the BJP of preventing their candidates from collecting and filing their nomination papers during the scheduled nomination period from July 1 to July 8.

'Atmosphere of fear'

About 121 CPI(M) candidates were forced to withdraw their nomination papers on the last day of withdrawal, the party claimed. Bike-borne BJP workers were stationed at the election offices so that no Opposition candidate could collect or submit nomination papers, it said, adding that in most of the places the police were just onlookers.

"Physical attacks on prospective candidates and attacks on the CPI(M) offices and leaders such as on the North Tripura district committee and sub-divisional office in Dharmnagar were resorted to, creating an atmosphere of fear and intimi-

ation," a statement by CPI(M) said.

'A farce'

State Congress unit vice-president Tapas Dey also accused the BJP of reducing the election to a "farce".

"They (BJP) did not allow many of our (Congress) candidates to file nominations and launched physical attacks on them and our supporters during filing of nominations. We were forced to withdraw 124 candidates from the fray in the face of terror by the BJP goons," he said.

Refuting the allegations, BJP spokesperson Nabendu Bhattacharya said candidates of the two Opposition parties did not file nomination because they had lost their support base.

"They have lost their support base and could sense their defeat in advance. So they did not file nominations," he added.

An Appeal

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Call for focus on adolescent health

'Limited access to services making negative impact on their well-being'

MOHAMMED IQBAL

JAIPUR

Population experts in Rajasthan have called for a renewed focus on the adolescent and youth health for bringing economic and demographic benefits to the State. The deficiencies in human development inputs were preventing the youths in the State from reaching their full potential, especially observed in their low employability, according to experts.

The Population Foundation of India has called for focus on sexual and reproduc-

tive health of adolescents as a "precursor to social transformation". PFI executive director Poonam Mutreja said here that a limited access to healthcare services was making a negative impact on the overall health and well-being of adolescents.

Rajasthan has an adolescent population of 1.57 crore and youth population, aged between 16 and 24 years, of 1.37 crore. About 35% of women of the age of 20 to 24 years are married before they turn 18, as against 27% nationally. Adolescents and youths comprise 23% and

20% respectively of the State's population.

'Whole child' concept

Noted Jaipur-based population and development analyst Devendra Kothari has called for adopting a new strategy to empower the youths with "human development plus" approach for their families. He said the "whole child" concept should make five interventions - improving the quality of school education, focusing on WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) factors, enhancing primary

health, reducing gender gap and stabilising population.

Dr. Kothari said the strategy was aimed at laying foundation for the human competency, while ensuring that 14-year-old or VIII graders were well-prepared to read, write and be efficient in mathematics as well as in the basic digital technology before moving to further education.

The experts' observations came during the events, shows and plantation programmes organised on the World Population Day here earlier this week.

Focus on MSME to create more jobs in Rajasthan

New industrial policy would attract more investments to the State: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The Congress government's focus on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) in Rajasthan, in accordance with its promise made in the Assembly election manifesto, has opened up a new route to job creation.

Interest subsidy

A budgetary announcement for interest subsidy on MSME loans up to ₹10 crore is also set to promote the sector in a big way.

Industries & State Enter-

prises Minister Parsadi Lal said here on Saturday that the MSME (Facilitation of Establishment and Operation) Ordinance, 2019, which had taken the shape of law, allowed entrepreneurs to start their business by just filling a self-declaration form and exempted them from approval and inspection by various departments for three years.

Mr. Lal said while several States had evinced interest in the new measures, the youths in Rajasthan aspiring to establish business would get the much-needed sup-

port for their enterprises and create jobs for others. The laws on labour, safety and environment have to be complied with, but no verifications will be required.

Self-help groups

In his budget speech earlier this week, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had announced the launch of a new small industries promotion scheme giving interest subsidy on loans up to ₹10 crore, which will include self-help groups. A provision of ₹50 crore in 2019-20 and ₹250

crore during the next five years has been made under the scheme.

Mr. Lal said said the budgetary provision of ₹10 crore for a revolving fund for khadi industries for the next 10 years would also promote the sector in a big way.

The Minister said that new policies in the industrial sector would attract more investments to the State.

The aspiring entrepreneurs would be able to give jobs to others in the changed industrial scenario, he added.

IN BRIEF

President visits
Tiruchanur temple

CHITTOOR
President Ram Nath Kovind offered prayers at the temples of Goddess Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru at Tiruchanur and Lord Kapileswara Swami at Tirupati on Saturday, before proceeding to Tirumala for a darshan on Sunday. He is on a three-day visit to A.P. The President, who arrived at the Renigunta airport by an IAF aircraft, was welcomed by Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan and Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, along with his Cabinet colleagues.

Mild tremors felt in
Nellore district

NELLORE
Mild tremors were felt in some parts of SPSR Nellore district in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday. Panic-stricken people ran out of their houses in and around Mairipadi and Atmakur after household articles were seen mildly shaking in the wee hours. Cracks also developed in some buildings, according to eye witnesses. The micro-tremor activity in the district started in October 2015 with a few hundred ones recorded by the CSIR-NGRI since then.

Measures to curb tea
adulteration in T.N., Kerala

KALPETTA
The Tea Board, in association with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and district administrations, is gearing up to adopt stringent measures to curb the production and marketing of adulterated tea at Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu and neighbouring districts, including Wayanad and Idukki. The public can contact the board authorities on the availability and use of adulterated tea in the numbers 8486374193 (Kerala), 9659337133 and 8903172141 (Tamil Nadu).

Hectic efforts on to woo back rebel MLAs in Karnataka

Coalition partners Congress-JD(S) use weekend for parleys with the members

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU**

It is a hectic weekend for leaders from across the political spectrum in Karnataka, with the coalition partners Congress-JD(S) as well as the Opposition BJP carefully guarding their flock while trying to woo back MLAs who have rebelled.

The Assembly session is set to resume on Monday after the weekend break and the Supreme Court on Tuesday will hear a plea by the JD(S) and the Congress MLAs who have resigned.

The weekend is the short window open for a last-minute effort by the coalition government to retain power and for the BJP to firm up its strategy to topple the government with the ruling dispensation's numbers dwindling.

Karnataka Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy has already announced that he would seek a trust vote.

Saturday began very early for Congress Minister and "troubleshooter" D.K. Shivakumar who landed at the house of MLA and Minister N. Nagaraju (MTB) who is among those who have submitted their resignations.

It was a long negotiation to woo him back into the Congress fold, with CLP leader Siddaramaiah and the Chief Minister too joining in later.

An effort was also made to woo back Dr. Sudhakar and Ramalinga Reddy.

At the end of the day, while Mr. Reddy was uncertain about his future course of action, the party appeared to have failed to convince Dr. Sudhakar. BJP sources confirmed that Dr. Sudhakar flew to Mumbai to join the other rebel MLAs



Last resort: Rebel Congress MLA N. Nagaraju, centre, meeting Karnataka Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, Ministers and former CM Siddaramaiah, in Bengaluru. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

BJP guards its flock, tries to keep morale of rebels high

**STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU**

With all eyes on the Supreme Court for Tuesday's hearing on the resignation of Congress and JD(S) MLAs, the big task before the BJP is to ensure that they stay firm.

"Now, before the trust vote, the battle is over the mind space of the rebel MLAs. The coalition is trying hard to threaten them with disqualification for defection if they do not turn up for the trust vote, which they hope will get them back in the fold. But the momentum is with us," claimed a senior BJP leader close to the party's Karnataka president B.S. Yeddyurappa. "This is a time when power swings

who are in a hotel there.

Later in the day, Mr. Nagaraju announced that he had decided to withdraw his resignation as MLA.

Two BJP MLAs – Arvind

loyalties. The trick is to convince the rebels and those with potential to cross over that we are coming to power or retaining power. That is the case with the BJP and the coalition respectively. Both are in the same game," he said.

While the BJP is keeping its flock together in a resort on the city's outskirts, they have been constantly in touch with the rebel MLAs to counter any influence by the coalition. "Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, counsel for the rebel MLAs in the Supreme Court, is said to have briefed them on the legal aspects. Several other legal luminaries from the State have spoken to them, assuring them that it is legally not possible to

Limbalavi and Balachandra Jarkiholi – both known to have played a key role in wooing coalition MLAs under Operation Lotus, left for New Delhi to meet the par-

ty's central leadership.

Meanwhile, it is learnt that Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath will be in Bengaluru on Sunday as his party battles the crisis.

disqualify them for defection, a senior leader overseeing the legal aspects said.

More than those in Mumbai, the five MLAs in the State – Ramalinga Reddy, R. Roshan Baig, Munirathna, B.S. Anand Singh, and N. Nagaraju (MTB) – have left the BJP jittery.

Archdiocese may get new administrative bishop

Cardinal George Alencherry gives assurance in a circular

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI**

Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, has said that steps will be taken under the guidance of authorities in Rome and in consultation with the synod of the Church to appoint a bishop with special administrative powers for the growth and pastoral care of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese.

The Cardinal gives the assurance in a circular sent out to parishes in the archdiocese. The circular is expected to be read out during the course of the Sunday mass, Church sources said.

The Cardinal expressed optimism that the synod of bishops, meeting in August, would take decisions for better pastoral care of the archdiocese.

Police action criticised
Meanwhile, Janakiya Samara Samithi, Konthuruthy, a people's combine, organised a



Loud and clear: People protesting against the alleged police torture of computer engineer Aditya Valavi. •THULASI KAKKAT

day-long sit-in at the Vanchi Square on Saturday, demanding action against Dy.SP K.A. Vidhyadharan, who, they said, was responsible for keeping computer engineer Aditya Valavi under "illegal custody" for 72 hours in connection with the "forged documents" case.

The protesters demanded that the police refrain from implicating lay people and priests of the archdiocese in

"false" cases. The police have claimed that Aditya Valavi from Konthuruthy was responsible for forging documents to show that Cardinal Alencherry transferred substantial sums of money to a business group. The police had also questioned two senior priests of the archdiocese in connection with the forged documents case. Vishnu Roy, alleged to have helped Aditya, was arrested by the police on Friday.

Kerala custodial death: probe panel wants post-mortem repeated

**A CORRESPONDENT
IDUKKI**

Judicial Commission headed by K. Narayana Kurup probing the custodial torture and death of private financier Rajkumar reiterated on Saturday its demand for repeating the post-mortem on the body as there were 'lapses' in the first autopsy, which it said was done 'without the seriousness it deserved.'

Talking to presspersons on Saturday, Mr. Kurup said the post-mortem report was

inaccurate. "The autopsy on the body was conducted without professionalism. The internal organs were not sent for expert verification. The commission had the power to repeat the post-mortem." He said all circumstances that led to the death of Rajkumar would be inquired into. It was a lapse on the part of the police to have record the arrest days after he was taken into custody. What happened to him in the preceding days should be inquired, he said. The de-

lay in providing medical help would also be probed.

Autopsy report was the most important document in a custodial death. The time of occurrence of injuries did not find mention in the post-mortem report, he said. The commission said that it would not be possible to establish torture without getting the autopsy report on the time of occurrence of injuries. The commission visited the Nedumkandam taluk hospital and Peermade sub-jail to collect evidence.

Over 200 cases of NRI husbands deserting wives

Show-cause notices being sent following complaints in Telangana: passport officer

**STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD**

With 195 cases of NRI husbands deserting their wives surfacing in the past two years, the Regional Passport Office (RPO) here is taking the matter seriously.

Regional Passport Officer E. Vishnuvardhan Reddy told the media on Saturday at the passport mela held for journalists, "The Ministry [of External Affairs] has asked us to be very sensitive towards women who have been affected by this."

Past vs present

Sharing data, Mr. Reddy said 118 complaints were recorded last year and 77 this year. They included desertions, divorces, instances of domestic violence and dowry harassment.

To a question, he said Punjab with around 770 cases was among the other States which had received a larger number of com-



Vishnuvardhan Reddy.
•G. RAMAKRISHNA

plaints. Officials said not many approached the RPO to report desertions earlier. However, the numbers had increased in the recent past with the Ministry of External Affairs taking serious note of the situation. The RPO has been handling complaints which come to its notice from the police, the State Women's Commission and other sources.

Mr. Reddy said passports

were suspended in case there was a lookout notice, non-bailable warrant and court directions against the errant husbands. Complaints filed by third parties too are accepted and investigated.

Show-cause notices are being sent to the NRIs once the RPO receives complaints.

The RPO is also dealing with cases of foreign nationals claiming to be Indian citizens and fraudulently applying for passports. In the last two years, 93 passports have been revoked.

Fraudulent activity

Mr. Reddy said Nepalis, Bangladeshis and Myanmarers had applied for passports using the Aadhaar cards, birth certificates and school certificates. But on account of police verification, the fraudulent activity was detected.

He pointed out that there had been instances in which

Bangladeshis had claimed to belong to West Bengal. Upon verification, the claim was found to be false and prosecution of the accused had begun.

He urged applicants to be wary of phishing websites and underscored that www.passportindia.gov.in was the only genuine website. While the application fee for ordinary passport is ₹1,500, those masquerading as genuine websites have been charging up to ₹5,000.

The RPO has received 2.82 lakh applications and has issued 2.69 lakh passports in the last six months. While there is a pendency of around 2,500, a chunk of this is due to insufficient documentation which the applicant has provided.

Mr. Reddy said the RPO had the required systems in place to bring about the move from current passports to chip-based e-passports.

Ray of hope



Monsoon awaited: Cloud formation over the historic Qutb Shahi monuments in Hyderabad on Saturday. After a delayed entry, monsoon's progression has been weak across Telangana. •NAGARA GOPAL

Eyes wide shut — blindfolds help students focus in class

For a limited number of classes, children listen to audio lectures with their eyes covered

**TANU KULKARNI
BENGALURU**

With parents and teachers struggling to address the ever shorter attention spans of children in a world of gadgets and screens, some of the more enterprising schools in Bengaluru have turned to an old-fashioned solution to improve concentration – closing eyes.

These schools have started a 'blindfold technique' where students have to cover their eyes with cloth and listen to audio lectures. These sessions usually last for less than 40 minutes.

Prashanthi Shashikanth, headmistress of Blossoms School said this mode of



Blindfold technique: Students covering their eyes and listening to audio lectures in a school in Bengaluru.

teaching had been made a regular feature this academic year, after a pilot last year.

Every week, students have one class per subject for which they have to sit wearing blindfolds. "It is an

innovative teaching method and helps engage the auditory skills of students when they get bored and don't want to read and write. As their eyes are closed, students have to focus entirely on listening to

the audio clips," said Ms. Shashikanth.

Shailaja Manjunath, whose child studied in Class X last year at Blossoms School and was part of the pilot project, gave a thumbs up to the unusual teaching technique.

"My daughter and her friends said it helped them improve their concentration as well as their ability to recall certain concepts," she said.

Ironically, this method is being adopted when classrooms are increasingly relying on technology as study aids.

Manoj Kumar Sharma, professor of clinical psychology, National Institute of Mental Health

and Neuro Sciences, who heads the Service for Healthy Use of Technology clinic, said schools should also test the efficacy of the method after observing students for a three to six-month duration.

D. Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka, said that Blossoms Research Application Interact Nurture research centre is conducting research to test the effectiveness of this technique. "Once we are convinced of its benefits, we will issue an advisory and teaching methodology to all our 3,000 member-schools," he said.

WHC makes its displeasure known to Hampi authorities

**STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU**

The World Heritage Committee, which supervises and advises on conservation of UNESCO world heritage sites, has "regretted" the lack of response from local authorities on "concerns" about developmental projects in the world heritage site of Hampi.

The issue pertains to road widening in the historical Kamalapur Tank area of Hampi, which had been viewed with serious concern by the WHC at its 41st session at Krakow in 2017. The State party – Archaeological Survey of India and Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority – had been given time till December 2018 to respond to the



The World Heritage Committee was concerned about a proposal to widen the road near the tank area in Hampi.

committee's observations. However, the Karnataka State party has not submitted a response, for which the WHC placed on record its "regret" at its 43rd session held in Baku, Azerbaijan. "...Despite its previous request, the State party has not yet provided any information on proposal to widen

a road near the Kamalapur tank area, which may have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property...the State party [must] provide, as a matter of urgency, detailed information concerning this project," notes the committee draft decision taken earlier this week.

IN BRIEF



Taj Mahal minaret to be repaired by September 15

AGRA
One of the four minarets of Taj Mahal will be repaired fully by September 15, ahead of the World Tourism Day, officials said. Reports had indicated that the stairs were damaged and needed replacement. PTI

DRI arrests Future Enterprises CFO

NEW DELHI
The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has arrested Dinesh Maheshwari, chief financial officer of Future Enterprises Ltd, for allegedly misusing the facility of duty free imports under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) agreement and evading customs duty of ₹14.58 crore.

Press Club of India backs boycott of Kangana

NEW DELHI
The Press Club of India on Saturday said it supported the Entertainment Journalists Guild in the boycott of actor Kangana Ranaut for refusing to apologise for lashing out at a Press Trust of India reporter. Ms. Ranaut had accused the reporter of writing negatively about her film *Manikarnika*. PTI

Unclaimed packet triggers bomb scare at IGI

NEW DELHI
An unclaimed packet in a bathroom triggered a bomb scare at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, officials said. A bomb detection and disposal team later declared the packet safe. A 1 kg gold bar was recovered from it. PTI

Man dies after hand is caught in Metro door

KOLKATA
A 66-year-old man died on Saturday when his hand was caught between the automated doors of a train, which started moving soon after from the Park Street station towards the Maidan metro station here. The man was dragged for several metres before the driver applied the brakes.



Bihar on alert: People looking at a culvert which was washed away by flood waters at East Champaran in Bihar on Saturday. The Water Resources Department has issued a high alert in vulnerable districts, particularly those bordering Nepal, as water level continues to rise in several rivers in the State following heavy rain in the past six days. PTI

Floods, landslips cause havoc in northeast

8 killed in the region; more than 14 lakh marooned in Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Floods and rain-induced landslips have claimed eight lives across the northeast in the past 36 hours. While five persons died in Meghalaya, two drowned in Mizoram's Lunglei district and one in Assam's Dhemaji district.

At least 16 people, including two 10-year-old girls in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang, have died in floods across the northeast in less than a week. A person each is reported missing from East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya and West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh after being swept away by strong water currents.

Officials of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said the number of flood-affected people jumped overnight by 5.57 lakh to 14.07 lakh by Saturday afternoon. "These people are from 2,168 villages from across 25 of Assam's 33 districts," an official said.

Western Assam's Barpeta,



To higher ground: A rhino calf moves to safety with its mother in Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam. RITU RAJ KONWAR

with 5.22 lakh victims, continues to be the worst-affected district followed by Dhemaji with 1.38 lakh persons.

Morigaon district is third on the list with 94,627 people forced to leave their homes.

The district officials have opened 234 relief camps where 20,047 people have taken shelter.

Kaziranga inundated

A bloating Brahmaputra has flowed into the Kaziranga National Park (KNP), inundating 95 of the 200 rhino

anti-poaching camps. Such camps, all on stilts to escape average flooding, are used by forest guards to watch over the 430 sq. km UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"We have imposed speed restrictions on the highway skirting the southern edge of KNP because animals of the park invariably move from the flooded park to the hills across the highway," the park's divisional forest officer Rohini Ballave Saikia said.

A hog deer was, however, run over early on Saturday by a speeding vehicle.

Shah takes stock of situation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a high-level meeting on Saturday to review the current flood situation in different parts of the country.

The India Metrological Department informed that Assam and Bihar have received excess rainfall in the past one week. Heavy rainfall is expected in these States in the next 48 hours.

The preparedness of the States and the Central Ministries concerned to deal with the situation was discussed during the meeting.

"DG, NDRF apprised that 73 NDRF teams have been pre-positioned in vulnerable areas of flood affected States along with all necessary equipments. NDRF teams have also rescued about 750 persons in Assam and Bihar," a statement by the MHA said.

The Home Minister directed the officers to take every possible measure to deal with the situation arising due to the southwest monsoon and to extend all necessary assistance to the flood-affected States.

Chandrayaan-2 all set for 3.84 lakh km voyage

ISRO to launch moon landing mission at 2.51 a.m. on Monday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Chandrayaan-2, the first Indian moon landing mission, is all set to head on its 3.84 lakh km voyage to the moon in the early hours of Monday, July 15.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has scheduled the launch of its lunar probe, by a GSLV MkIII rocket, from the country's Sriharikota spaceport for 2.51 a.m. And the countdown is set to begin at 6.51 a.m. on Sunday.

A sequel to Chandrayaan-1, which was launched in 2008 and only orbited the moon at a distance of 100 km, Chandrayaan-2 entails the first attempt by any nation to make a landing on the moon's mineral rich south pole.

Elite group

The mission is to put a lander and a robotic, solar-powered rover with six wheels on the lunar terrain on September 6 for a brief on-site exploration. If ISRO achieves the feat in this first attempt, it will make India only the fourth country to soft-land on the lunar surface. The erstwhile Soviet Union, the U.S. and China are the only countries to have achieved lunar landings.

Ever since the spacecraft left the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru and was integrated with the GSLV MkIII launch vehicle around early July, the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota has been the hub of mission activities.

During the journey, the lander rides on the parent spacecraft and the smaller rover nestles inside the lander. The entire assembly weighs about 3,840 kg, according to ISRO.

The combined entity is programmed to function autonomously through the course of the mission. Post-

Tale of two lunar missions

A look at how Chandrayaan-2 is different than its predecessor

	Chandrayaan-1	Chandrayaan-2
Launch year	October 2008	July 2019
Launch vehicle	PSLV-C11 [light lift vehicle]	GSLV MkIII [far more powerful]
Spacecraft size	1,380 kg	3,850 kg
Mission & life	Orbiter 1 year [failed 4 months prematurely]	Orbiter 1 year; lander and rover 14 earth days
Cost	₹540 crore	₹978 crore
Payloads	11, Indian & international	14 Indian (many same as on CY1) 1 from NASA 8 on orbiter 4 on lander 2 on rover
Result/Objective	Detected presence of water	India aims to be first country to land on and explore the lunar south pole
Specialty	Crashed the Moon Impact Probe near the southern lunar hemisphere	Will try to safely place the Vikram lander near the south pole



The GSLV MkIII launch vehicle

launch, the spacecraft's orbit will be gradually raised six times over 17 days before it is catapulted out of the earth's orbit towards moon. The 3.84 lakh km journey will take five days, but the combined spacecraft must orbit the moon for about 28 days before the lander separates itself from the orbiter and descends on to the lunar terrain.

The exercise would take 52 days, with the lander-rover combine programmed to reach the lunar terrain on September 6, ISRO Chairman K. Sivan said at a briefing in June. The rover would be launched from the lander after about four hours and would roam the terrain for about 500 m over the next 14

earth days – or one day on the moon.

Imaging, sampling the soil for minerals and water are some of the mission's tasks and information will be conveyed to earth through the orbiter or lander, and via the Indian Deep Space Network at Bialalu near Bengaluru.

The solar-powered lander and the rover are not expected to last beyond one lunar day, but 100 km above the moon's surface, the orbiter will continue to scan lunar features for at least a year.

ISRO's new 5,000-seater launch viewing gallery is expected to be packed with late-night onlookers. President Ram Nath Kovind is scheduled to visit the centre to witness the launch.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning at isolated places likely over Odisha.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	16.4	34.0	25.0	Kozhikode	33.0	25.0	
Ahmedabad	39.0	28.0		Kurnool	3.4	37.0	26.0
Aizawl	26.0	20.0		Lucknow	35.0	29.0	
Allahabad	36.0	28.0		Madurai	0.4	37.0	26.0
Bangaluru	30.0	21.0		Mangaluru	1.0	30.0	23.0
Bhopal	33.0	24.0		Mumbai	3.8	32.0	25.0
Bhubaneswar	18.0	34.0	26.0	Mysuru	31.0	21.0	
Chandigarh	11.9	32.0	24.0	New Delhi	39.0	31.0	
Chennai	35.0	28.0		Patna	30.2	34.0	25.0
Coimbatore	33.0	23.0		Port Blair	32.0	25.0	
Dehradun	12.4	30.0	25.0	Puducherry	1.0	32.0	23.0
Gangtok	36.6	21.0	17.0	Pune	0.9	23.0	30.0
Goa	113.3	30.0	24.0	Raipur	34.0	27.0	
Guwahati	2.2	32.0	26.0	Ranchi	33.0	24.0	
Hubballi	27.0	22.0		Shillong	18.1	25.0	18.0
Hyderabad	35.0	23.0		Shimla	24.2	22.0	15.0
Imphal	0.8	29.0	23.0	Srinagar	31.0	21.0	
Jaipur	37.0	28.0		Thiruvananthapuram	35.0	23.0	
Kochi	31.0	26.0		Tiruchi	38.0	27.0	
Kohima	3.4	27.0	18.0	Vijayawada	39.0	28.0	
Kolkata	35.0	28.0		Visakhapatnam	32.0	29.0	

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	133	52	63	106	106	106
Bangaluru	25	42	71	63	106	106
Chennai	16	22	58	89	106	106
Delhi	15	28	28	128	373	373
Hyderabad	57	30	12	53	69	69
Kolkata	9	51	14	82	101	101
Lucknow	13	35	47	106	106	106
Mumbai	18	102	21	58	68	68
Pune	68	8	67	46	46	46
Visakhapatnam	9	52	28	62	123	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.
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

Seed rights: Ministry notice to PepsiCo

Following application to revoke registration of potato variety used for Lays chips

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

Food and beverage giant PepsiCo India has been slapped with a notice from a Central agency under the Agriculture Ministry regarding an application to revoke the registration of its potato variety used to make its trademark Lays chips.

The application was filed by Kavitha Kuruganti, a convener of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture. The notice, which *The Hindu* has viewed, was issued by the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority on June 17. The company has been given three months to respond.

"We are studying the not-

ice and will be responding to it appropriately," a PepsiCo spokesperson told *The Hindu*.

According to sources the application to revoke PepsiCo's registration argues that the firm violated Section 39 (1) (iv) clause of the PPV&FRA [the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001] when it sued the Gujarat potato farmers.

This clause permits farmers to sow or even sell the produce of registered varieties, so long as they do not sell branded seed.

The application reportedly evokes Section 34 (f) of the Act which allows the registration to be revoked on

the grounds that "the breeder has not complied with the provisions of this Act or rules or regulations made thereunder".

The application also reportedly points out omissions from PepsiCo's original application for registration, which would be grounds for revocation under Section 34 (c).

This move comes in the aftermath of PepsiCo's legal action in April against at least nine potato farmers from Gujarat, who were sued for over ₹1 crore each for growing the potato variety registered by the company in 2016. Following public outrage and intervention by the Gujarat government, the

company withdrew its cases in May.

Farmers' union have also come together to prevent any future cases against farmers. On Saturday major unions, including those affiliated to the BJP, gathered to draft an action plan.

Bhartiya Kisan Union president Rakesh Tikait has threatened that farmers would deliberately plant the registered variety to show that they had the right to do so.

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh plans to hold a national "Quit India" protest on August 9 to protect the seed rights of Indian farmers, said its general secretary Badri Narayan Chaudhary.

2,900 scientist positions are vacant, says Minister

Most vacancies in labs, CSIR institutes

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Nearly 2,900 vacancies for scientists in institutes supported by the Department of Science Technology (DST) are lying vacant, said Union Science Minister Harsh Vardhan in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

The bulk of the vacancies are in laboratories and institutes of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). While the CSIR-Central Food and Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore has 111 posts vacant, the CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad has 102 and the CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory, Pune has 123 vacancies.

The CSIR has devised a recruitment formula and is

looking to fill the posts over time and not at one go, an official told *The Hindu*. "Filling it at a go would mean a similar shortfall after, say 20 years. What we're doing instead is following a formula that accounts for existing vacancies, the number of scientists who will retire. So we'll fill these vacancies over time," Shekhar Mande, Director-General, CSIR, said.

The DST was allotted ₹5,321 crore in the 2019 Budget, which is ₹207 crore more than the 2018-19 allocation. The CSIR was allocated ₹4,895 crore, up from the ₹4,572 crore last year.

"As and when a vacancy arises, the concerned laboratory/institute initiates steps to fill it up in accordance with the extant rules."

Bid to dispel anti-Islam views

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH), an Islamic organisation, on Saturday said it would set up information centres and use social media in the next four years to dispel the "negative propaganda" against Islam and set up entrepreneurship development centres for Muslim youth, among other welfare measures.

"The Jamaat would focus on Indian society, seeking to rebuild it on healthy basis. Universal values would be protected and attempts will be made to dispel the atmosphere of distrust and conflict," a statement said.

The statement added that JIH would aim at communicating the "true message" of Islam and "remove misunderstandings".

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FROM PAGE ONE

Five more Cong. MLAs move Supreme Court

The legislators, represented by advocate Subhranshu Padhi, said there is no need for a probe by the Speaker into whether their resignations were "voluntary or genuine" as they had submitted their letters in person. Besides, they have filed separate sworn affidavits in the apex court saying their signatures on the resignation letters, which they tendered in person, are their own and genuine. The affidavits have been filed to obviate any doubts of the voluntary nature of their resignations.

They said this would answer the conditions mandated under Article 190 of the Constitution and under Rule 202 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly. The writ petition filed by the rebel MLAs should be allowed on this ground alone.

The MLAs said there was no disqualification proceedings against them at the time of their resignation. Subsequent disqualification proceedings on the basis of a complaint by the Congress

party is infructuous.

"The subsequent disqualification petition is absolutely without any grounds. This was filed by the Congress party on the ground that the MLAs have not attended the Legislature Party meeting held outside the House. The non-attendance of the meeting outside of the House is not a ground for disqualification," the MLAs argued.

Seeking impleadment, the MLAs said the court should implement its order of July 11 asking the Speaker to decide on their resignations forthwith or within the remaining part of the day. They said they were handled and confined by certain persons within the premises of the House when they sought to submit their resignation on July 10. Police personnel had to escort them to safety.

The Supreme Court has asked the Speaker to defer any decision on disqualification or resignation of the 10 MLAs for now. The court is scheduled to hear the petition of the 10 MLAs on July 16.

Sawant inducts 3 former Cong. MLAs into Cabinet

Goa Governor Mridula Sinha administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new ministers at a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan on Saturday afternoon.

Prior to the swearing-in, the Chief Minister issued a notification, dropping all three Goa Forward Party (GFP) ministers - Deputy Chief Minister Vijai Sardesai, Water Resources Minister Vinod Palyekar, Rural Development Minister Jayesh Salgaonkar - and Independent MLA and Revenue Minister Rohan Khaunte from the Cabinet to accommodate the new members.

Ten Congress MLAs had on Wednesday joined the BJP, increasing the strength of the party to 27 in the 40-member House. Strengthened by their support, Mr. Sawant decided to drop the GFP, a regional party that was instrumental in forming the Manohar Parrikar-led government in 2017.

India hands over 250 homes for Rohingya

According to a senior official involved in the disbursement, the Myanmar government has also handed over a list of 21 other projects that it wants India to fund as part of the agreement, including the construction of small villages, culverts and school buildings.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya, mostly Muslim, fled the violence that started after a local militant group ARSA attacked several Myanmar police posts in August 2017, killing about 12, and also Hindus in nearby Rakhine villages.

In attacks on the Muslim Rohingya, termed 'retaliatory' by Myanmar's Junta and the majority Buddhist community, thousands were killed. Nearly a million Rohingya, including about 400 Hindu families, are now living in precarious conditions in the Bangladesh's mud tracts in Kutupalong camp.

Mynamar keen: official
The government official said contrary to the general impression that the Myanmar government is resisting the return of the Rohingya, it is actually keen on assuring them of a safe passage to their villages, and India wants to "create incentives" for the refugees to go home.

So far, the official said, more than 20,000 refugees' names have been sent to the Myanmar government for verification, the first step in repatriating them, of which

Later in the day, Mr Sardesai announced that the GFP was withdrawing support to the Sawant government.

'Death of a legacy'

Addressing a gathering at Parrikar's memorial at Miramar, Mr. Sardesai, said the induction of 10 Congress MLAs into the BJP was the "death of the legacy" of late Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar. "Parrikar died twice... once on March 17 physically while today it is the death of his political legacy," Mr. Sardesai said.

"We supported the Pramod Sawant government because I had given my word to Parrikar that the support to the government will continue in any circumstances. We now feel cheated and ditched by the NDA," he said.

Mr. Sardesai reiterated that he had not received any communication from Central leaders of the BJP.

about 13,000 have been confirmed by the authorities. Myanmar officials, including their Foreign Secretary, are expected to travel to Bangladesh and assure the refugees of their safety if they return.

International concern

However, the government in NayPyiTaw still refuses to recognise the Rohingya as citizens and will not prosecute military personnel and civilians for the killings, which the United Nations officials said bore the "hallmarks of genocide". In such a situation, several international refugee relief and human rights agencies have counselled against forcing the refugees to return to Myanmar.

Making the situation worse are monsoon rains and flooding at the camps in Bangladesh that have already affected about 45,000 people since April this year, even as international funding for the camps dwindles.

Despite the desperate situation for them, there are no signs yet that the Rohingya refugees will return at any specific date, and officials could not confirm when they would actually occupy the houses being built by India and also by Japan, China and ASEAN countries for them. Building trust, they say, is far more difficult than simply rebuilding Rohingya homes and villages.

No Chinese intrusion: Rawat

Clarifies that a few Chinese had only come to witness a local festival in Ladakh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

There was no transgression by China in the Demchok sector in Ladakh recently when banners were waved during a local festival on the Indian side along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Chief of the Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat, said here on Saturday.

"Celebrations were going on our side and to see this, some Chinese also came opposite. There is no intrusion," he said, adding there are differing perceptions on the LAC and both sides conduct patrols accordingly.

The current issue was



Clearing the air: Army chief General Bipin Rawat addressing a seminar at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi on Saturday. •PTI

raised with the Chinese during the flag meeting and it has been resolved, he said. "We have a very good work-

ing relationship with the Chinese."

On July 6, during a local festival on the Indian side

called Doley Tango, to mark the birthday of the Dalai Lama, 11 or 12 people were seen waving banners from the Chinese side across the Indus which read "Ban all activity to split Tibet".

To questions whether they were Chinese civilians or soldiers, Gen. Rawat said, "There are civilians who have come in and obviously when civilians come in, Chinese [soldiers] will accompany them. Nobody would want civilians going to the border without their activity being monitored. Both sides will continue to monitor the activity of civilians along the LAC and even LoC."

Cleaning the House



Many hands: BJP MPs Hema Malini and Anurag Thakur and their colleagues taking part in a 'Swachhta Abhiyan' at the Parliament House Complex in New Delhi on Saturday. •SANDEEP SAXENA

Ram Lal back in RSS after 13 years in key BJP post

Shift follows his request to Shah

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

After 13 years as the BJP's general secretary (organisation), Ram Lal has been declared co-in-charge of the RSS's publicity and communications wing, signalling his return to the mother organisation from the political wing of the Sangh Parivar.

Top sources in the RSS confirmed that the announcement had been made at a meeting of the RSS top brass being held in Vijaywada.

The name of V. Satish, currently the joint general secretary (organisation) in the BJP, is doing the rounds as replacement for Mr. Lal. Other names, including that of B.L. Santhosh, seconded to the Karnataka unit, are also doing the rounds.

The official announcement on this would be made

by the BJP, said RSS sources.

The general secretary (organisation) is one of the most powerful positions in the BJP hierarchy and is usually occupied by a full-time *pracharak* from the RSS on loan to the party.

Mr. Lal, as per letters made available to *The Hindu*, had written to BJP president Amit Shah in September 2017, asking to be relieved of his responsibility in the party citing his advancing age (he was 65 then).

At that time, owing to several upcoming Assembly elections and the Lok Sabha election, his request was turned down.

Party sources say he wrote again in early July and a decision to relieve him was taken by both the BJP and the RSS.

9 councillors return to Trinamool

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Nine councillors of West Bengal's Kanchrapara Municipality, who had defected to the BJP days after the Lok Sabha election, returned to the Trinamool Congress on Saturday.

The development comes two days after five other Kanchrapara councillors returned to the Trinamool. With this, the party's tally has increased to 19 in the 24-seat municipality, allowing it to regain control over the civic body board.

Earlier this week, eight councillors of the Halisahar Municipality, who had switched allegiance to BJP, returned to the Trinamool.

Cong. blames govt. for rising cases of child sexual abuse

Party says the 'Beti Bachao' campaign was merely lip service

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after a Supreme Court Bench led by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi took *suo motu* cognisance of the "alarming rise" in the number of cases of sexual abuse of children, the Congress on Saturday criticised the Narendra Modi government, saying the "Beti Bachao" campaign was merely lip service as it spends only "five paise per girl child in the country".

According to the data collected by the court in the past six months, more than 24,000 child rape cases have been registered, of

Modi, Xi to balance ties on the Ganga

A boat ride likely to be included in summit schedule, which is yet to be finalised

ATUL ANEJA
BEIJING

The details of the second informal summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi in Varanasi, the Prime Minister's Lok Sabha constituency, are yet to be finalised.

A boat ride by the two leaders on the Ganga is expected, echoing their half-an-hour sail on the East Lake in Wuhan last April when they met at their first informal summit.

"At the bilateral meeting in Bishkek on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, President Xi stressed that the two countries must celebrate the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic ties befittingly after congratulating Mr. Modi once again on his victory in India's general election," a Chinese official



Xi Jinping with Narendra Modi at Sabarmati in 2014.

said. "India and China are ancient civilisational states, which will be the pillars of the multi-polar world. This shapes the context of the meeting between the two leaders," the official said.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to visit Beijing next month for the second meeting of the India-China high-level people-to-people exchanges me-

'Surgical strikes show political resolve'

Rawat says terror will be put down

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

The country has come a long way in beefing up surveillance along the border since the Kargil conflict 20 years ago to ensure there is no repeat of such an incident, the Chief of the Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat, said here on Saturday. The surgical strikes of 2016 and 2019 show the political resolve of the country in dealing with terror, he said.

"We are working in a coordinated manner for a cogent and synchronised national response against sub-conventional and asymmetric threats by any adversary. Surgical strikes post-Uri and in Balakot have amply demonstrated our political and military resolve against terror. Any act of terror will not go unpunished," Gen. Rawat said. He was speaking at a commemorative event on 20 years of the Kargil conflict and the lessons learnt, organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies.

A book, *Surprise, Strategy and Vijay: 20 years of Kargil and beyond*, was released at the seminar with accounts by various officers who fought in the conflict and edited by Lt. Gen. V.K. Ahluwalia (retd), Director of the centre.

In the summer of 1999, India was caught off guard as Pakistani regular soldiers dressed up as irregulars occupied the icy heights in Kargil and adjoining areas. After initial losses, India eventually recaptured the peaks but as a strategy refused to cross the Line of Control or open new fronts.

Several lacunae

Talking of the conflict, then Army Chief, Gen V.P. Malik, highlighted a lack of surveillance, intelligence failure, a shortage of equipment and sanctions among the major

We are working in a coordinated manner for a cogent national response against asymmetric threats by any adversary

failures and challenges. "There was absolutely no assessment anywhere that Pakistan Army was planning an infiltration of this scale," Gen. Malik said and added that initially the infiltration was thought to be a counter-terror operation and different tactics were adopted. "So we suffered high casualties initially," he said.

Talking of the changing nature of warfare, Gen. Rawat observed that future conflicts will be more "violent and unpredictable".

"Unconventional and asymmetric wars are gaining pre-eminence. In the future, even conventional conflicts are likely to have a large asymmetric component - what is now being called hybrid wars," he said.

Self-reliance is key

Talking of the continued import of defence equipment, Gen. Rawat said: "We can't afford to be import-dependent throughout" and "achieving self-reliance in critical weapon technologies involves realisation of the defence public sector units, private sector participation and impetus to research and development".

In this direction, he announced that the first ordnance factory being established jointly with Russia to manufacture the Ak-203s is being headed by a serving two-star Major-General as the Chief Executive Officer.

During Kargil, heavy artillery in the form of 155mm Bofors guns and aerial bombardment by the Indian Air Force (IAF) with laser-guided bombs turned the tide in India's favour.

chanism with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. While the focus of this mechanism is on people-to-people exchanges and culture, all topics of ties, including the detailing of the Varanasi summit, will be covered, except for trade and commerce.

Railways and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will also visit Beijing next month to address the nearly \$60-billion trade deficit between the two countries. India's participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is also expected to be discussed then.

Trade worries

Trade deficit is now one of the top items on the agenda. Mr. Modi is understood to have highlighted the need for reducing the trade gap at his meeting with Mr. Xi in

Bishkek. Faced with an escalating trade war with the U.S., Mr. Xi affirmed that the issue would be addressed.

Nevertheless, India's Ambassador to China Vikram Misri said at an Asia Society event in Hong Kong last week that the "trade imbalance is not economically sustainable in the long run". "It is in our mutual interest to find workable solutions before the markets react in unpredictable ways and the issue becomes politically sensitive," he said.

The boundary issue continues to impart background friction to the ties. Described as a "courtesy meeting" on the Twitter handle of the Embassy of India in Beijing, Mr. Misri on Friday met Hong Liang, the new Director-General for Boundary and Oceanic Affairs in the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

As separatists call strike, Yatra suspended for a day

Shutdown on Martyrs' Day hits life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAMMU

The Amarnath Yatra from Jammu was suspended on Saturday as a precautionary measure in view of a separatists-sponsored strike in the Kashmir Valley on Martyrs' Day, officials said.

July 13 is observed as Martyrs' Day as a tribute to the 22 people killed in firing by the forces of Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh in 1931. In Srinagar, Governor Satya Pal Malik skipped the function organised to pay homage to the martyrs.

The strike severely affected normal life in the Valley as shops and business remained shut and public

transport remained off roads, the officials said.

On July 8 too, the pilgrimage was suspended as a precautionary measure in view of the third death anniversary of former Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani.

As many as 12 batches of pilgrims have so far left from Jammu for the twin base camps of Pahalgam and Batal in the Valley since the beginning of the pilgrimage on July 1. Over 1.75 lakh people have so far registered for the pilgrimage this year.

Multi-tier security arrangements are in place for the smooth conduct of the yatra that concludes on August 15.

NSCN(IM) slams move for tribal register

Terms it a bid to divide and undermine the inherent rights of the Nagas, who want to live together

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) has slammed the Nagaland government's exercise to compile a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN), saying it is a bid to divide and undermine the inherent rights of the Nagas and dilute the peace process approaching a final settlement.

The NSCN-IM, the largest and most prominent of the armed Naga groups that signed a framework accord with the Centre in August 2015, termed the RIIN exercise a conspiracy of the groups that had agreed to the 16-Point Agreement of 1960.

That accord, signed between New Delhi and the Naga People's Convention on

It is the legitimate right and political decision of the Naga people to live together under one political roof...The Nagas will not accept their division by the imposed artificial State and international boundaries

NATIONAL SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND (ISAK-MUIVAH FACTION)

July 26, 1960, paved the way for Nagaland's statehood on December 1, 1963. The new State was earlier the Naga Hills-Tuensang area of Assam.

Prolonged battle

The agreement for forming a State "within the Indian Union" and to be "under the Ministry of External Affairs" followed a prolonged battle for the independence of Naga-inhabited areas.

"The Nagaland State does [not] and will not represent

the national decision of the Naga people," the NSCN-IM's publicity wing said in a statement on Friday evening. "It [the State] was formed purely to divide the Nagas," the NSCN-IM said, adding that all Nagas were indigenous in the ancestral homeland that is contiguous.

One of the major demands of the NSCN-IM, in ceasefire mode since July 1997, has been for bringing all Naga-inhabited areas under a single administrative umbrella in a homeland

called "Greater Nagalim".

"It is the legitimate right and political decision of the Naga people to live together under one political roof," the NSCN-IM said. "The Nagas will not accept their division by the imposed artificial State and international boundaries. This is the key focus of all Nagas and any political steps to be taken must be in conjunction with this decision."

Honourable solution

"Nothing is conclusive on the Naga issue, until and unless a mutually agreed, honourable political solution is signed between the two entities (Centre and NSCN-IM). Therefore, any attempt to dilute the final political settlement by justifying any past accord of treason should be seriously viewed by all Nagas," the armed group said,

referring to the 16-Point Agreement.

The contents of the NSCN-IM's accord with the Centre have not been made public.

According to the Nagaland government, the objective of the RIIN was to prevent non-indigenous residents of the State from acquiring indigenous inhabitant certificates for jobs and beneficiary schemes. This has raised apprehensions that Nagas from beyond Nagaland may be excluded.

There are more than 50 Naga tribes across Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Myanmar, besides Nagaland. Though the NSCN-IM has had its peace headquarters at Hebron near Nagaland's Dimapur, most of its members belong to the Tangkhul community dominating the Ukhrul and Kampong districts of Manipur.

End confusion over 1966-71 refugees, says CPI(M)

'Many of them were identified by Foreigners' Tribunals'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has asked the State Coordinator for the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to remove the confusion over the status of refugees who came to Assam between 1966 and 1971 and add their names to the citizens' list to be published by July 31.

The midnight of March 24, 1971, is the cut-off for detecting, detaining and deporting undocumented migrants under the Assam Accord of 1985, which was signed between the Union government and the leaders of the Assam Agitation that took place between 1979 and 1985.

The Accord stipulates that

They are very much eligible for inclusion in the NRC. But there prevails a lot of confusion...

DEBEN BHATTACHARYYA
CPI(M) leader

those who came from Bangladesh between 1966 and 1971 be barred from voting for 10 years before their requests for citizenship is considered.

A major stream of refugees entered India after the India-Pakistan war in 1965 and during the war for liberation of East Pakistan that resulted in the birth of Bangladesh in 1971.

"There is a confusion over the status of those who entered India from the 'specified territory' between Janu-

ary 1, 1966, and March 24, 1971. Many people belonging to this category were identified by the Foreigners' Tribunals and asked to register themselves with the competent authority," CPI(M) leader Deben Bhattacharyya said in a letter to NRC State Coordinator Prateek Hajela on Friday.

"A big number of such people registered themselves... They are very much eligible for inclusion in the NRC. But there prevails a lot of confusion among NRC officials in some areas over their eligibility..." the CPI(M) leader said.

The party urged Mr. Hajela to include the people belonging to the refugee stream from 1966 to 1971 in the NRC.

Tripura man in Assam detention centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

A 45-year-old man from Tripura was on Saturday sent to a detention camp after being declared a foreigner.

The police said Tapan Debnath, from Rabindranagar village in the Sonamura police station limits in Tripura, was arrested from the Birubari locality here on Friday evening. He was sent to the Goalpara Central Jail.

An officer of the border wing said the man had since 2017 been avoiding notices from it and those from a Foreigners' Tribunal (FT) to which his case was referred. "He paints buildings for a living, has a wife and two

children, and as per the statement recorded when he was marked as a suspected non-citizen two years ago, he came to Guwahati from Tripura when he was 21. But not only did he ignore the notices issued over the past 24 months, he kept changing his rented houses and ignored our calls," a border wing officer at the city's Fatashil Ambari police station said.

Mr. Debnath showed the copy of his father's citizenship certificate of 1956. "Citizenship certificates issued in Tripura are considered invalid in Assam because of the dubious ways in which they are known to be acquired," the officer said.

Police deny communal angle to assault on madrasa students

Say they were not targeted for refusing to chant 'Jai Sri Ram'

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh police on Saturday denied the allegation that a group of madrasa students were assaulted in Unnao for refusing to chant "Jai Sri Ram".

This came a day after the Unnao police booked four persons and detained two for questioning following the attack in which four madrasa boys playing cricket were injured. In a statement, the police said they had found that "the issue of raising slogans ('Jai Sri Ram') did not come to light".

Top State officials, including Additional Chief Secretary Awanish Awasthi and Additional Director-General of Police, Law and Order,



The police presenting an accused on Saturday.

*TWITTER/@UNNAOPOLICE

P.V. Ramasastri, who held a hurriedly called press conference late on Friday, said the investigation had "confirmed" that "no religious slogans" were raised. Similar "misleading" incidents had been reported from

Kanpur and Aligarh by "distorting facts" in a bid to "spoil the communal atmosphere", the State Home Department said.

Going by the investigation, eyewitness statements, CCTV footage and call detail records, the four youth mentioned in the FIR were not present at the site during the incident.

An FIR has been registered against four persons, allegedly right-wing activists, at the Kotwali police station in Unnao.

The police have now identified four other youths and arrested one of them, Sanket Bharti. They say the incident was a brawl after an argument broke out between the madrasa boys and a youth.

Yashwant Sinha pans sovereign bonds idea

Says it's a fraught enterprise in the climate of a trade war, and unnecessary exposure to global market

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha has expressed concern over the Union Budget proposal of floating sovereign bonds.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on the eve of the launch of his autobiography, *Relentless: An Autobiography* (Bloomsbury), Mr. Sinha said the government's plans for sovereign bonds was something that had not been done by any government since 1947, and was a fraught enterprise in the current climate of a global trade war, and unnecessary exposure to the global market.

Even in 1991, in the face of the balance of payments (BoP) crisis, India did not go in for it, he said.

"There are three types of external borrowing: one is the Indian private sector borrowing abroad as well as the public sector; the second

Budget will not be a worthwhile Budget unless it provides for every service...You can't have a bland statement saying we will do this and that and not say where the money will come from

YASHWANT SINHA
Former Union Minister for Finance



is what I and Dr. Manmohan Singh also did, which was the Resurgent India and Millennium Development Bonds, which were not sovereign bonds, but were issued by the SBI; the third type is sovereign bonds where any government issues a bond in its name. This we haven't done since 1947, for some very solid reasons. It was suggested to me in 1998 by investors and economists abroad that we should, but the idea was discussed and discarded. Instead we decided that the SBI would issue the bonds preventing the country's reputation, its glo-

bal reputation from being on the line and you avoid being exposed to the vagaries of the global market as well," he said.

Domestic resources
"The current government is saying they need to supplement resources, but I feel we could raise it here, domestically. I don't know who gave the government this idea, as we are increasing our exposure to the global market at a time when there is a trade war on between the U.S. and China and between the U.S. and us as well. You never know what might happen,

the rupee is semi-convertible and there may be pressure on that. By bonds like Resurgent India, et al, you are injecting money straight into the banking system," he said.

Not a Budget at all

Mr. Sinha, who presented the largest number of Budgets in non-Congress governments, described the last Budget speech as "not a Budget at all".

"Under the Constitution, [the Budget] is a statement of annual accounts, over a period of time, it has changed a bit, but this year it has changed completely and there is no difference between the Budget and the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament. The difference between the two used to be that the President can say what he is told to say about the future course of the government, etc, but he

does not have to specify where the money is going to come from. A Budget will not be a worthwhile Budget unless it provides for every service. Service means every scheme, and that is why we have the provision of making even token allocations; you can make a provision of one rupee, but it has to be made. You can't have a bland statement saying we will do this and that and not say where the money will come from," he said.

Dialogue with the deaf

Mr. Sinha, in his book, describes himself as a bit of a hawk with regard to Pakistan, and describes attempts to hold dialogue with that country as "a dialogue with the deaf."

He goes into details about his own stint as the External Affairs Minister at a time when relations had hit a low with Pakistan.

Rising hate crimes can damage economic growth: Adi Godrej

Murthy says this is not what our forefathers got freedom for

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Industrialist Adi Godrej on Saturday warned that the rising intolerance, hate crimes and moral policing could "seriously damage" economic growth.

"It's not all a rosy picture now. One must not lose sight of the massive impoverishment plaguing our nation which can seriously damage the pace of growth going forward and prevent us from realising our potential," Mr. Godrej said at the 150th anniversary celebration of his alma mater St. Xavier's College.

He said economic growth would be affected if "rising intolerance, social instability, hate crimes, violence



Adi Godrej

against women, moral policing, caste and religion-based violence and many other sorts of intolerance that are rampant" were not contained to ensure social harmony.

He said unemployment was at 6.1%, a four-decade high, and should be tackled at the earliest.

Mr. Godrej, however, commended Prime Minister

Narendra Modi on presenting a "grand vision" to build a new India and nearly double the economy to a \$5-trillion giant over the course of his second term in office.

Call to youth

Infosys co-founder N.R. Narayana Murthy said that looking at "what is happening in different parts of the country today", the youth need to state bluntly that this was not the country for which our forefathers got freedom.

"But how many of us are doing it? Nobody is doing it, sadly. That is the reason why this country is in the state that it is. Nobody wants to displease anybody by saying what is wrong," he said.

Road to a shrine

The second Kartarpur talks will be held on Sunday on the Pakistani side of the Attari-Wagah border at 10 a.m. IST

Indian and Pakistani teams meet to "bridge" differences on:

- Who can go? Open to all Indians or only Sikh pilgrims?
- What documentation will be required? Government-issued identity cards or only passport?
- How many can travel - unlimited or any caps on numbers?
- Transport for pilgrims - by vehicle or by foot?
- Infrastructure at zero point - bridge or causeway?
- Allowing more pilgrims on special occasions like Gurdwaras and Baisakhi
- Indian concerns over presence of Khalistani separatist activists on Gurdwara committee

India to construct a passenger terminal complex with a capacity of 5,000 pilgrims a day and a highway. Completion target: October 31, 2019 ahead of the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in November

More than 250 labourers and 30 engineers are working in three shifts to complete the work on a passenger terminal and National Highway near Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur district.

IS link: NIA searches four places in T.N.

It had arrested six people last month

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI/NAGAPATTINAM

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at four places in Tamil Nadu - two in Chennai and two in Nagapattinam - to probe the nexus with six IS sympathisers / accused who were arrested in Coimbatore last month. The premises searched included the office and house of Wahdat-e-Islami Tamil Nadu leader Syed Mohammed Bukhari.

Last month the agency had arrested six persons, including Mohammed Azarudeen, in Coimbatore.

Social media network

The arrests followed the seizure of incriminating documents from their homes and work places, for propagating IS ideology of the IS on social media, aimed at recruiting youth for carrying out terrorist attacks in South India, especially Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

According to the NIA, prime accused Mohammed Azarudeen was a Facebook friend of Sri Lankan suicide bomber Zahran Hashim, considered the mastermind of the Easter Sunday serial blasts that killed 257.

Following the seizure and confessions from them, Saturday's search was conducted at four places in Chennai and Nagapattinam said sources.

Naming it as Tamil Nadu Ansarulla Case, the agency registered, on July 9, a case against Syed Mohammed Bukhari, resident of Veprey and leader of Wahdat-e-Islami, Hassan Ali Yunusmaricar and Mohammed Yusufudeen Harish Mohamed, natives of Nagapattinam and



Police personnel at the All-India Imams Council office in Chennai, on Saturday. *B. VELANKANNI RAJ

others under section 120B (Criminal Conspiracy), 121A (Conspiring to commit certain offences against the State and 122(Collecting Arms with intention of waging war against India) of IPC besides provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

A release said this was based on credible information received that the accused persons, while being within and beyond India, had conspired and prepared 'to wage war against the Government of India by forming the terrorist gang Ansarulla.' It has also been learnt that the accused and their associates had collected funds and made preparations to carry out terrorist attacks in India, with the intention of establishing Islamic rule in India, said NIA.

During searches, nine mobile phones, 15 SIM cards, seven memory cards, three laptops, five hard discs besides documents have been seized. Three accused are being questioned.

Police and intelligence sources said Wahdat-e-Islami could be an offshoot of banned outfit Students Islamic Movement of India.

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(TIDCO Centre for Life Sciences)
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No.5, CSIR Road, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113. Ph: +91 44 2254 2060/61/62, Fax: +91 44 2254 2055, E-mail: md@ticebiopark.com

TICEL Bio Park-III, Coimbatore

Re-Tender for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Lift & Allied Works in the construction of TICEL Bio Park - III (G + 13 Upper Floors) at SF No.66,67,68 & 75, Off Maruthamalai Road, Somayampalayam Village, Bharathiyar University P.O., Coimbatore - 641 046.

TICEL Bio Park - I established in Technical Collaboration with Cornell University, USA at a cost of ₹ 54 Crores is in Operation Since 2004. The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, has inaugurated the ₹ 168 Crores TICEL Bio Park - II on 09-09-2015 and also announced under Rule 110 for construction of Biotechnology Park - III in Anna University Campus, Coimbatore at a cost of ₹ 55 Crores.

TICEL invites Tender for the following service for Bio Park - III at Coimbatore:

Name of the Tender	Tender Document Cost (₹ in Lakhs)	EMD (₹ in Lakhs)	Date of the Pre-Bid Meeting at Site	Last Date of Submission	Date of Technical Bid Opening
Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Lift & Allied Works.	16,800/-	1.42	2.00 P.M. on 23-07-2019	31-07-2019 before 3.00 P.M.	31-07-2019 @ 3.30 P.M. @ TICEL Bio Park-I, No.5, CSIR Road, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113.

Tender Documents can be downloaded from TICEL's website viz. www.ticebiopark.com from 13-07-2019 onwards. The downloaded Tender Documents should be submitted by the Bidder along with Tender Document Fee of ₹ 16,800/- in the form of crossed Demand Draft drawn on any Nationalized Bank in favour of TICEL Bio Park Ltd., Payable at Chennai. Tender Documents submitted without the non-refundable Tender Document Fee will be summarily rejected. The EMD should be in the form of Crossed Demand Draft drawn on any Nationalized Bank in favour of TICEL Bio Park Ltd., Payable at Chennai. TICEL reserves the right to accept/reject any one/all the Tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Pakistan tightens media censorship

Two interviews of Opposition leaders were taken off air, another one was cancelled at the last minute

MEHMAL SARFRAZ
LAHORE

In recent weeks, Pakistan has seen interviews of two high-profile Opposition leaders being taken off air, raising fears of growing censorship of media by the government.

After former President Asif Ali Zardari's interview went off air from Geo News earlier this month, an interview with Maryam Nawaz, leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and daughter of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, on Hum News met with the same fate last week.

Journalist Nadeem Malik, who interviewed Ms. Nawaz, tweeted that he "just came to know [that] @MaryamNSharif interview has been stopped forcefully just few minutes after it started Live". He telecast the interview on his Twitter and YouTube accounts.

In a press conference held earlier this month, Ms. Nawaz played a video of Judge Arshad Malik in which he is seen allegedly admitting that he was blackmailed into giving a verdict against former Prime Minister Sharif. TV channels showed her press conference live and were later sent notices by the regulatory authority PEMRA.

Also, Ms. Nawaz held a rally in Mandi Bahauddin in Punjab. Three channels that gave coverage to the rally were taken off air. It took almost a day of back-channel negotiations to restore them. The media has been directed not to give airtime to those under trial or those who have been convicted.

"Don't know [how long the censorship will continue] but as a journalist, my job is to dig out facts and report, which I will continue to do. The Islamabad High Court's



Not on air: Microphones of Pakistani channels seen ahead of a press conference in Islamabad. Channels are being taken off air with little or no notice, complain journalists. •GETTY IMAGES

decision [to remove Judge Arshad Malik] also proves that it was the professional journalistic effort to highlight the issues relating to the videos transparently and justly," Nadeem Malik told *The Hindu*.

Senior journalist Najam Sethi was also planning to interview Ms. Nawaz, but it couldn't even be recorded. "Our Channel 24 HD was taken off air following instructions from unnamed government and state organs to cable operators across the country," Mr. Sethi told *The Hindu*.

Palpable threat

The channel's management was told that 'excessive' coverage of Maryam Nawaz Sharif's rally would not be condoned, Mr. Sethi added.

The channel was restored after a few days following nationwide condemnation by media and political parties of bullying tactics. "However, when I subsequently scheduled an interview of Maryam Nawaz, Channel 24

The ruling party has built a narrative that anyone who speaks against it is a traitor

FEREHAH IDREES
Journalist

management pulled it at the last minute. It seems there was a palpable threat that if the interview went ahead, the channel would be taken off air for a whole month."

Mr. Sethi believes that resistance is mounting. "Respected journalists are standing up and telling tales of personal repression. Some small channels are defying state censorship. Media bodies and political parties are raising concerns in public. If there is public agitation against the government's back-breaking economic policies, the media can peg its freedom to it and break its chains," said Mr. Sethi.

In recent days, intimidation and harassment of journalists have taken another form. "What happened at

my house is obviously to harass me, which is an old tactic," award-winning journalist Asma Shirazi told *The Hindu*, referring to two incidents of attempted break-in.

"It is not possible for us to stay silent and not voice our dissent. Our fight for freedom of expression and the truth will continue. Censorship is there and it is blatant. We are fighting a war against such censorship. We have a long history of fighting for media freedom. We will not give up," she added.

Journalist Munizae Jahangir said that in a democracy, the Opposition should be allowed to be heard; media should not be censored through vague laws or forced to self-censor; and civil society movements should not be malign and/or banned as 'anti-state' movements. "National security cannot be about protecting vested interests of a powerful military but must instead protect vulnerable citizens of society. Pakistan is a resilient country with strong lawyers' bo-

dies, divided yet lively journalist unions, a fierce Opposition and citizens that have fought for their rights under harsher circumstances, so I am confident that at the very least there will be a ferocious fight for democratic values," Ms. Jahangir said.

Gag order

Anchorperson Fereha Idrees believes that the notion that there is a gag order on media in Pakistan is now spreading.

"Sooner rather than later, it will come to haunt the government. If anyone has been the beneficiary of free media, it has been this government. During the *dharma* days, my present channel AbTakK faced a serious [closure] threat because of the then PML-N government's pressure, but we sustained the pressure to support the Opposition and their right to free speech. Sadly and ironically, ever since the PTI [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf] has come into power, they have built a narrative that anyone who speaks against them is either paid or a traitor," she said.

She added that Pakistan is seeing a very active but directionless PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority), which is putting channels off air with little or no notice just because they are showing two sides of the story.

"The other day, a PTI spokesperson labelled me a criminal for glorifying Maryam Nawaz's speech because I was reading out her tweet. Such a level of intolerance is only reflective of a narrow vision. If the government wants us to tell a good story, they need to give us good stories instead of yelling at us for showing voice of dissent," Ms. Idrees said.

26 killed as gunmen from al-Shabaab storm Somalia hotel

Attack lasted 11 hours, foreign citizens among the victims

REUTERS
MOGADISHU

Islamist gunmen killed at least 26 people, including Kenyans, Americans, a Briton and Tanzanians, when they stormed a hotel in Somalia's southern port city of Kismayo, a regional State President said on Saturday, the deadliest day in the city since insurgents were driven out in 2012.

A car bomb exploded at the hotel where local elders and lawmakers were having a meeting on Friday night, and then three gunmen stormed in, police said. It took 11 hours before security forces ended the overnight attack, police officer Major Mohamed Abdi said.

The dead included a presidential candidate for August's regional elections, Jubbaland State President Ahmed Mohamed Madobe said. At least two journalists and a UN agency staff member were also reported to



Militancy returns: The Medina hotel in Kismayo, Somalia, which was targeted by al-Shabaab on Friday night. •AFP

have been killed. Al-Qaeda-linked Islamist group al-Shabaab, which is trying to topple Somalia's UN-backed government, immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Abdiasis Abu Musab, the group's military operations spokesman said on Saturday that they had killed 30 people and four of its fighters were also dead. Mr. Madobe said three Ken-

nyans, one Briton, two Americans and three Tanzanians were among those killed.

"Four militants attacked the hotel. One of them was the suicide car bomber, two were shot dead and one was captured alive by security forces," he said. He said 56 people were wounded in the attack, including two Chinese citizens.

Willing to release tanker if Iran gives guarantee on destination, says U.K.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt sought to ease tensions with Iran on Saturday, saying that a tanker held by Gibraltar would be released if Tehran guaranteed that it was not heading to Syria.

He said he had a "constructive call" with his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif, who he said assured him that Tehran "is not seeking to escalate" tensions between the countries.

"I reassured him our concern was destination not origin of the oil on *Grace One*," a tanker seized off the coast of the tiny British territory of Gibraltar on July 4, Mr. Hunt tweeted. U.S. officials believed the tanker was destined for Syria to deliver oil, in violation of separate sets of EU and U.S. sanctions.

Mr. Hunt said Britain "would facilitate release if we received guarantees that it would not be going to Syria, following due process in Gib (Gibraltar) courts. "Was

told by FM Zarif that Iran wants to resolve issue and is not seeking to escalate." Tehran had reacted angrily to the seizure, and Britain this week said Iranian military vessels had tried to "impede the passage" of a British oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz. Mr. Hunt also said that he raised with Mr. Zarif the imprisonment of British-Iranian national Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, and added that Mr. Zarif "said he would continue to seek to find a solution".

ELSEWHERE



Ranil to appear before Easter attacks panel

COLOMBO
Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said that he would appear before the Parliamentary Select Committee probing the Easter Sunday attacks that claimed 258 lives and would provide all available information, according to a media report. •PTI

Channel set to air Putin documentary targeted

KIEV
A grenade launcher fired at the building of a Ukrainian television channel on Saturday after it announced plans to air a controversial documentary featuring Russian President Vladimir Putin. The attack at around 3.40 a.m., described as terrorism by officials, caused no injuries, police said. •AFP

U.K. police's warning to media provokes outrage

Outlets told not to publish leaked papers

REUTERS
LONDON

Senior British politicians, including the contenders to be the next Prime Minister, joined journalists on Saturday in criticising police for warning media not to publish leaked government documents, saying it was a "dangerous road to tread".

Last week, a Sunday newspaper published leaked memos from Britain's Washington Ambassador that provoked a serious diplomatic spat with U.S. President Donald Trump and ultimately led to the envoy announcing his resignation.

Britain's most senior counterterrorism officer, Neil Basu, said on Friday that police would investigate who was responsible but also warned journalists and publishers they too could be in breach of the law if further documents

were leaked. His comments provoked anger and criticism from journalists, editors and politicians who said it risked infringing the freedom of the press. "The state threatening media freedom is a dangerous road to tread," Health Minister Matt Hancock tweeted.

'Ill-advised statement'

George Osborne, editor of the *London Evening Standard* and a former Finance Minister, described the remarks as a "very stupid and ill-advised statement from a junior officer who doesn't appear to understand much about press freedom".

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt and his predecessor Boris Johnson, both in the race to replace Theresa May as Prime Minister, said the leaker should be found but the press should not be targeted.

Rallying against Beijing



Hong Kong erupts: Hong Kong protesters rallying on Saturday in Sheung Shui, a town near the boundary with mainland China, where thousands marched against the presence of Chinese traders, seizing on another grievance following major unrest over an extradition Bill. The demonstration began peacefully but devolved into skirmishes and shouting. •AP

Turkey ignores U.S. warnings over S-400

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ANKARA

Turkey ignored U.S. warnings as it continued on Saturday to take delivery of Russia's S-400 missile defence system near Ankara, a Defence Ministry statement indicated.

"Delivery of S-400 Long Range Air and Missile Defence Systems resumed today," the statement said. "The fourth Russian plane carrying S-400 parts landed at Murted Airport outside Ankara," it added.

The U.S. fears that if Ankara integrates the S-400 into its defences, data about the U.S.-built F-35 fighter jet could leak back to the Russians, and Washington has threatened to deny Turkey access to the stealth aircraft.

NATO is also "concerned about the potential consequences" of the S-400 purchase, said an official.

New Zealanders begin handing over firearms

Christchurch attacks led to tighter laws

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CHRISTCHURCH

Dozens of New Zealanders handed in their firearms on Saturday as a gun buyback scheme went into operation aimed at ridding the country of semi-automatic weapons in the wake of the Christchurch attacks.

The first of more than 250 collections to be held nationwide was held in Christchurch where 51 Muslim worshippers were gunned down while at prayer less than four months ago.

The government, with support from Opposition parties, immediately rushed through legislation to tighten New Zealand's gun laws.

With armed police monitoring the handover, 68 firearms owners handed in 97 weapons and 94 parts and



A New Zealand policeman in Upper Hutt, near Wellington. •AFP

accessories in the first two hours. The regional police commander Mike Johnson said that 903 gun owners in the Canterbury area had registered 1,415 firearms to be handed in.

China's independent journalists struggle to be heard

Crackdown under President Xi has left the press entirely devoid of critical reporting, with many topics being off limits

JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ
BEIJING

She was once one of China's best journalists, roaming the country uncovering stories about police brutality, wrongful convictions and environmental disasters. But these days, Zhang Wenmin struggles to be heard.

The police intimidate Ms. Zhang's sources. The authorities shut down her social media accounts. Unable to find news outlets that will publish her work, she lives largely off her savings. "The space for free speech has become so limited," Ms. Zhang, 45, said. "It's now dangerous to say you are an independent journalist."

Voices silenced

China's investigative reporters once provided rare voices of accountability and criti-

cism in a society tightly controlled by the ruling Communist Party, exposing scandals about babies sickened by tainted formula and blood-selling schemes backed by the government.

But under President Xi Jinping, such journalists have all but disappeared, as the authorities have harassed and imprisoned dozens of reporters and as news outlets have cut back on in-depth reporting. One of the most glaring consequences of Mr. Xi's revival of strongman politics is that the Chinese press is now almost entirely devoid of critical reporting. Critics call it the "total censorship era."

"We're almost extinct," said Liu Hu, a reporter from Sichuan who was detained for nearly a year after investigating corrupt politicians.



Alone and helpless: Zhang Wenmin, who has written stories on police brutality and environmental disasters. •NYT

"No one is left to reveal the truth."

Since rising to power in 2012, Mr. Xi has transformed China's media landscape, restoring the primacy of party-controlled news outlets while silencing independent voices. He has said that the mission of the news media should be to spread "positive energy" and to "love the party,

protect the party and serve the party." Mr. Xi's crackdown on journalists has left China in what sometimes seems like an information vacuum.

A rapidly expanding list of topics is off limits to all but the party's main official media outlets, among them the trade war with the U.S., the #MeToo movement, gene-

edited babies and the spread of African swine fever.

Online outlets targeted

Mr. Xi's campaign has also targeted online outlets, with the government ordering many to close or shift away from critical reporting. Q Daily, a news-site founded in 2014, was known for running feature stories on social issues, including problems facing rural migrants in big cities. But the authorities have repeatedly shut down the site over the past year. The government has accused it of illegally "conducting original reporting" and harming public opinion.

Before Mr. Xi took control, Chinese journalism had entered something of a golden age, with reporters publishing investigations about faulty vaccines and shoddy

buildings toppled by earthquakes. But under Mr. Xi's rule, harassment of journalists has worsened. At least 48 journalists were in prison in China as of December, more than in any other country, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Despite the political climate, a small group of investigative journalists are fighting to keep their profession alive, publishing stories on social media and overseas outlets. Mr. Liu continues to investigate serial killers and problems in the justice system, often under a pen name. The best journalists are persistent and aware of the risks of the job, he said. "Outside of China, journalists are fired for writing false reports," he said. "Inside China, they are fired for telling the truth." •NYTIMES

'New rules could lead to more churn in liquid funds'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The recent regulatory changes by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for valuation of debt securities could lead to more churn in liquid funds that already saw outflow of ₹1.5 lakh crore in June thereby dragging the overall assets in mutual fund (MF) industry.

According to the latest study by ICRA, institutional entities, who are the biggest investors in this segment, might look at other categories while those with a high-risk appetite might look at rebalancing their portfolios to higher-yield, higher-risk categories such as ultra-short and money market funds.

"The category [liquid funds] might see more churn going forward due to the recent regulatory amendments announced by the SEBI for debt-oriented schemes, which has made valuation of debt securities to be fully market-to-market (MTM) compared with amortisation of securities with maturity less than 30 days," ICRA said.

The change in the threshold level for amortisation from 60 days to 30 days will have an impact on both returns and volatility of liquid funds. Incidentally, the SEBI had only recently introduced the 30-day norm since till June, the threshold was 60 days, it added. According to the monthly numbers from the Association of Mutual Funds in India, net outflows from income and debt oriented schemes totalling ₹1.71 lakh crore in June led to a decline in the MF assets under management to ₹24.25 lakh crore.

Bad loans drag DHFL into loss

Firm reports a loss of ₹2,223 crore as gross NPAs zoom to 2.74% in March quarter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Troubled mortgage lender Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) reported a net loss for the quarter ended March 31 as bad loans zoomed.

DHFL reported a standalone net loss of ₹2,223 crore in the quarter ended March 31, 2019 against a net profit of ₹134 crore in the year-earlier quarter.

The lender had earlier deferred the board meeting to approve earnings.

Gross NPAs (non-performing assets) shot up to 2.74% of gross advances as at March-end compared with 0.96% a year ago.

For the full year 2018-19, DHFL posted a net loss of ₹1,036.05 crore compared with a profit of ₹1,701.02



Flight to trouble: The firm is facing a cash crunch after banks curbed lending. •REUTERS

crore during the previous financial year. "The operating profit was ₹372 crore for the quarter and ₹2,378 crore for the whole year.

However, due to the additional provisioning of ₹3,280 crore (inclusive of net loss on fair value), the company reported a net loss of ₹2,223

crore for the quarter and net loss of ₹1,036 crore for the whole year," said Kapil Wadhawan, CMD, DHFL.

Assets under management grew 8% year-on-year to ₹1,19,992 crore during FY19 while total revenues increased by 19% to ₹12,900.6 crore for the year ended

March 31, 2019 as against ₹10,864.4 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

Mr. Wadhawan said, "Over the last nine months, with single-minded focus, we have met all our financial obligations."

DHFL is facing a cash crunch after banks curbed lending. It witnessed a rating downgrade and defaulted on commercial paper payment.

"Since September 2018, DHFL has managed to make repayments of over ₹41,800 crore. In the backdrop of a significant slowdown in disbursement and loan growth post September 2018, the financials of the company have been quite strained for the quarter, impacting the overall performance of the year," he said.

Allahabad Bank reports ₹1,775 cr. fraud by BPSL

Lender had made ₹900 cr. provision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

After Punjab National Bank (PNB), another state-owned lender Allahabad Bank on Saturday reported a fraud of over ₹1,774 crore by Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd. (BPSL) to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

In a regulatory filing, the bank said on the basis of forensic audit investigation findings and CBI filing FIR against the company and its directors, alleging diversion of funds from the banking system by BPSL, a fraud of ₹1,774.82 crore has been reported by the bank to the RBI.

Last week, PNB reported a fraud worth ₹3,805.15 crore by the bankrupt steel

company by misappropriating bank funds and manipulating its books of accounts.

Around 85% of PNB's ₹4,399 crore exposure to the company had been siphoned off.

Allahabad Bank further said it had already made provisions amounting to ₹900.20 crore against exposure of the bank in BPSL.

At present, the case is in the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), which is at an advance stage and the bank expects 'good' recovery in the account.

It is expected that more banks may report fraud committed by BPSL as the CBI complaint registered in April names several other lenders.

Sri Lanka keen on enhancing connectivity with Indian ports

The ferry service will facilitate tourism and small-scale trade: Sri Lanka Ports Authority chairman

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) is keen on enhancing connectivity with Indian ports using ferry services to facilitate easier trade and tourism, its chairman Kavan Ratnayaka said.

"If the two countries can set up a ferry service connecting Kankesanthurai port (KKS) in Jaffna with Karaikal near Puducherry, and similarly between Colombo and Tuticorin in south India, there is scope for increased trade activity and tourism," he told *The Hindu*.

The ferry connection, he said, would primarily facilitate tourism and small-scale trade both ways. "It will help especially with Buddhist tourism from the south of the island, and by extension peo-



Boosting ties: The East Container Terminal is being developed by India, Sri Lanka and Japan. •MEERA SRINIVASAN

ple-to-people connections," he said. Further, the KKS Port will facilitate increased trade opportunities for communities living in proximity to the port and reduce the cost of road and rail transport for bulk items such as



ceutical films and methods of making them. However, the parties' substantive disputes focus on only two of the four, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit said. Besides Dr. Reddy's, the defendants in the case included Watson Laboratories, Actavis Laboratories and Teva Pharmaceuticals, which originally owned DRL's Abbreviated New Drug

Application (ANDA).

Affirming the district court's judgment that DRL does not infringe the '514 patent', while Watson does, the ruling said Watson, Teva, and DRL, however, failed to prove that Indivior's patent is invalid. Likewise, DRL does not infringe the '150 patent', but failed to prove that it is invalid.

Dr. Reddy's in February, soon after the U.S. Supreme Court turned down a plea for stay filed by Indivior, re-launched its generic version of Suboxone. It had first started sale of the generic version in June last year for a while before a U.S. court passed a temporary restraining order on the sale in response to a plea by Indivior.

INTERVIEW | SANDEEP KATARIA

'Digital sales integral to strategy'

We made Bata accessible to all, says company's India CEO

INDRANI DUTTA

Increased challenges from international footwear giants coupled with stiff competition from the local, unorganised sector and regional players, had all cut into the market share of Bata India. That was around three years back. Bata did not give up, although margins came under pressure. It closed unviable units, separated employees through VRS, realigned product lines and recast its store strategy to claw back. Excerpts from an interaction with CEO Sandeep Kataria.

How did Bata manage to bounce back?

■ The cornerstone of our strategy was – Sweeping Angela off her feet. Angela is the name given to our ideal consumer, identified based on consumer research. Once we knew Angela, concerted efforts were made towards creating a Bata world that was customised for her.

The first step was placing the 'product is king' philosophy at the centre of all our efforts and introducing styles that were relevant to millennials and the youth. With products that stem from consumer understanding, we carved our niche in the market, forcing reconsideration among urban India.

Seamlessly reaching and winning across India through retail, franchisee and e-commerce-led omnichannel, we made Bata accessible to all.

Along with product and supply chain, focussed efforts were made towards improving customer experience through enhanced store ambience with contemporary collection and wide choice. While we are focussing on our larger objectives, we are making conscious efforts towards setting and achieving our sustainability

What steps are being taken to ensure the sustainability of the 2018-19 numbers in terms of top line and bottom line?

■ Steps are the same as above. It is a five-year strategy and we are on year three already. While the core pillars of the strategy remain the same, the dynamic, socio-economic environment may call for timely reviews.

How much did control of costs and expenses help boost profit?

■ Indeed, cost-saving efforts have yielded results in improving the bottom line and leveraging economies of scale. Right-sizing and re-negotiating the store costs have been two key levers of our

GST has been helpful in using our inventories more productively and removing State-specific barriers

cost control measures.

How many pairs does Bata sell annually?

■ Approximately, 50 million pairs are sold annually.

Has the GST roll-out helped in expanding the market for organised players?

■ Implementation of GST has been helpful in using our inventories more productively and removing State-specific barriers, allowing us to service customers from anywhere to anywhere.

You said that staying contemporary was the biggest challenge... how are you meeting this challenge?

■ It is an ongoing process of ensuring relevant marketing and communication based on customer insight, backed by the regular introduction of contemporary collections. In fact, we are currently driving an 'industry-first' practice of ensuring all our stores get new arrivals every Friday.

What is your view on premiumisation?

■ The Indian consumer is evolving and increasingly aspires for global fashion trends and is ready to pay a premium once they see value in the product. With an eye on changing consumer demands, we have increased the width and depth of our product offerings.

Employing technology-backed innovations such as memory foam in walking shoes, OrthoLite across sub-brands and Life Naturals in our school shoe range helps attract consumers who aspire for fashion with comfort.

We are innovating with materials and processes to deliver a more premium product to our customers.

Your policy on digital sales?

■ Digital plays an integral role in our strategy.

From direct connect with consumers through Bata.in, to presenting our extensive offering on partner platforms, we are able to leverage our inventories more productively across online and offline.

Tata Steel to further reduce debt this year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Tata Steel Limited (TSL) is planning to further de-leverage its balance sheet during this fiscal and beyond through a combination of internal cash flow generation and continuing efforts to rationalise the portfolio to focus on core businesses and markets.

This was stated by CEO and MD T.V. Narendran and executive director and chief financial officer Koushik Chatterjee in TSL's latest annual report. They said through rigorous efforts, gross debt had been reduced by ₹17,864 crore to end the year with a ₹1,00,816 crore debt.

"We will continue to focus on deleveraging as a primary strategic initiative to rebuild the balance sheet strength," they said.

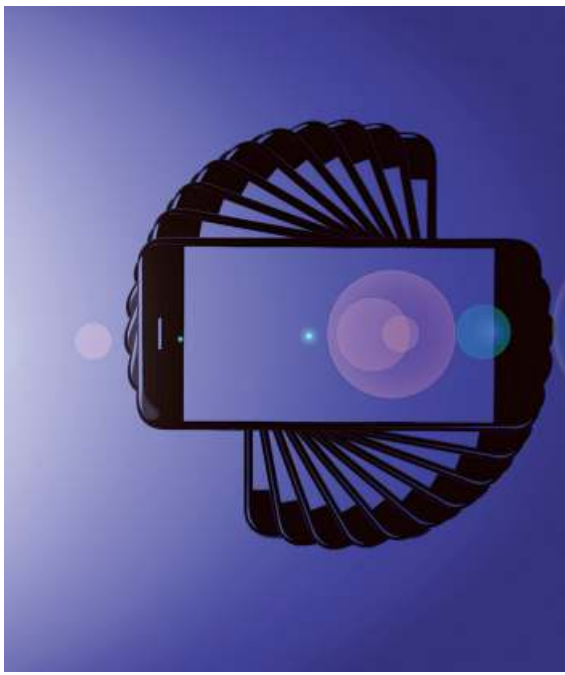
Maturity profile

"Despite some stress in the domestic debt markets, we extended the company's debt maturity profile by successfully raising ₹4,315 crore through non-convertible debentures with a maturity of 15 years. We also put in place a 12-year, long-term, take-out financing for ₹15,500 crore at Tata BSL Ltd," they said.

On the demand scenario, Mr. Narendran and Mr. Chatterjee felt although the first half was stable, the second half has brought with it a distinct decline in the automotive sector and other sectors too.

A key issue "has been the credit flow to the system and we hope that policy actions will be undertaken to ensure increased credit flow is restored and private investment is encouraged to revive the economy." Globally, while demand is expected to see gradual recovery, it will be at a lower pace (2018 global steel demand grew 2.1%), due to uncertainty in the trade environment.





GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Registry for phones

How has a database been drawn up to address the issues of security, theft and other concerns regarding mobile phone handsets?

P.J. GEORGE

The story so far: The National Telecom Policy of 2012 calls for the establishment of a National Mobile Property Registry to address the issue of “security, theft, and other concerns including reprogramming of mobile handsets”. Based on this, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications initiated a Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) for mobile service providers. The DoT issued a memorandum in July 2017 announcing the CEIR with a pilot project led by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited in Maharashtra. In January 2018, this project was handed over to the Centre for Development of Telematics (CDOT). Now, it is all set to roll out.

What is CEIR?

Based on a 2008 order from the DoT, every mobile network provider in India has an Equipment Identity Register (EIR), or a database of the phones connected to its network. These EIRs will now share information with a single central database, the CEIR. In essence, it will be a repository of information on all mobile phones connected to networks across India. There were over 1,026 million active wireless phone connections by the end of 2018, according to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

As per the DoT’s 2017 memorandum, the CEIR will have information on the device’s International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number (every phone or mobile broadband device has this unique 15 digit code that precisely identifies the device), model, version, and “other information”. It will also know if the phone is blacklisted, and the reason why it has been blacklisted.

Phones are identified based on the IMEI number, which you can find under the battery in many mobiles or by dialling “*#06#” on the device. Mobile phone manufacturers assign IMEI numbers to each device based on ranges allotted to them by the Global System for Mobile Communications Association. Dual SIM phones will have two IMEI numbers.

What is the purpose of a CEIR?

Such centralised databases are meant to identify and block stolen or illegal mobile phones across networks. Currently, when a customer reports a mobile phone as missing or stolen, mobile service providers have the ability to blacklist the phone’s IMEI in their EIRs and block it from accessing their network. But if the SIM is changed to a new network, it can continue to be in use. With a CEIR, all network operators will be aware that the phone is blacklisted.

The CEIR will also access the GSMA’s database of IMEI numbers to check whether the phone is authentic. There are cases of phones being in use with duplicate IMEI numbers, or with all zeroes instead of an authentic IMEI number.

Most importantly, as per the DoT’s 2017 memorandum, the CEIR will be able to block services to subscribers. This ability had rested with individual networks till now. The memorandum also mentions enabling “IMEI-based lawful interception”, which means allowing legal authorities to use CEIR data.

What are the issues with having a CEIR?

In its 2010 consultation paper on “issues relating to blocking of IMEI for lost/stolen mobile handsets”, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) raises a key issue with the CEIR – who should maintain such a high-value database? Should it be the service provider, or a neutral third party?

In their responses to the consultation paper, many major service providers preferred having a third party, ranging from international bodies to TRAI itself as suggested by the BSNL. The CDOT, which is reportedly readying to roll out the service, is an autonomous entity under the DoT.

Another major issue is cloning, or reprogramming stolen or unauthorised mobile phones to attach existing genuine IMEI numbers. Blocking cloned IMEI numbers could result in the authentic ones also being blocked. While the actual numbers on phones in circulation with cloned or inauthentic IMEIs are hard to pin down, Parliament, in 2012, was informed of two cases of 18,000 phones using the same IMEI number. In 2015, the government banned the import of mobile phones with fake IMEI numbers. In 2017, the DoT framed the “prevention of tampering of the Mobile Device Equipment Identification Number, Rules, 2017” that makes it punishable to tamper with the IMEI number of a device or knowingly use such a device. However, tools to reprogramme phones remain available online, and cases of such activities are reported frequently. On this issue, the DoT memorandum of 2017 says the IMEI Cloning and Duplication Restriction (ICDR) software is to be integrated in the CEIR.

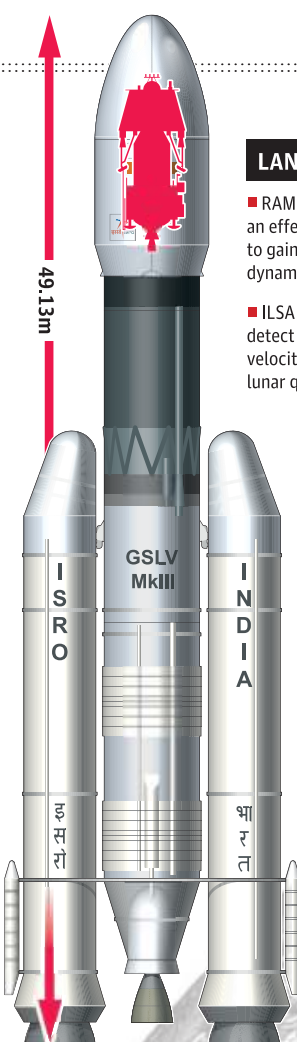
Moon RUSH

Chandrayaan-2, India’s second unmanned lunar mission, is fully indigenous and aims to put a rover on the unexplored south-polar region of the moon

It will be launched on board GSLV Mk-III. The spacecraft includes the Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter, a Lander called Vikram and a Rover, called Pragyan

It is the country’s first space mission headed by women: Ritu Karidhal, the mission director, and M. Vanitha, the project director

If successful, India will be the fourth country after the U.S., the former Soviet Union and China to complete a soft landing on earth’s only natural satellite



LANDER PAYLOADS

RAMBHA has proven to be an effective diagnostic tool to gain information in highly dynamic plasma environments

ILSA is a seismometer that can detect minute ground displacement, velocity, or acceleration caused by lunar quakes

ChaSTE measures the vertical temperature gradient and thermal conductivity of the lunar surface

Orbiter: Carries a series of scientific instruments

ROVER PAYLOADS

APXS’ primary objective is to determine the elemental composition of the moon’s surface near the landing site

LIBS’ prime objective is to identify and determine the abundance of elements near the landing site

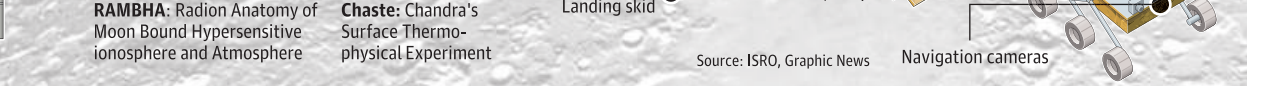
LIBS: Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy

ILSA: Instrument for Lunar Seismic Activity

RAMBHA: Radion Anatomy of Moon Bound Hypersensitive ionosphere and Atmosphere

APXS: Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer

ChaSTE: Chandra’s Surface Thermo-physical Experiment



How will Chandrayaan 2 study the moon?

Why is India’s first attempt at a powered lunar landing important?

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

The story so far: When Chandrayaan 1, India’s first moon mission was launched on October 22, 2008, from Sriharikota, using the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), India became the fourth country to plant its flag on the lunar surface. On the moon, the mission conclusively detected traces of water along with magnesium, aluminium and silicon. Now, close to a decade later, India will launch its second lunar mission, Chandrayaan 2, on July 15, 2019, again from Sriharikota, using the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) Mark III rocket. The launch falls a day short of the 50th anniversary of the launch of the American mission Apollo 11 which took humans to the moon and back. The first moon landing occurred on July 20, 1969, on the Apollo 11 mission which was launched on July 16.

How will the launch work?

The GSLV Mark III rocket will first launch the spacecraft into an Earth Parking Orbit (170 km X 40,400 km). Then the height of the orbit will be enhanced until the spacecraft can reach out to the Lunar Transfer Trajectory. On entering the moon’s sphere of influence, on-board thrusters will slow down the spacecraft, allowing it to be captured by the moon. Then it will be eased into a circular orbit (100 km X 100 km). From this orbit, the lander and rover will separate as a unit from the orbiter, and, through a series of braking mechanisms, the duo will “soft-land” on the moon, on September 6, 2019.

What is special about Chandrayaan 2?

Chandrayaan 2 will be the first mission to reach and study the south pole of the moon. It is made up of an orbiter, a lander named ‘Vikram’, after Vikram A. Sarabhai, the founding father of space science research in India, and a rover named ‘Pragyan’, which means ‘wisdom’. At about 3,877 kg, the spacecraft weighs nearly four times its predecessor, Chandrayaan 1. It will be launched by the GSLV Mark III, the Indian Space Research Organisation’s (ISRO’s) most powerful and massive launcher. While Chandrayaan 1 sent its lander

crashing into the moon, Chandrayaan 2 will use rocket technology to soft land ‘Vikram’, carrying its ‘Pragyan’ rover in a suitable high plain on the lunar surface, between two craters, Manzinus-C and Simpelius N, at a latitude of about 70° South. This landing is scheduled for September 6 this year. The total cost of the project is about ₹978 crore. The lander-rover combo has an expected lifetime of 14 days, while the orbiter will continue for a year.

How does the ‘Pragyan’ rover operate and what determines its lifetime?

The time taken for the moon to complete one rotation on its axis is approximately equal to 29.5 earth days. This is also equal to the time it takes to complete one orbit around the earth.

Chandrayaan 2 will be the first mission to study the south pole of the moon. It is made up of an orbiter, a lander named ‘Vikram’, and a rover named ‘Pragyan’

That is why the same side always faces the earth. But because it takes 29.5 earth days to complete one rotation, every point on its surface experiences daylight for about half the time, or a little more than 14 days at a stretch. Moon days are nearly 14 earth days long. Note that the landing is scheduled for September 6, when we will see the first quarter of the moon. This is a date when the lander will land at a point that is facing the earth and which has started receiving sunlight.

This point will receive light for nearly another fortnight which will match the expected lifetime of the lander-rover combo. Since the ‘Vikram’ lander and ‘Pragyan’ rover are powered by solar energy, they will be energised during this period by sunlight on the moon. Once night falls, this energy will not be available as they are plunged into a dark and cold -180° Celsius environment. If the lander-rover duo should kickstart after another half-rotation when day breaks once again, it will be a bonus for the ISRO.

The mission is not designed to survive this extreme

cold, unlike some U.S. and Chinese missions which survived on the “dark” side of the moon using special sources of warmth.

How will the mission study the moon?

Using the Terrain Mapping Camera 2 which is on board the orbiter, the mission will produce images of the moon remotely from a 100 km lunar polar orbit. While the moon rotates about its axis, along its east-west direction, say, the lunar polar orbit will be in the perpendicular direction, along the lunar north-south direction. Thus, as the moon rotates, the orbiter gets a view of its entire surface from overhead. This data collected by the orbiter will be used to produce a 3D image of the moon’s terrain. This is just one of the eight instruments, or payloads, on board the orbiter. The lander carries three such payloads, some of which will measure the electron density and temperature near the lunar surface; the vertical temperature gradient, and seismicity around the landing site.

The rover will carry two instruments or payloads which will collect and test samples from the moon’s surface to identify what elements they contain. The rover moves on six wheels and once let down on the moon, can travel about 500 m from the lander.

What is the success rate of “soft-landing” on the moon?

There have been 38 attempts so far at “soft-landing” on the moon, with a success rate of 52% according to the ISRO website.

Why should we have this mission? Why should we study the moon?

The moon offers a pristine environment to study. It is also closer than other celestial bodies. Understanding how it formed and evolved can help us better understand the solar system and even earth itself. With space travel taking shape and exoplanets being discovered everyday, learning more about earth’s celestial neighbour can help in advanced missions. Finally, it is a piece of the larger puzzle as to how the solar system and its planets have evolved.

Why is India opting for overseas bonds?

The government plans to raise a part of its gross borrowing in external markets. What are the advantages and risks?

T.C.A. SHARAD RAGHAVAN

The story so far: The government, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced in the Budget speech, plans to raise a portion of its gross borrowing from overseas markets. The government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will reportedly finalise the plans for the overseas issue of sovereign bonds by September. While several commentators have argued that this is a risky move, the government itself is convinced that it will help boost private investment in the country.

What is an overseas bond issue?

A government bond or sovereign bond is a form of debt that the government undertakes wherein it issues bonds with the promise to pay periodic interest payments and also repay the entire face value of the bond on the maturity date. So far, the government has only issued bonds in the domestic market.

According to Ms. Sitharaman, India’s sovereign external debt to GDP ratio is among the lowest around the world, at less than 5%. Against this background, the government will start raising a part of its gross borrowing programme in external markets in external currencies. This, she said, would also have a beneficial impact on the demand for government securities in the India. The market estimates that the government will only test the waters and borrow about \$10 billion, which works out to about 10% of its gross market borrowing.

What are the benefits of an overseas bond issue?

The government has been arguing that the quantum of its borrowing within India is “crowding out” the private sector. In other words, it is saying that government borrowing is at such a level that there are not enough funds available for the private sector to adequately meet its credit and investment needs. If the private sector cannot borrow adequately, then it cannot invest as it wants to, and that cripples one major engine of economic growth.

According to Finance Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg, government borrowing accounts for about 80-85% of domestic savings. He also said that the overseas borrowing programme allows the government to maintain its gradual reduction of the fiscal deficit. Had the government listened to some commentators and relaxed its fiscal deficit to say 4.4%, then this would have allowed it to borrow an additional ₹2 lakh crore from the domestic market. However, this would have been ₹2 lakh



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

crore that would not be available now to the private sector for borrowing purposes.

Therefore, borrowing overseas allows the government to raise funds in such a way that there is enough domestic credit available for the private sector.

The appetite of the international market for Indian bonds and their price will also say a lot about how India is viewed globally on the risk factor. For example, if the rate at which India can borrow overseas is low, then this would mean the global market assigns a low risk to India defaulting. This would undoubtedly be something the Narendra Modi government would take pride in.

What are the risks?

Several economists have expressed their concerns over the fact that India might follow the path of some Central and South American countries such as Mexico and Brazil. In the 1970s, several of these countries borrowed heavily overseas when the global market was flush with liquidity. But then, when their currencies depreciated sharply a decade later, these countries were in big trouble as they could not repay their debt.

India is not likely to be viewed as a risky proposition by the international market and so is likely to fetch an attractive rate for the bonds. Cheap and plentiful funds, however, should not encourage the government to borrow too heavily from abroad.

Another risk to India from overseas borrowings is that this would lead to a quicker increase to its foreign exchange reserves, which would lead to a stronger rupee at a time when it is already appreciating against the

dollar. This, many experts say, would be an adverse outcome. A stronger rupee would encourage imports at a time when the government is trying to curb them, and discourage exports at a time when they are being encouraged.

On the other hand, a rupee depreciation for whatever external reason would prove even more disastrous as it would make it far more expensive for India to repay its external debt.

The third problem with an overseas bond issue is that the government would not be able to inflate itself out of trouble. That is, in the domestic market, if the government does ever reach the stage where it is finding it difficult to repay its debt, it can simply print more money, let inflation rise quickly and repay its debt. This is not an option in an overseas bond issue. The Indian government cannot print foreign currency to repay its debt.

What does it mean for the domestic market?

According to the government’s own reasoning, there are not enough funds in the domestic market to cater to its needs as well as those of the private sector. This shallowness of the bond market is not a good thing, especially at a time when the government needs the bond market to finance several of its commitments.

The Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) scheme, for example, involves State governments taking over the debt of State power distribution companies and issuing bonds to repay that debt. Or take the government’s Budget announcement of a further ₹70,000 crore capital infusion in public sector banks. A shallow

bond market would make it difficult for the government to expand any of these schemes.

Ideally, the government should have enough revenue that it does not need to borrow as much. However, at a time when both direct and indirect tax collections have disappointed, the government is forced to borrow to finance its expenditure. In such a scenario, it is a welcome move for the private sector that the government is leaving it room to borrow in the domestic market.

CAPSULE



Black hole puzzle

The Hubble space telescope revealed the presence of a black hole at the centre of the galaxy NGC 3147 which is 130 million light years away that behaves differently from what is expected. While traditional theories postulated that its accretion disc would puff up like a doughnut, it was in fact flattened like that surrounding a more massive black hole.



Insects feel chronic pain

New research published in *Science Advances* reveals that insects feel chronic pain after injury. The researchers injured one leg of fruitflies (*Drosophila* species) and found that other legs became hypersensitive, trying to protect themselves from injury. They inferred that the fruit flies experienced long-lasting pain in the injured leg.

TIFR desalinates seawater without electricity

Alternatively, gold nanoparticles can be used to convert carbon dioxide into methane

R. PRASAD

Using gold nanoparticles that absorb sunlight over the entire visible region and even the near infrared light, researchers at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, have been able to desalinate seawater to produce drinking water. Unlike the conventional reverse osmosis that is energy intensive, the gold nanoparticles require no external energy to produce potable water from seawater.

Using 2.5 mg of gold nanoparticles, the team led by Vivek Polshettiwar from TIFR's Department of Chemical Sciences was able to use sunlight to heat the water to 85 degree C and generate steam to produce drinking water from seawater. Since the temperature reached is high, about 10% of seawater becomes steam (and hence drinking water) in about 30 minutes.

Alternatively, the gold nanoparticles can be used to convert carbon dioxide into methane. This happens when the light absorbed by the gold nanoparticles excites the electrons, and the excited electrons when transferred into carbon dioxide converts it into methane in the presence of hydrogen. The hydrogen comes from the water that is used as a reaction solvent.

"At present, the conversion of carbon dioxide to methane is low – about 1.5 micromole per gram. It is desirable to increase the conversion one-fold to millimole range. We are finding ways to improve the conversion rate," says



Alternative metal: The next step after this preliminary study is to replace gold with some inexpensive metal to make it sustainable, say (from left) Mahak Dhiman, Vivek Polshettiwar and Ayan Maity. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Prof. Polshettiwar. The results of the study were published in the journal *Chemical Science*.

The gold nanoparticles decorate the surface of 3D fibrous silica nanosphere structure. The silica nanospheres measuring 400-500 nanometres are first functionalised with amines. In the presence of a reducing agent, the gold chloride gets deposited on the silica nanospheres. The gold nanoparticles were made bigger through cycles of deposition.

"We used a different reducing agent

that allows the gold to get deposited only on already formed nanospheres and not form new nanoparticles," says Prof. Polshettiwar. "A weak reducing agent does not allow gold to reach a critical concentration for it to form new nanoparticles. But in certain channels of the fibrous material, the concentration of the gold precursors was sufficient to form new nuclei leading to the formation of new nanoparticles."

The formation of smaller gold nanoparticles allows variation in size,

which is essential for harvesting light. Each gold nanoparticle has an electron cloud on the surface that resonates with light. As the gold nanoparticles come closer when they grow bigger, the resonating electron cloud starts coupling together. This allows the gold nanoparticles to absorb light of different wavelength – visible and near infrared light.

While gold takes on different colours including red at nanometre size, it is not possible to make it black by simply changing the size of the nanoparticle. "By changing the size and shape of gold nanoparticles we can tune the light absorption characteristic in the visible region. When we have plenty of gold nanoparticles in the vicinity of each other we can achieve completely absorption of visible light leading to black colour," says Mahak Dhiman from TIFR and one of the first authors of the paper.

"There is huge electromagnetic field and thermal heat produced about 1 nanometre around the gold nanoparticle. This is called a hotspot. Such hotspots are present only when there is a gap between the gold nanoparticles. The gaps provide higher surface area," says Ayan Maity from TIFR and the other first author. So more number of nanoparticles with gaps in between them are needed to generate more thermal hotspots.

"This is only a preliminary study. The next step should be to replace gold with some inexpensive metal to make it sustainable," says Dhiman.



•Uday Khankhoje

IIT-M's model detects cancer with deep learning, microwave

The method offers a portable, low-cost and safe alternative to X-ray and MRI scans

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Uday Khankhoje's team at IIT Madras is interested in developing a way of detecting breast cancer using microwaves - or radio frequency (RF) waves, as they are called. While several groups have worked on this in Europe and the US, and even made working hardware for this purpose, Dr Khankhoje's group uses the very popular method of "deep learning" for this. The method not only addresses a mathematical challenge, it also increases the range of the permittivity observed, where permittivity, the square of the refractive index of a material, is the characteristic that distinguishes cancer tissue from normal tissue. Further, this offers a portable, low-cost and safe alternative to X-ray and MRI scans already available for detecting cancer tissue.

In their method, what Dr. Khankhoje's team would do is to surround the patient with RF transmitters and receivers and collect the waves that bounce off the tissues. Analysing the waves reflected by the tissue, they would reconstruct the type of tissue, or the permittivities of the tissues, that scattered the waves.

This is a classic example of what are known as inverse scattering problems. Other examples of inverse scattering problems are the following: detecting buried landmines using ground penetrating radars; archaeological missions for detecting buried artefacts and so on. These are "inverse" problems because you observe the way waves scatter off an unknown object and reconstruct what it is made of, its shape and other characteristics. The innovation used by this group in solving the inverse scattering problem is "deep learning," which is a popular technique involving neural networks. Their article has been published in the journal *IEEE Transactions on Computational Imaging*.

"A neural network is something that learns a relation between input and output just by looking at data," explains Dr Khankhoje. If you have pairs of numbers (1,1), (2,4), (3,9), (4,16) and so on, a human intelligence would guess that this is a series of numbers and their squares. A machine, on the other hand, "learns" this series, and when given a number as input can produce an output that is the square of that number without having figured out that the relation between them is "square of". Deep learning, simply, is such a learning process made up of a huge number of "neurons."

A neural network thus has to be "trained" on data. "We generate our own input or output training data because we know the physics of the problem. This data is used to train the network for inputs it is yet to see," says Yash Sanghvi the first author of the paper.

He further explains that by this learning, the algorithm positions the analysis approximately in the correct region of the solution. Then existing physics-based algorithms take over, refine the result and arrive at the correct answer. "This exciting new framework of combining physics and machine learning has a very bright future, and in my opinion, it is important to do both," he adds.

The group is yet to work with the actual biological data. "More work needs to be done, including getting biological samples, building a hardware setup and running trials. That is the direction in which we are heading," says Dr. Khankhoje.

Humans drive all-male elephant grouping

These elephants remained solitary or associated in mixed-age and mixed-sex groups within the forested areas.

ILAVENIL I T
ASWATHI PACHA

Environmental and anthropogenic factors have not just degraded elephant habitats and left them stressed, but also changed their social behaviour, notes a recent study conducted by the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru.

The study revealed that there has been an increase in all-male elephant groups in the regions where landscape have been modified by humans. However, these elephants remained solitary or associated in mixed-age and mixed-sex groups within the forested areas.

From February 2016 to December 2017, the researchers observed Asian elephants in a large area of nearly 10,000 sq. km, encompassing protected forested areas and human-use habitats including crop fields in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Using camera traps, they monitored the elephants that visit the nearby agricultural areas and those that stayed largely within the forests. Mature male elephants are known to move out from their herd to find nutritious forage to im-



Pack protection: All-male elephant grouping has become a behavioural necessity for young males in high-risk, high-resource landscape. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

prove their reproductive health and also find a mate. But usually they roam around solo.

The study found that in recent times the male elephants have started to form small groups. "Since the landscape around them is changing drastically and not necessarily favourable – more roads, more electrical lines have come up – it becomes risky for the young males to be alone. So they have started associating with other male elephants and this helps them in multiple ways," says Nishant Srinivasaiah, PhD

Scholar at NIAS and the corresponding author of the research paper published in *Scientific Reports*.

Individuals familiar with the landscape help the group navigate better, find nutritious foraging sites and survive in the human-inhabited area. This has become a "behavioural necessity for the young males in high-risk, high-resource landscape," notes the study.

The researchers found that these groups comprised of mixed age male elephants and their number also varied. The smallest was two and the lar-

gest male group comprised of 25 individuals.

Dominance

Some of these elephants have been together for over 10 years. When asked if there has been any homosexual behaviour, Srinivasaiah explains that though they have observed few sexual interactions among the males, they were not aimed at mating but mostly to establish dominance or bonding. It was also observed that musth elephants from these groups moved long-distances into the forested areas and associated with females for reproduction and returned to the original male-group later. "Similar all-male groups are found in baboons, Asiatic and African lions. But this owes mostly to affiliations and establishing domination over mating. But in elephants it's more about security or escaping the risk-areas," he adds.

He adds that these changes are purely environmental and not biologically influenced. More studies are needed to fully understand such emerging behaviours. Decoding them may help frame new strategies to manage human-elephant conflict.

High-fibre diet may promote healthy pregnancy: study

PTI

Consuming a healthy diet rich in fibre during pregnancy may promote the wellbeing of both the mother and child, and reduce the risk of preeclampsia, according to a study published in the journal *Nature Communications*. Plant-based fibre is broken down in the gut by bacteria into factors that influence the immune system, said researchers from the University of Sydney in Australia.

Gut microbiome

The researchers investigated the role of these metabolic products of gut bacteria during pregnancy. They noted the simple recommendation to 'eat real food, mostly plants, and not too much' might be the most effective primary prevention strategy for some of the most serious conditions of our time. "The mother's gut bacteria and diet appear to be crucial to promoting a healthy pregnancy," said Professor Ralph Nanan, from the University of Sydney.

The study found that in humans, reduced levels of acetate, which is mainly produced by fibre fermenta-

tion in the gut, is associated with the common and serious pregnancy-related condition preeclampsia. Preeclampsia occurs in up to 10 per cent of pregnancies and is characterised by high blood pressure, protein in the urine and severe swelling in the mother.

Immunity

It also interferes with the child's immune development whilst in the womb, with some evidence suggesting a link to higher rates of allergies and autoimmune disease later in life. The study found that preeclampsia affected the development of an important foetal immune organ, the thymus, which sits just behind the breastbone.

These results showed that promoting specific metabolic products of gut bacteria during pregnancy might be an effective way to maintain a healthy pregnancy and to prevent allergies and autoimmune conditions later in life. They may also, in part, explain the rapid increase of allergies, autoimmune conditions as Western diets are increasingly dominated by highly processed foods, which are very low in fibre.

127 papers from India retracted for image duplication, manipulation

Since 2011 and particularly in the last three-four years more papers are getting flagged and retracted for problematic images

R. PRASAD

Unlike plagiarism in papers published in scientific journals, image duplication in the same paper or in different papers and image manipulation have hardly received any attention. Fortunately, this is beginning to change. Since 2011 and particularly in the last three-four years more papers are getting flagged for problematic images. And the number of papers with questionable images getting retracted is also growing suddenly.

A searchable database of retracted papers launched in October last year by Retraction Watch blog has about 18,000 papers since the 1970s. The database was screened for retracted papers from India. Of the 982 papers that have been retracted so far from India, 330 have been for plagiarism. Surprisingly, 118 papers from India have been retracted for image duplication and/or manipulation.

Of the 118, 54 papers have been retracted for image manipulation and the remaining for image duplication. There are a few papers that contain

both image duplication and manipulation. However, nine retracted papers that did not figure in the database have been added taking the total number of papers retracted for image duplication and/or manipulation to 127.

The number of papers retracted has suddenly increased since 2016, with 18 papers retracted in 2019, 37 papers in 2018, 15 papers in 2015 and 21 papers in 2016. At 20, Dr. Rashmi Madhuri and Prashant Sharma of IIT Dhanbad have the most number of retracted papers. They are co-authors in all papers.

While 127 papers retracted might be a fraction of the number of papers published each year from India, it is still a huge number considering how reluctant journal publishers are in retraction.

"Journals are not very responsive [in retracting or correcting papers with problematic images]," Dr. Elisabeth Bik who is a Science Consultant at Harbers-Bik LLC, San Francisco, California and an expert in identifying duplication and manipulation in images says in an email to *The Hindu*. "Of the 782 papers that I reported in 2014 and

2015 [for image duplication and manipulation], 44 have been retracted, two have an expression of concern, and 196 have a corrigendum or erratum. The remaining 540 papers have not been corrected, as far as I know. That means that five years after problematic papers have been reported, only one third of them have been corrected or retracted. That number is much too low, in my opinion, and it means that journals are not very willing to take any action." The reluctance becomes all the more glaring as at least 50% of papers had images suggestive of deliberate manipulation.

Dr. Bik along with two other authors found 782 papers with problematic images from a dataset of 20,000 papers published by researchers from many countries in 40 journals from 1995 to 2014. The study was published in 2016 in the journal *mBio*. The authors reported the problematic papers to the respective journals.

Compared with the US and China, there are relatively fewer papers from India that gets published. But Bik's



Leading the pack: At 20, Dr. Rashmi Madhuri and Prashant Sharma of IIT Dhanbad have the most number of retracted papers. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

study found India had 1.93 higher-than-predicted ratio of papers containing image duplication. In 2018, Dr. Bik and others analyzed 960 papers published in *Molecular and Cellular Biology* from 2009 to 2016. They found 59 papers contained duplicated images leading to corrections for 41 papers and five retractions. "The majority of inappropriate image duplications result from errors during figure preparation

that can be remedied by correction," they write. The journal instituted a pilot program where all the accepted papers were screened for images prior to publication. In just two months, the journal identified image concerns in 12 of the 83 papers. "Image screening can identify papers with problematic images prior to publication... and requires an average of 30 minutes of staff time per problematic paper," they write.

According to a small study of 200 papers that were about to be accepted for publication in *The Journal of Clinical Investigation*, 21% (42 of 200) of papers had issues with Western blots and 27.5% (55 of 200) of papers had problems with images. The study was carried out between July 2018 and first week of February 2019. They found 49 of 55 papers with image issues were "minor transgressions".

"The absolute number of retractions has risen over the past few decades, from fewer than 100 annually before 2000 to nearly 1,000 in 2014. But retractions remain relatively rare: Only about four of every 10,000 papers are now retracted," says an article in the journal *Science*.

Shift of opinion

The good news is that journals are beginning to shed their reluctance to retract papers involving problematic images. "There appears to be a trend towards a faster response time; perhaps under the influence of social media discussions or a shift of opinion of the general audience that these cases should be

handled faster," Dr. Bik says.

Unlike in the case of plagiarism where there are software available to detect it and almost all journals routinely use them, no such software or system is available for detecting image duplication and manipulation. But that shortcoming is to a small extent getting addressed in a completely different way. The *Journal of Clinical Investigation* is relying on Dr. Corinne L. Williams, an editor who has an "excellent eye for image duplication", to find such faulty papers. "The *Journal of Biological Chemistry* has been a pioneer though, screening images after acceptances very carefully and asking for originals if there was any doubt. But only if they suspected something," says Dr. Bik. The *Molecular and Cellular Biology* "instituted a program to analyze the figures in all accepted manuscripts before publication, modeled after a similar program used by the *Journal of Cell Biology*" Dr. Bik and others write in the 2018 paper. Now, more and more journals have started demanding for unedited, raw image data from authors at

some stage of the publication process.

A catalyst that is bringing about this change is the PubPeer website, which allows independent researchers to publish post-publication review of scientific papers. The independent researchers are "increasingly making use of PubPeer or social media to describe papers of concern," says Dr. Bik. "Almost all remarks about problematic images on PubPeer appear correct, and there is an active community who will comment if they do not agree," she adds. The popularity of PubPeer can be gauged by the regular mention of the website in articles on science misconduct. "So we can assume that more and more people are becoming familiar with PubPeer," Dr. Bik says.

And the results are showing. At least one paper from India with questionable image gets posted on PubPeer at least once in two days. With *The Hindu* reporting on papers with problematic images from half a dozen institutions, there is a sudden rush by Indian researchers to post their responses on PubPeer.

A different set of notes with music

R.W. ALEXANDER
JESUDASAN

Human beings face different kinds of sicknesses in life. While many overcome them, some succumb to one or the other. As the world progresses, concomitant problems surface in different ways, and as a result humanity doesn't progress in the manner it could be expected to.

While there are many stress-busters available to handle tensions in life, music seems to have an overriding and therapeutic effect on the stresses and sickness that humans endure. Music is thought to bring forth miracles by healing wounded hearts and minds; it has magical powers to transform lives. Even a foetus in the womb apparently vibes with certain types of it. So, how exactly can music help us in our lives and influence us in a positive manner?

Diversity in sickness

Sickness can be quite diverse. It could be physical, physiological, psychological, psychosomatic and so on, and it can have a profound impact on one's body and mind. Today we find psychological stress to be more common than before, leading to a situation of concern to humanity. While there are different medical methods available to handle medical conditions, with their own promise and challenge, virtually all treatment regimes have side-effects too. Appropriate music is a therapy that would largely bring down the intensity of such medical aberrations in an individual, as it has its soothing effect in bringing down stress.

Diversity in notes

Music is not restricted to one note or an entity. Whether it is string instruments or wind instruments (veena, guitar, and so on, or piano, or organ, or saxophone) we find a fusion of many notes when played. The notes, though diverse, when simultaneously played in a synchronised manner present a chord which is the unification and blending of many notes. These result in calmness and peace.

Diversity and peace

There is no better country than India to explain diversity in its totality, as it is rich in every sense of the term. We could learn clear and apt lessons from music. Musical notes are diverse, each superior in its

own way. For example, the treble cleft notes EGBDF, space notes FACE, or the bass cleft notes, GBDFA, space notes ACEG, or the strings of the guitar bearing the notes EBGDAE, each when played can give a unique tone.

The grandeur of music comes from the harmony they bring when these notes are struck or played together through the musical instrument. Harmony and peace are entwined, and where there is harmony, there is peace, whether between two or among a multitude. Accomplishing this virtue is the need of the hour both in India and the world at large.

Orchestra & harmony

In a musical orchestra we find a multitude of instruments of a varied nature being used to provide scores and background for playback singers. We find the controlling and facilitating power of the music director to synchronise the different musical tones that come from instruments, to the taste and design of the musical composition the music director has conceived. So is the human population in a given environment: though it is diverse in every sense, if blended well as a music director handles music, it could lead to peaceful and harmonious coexistence of the biota, which include the environment, too.

United we progress

It is essential that we work in tandem: we all know unity is power. As a country with over 1.3 billion people representing a wide range of diversity, it is imperative that we stand united even as divisive forces impede us in many walks of life. The lesson from music should bind us together in order to bring out the best from each one of us and create a synergy for goodwill and progress.

Comparing our nation with other developed countries and also with those that are younger to us, we are far behind. We should and can do much better in any field provided we pool all our resources, including our intellectual resources. Music teaches us to have an amalgamation of our strengths both individually and collectively.

The author, the Principal of Madras Christian College, is a music-lover and a professional player of a few instruments. Elmhurst College, Chicago, conferred the Lamda Sigma Psi on him recently. E-mail: alexjesu62@gmail.com



ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

The farewell

A strange kind of melancholy overcomes a family as a young person leaves home for greener avenues

NAITIK JAIN

It's the morning of my departure. My elder sister just went home to her husband. I'm scheduled to leave at night. I start my first 'real' job tomorrow. I take a deep breath and head out, where mum greets me with instant noodles, as I've decided to discontinue eating for today. Today's lunch will be the first in many months, a welcome change from my fruit diet.

It's the afternoon of my departure, and mom is visibly upset. She has barely spoken all day, and I don't have the necessary tools to break the silence. These are times when I wish my extroverted sister were present. Somehow, her heading home has created an eerie si-

lence in the house. Dad walks into my room as I'm fiddling with my phone and lies down beside me, asking me when my flight is. It takes him a couple of minutes to get comfortable, as he tries giving me 'the talk'. He reminds me that they're there for me whenever I need them. He talks to me about the new world that I'm entering – the responsible, adult world. I nod and pick up the phone up again, trying hard not to display any emotion.

A gap to bridge

Mom and I sit beside each other and read, both needing each other's presence, yet unable to bridge the gap.

The silence is deafening. I steal occasional glances at her, as she continues to bury herself in her book, trying hard not to let her emotions show. I keep reading, continuing to suppress every single emotion I've been feeling; not that I haven't done that before.

It's evening by the time we speak to each other about this. "What will I do when you're gone?" mom asks. I reply with a joke, trying to act foolish to lighten the mood. I'm thinking of joking about how she won't need to restock the cashew nuts every three days now that I'm not home anymore, but decide against it. I fool around for a while and then go into my room to change.

My PlayStation is already in its box, as are my books. My clothes will travel with me.

I look at my room once more. No mess of wires in the corner of the bed. No gadgets strewn all over it. This has been my room for over a decade, ever since we moved into this house. Now I'll have my own place. No more dorm rooms. I'll be entering the world of 'adulthood'. I change into my new clothes and head out.

The drive to the airport is in absolute silence. No one speaks a word as my parents drive me. As we hug our goodbyes, mom breaks down and cries. I hug her tighter, reminding her that I'll see her in a month, and then again, every couple of months. She pretends to un-

derstand, and turns away.

My father and I are not good at handling these emotions. Both of us stand and try our best to console her. She eventually waves me away, and asks me to go in.

Strange melancholy

I've left home too many times for many things to be feeling as sad as I am. I don't understand this strange melancholy, especially considering that this is exactly what I wanted from life. This kickstarts my career and helps me move forward in life. Why, then, do I want to rush back out, get into the car and drive back home?

Many Indian weddings have a *vidai* ceremony, where the daughter is said to leave her home for her hus-

band's home. I remember not crying during my sister's *vidai*, because for me, she had left home many years before that. Today, I stand at the precipice of my house, having broken into tears every night for the past few days.

I sit at the boarding gate, 30 minutes to the scheduled departure of the flight. It's the last call for my name. I'm still torn between turning back and rushing to the comfort of my home, and moving forward to start my new life – a life of 'independence'. It took me 24 years, but now I have the scissors in my hand. Do I dare to cut the umbilical cord?

I dare.

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Art, the brain and the mind

More and more people are beginning to understand the role art can play in emotional well-being

GEORGE JOHN

Creativity takes courage.
- Henri Matisse

Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.
- Pablo Picasso

Art in some form or other has existed from the Palaeolithic period, and as long as humans have existed, we have been attracted by and fascinated by it. Art affects society by its power to change opinions and translate human experiences. It is a repository of our collective memory.

But it is the effects that art has on the mind and brain that truly deserve admiration. Art has been shown to have an impact on the brain by causing an actual increase in the levels of 'feel-good' neurotransmitters.

Humans have two types of skills – physical and cognitive. Neurosciences show that even the simple act of drawing can improve our cognitive and higher cerebral functions. The essence of art is its perceptibly imaginary nature, which reflects actual experiences, feelings and sentiments. The mind being the target behind the idea of art as therapy, the same art can purify our sensual world through artistic catharsis-on-canvas, which could even 'correct' some psychological dispositions.

Art therapy is one of the newer technologies in the

tool kit of psychiatric treatment; some call it 'person-centred'. The essence of art is its perceptibly imaginary nature, which reflects actual experiences, feelings and sentiments. And the mind being the target behind the idea of art as therapy, the same art can purify our sensual world through an artistic catharsis-on-canvas which could even 'correct' some of our psychological dispositions.

Because the benefits of such therapies in some cases are seen to outweigh the advantages of treatments with pills alone, today they have become part of some mental health treatments. The American Art Therapy Association describes it as using "the creative processes of art-making, to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being in individuals of all ages." Such therapy involves "creative processes involved in artistic self-expression which helps people to resolve conflicts, develop interpersonal skills, manage behaviour, reduce stress, increase self-esteem, self-awareness and achieve insight."

Healing strategies

When psychiatrists and psychologists found that those with mental health issues often express their emotions through art and drawings,

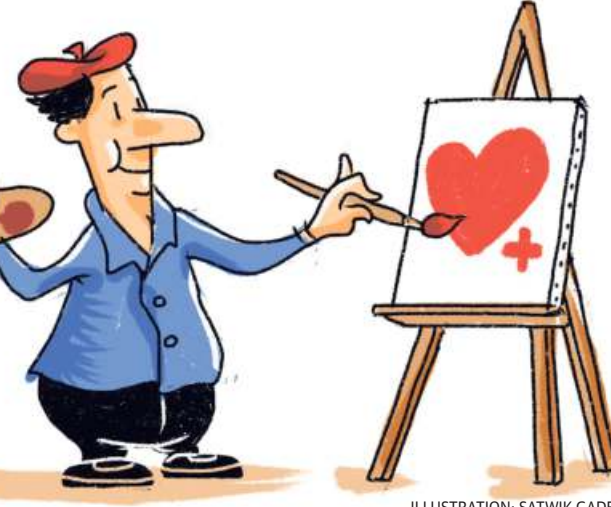


ILLUSTRATION: SATWIK GADE

such therapies started evolving into healing strategies. Today they are even used in mental health assessments of trauma survivors and victims of abuse.

When mental illness and its treatment face considerable stigma in society and when only a small percentage of the population that would benefit from treatment actually receive it, it is unwise to ignore the therapeutic value of art, especially when there are those who do not wish to take medicines although they may benefit from them. And there are others who have trouble finding the right pharmaceutical formulae. Although some may dismiss art as frivolous, more and more people are beginning to understand the role it plays in emotional well-being.

Human beings have an inordinate capacity to be creative but there is also great va-

riability. Some are hardly creative. The creative energies of Picasso, Cezanne, Monet and others, including the likes of Newton and Einstein, were exceptional.

Art is also a symbolic communication system practised only by humans and it may have helped us in creating social cohesion and ensuring survival itself.

New prescription

In November 2018, the British Health Secretary unveiled an initiative that might soon enable doctors in the U.K. to prescribe art, music, dance and even singing lessons as 'treatment' for a variety of ailments, from some forms of dementia and early psychosis to various respiratory conditions. This could mean that in the future, with this form of 'social prescribing' in the U.K. and other countries that had for decades fostered a culture of

reliance on antidepressant pills to ease the dyphoria associated with illnesses, could find patients enrolling for dance and singing lessons.

In order to prevent any misuse of the system, the U.K. is aiming to create a National Academy for Social Prescribing to ensure that doctors only refer suitable patients for art as treatment. The King's Fund, an independent charity that works to improve health and social care in England, says more should be done for prevention, and that social prescribing can help combat over-medicalisation.

Although we tend to think of art as a luxury, art tends to give rise to feelings of pleasure, which in turn become the personification of hope. Life itself is art and it is because life is sacred that art that comes from within, rather than from the ego, is also sacred. Hence art speaks more eloquently than a thousand spoken words and has the potential to become a messenger of love.

Even when art is beneficial, comforting, pleasurable and healing, all art is not art because it should never be *Exitus acta probat* (the end justifies the means). And because art is to do with perceptions, it is not always very easy to distinguish good art from bad art.

The author was a psychiatrist in the U.K. specialising in stress, anxiety and depression. Email: docjohn@aol.com

Finding joy

SHOBHA ANAND

The refrain these days is: 'I am bored'. Kids, housewives, elderly, all seem bored. Those busy with careers may not be bored but prone to depression. What has led to this?

A couple of decades ago children were happy playing outdoors and reading story books. School vacations invariably meant taking the train to the ancestral town or village. Housewives were happy preparing good, healthy food at home. Now cooking is regarded as a mundane chore. Eating out or ordering online is the 'in' thing.

Many senior citizens are no longer content with playing with their grandchildren or being involved in religious activities: they aspire to travel to exotic locations. Everyone wants to enjoy. A great idea; but has the pursuit of enjoyment led to discontent too?

Perhaps the social media and the Internet are the causes. We envy our Facebook friends who post pictures of holidaying in exotic locations. Many post pictures of their beautiful houses. Most people have more 'FB' friends than real friends. Since we don't get to really know them, we think everyone is having a great time, except us.

The cure: adopt what American writer Robert Brault said, "Enjoy the little things for one day, you may look back and realise they were the big things."

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The song of the open road recalled

A walk across memory lane of a deserted path where you were all alone and sang to yourself heartily

SUDHA VIDYASAGAR

It was hot as usual in my Madras those days, half a century ago. The sweat made a track from my scalp through my forehead to my cheeks, plastering strands of hair in front of my ears. I walked alone. I had a school bag made of cloth – I even remember the multi-coloured threads of green and red and blue than ran through it, anchored on my shoulders. There was no concept of a backpack then. My textbooks and notebooks of Class 6 weighed down my thin arms.

It was a mile's walk from school to home. It began from the school gates opening with the 4.30 p.m. bell, a small gate in a big steel one, and all of us kids rushed to squeeze ourselves out

through the three-foot-wide opening. Outside was freedom, conversations, loud laughter and goodbyes, till we met the next day.

The road was tarred to begin with, with some two-wheelers and cars hurrying along though the small lanes. Then I turned into a mud track, formed by human feet, through open land with hardly anybody around.

It is here that I began to sing. All kinds of songs: the ones that I learnt in my music class, classical ones, or contemporary movie songs that I liked. I sang in a fairly loud voice, tweaking the inflections of every sound, trying to get the right notes, attempting the same lines till I was satisfied!

And it was here that I transferred the weight of my

schoolbag on to my head. I made a hair band out of the sling of my bag, and centred it, balancing it on my head. This way my hands were free, to move around, provide the beat for my songs and generally swing around.

I also told myself stories. Made-up ones, of teachers and cousins and heroes and heroines. Dramatic ones, with some catastrophe or the other that the hero had to overcome, and always ended in success. The ground was full of small pebbles, brown and shiny. Some were big enough to be kicked along, and I transported them to the path to the main road. Some I picked up to throw at imaginary villains and vanquish them.

The open ground ended in the main road. In fact, the



ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

ground was a short-cut, and I gained a good ten minutes by taking it. The main road was full of people and vehicles. I stopped my self-chatter and my singing. Down came the

bag from head to shoulder, and I transformed myself into a regular, short schoolgirl going back home. My secret stories and songs lay in wait for me, in the open ground,

to be continued the next day.

Not once did I feel fear. It was a testimony to the safety of those times, that I walked all alone, and no one bothered me. Closer to home, my stomach rumbled, and mouth watered imagining the snacks and coffee that my mother would have made for me.

When I turned into my lane and opened the steel gate with a particularly loud bang, I could hear my dad saying, "She is back!" His laughter rippled through his voice. And my mother rushed to take my bag from me, as I kicked my shoes off to free my feet.

Some journeys in life are just sheer joy. It was a walk that I thoroughly enjoyed.

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Black, blue and more

The fascinating facts behind the phenomena of multiple eye colours
PITAMBER KAUSHIK

Homage to an oddball

This tribe's idiosyncrasies provide colour to our daily greys of mundanity
SHIVANGI RAI

A mentor and a master

Once upon a time a young man hated English, and then one day...
M.R. ANAND

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England, New Zealand to battle it out for the long-elusive crown

It promises to be a gripping contest between Williamson's bowlers and Morgan's big-hitters on the hallowed Lord's turf



Who'll lift it? Eoin Morgan and Kane Williamson will go all out to lay their hands on the coveted trophy. •COURTESY ICC



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
LONDON
England, cricket's birthplace, seeks its biggest moment under the sun very appropriately at a venue steeped in history. Lord's has its iconic red-brick pavilion and even the walls have gravitas and feature stunning lines, like the following one from W.G. Grace: "The great thing in hitting is, not to be half-hearted about it; but when you make up your mind to hit, to do it as if the whole match depended upon that particular stroke."

space-ship styled press box which doesn't blend with the prevailing aesthetics. There is irony too as one of its access points has a black and white picture of Sunil Gavaskar and this after the great opener was once barred entry at the Grace Gates by overzealous Marylebone Cricket Club stewards!

Advantage England
In this theatre, largely ancient in spirit with some modern influences, Eoin Morgan's men will take on New Zealand in the ICC World Cup final on Sunday. It is also heartening that in a nation where football reigns, this particular clash, marinated in overwhelming expectations, will be beamed live on free-to-air channels and the common man can savour it with his favourite beverage and some fish and chips at home.

This is an epic contest which is England's to lose. After a splendid start before a series of losses forced it into a 'win or perish' zone within the league phase, the host

THE FACE-OFF
ENGLAND vs NEW ZEALAND
LORD'S
HEAD-TO-HEAD

	Mat	ENG	NZ	Tied	NR
Overall	90	41	43	2	4
World Cup	9	4	5	0	0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

found a pulsating tail-wind and qualified for the semifinals where old foe Australia got hammered. The return of Jason Roy after he recovered from a hamstring injury, has turned out to be the x-factor and his pulverising bat found a mirror image in opening partner Jonny Bairstow.

Strong batting line-up
The relatively sedate Joe Root has hit the straps, Morgan found key runs against Australia and England bats deep as Ben Stokes and Jos Buttler are around to either rescue an innings or indulge in a biff. The bowling crew has its varied shades of pace and swing, be it through Jofra Archer or a

Chris Woakes and Adil Rashid is present in the spin-stakes. In the opposite corner, New Zealand awaits with a chuckle. It is a pretty relaxed unit, aware of its strengths: dogged batting embellished through skipper Kane Williamson's authoritative blade, plus a fast attack led by left-armers Trent Boult and Matt Henry, while spinner Mitchell Santner does a holding job. This joust's fate primarily hinges on the battle between Williamson's bowlers and the home squad's fire-spewing willow wielders on a pitch with its tinge of green. On match-eve here on Saturday, just before they trained, the Black Caps sat in

ROAD TO THE FINAL

ENGLAND			NEW ZEALAND		
LEAGUE STAGE			LEADING RUN-SCORERS		
• Beat South Africa by 104 runs, The Oval	Name	Runs HS	Name	Runs	HS
• Lost to Pakistan by 14 runs, Trent Bridge	Joe Root	549 107	Kane Williamson	548	148
• Beat Bangladesh by 106 runs, The Oval	Jonny Bairstow	496 111	Ross Taylor	335	82
• Beat West Indies by 8 wickets, Southampton	Jason Roy	426 153	Jimmy Neesham	213	97*
• Beat Afghanistan by 150 runs, Old Trafford	LEADING WICKET-TAKERS			LEADING WICKET-TAKERS	
• Lost to Sri Lanka by 20 runs, Headingley	Name	Wkts	BBI	Name	Wkts
• Lost to Australia by 64 runs, Lord's	Jofra Archer	19	3-27	Lockie Ferguson	18
• Beat India by 31 runs, Edgbaston	Mark Wood	17	3-18	Trent Boult	17
• Beat New Zealand by 119 runs, Chester-le-Street	Chris Woakes	13	3-20	Matt Henry	13

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths: A remarkably strong opening partnership of Bairstow and Roy that has yielded four century stands. A superb new-ball pair of Woakes and Archer. Wood's pace and Root's consistency.

Weaknesses: No obvious ones. The only one perhaps is an over-reliance on the openers.

Opportunities: Play out Boult and Henry and attack the other bowlers. With the ball, get rid of Williamson early.

Threats: Boult and Henry. If they strike early, like they did against India, the situation could turn irredeemable, no matter how deep a team bats.

Strengths: The fast-bowling trio of Boult, Henry and Ferguson. They have accounted for 48 wickets, with none of them going above five per over.

Weaknesses: The batting. A total over-reliance on Williamson, who has scored 548 runs and is the only centurion.

Opportunities: Get rid of England's openers early. Go after Woakes and Archer, the way Pakistan did, to great effect. Force England to look for alternative plans – something the team is not good at.

Threats: England's strong batting unit could put the game beyond the Kiwis if they fail to take early wickets.



Morgan aware of challenges of a summit clash

New Zealand is an extremely tough side: England skipper



Ready for it: A relaxed Ben Stokes, Jonny Bairstow, Joe Root and Eoin Morgan, at a practice session on Saturday. •REUTERS

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
LONDON
Nasser Hussain stood behind the assembled correspondents, near the jostling bunch of television cameramen and listened. The former England captain, now a commentator and columnist, is acutely conscious that the World Cup has been an elusive holy grail for the Old Blighty since the championship was first played in 1975.

Perhaps, he wanted to gauge the mood in the home team's camp while history beckons and out at the high table, current skipper Eoin Morgan held centre-stage in the pre-final press conference at Lord's here on Saturday. It helps that Morgan has met Rudyard Kipling's twin impostors 'triumph and disaster', while duelling with New Zealand.

Miserable defeat
During the 2015 edition, England suffered a miserable

defeat against New Zealand at Wellington, with the former scoring a measly 123 and the latter getting those runs with Brendon McCullum leading the way. Cut to the current World Cup, England paid back with cumulative interest and thumped the Black Caps by 119 runs in the league game at Chester-le-Street.

But a summit clash is a different beast and Morgan is aware of the challenges. "It's a culmination of four years of hard work and it presents a huge opportunity to try and win a World Cup. We are going to enjoy the game and try and take in as much as we can, it's a World Cup final and we are not going to shy away from that."

Kiwi bowlers' threat
While exuding confidence, Morgan remained wary of the opposition. "New Zealand is an extremely tough side, with a lot of experience and skill." He then added:

"Through the tournament, the scores have been lower than they previously were and Lord's isn't a high-scoring ground so it (final) will be a bit of a battle. They (New Zealand bowlers) offer threats throughout with the ball."

Morgan, who is close to McCullum, revealed that he has learnt a lot from his Kiwi friend. "I think in 2015, the way New Zealand played, it is very similar to what they are playing now. They proved to everybody that you can perform at the highest level and get to the top by being yourselves and not trying to be somebody else."

And has he dreamt about lifting the World Cup? Morgan nodded in the negative and quipped: "I haven't allowed myself to think about lifting the trophy. "Cricket, and sport in particular, is very fickle. If you ever get ahead, it always seems to bite you in the backside."

WORLD CUP FINALS - A TIMELINE

1975, Lord's: West Indies beat Australia by 17 runs	1979, Lord's: West Indies beat England by 92 runs
1983, Lord's: India beat West Indies by 43 runs	1987, Kolkata: Australia beat England by seven runs
1992, Melbourne: Pakistan beat England by 22 runs	1996, Lahore: Sri Lanka beat Australia by seven wickets
1999, Lord's: Australia beat Pakistan by eight wickets	2003, Johannesburg: Australia beat India by 125 runs
2007, Bridgetown, Barbados: Australia beat Sri Lanka by 53 runs (D-L method)	2011, Mumbai: India beat Sri Lanka by six wickets
2015, Melbourne: Australia beat New Zealand by seven wickets	

- **Most titles:** Australia 5
- **Highest total defended:** Australia 359 (2003); **Lowest total defended:** India 183 (1983)
- **Highest total chased:** India 277 (2011)
- **Most finals without title:** England 3 (1979, 1987, 1992)

'Anybody can beat anybody regardless of the breed of dog'

Williamson, however, concedes that England is favourite



Handling pressure: Ross Taylor, centre, will look to put his experience to good use in the final. •AFP

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
LONDON
Absorbing pressure and having a laugh about it seems second-nature to Kane Williamson. The New Zealand captain conceded that England is the favourite ahead of the World Cup final, during a press-conference at Lord's here on Saturday but in the same breath, insisted that anything could happen.

Witty and relaxed, he also made fun of the 'under-dog' tag bequeathed to New Zealand: "England rightly deserves to be the favourite. But whatever dog we are, it's just important that we focus on the cricket that we want to play and we have seen over the years that anybody can beat anybody regardless of the breed of dog."

Looking forward
When another correspondent queried whether New Zealand would love to be England's party-poopers at

Lord's, Williamson smiled and said: "Party-poopers? You talking about dogs again, hey? (smiling) under-dogs? Look, we are really looking forward to the occasion and when you go into any match, you have to deal with a number of different things, be it pressure or momentum."

England has relished its adrenaline-dripping starts unleashed by openers Jason Roy and Jonny Bairstow and Williamson admitted the threat but felt that there was no need to be overwhelmed. "Those two have been fantastic throughout this competition and prior as well."

"There is a huge amount of respect for the match-winners that England has, obviously the top of the order and throughout. But the focus for us is very much about the cricket that we want to play and we have seen throughout this compe-

titution that anybody can beat anybody."

Try to learn
Probed about how he deals with wins and losses, the visitor's skipper revealed his equanimity: "I prefer winning than losing. That is probably the best way to say it."

"Any experience is an opportunity to learn and sometimes tough experiences, being on the wrong side of results, can slap you in the face and give you a glaring lesson and if you ignore that, I don't think that is a positive thing, so treating both the outcomes with respect and trying to learn from them is the best part."

But is the pressure entirely on England? Williamson, impish smile in place, countered: "We are quite keen on winning as well. There are different bits of pressure on anybody, whether you are favourites or not."

SERVO CRICKET TRIVIA

SERVO
WORLD-CLASS LUBRICANTS

Lord's has hosted 5 World Cup finals, the maximum in cricket history.

Jonny Bairstow, Joe Root, Jos Buttler, Ben Stokes, Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, Tom Curran, Liam Dawson and James Vince.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (Capt.), Ross Taylor, Martin Guptill, Tom Latham, James Neesham, Trent Boult, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Tom Blundell, Colin Munro and Henry Nicholls.

Umpires: Kumar Dharmasena and Marais Erasmus; **Third umpire:** Rod Tucker; **Match referee:** Ranjan Madugalle.

Play starts at 3 p.m. IST.

Halep brings her regal and majestic best, creates history

Beats Serena in less than an hour, adds to her 2018 French Open title and bags a life-time membership to the coveted All England Club



N. SUDARSHAN
LONDON

One of Simona Halep's biggest motivations to win Wimbledon was to get a life-time membership of the coveted All England Club. Before the final, she had even hoped that the Duchess of Cambridge would cheer for her from the Royal Box.

On Saturday, her tennis was sufficiently regal and majestic, as she dispatched seven-time winner Serena Williams 6-2, 6-2 in just 56 minutes to clinch her first Wimbledon and second Major title. She is now the first Romanian to win the singles crown at SW19. The mercurial Ilie Nastase was a two-time finalist in 1972 and 1976.

Mum's dream

"Have you ever played a better match?" Halep was asked after the triumph. "Never," was the pat answer. "It was



Living the dream: A young Halep was told that if she had to do something in tennis, she had to play the Wimbledon final. • AP

my mum's dream. When I was 10 or 12, she had told me that if I had to do something in tennis, I had to play the Wimbledon final. So, thanks to my mum," the 27-year-old

said with a wide grin.

For Serena, it was a third successive loss in a Major final since her return from maternity as she continues to trail Margaret Court's record

of 24 Majors by one. If the defeat hurt, the 37-year-old hid it rather well, wholesome as she was in her praise for Halep.

"She literally played out of

her mind," Serena said. "It was a little bit of 'deer in the headlights' for me. Whenever a player plays that amazing, you have got to doff your hat. I don't think I could have

Match stats

Serena		Halep
2	Aces	1
1	Double faults	0
68	First serve %	76
4/11	Net points won	2/2
0/1	Break points	4/5
17	Winners	13
26	Unforced errors	3
38	Total points won	55

Sunday's showpiece

CENTRE COURT
Men's final
1-Djokovic vs 2-Federer
(6.30 p.m. start, IST)

done anything differently. Simona played her heart out. Maybe, one thing I can learn is to be like her."

Just that Serena wasn't allowed to be even half as good. Piling pressure early on is something Serena excels at. Instead, it was Halep, who has long preferred the sport's slower surfaces, who started at a frenetic pace in her maiden Wimbledon final.

At her counter-punching best - she is, after all, a clay-court natural - she guessed

nearly every Serena shot right. A 5-1 lead was established in no time, with eight winners to zero unforced errors.

Snapshot

Two points in her hold from 5-2 to take the set provided a snapshot of the whole match. At 15-15, Serena sent a powerful cross-court backhand - accompanied with a huge unnerving cry - that would have been beyond most players' reach.

Halep went scurrying after and pulled the ball back at such an extreme angle that Serena couldn't return it beyond the net. The next point was a near-repeat, ending with a volley going long.

"She was getting so many balls back," Serena said. "I generally have a strategy for players who do that. But today I just thought about it far too late."

It was not just Halep's defence that stood out. After she broke to go 3-2 up in the second set, Serena pressured her. But from 15-30, she landed two monster serves to wriggle out of trouble. Three more in the eighth game brought her the victory.

Overall, she won 34 of 46 service points and had just three unforced errors to Serena's 26. It was a Wimbledon performance that would have made her great American opponent proud.



Agonisingly close

Serena failed yet again in her bid to pull level with Margaret Court's record-haul of 24 Majors. The American has now lost five of her last seven Grand Slam finals

THE SLAM BREAK-UP OF COURT AND SERENA:

Player	Australian	French	Wimbledon	US	Total
Margaret Court	11	5	3	5	24
Serena Williams	7	3	7	6	23

■ Serena's loss was her worst in Slam finals, the previous being the 6-1, 6-4 rout by Maria Sharapova at the 2004 Wimbledon
 ■ Halep is the first Romanian woman to win Wimbledon
 ■ Serena's defeat was also the worst in a Slam final since Petra Kvitová beat Eugénie Bouchard 6-3, 6-0 at the 2014 Wimbledon

'Was tough because we don't even have a grass court in Romania'

Worked a lot to change my game a little bit to win: Halep

N. SUDARSHAN
LONDON

Calling her victory over Serena Williams the "match of her life," Simona Halep credited the way she managed herself, following the breakthrough win at the 2018 French Open, for her latest success.

"I was a little bit exhausted at the end of last year. I took a long holiday, and then I said 'it's a chill year.' I meant I wanted to relax as a person, not as a player. I still work hard every day, every match, every tournament. That's why I was able to win this tournament."

The finals she had lost in the past (French Open 2014, 2017 & Australian Open 2018) also helped her, she said. "It's never easy in a Grand Slam final. You can get intimidated by the moment. You can get too nervous. So, I didn't think that much about the trophy, but just try and be the best [I could]."

Once more

Before Saturday, Halep's lone win over Serena was the 6-0, 6-2 drubbing at the WTA Finals in 2014. Pre-match, Serena had even spoken about not letting Halep reach that level. "I just went for it like in Singapore," Ha-



Match of her life: Simona Halep went into the final hoping to repeat Singapore 2014, her lone victory over Serena Williams before Saturday. • AP

lep said. "I had that image in my head. I really believed there was a chance to do the same thing."

"I never thought I'll be able to win on grass with all these tall players serving with power," added the 27-year-old, who stands at 5 ft 6 in.

"I worked a lot to change my game a little bit to win on grass. I like to run a lot but here you cannot slide. But this year I started to have a feel for it."

"It was tough to believe that we could win on grass

because we don't even have a grass court in Romania!"

On the other hand, Serena, who is yet to win a title of any kind since her return, hoped things would come together soon. "I just have to figure out a way to win a final."

"Maybe playing other finals outside of Grand Slams would be really helpful."

"Just to get into the groove. I just have to keep working and be able to play some tournaments uninjured, like I did here."

The gentlemen's final: the prep done, stage is set

Federer will look to upstage defending champion Djokovic in a much-anticipated clash

N. SUDARSHAN
LONDON

Among tennis' Big Three, no rivalry works as well as the one between Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. In terms of numbers as well as styles, it has been the most competitive of match-ups. So much so that each has beaten the other at all the four slams. Sunday's Wimbledon final will be their 48th meeting with Djokovic leading 25-22.

"It's the same like going into a Rafa [Nadal] match," Federer said. "I think the moment you've played somebody probably more than 15 times, especially in recent years, there's not that much more left out there. It comes very much down to who's better on the day, who's in a better mental place and who's got more energy."

'Stars aligned'

"I don't think there's much to do in terms of practice. This is like a school: the day of the test you're not going to read, how many [ever] books. It's quite clear the work was done way before."

"That's why I was able to produce a good result [against Nadal]. It's been a rock-solid year for me. Stars are aligned right now. From that standpoint I can go into the match very confident."

The pace and the rhythm at which Federer plays has

Master vs Machine

It will be the 48th meeting between Federer and Djokovic, and the fourth at Wimbledon

Head-to-head: Djokovic leads 25-22

Before 2010: Federer 13-6 | After 2010: Djokovic 19-9

THE BREAK-UP:

ROUND-WISE:
Finals (19 times)*: Djokovic is way ahead 12-6

Semifinals (23 times): Djokovic leads 12-11

Quarterfinals (once): Federer won

Round-of-16 (once): Federer won

Round-of-64 (once): Federer won

Round-robin (3 times): Federer ahead 2-1

* In the 2014 ATP Finals at London, Federer pulled out of the summit clash due to a back injury

SURFACE-WISE:
Outdoor clay (8): Tied at 4-4

Outdoor grass (3): Djokovic ahead 2-1

Outdoor hard (26): Djokovic leads 13-13

Indoor hard (10): Djokovic has a 6-4 advantage



ATP ranking: Djokovic (1), Federer (3)

AT GRAND SLAMS
Titles: Federer (20), Djokovic (15)

Head-to-head: Djokovic leads 9-6

AT WIMBLEDON:
Titles: Federer (8), Djokovic (4)

Head-to-head: Djokovic leads 2-1

BREAK-UP

SEMIFINAL
2012: Federer won 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3

FINAL
2014: Djokovic won 6-7(7), 6-4, 7-6(4), 5-7, 6-4

FINAL
2015: Djokovic won 7-6(1), 6-7(10), 6-4, 6-3

LAST MEETING: Paris Masters 2018 (Semifinals): Djokovic won 7-6(6), 5-7, 7-6(3)

PREVIOUS MEETING IN A GRAND SLAM FINAL:

US OPEN 2015: Djokovic won 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4

"We've played each other so, so much. I don't mind that. It's more of a clear game plan. We had a great match against each other in Paris just recently. I hope we can back it up from there" - FEDERER

"It wouldn't be the first time playing against Federer on the Centre Court. Him and Nadal are the two biggest rivals that I ever had. I'm going to be excited and nervous and everything that you can think of" - DJOKOVIC

COMPILED BY AKHILESH KUMAR VEDAM

never been to Djokovic's liking. On above medium-pace surfaces, the Swiss can hustle opponents like no other, something Nadal found out on Friday.

On current form, Federer looks closer to his 2012 version that produced the master-class against Djokovic in the semifinal than the one that lost two finals in 2014

and 2015.

Constant pressure

"I've played Roger in some epic finals here, so I know what to expect," Djokovic said. "This surface complements his game very much. He loves to play very fast. Takes away the time and rushes you into everything. For players like Nadal or my-

self who like to have a little more time, it's constant pressure."

But as much as Federer is the master of tennis' first-act, the serve, Djokovic is of the second, the return. No one has neutralised the 20-time Major winner's precisely directed weaponry as well as the Serb, even on grass. The 32-year-old may not be

the invincible self he was in 2014-15, but such are his powers of recovery that he has won three of the past four slams and made the semifinal of the other.

From being outside the top-20 this time last year, he is now the undisputed king. A successful defence of his crown will firmly establish his hegemony.

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

IN BRIEF



Daruvala finishes second, leads F3 standings

SILVERSTONE India's Jehan Daruvala, despite finishing second in the first race of the fourth round of the FIA Formula 3 championship here on Saturday, moved to the top of the drivers' standings. Daruvala's P2 finish was enough to haul him into the championship lead with 100 points, two ahead of teammate Robert Shwartzman. Juri Vips, who won the race, is third with 92.

Ashwin spins a web around Surrey batsmen

NOTTINGHAM R. Ashwin, representing Nottinghamshire, followed up his eight-wicket haul earlier this week with a six-for in the County Championship Division One match against Surrey on Saturday. Ashwin spun out the top-order as Surrey was bowled out for 240. Ashwin finished with figures of 33.2-9-69-6.

DPR Korea proves too good for India

With second loss, the host's chances of making final is almost over

INTERCONTL. CUP

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
AHMEDABAD

DPR Korea proved too good for India handing out a 5-2 defeat to the host in the Intercontinental Cup here on Saturday.

Having lost the first outing 4-2 to Tajikistan, India's chances of reaching the final is almost over.

The 3-0 lead that DPR Korea enjoyed in the opening half exposed the problems in the Indian defence. Stimac overhauled his roster yet again, bringing nine new players as against the side that played Tajikistan.

The opposition presented a more settled look retaining its attack that turned out against Syria in its first outing of the tournament. The Indian team also presented a three-man attack with Manvir Singh and Jobby Justin joining Sunil Chhetri in the offensive.

Seasoned Rowlin Borges anchored the midfield while Brandon Fernandes and



Pulling one back: Lallianzuala Chhangte scored India's first goal in the 51st minute. • AIFF MEDIA

Amarjit Singh Kiyam took to the wings.

Playing a new system with three-man attack, the Indian line-up suffered communication gaps giving its opponent enough space in the middle to make the build-ups.

It was just a matter of time before the Indian citadel fell and it happened through a free-kick at the top of the box that was sent home by DPR Korea captain Jong Il Gwan in the eighth minute.

The goal prodded India

out of its slumber, but Chhetri fluffed a clear opportunity in the 11th minute when he nodded over from the goal-mouth.

India slipped into further crisis conceding the second in the 16th minute when a confusion between Kotal and Jhingam in the defence saw Sim Jin making the most of it.

The host conceded the third in the 29th minute when Gwan nodded in his second to make it 3-0.

Stimac overhauled the

side after the break and exhausted the quota of six substitutions (this tournament being treated as a friendly) to bring back the young brigade.

Pulling one back

With the likes of Udanta Singh, Sahal Abdul Samad, Anirudh Thapa and Lallianzuala Chhangte back in the attack, the host's performance improved as Chhangte pulled one back in the 51st minute.

But India's problems in the defence persisted as Korea made it 4-1 in the 63rd minute through Ri Un Chol off a counter-attack.

Chhetri added one more to his tally of 71 international goals to make it 4-2 in the 71st minute, but it was all over for the host by then as Korea made it 5-2 in the injury-time to rub more salt in India's wound.

The result: India 2 (Lallianzuala Chhangte 51, Sunil Chhetri 71) lost to DPR Korea 5 (Jong Il Gwan 8, 29, Sim Jin 16, Ri Un Chol 41, Ri Hyong Jin 90+2).

De Gendt wins

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SAINT-ETIENNE (FRANCE)

Thomas De Gendt won the eighth stage of the Tour de France on Saturday as Frenchman Julian Alaphilippe claimed back the race leader's yellow jersey.

Defending champion Geraint Thomas was caught in a crash 15kms from the end but escaped unscathed and finished strongly.

De Gendt rode at the front from start to finish after taking part in an early breakaway during the 220km tough trek.

Alaphilippe finished the stage in third place.



De Gendt. • REUTERS

TV PICKS

ICC World Cup: (final): Star Sports 1 & 2, Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 3 p.m.
Wimbledon: Star Sports Select 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Kiran More named interim USA coach

NEW DELHI
Former India wicketkeeper Kiran More, who was appointed USA's director of cricket last month, will take the additional responsibility of coaching the senior national team on an interim basis. More has been handed the job alongside a group of advisors, including former India players Sunil Joshi and Pravin Amre, following the resignation of head coach Pubudu Dassanayake. PTI



Pardeep betters his own clean & jerk record

APIA (SAMOA)
Pardeep Singh created a new clean and jerk record on his way to a total of 350kg and the gold in the men's 102kg class in the Commonwealth weightlifting championships here on Saturday. Pardeep bettered his own record of 201kg by 1kg.

The medallists: Men: Elite: 96kg: Silver: Vikas Thakur (snatch 153kg, clean and jerk 185kg, total 338kg); **102kg: Gold:** Pardeep Singh (148, 202, 350). **Juniors: Silver:** Kalyan Singh (127, 160, 287).

Westbrook 'eternally grateful' to Thunder fans

WASHINGTON
Russell Westbrook declared on Friday he would be "eternally grateful" to Oklahoma City Thunder supporters. "I can't even begin to put into words all of the emotions I have right now. It's been one heck of a journey Oklahoma! I'm leaving Oklahoma with so many friends and so much gratitude," Westbrook posted on his Instagram account. AFP

Shiv Nadar School wins title

FARIDABAD
Shiv Nadar School won the girls' under-14 district basketball title in the two-day tournament, organised by BFI at the school premises, here on Saturday. The host beat St. Anthony School 35-8 in the final. Suhana Gupta, an eighth standard student of Shiv Nadar, was adjudged the Most Valuable Player. Some of the prodigies of Haryana charmed everyone with their dribbling skills during the tournament which featured 11 schools.



Mane reveals his absolute dream

CAIRO
Sadio Mane says helping Liverpool win the Champions League was special, but his "absolute dream" is parading the Africa Cup of Nations trophy through the streets of Dakar. "Going to Dakar with the trophy would be extraordinary. My dream is to help Senegal win the Africa Cup of Nations — that would surpass even what I achieved with Liverpool in Champions League," said Mane. AFP

Bottas pips Hamilton to pole

Leclerc will share the second row with Verstappen

BRITISH GP

REUTERS SILVERSTONE
Valtteri Bottas beat crowd favourite and Formula One leader Lewis Hamilton by a wafer-thin margin on Saturday to deny his Mercedes teammate a fifth successive British Grand Prix pole position.

The Finn was a mere 0.006 of a second quicker than the five times world champion as the two Silver Arrows once again locked out the front row of the grid on a cloudy afternoon at Silverstone.

Ferrari's young Monegasque Charles Leclerc will share the second row with Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who won the previous race in Austria where the two 21-year-olds clashed on track while fighting for victory in the closing laps.

The pole, in a time of one minute 25.093 seconds, was Bottas's fourth in 10 races this season — more than any other driver — and career 10th.

"Ultimately not good enough," said Hamilton, who was fastest in the first phase of qualifying, of his performance.

"We worked really hard throughout the session but it just got a little bit away from us."

"I sacrificed a lap in Q2 (the second phase), which would have helped get a reading of how the car was. And then just at the end I had that mistake on the first



Top of the heap: Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas is presented with the trophy by musician Mabel. •REUTERS

lap and the second one just wasn't that great.

"Fair play to Valtteri, he did the job. But its a long race tomorrow and we've got a great crowd here so hopefully I can do something different."

Bottas is 31 points adrift of Hamilton in the championship and needs to close the gap, fully aware that his teammate has a habit of hitting full throttle once the August break is out of the way.

"I knew the first lap was

good but it wasn't perfect and honestly I should've improved in the second run and I'm glad it was enough — it's not easy to get a quick lap together and it's very easy to do mistakes," said the Finn.

Hamilton remains well-placed, however, to take a record sixth home win and 80th of his career.

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, last year's race winner, was sixth and behind Red Bull's French driver Pierre Gasly on the third row.

Australian Daniel Ricciardo lines up seventh for Renault, alongside McLaren's Lando Norris after another fine performance by the British teenage rookie whose Spanish teammate Carlos Sainz was 13th.

The starting grid: Front row: Bottas; Hamilton; **Second:** Leclerc; Verstappen; **Third:** Gasly; Vettel; **Fourth:** Ricciardo; Norris; **Fifth:** Albon; Hulkenberg; **Sixth:** Giovinazzi; Raikkonen; **Seventh:** Sainz; Grosjean; **Eighth:** Perez; Magnussen; **Ninth:** Kvyat; Stroll; **Tenth:** Russell; Kubica.

Gatlin edges past Lyles

Sifan Hassan breaks World record in the women's mile

DIAMOND LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE MONACO
Controversial American Justin Gatlin outspurred up-and-coming compatriot Noah Lyles in the 100 metres at Friday's Diamond League meet in Monaco where Sifan Hassan set a new world best in the women's mile.

In balmy conditions at a packed Stade Louis II, the 37-year-old Gatlin kept both his nerve and form after an average start to streak through the finish line in 9.91 seconds, just one-hundredth of a second ahead of much-vaunted Lyles, 21.

There was an outstanding performance in the women's mile, which is not an Olympic or world distance, as Ethiopian-born Dutch runner Hassan came home in 4min 12.33sec, smashing by 23 seconds the previous best set in 1996 by Russian Svetlana Masterkova.

Hassan, twice European



That's me! Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands celebrates after setting the women's mile World record. •REUTERS

champion over 1500m and once 5000m gold medallist, cracked the field with two laps to go and streaked through the line with teeth gritted, collapsing as the timer flashed up her feat.

"The first 800m were a bit slow so I wasn't thinking it would be a world record," said Hassan. "When I crossed the line I was so surprised."

"After you run the last 400m like that and set a world record it gives you so much confidence over

5000m," said Hassan. Another experienced campaigner, Botswana's Olympic silver medallist Nijel Amos, produced a stunning meet record in winning the men's 800m in 1:41.89 ahead of Kenya's Ferguson Rotich, France's world champion Pierre-Ambroise Bosse only managing ninth in a high-quality race.

Only four runners have gone faster than Amos' time, which was the 15th fastest ever run over the distance.

Sreeshankar produces season's best

Silwal's effort fetches him javelin gold

SPORTS BUREAU BISHKEK (KYRGYZSTAN)

M. Sreeshankar produced his season's best performance (7.97m) as he won the long jump gold at the Tatyana Kolpakova international athletics meet on Saturday.

Four of his six jumps were fouls, but the 20-year-old — who holds the national record with 8.20m — had his best jump in the fourth.

"I felt good today. I fouled four jumps but two or three of them looked to be above 8.10m. My approach was good too," Sreeshankar told *The Hindu* from Bishkek.

Meanwhile, Sahil Silwal came up with a personal best effort of 78.50m to take the javelin throw gold.

The 19-year-old is now in the third spot in the under-20 world list this year.

Archana Suseentran (100m), Lili Das (400m) and the 4x100m relay team all won gold in women's section while Harsh Kumar pocketed the men's 400m title.

Meanwhile, Jisna Mathew took the silver in the wo-



Good show: M. Sreeshankar claimed the honours in longjump. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

men's 400m in 53.76s.

Anas qualifies for Worlds

Muhammed Anas broke his own men's 400m national record, clocking 45.21s at the Klado international meet in the Czech Republic on Saturday. It helped him qualify for the September-October Worlds in Doha.

The entry standard in the event is 45.30s.

Anas' previous national record, 45.24s, also came in the Czech Republic last year. **The results (Indians only): Ta-**

tyana Kolpakova International: Men: 400m: 1. Harsh Kumar (46.76m), 2. Gajanand Mistri (47.23), 1500m: 2. Rahul (3:50.69s). **Long jump:** 1. M. Sreeshankar (7.97m). **Javelin:** 1. Sahil Silwal (78.50m), 3. Rohit Yadav (73.33). **Women: 100m:** 1. S. Archana (11.74s). **400m:** 2. Jisna Mathew (53.76s). **1500m:** 1. Lili Das (4:19.05s). **4x100m relay:** 1. Archana, Revathi, Rashmi, Hina (45.81s). **Klado international: Men: 400m:** 1. Muhammed Anas (45.21s, national record; OR 45.24). **Women: 400m:** 1. V.K. Vismaya (52.54s), 3. Saritaben Gayakwad (53.37).

World7 prevails over Indian7

KABADDI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

World7 scored an exciting 33-32 win over Indian7 in the All-Star kabaddi match, organised as a prelude to Pro-Kabaddi League Season-7, at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium here on Saturday night.

The winner trailed 14-20 at half-time.

For the Ajay Thakur-led Indian7, the star performer in the first-half was Pawan Sehrawat, who was the most valuable player of PKL last season.

But to the credit of World7, it rallied strongly, especially in the last five minutes thanks to star raiders Fazal Mohammad Esmaeil Nabibakhsh, Jang Jun Lee and captain Fazel Atrachali.

What tilted the scales in World7's favour in the dying minutes of the game was the brilliance of Nabhibakhsh whose 39th-minute all-out raid helped the team stretch the lead to 32-30.

Pawan Sehrawat was given the big moment to snatch the game back, but he succumbed to Jang Jun Lee's ankle hold in the penultimate raid of the match.



Catch me if you can! World7's Jang Kun Lee makes a raid in the All-Star match in Hyderabad on Saturday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HI names 33 for national women's camp

Preparations set to commence on Monday at SAI, Bengaluru

PREST TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Hockey India on Saturday named 33 core probables for the Indian women's national coaching camp, commencing on Monday at the Sports Authority of India, Bengaluru.

The players have been asked to report to chief coach Sjoerd Marijne for the four-

week camp, which will conclude on August 11.

After the conclusion of the camp, the team will travel to Japan for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics Test event, which will be played among India, hosts Japan, Australia and China, beginning on August 17.

"We will use this upcoming national coaching camp

to evaluate our performances at the FIH Women's Series Finals Hiroshima 2019, and identify the areas for improvement," said coach Marijne.

The probables:
Goalkeepers: Savita, Rajani Etimarpu, Bichu Devi Kharibam.
Defenders: Deep Grace Ekka, Reena Khokhar, Suman Devi, Sunita Lakra, Salima Tete, Man-

preet Kaur, Gurjit Kaur, Rashmi Mintz, Mahima Choudhary and Nisha.

Midfielders: Nikki Pradhan, Monika, Neha Goyal, Lilima Mintz, Sushila Chanu, Chetna, Reet, Anuja Singh, Karishma Yadav and Sonika.
Forwards: Rani, Lalremsiami, Vandana Kataria, Navjot Kaur, Navneet Kaur, Rajwinder Kaur, Jyoti, Sharmila Devi, Amandeep Kaur and Priyanka Wankhede.

Secretive Force wins Squanderer Trophy

BENGALURU: Secretive Force (Bengaluru), won the Squanderer Trophy, the main event of the race held here on Saturday (July 13). The winner is owned by Ms. Ameeta Mehra, Mr. Rienze M.K. Edwards & Mrs. P.P.M. Edwards and trained by Darius.

THE RESULTS:
1 MOUNT EVEREST PLATE (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms): WINALL (Sandesh) 1, Ozark (Akshay K) 2, Silver Swift (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Sun Splash (Neeraj) 4. Not run: Harbour Sunrise. 5-1/4, 1/2 and 4-3/4. Im 12.43s. ₹14 (w), 10, 14 and 11 (p). SHP: 41, THP: 33, FP: 52, Q: 40, Trinella: 113 and 28. Exacta: 423 and 322. Favourite: Winall. Owner: Mr. Kersi H. Vachha. Trainer: Arjun Mangalorkar.

2 GALILEE PLATE (1,600m), rated 15 to 35, 5-y-o and over: TRACK STRIKER (Akshay K) 1, Inky Black (Arshad) 2, After Hours (Akshay K) 3 and Raw Gold (M. Naveen) 4. 2, 3/4 and 3-1/4. Im 38.32s. ₹25 (w), 12, 20 and 22 (p). SHP: 56, THP: 57, FP: 100, Q: 74, Trinella: 1,397 and 614. Exacta: 2,698 and 1,337. Favourite: Track Striker. Owner: Mr. Hisqueel Taher. Trainer: M. Rajendra Singh.

3 BRAVE DANCER PLATE (1,200m), rated 00 to 20: SINGHSAAB (Md. Asif Khan) 1, Dalas (P.S. Chouhan) 2, Arragance (Yash) 3 and Dreams United (Irvan) 4. Not run: First Step, NK, 2-1/4 and 2-1/4. Im 12.90s. ₹78 (w), 24, 14 and 22 (p). SHP: 38, THP: 55, FP: 301, Q: 131, Trinella: 1,431 and 836. Exacta: 6,734 and 3,298. Favourite: Duty Call. Owner: Mr.

Mahinder Kumar. Trainer: Praveen Jesu.

4 SQUANDERER TROPHY (2,000m), rated 60 & above: SECRETIVE FORCE (Zervan) 1, Point To Prove (Sandesh) 2, Angelino (Akshay K) 3 and Mr Hand-some (S.A. Amit) 4. 1-1/2, 3 and Nose. 2m 04.71s. ₹14 (w), 11 and 17 (p). SHP: 26, THP: 29, FP: 34, Q: 25, Trinella: 54 and 31, Exacta: 261 and 128. Favourite: Secretive Force. Owners: Ms. Ameeta Mehra, Mr. Rienze M.K. Edwards & Mrs. P.P.M. Edwards. Trainer: Darius.

5 P.V. SHETTY MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,200m), rated 45 to 65: CASTAWAY (P.S. Chouhan) 1, Treasure Delight (Yash) 2, Cadillac (Sandesh) 3 and Fair Warning (Neeraj) 4. 1, 1-1/2 and 3-1/4. Im 12.11s. ₹24 (w), 12, 12 and 44 (p),

SHP: 28, THP: 71, FP: 57, Q: 25, Trinella 650 and 377, Exacta: 1,673 and 461. Favourite: Castaway. Owner: Mr. H. Thambuswamy. Trainer: S. Dominic.

6 NANOLI STUD STAKES (1,600m), rated 30 to 50, 4-y-o and over: AUSTRALIS (Trevor) 1, Foi Et Amour (Sandesh) 2, Candlelightqueen (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Astral Force (Antony) 4. Not run: High Admiral, NK, 4-1/2 and 2-1/4. Im 37.05s. ₹34 (w), 11, 11 and 16 (p). SHP: 36, THP: 37, FP: 56, Q: 18, Trinella: 127 and 103, Exacta: 207 and 66. Favourite: Foi Et Amour. Owners: Manjiri Horse Breed Farm Pvt Ltd rep by Mr & Mrs. S.P. Mistry & Mr. Shantanu Sharma. Trainer: S. Narredu.

Jackpot: ₹3,601 (164 tkts); Runner up: 227 (1,116 tkts); Treble (1): 272 (51 tkts); (ii): 194 (164 tkts).

Adjudicate may score in the Maharaja's Gold Cup

BENGALURU: Adjudicate, who is in fine nick, may score in the Maharaja's Gold Cup (2,200m), the chief event of the races to be held here on Sunday (July 14).

1 SUPERVITE PLATE (1,100m), rated 00 to 20, 2-30 p.m.: 1. Cashmere (4) M. Naveen 60, 2. Barog (1) Irvan 59, 3. Emerald Green (6) Noornabi 58, 4. Have A Nice Day (2) Md. Asif Khan 57.5, 5. Premier Premises (5) Arshad 57.5, 6. Kanthaka (8) Rajesh K 53, 7. High Hawk (3) A. Merchant 52.5 and 8. Epona (7) Rayan 51.5.
1 PREMIER PRINCESS, 2. CASHMERE, 3. HIGH HAWK.

2 PARSIANA PLATE (Div. II), (1,200m), rated 15 to 35, 4-y-o & over, 3-00: 1. Amazonite (1) John 60, 2. Touch Your Destiny (3) R. Manish 60, 3. Stars In His Eyes (7) M. Naveen 59, 4. Emidio (6) Akshay K 58.5, 5. Princezeem (5) T.S. Jodha 58.5, 6. Nawabzaddi (4) A. Ramu 57, 7. Aine (8) P.S. A. Imran 57.5, 4. Sacred Roman (6) Akshay K 57.5, 5. Roberta (2) Trevor 56, 6. Salazaar (8) P.S. Chouhan 55.5, 7. Oomph (-) 53, 8. Super Smart (1) S.A. Amit 52.5 and 9. Watchmyscript (7) Zervan 52.
3 MORIAL CUP (1,400m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 3-30: 1. Challenging Star (1) Zervan 56, 2. Cuban Pete (8) Akshay K 56, 3. My Vision (6) Arshad 56, 4. On The Trot (4) Suraj 56, 5. Super Gladiator (2) Raja Rao 56, 6. Sandariva (7) S.A. Amit 54.5, 7. Sea Of Cortez (3) Trevor 54.5 and 8. Touchwood (5) T.S. Jodha 54.5. **1. SEA OF CORTEZ, 2. ON THE TROT, 3. CUBAN PETE.**

4 MAHARAJA'S GOLD CUP (2,200m), 4-y-o & over, (Terms), 4-00: 1. Star Superior (3) Suraj 60, 2. Adjudicate (4) Sandesh 58.5, 3. My Opinion (5) A. Imran 57.5, 4. Sacred Roman (6) Akshay K 57.5, 5. Roberta (2) Trevor 56, 6. Salazaar (8) P.S. Chouhan 55.5, 7. Oomph (-) 53, 8. Super Smart (1) S.A. Amit 52.5 and 9. Watchmyscript (7) Zervan 52.
1. ADJUDICATE, 2. STAR SUPERIOR, 3. SALAZAAR.

5 YERAVADA STUD PLATE (1,400m), rated 30 to 50, 4-30: 1. Constantinople (6) Trevor 60, 2. Karadeniz (1) A. Imran 59.5, 3. Prabhakaran 57 and 8. Youres-handsome (8) B. Harish 56. **1. GRECIAN LIGHT, 2. DESERT AN-GEL, 3. LOOK OUT.** Day's best: ADJUDICATE Double: CONSTANTINOPLE — GRECIAN LIGHT Jkt: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6; Tr (i): 1, 2 and 3; (ii): 4, 5 and 6.

IN BRIEF



Sudha Murty to come up with trilogy on her pet

NEW DELHI
Writer and Infosys Foundation chairperson Sudha Murty will soon come up with *The Gopi Diaries*, a three-book series told from the viewpoint of her pet dog. The series will be published by HarperCollins India. **PTI**



Rome's garbage crisis sparks health fears

ROME
Landfills in flames and rats feasting on waste in the streets have sparked health fears in Rome. Due to a garbage crisis, Rome's chief physician Antonio Magi has issued a "hygiene alert" that could be upgraded into a health warning. **AFP**



U.S. growing largest crop of marijuana for research

NEW YORK
The U.S. government is growing the largest crop of medical research marijuana in five years. The government said it plans to grow 2,000 kg this year at the University of Mississippi, which holds the sole federal contract for producing marijuana. **AP**



China's manned space lab to re-enter atmosphere

BEIJING
China's manned space lab Tiangong-2 has finished experiments and will re-enter Earth's atmosphere on July 19. A small amount of debris will fall into the designated safe waters of the South Pacific Ocean, the China Manned Space Engineering Office said. **REUTERS**

U.S. sets \$5 bn fine for Facebook

Probe investigated harvesting of user data in the Cambridge Analytica scandal

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. regulators have approved a \$5 billion penalty to be levied on Facebook to settle a probe into the social network's privacy and data protection lapses, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday.

The newspaper said the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) approved the settlement in a 3-2 vote.

According to the report, the deal, which would be the largest penalty ever imposed by the FTC for privacy violations, still needs approval from the Justice Department before it is finalised.

Although details have not yet been released, the deal will likely include restrictions on how Facebook is able to use personal data.

Charlotte Slaiman of the consumer group Public Knowledge thinks it is unlikely the restrictions will be overly harsh.

"We don't yet know key aspects of the settlement: whether Facebook must



Online safety: Some critics of Facebook have argued that the company should face tougher sanctions. **AFP**

make any changes to its business model or practices as a result," said Charlotte Slaiman, the group's Competition Policy Counsel. "By itself, this fine will not be sufficient to change Facebook's behaviour."

'Privacy is key'

The outlook was more optimistic at the Center for Democracy and Technology, whose president Nuala O'Connor said the fine underscored the importance of "data stewardship" in the digital age.

"The FTC has put all companies on notice that they must safeguard personal information," Ms. O'Connor said.

The FTC announced last year it reopened its investigation into a 2011 privacy settlement with Facebook after revelations that personal data on tens of millions of users was hijacked by the political consultancy Cambridge Analytica, which was working on the Donald Trump campaign in 2016.

Facebook has also faced questions about whether it

improperly shared user data with business partners in violation of the earlier settlement. The leading social network with more than two billion users worldwide has also been facing inquiries on privacy from regulators around the world.

The fine is unlikely to hurt Facebook, which logged a profit of \$2.4 billion on revenue that climbed 26% to \$15.1 billion in the first three months of this year.

Some Facebook critics have argued the company should face tougher sanctions including monitoring of its data practices.

Faced with criticism, Facebook's head of global affairs, Nick Clegg, called on governments to do more to regulate social networks, instead of leaving the work to companies. "It's not for private companies, however big or small, to come up with those rules. It is for democratic politicians in the democratic world to do so," Mr. Clegg had said in an interview with the BBC.

Extinct bird had an extra long toe, shows study

Fossil discovered in Myanmar

BECKY FERREIRA

Some 99 million years ago, a small creature with a weird elongated toe died and became partially entombed in amber. Its lower leg and foot remained undisturbed in the hardened tree resin until amber miners eventually discovered the fossil in Myanmar's Hukawng Valley in 2014.

The preserved toe measures less than half an inch from knuckle to claw-tip, making it 41% longer than the next longest digit on the creature's foot. When traders showed the curious specimen to Chen Guang, a curator at China's Hupuge Amber Museum, they suggested that it probably belonged to an extinct lizard.

Mr. Chen thought that the remains looked more like an avian species, so he looped in Lida Xing, a palaeontologist at China University of



An artist's conception of *Elektorornis chenguangi*. **ZHONGDA ZHANG**

Geosciences who specialises in Cretaceous birds.

Named *Elektorornis chenguangi*, the specimen is described in a study, led by Mr. Xing, published in *Current Biology*.

Its elongated toe structure has never been observed in other birds, living or extinct. Mr. Xing's team speculated that *E. chenguangi* may have used the long, sensitive digit to probe cracks in trees for insects and grubs. **NY TIMES**

Lights for the soul



Honouring the dead: A man wearing yukata (summer kimono) poses with a mask as thousands of lanterns are lit up during the Mitama festival at Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, Japan, on Saturday. The four-day event is one of Tokyo's biggest lantern festivals, held annually to comfort the souls of those who lost their lives in war. **AP**

Study suggests virus co-evolved with humans

Will help in studying human evolution

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL
WASHINGTON

In 2014, a virus called crAssphage that infects bacteria was discovered as part of the human body's intestinal environment. Now, a recent study indicates that it may have co-evolved with human lineage.

The study published in the journal *Nature Microbiology* showed that the virus was found in the sewage of more than one-third of the world's countries. Additionally, the make-up of the virus can vary depending on the country and city.

"The virus is both highly abundant in the human gut and represents an entirely new viral family. With this study, we were able to expand our understanding of the diversity and evolution-

ary history of the human microbiome globally. Our team at Notre Dame has been evaluating the potential uses of this newly identified virus and is developing it as an alternative to *E. coli* or other faecal indicator bacteria that are not specific to humans, as an indicator of faecal pollution," said Kyle Bibby, co-author of the study.

The research was conducted by over 115 scientists from 65 countries, allowing for the collection of a significant amount of sequencing data.

Genetic data were also collected from primates and three pre-Columbian Andean mummies and a Tyrolean glacier mummy, which had 5,300-year-old intestinal content.

Ecuador tribe wins legal battle

Court ruling prevents government from selling rainforest land to oil companies

REUTERS
BOGOTA

A court in Ecuador has upheld a ruling preventing the government from selling land in the Amazon rainforest to oil companies, a move that is being termed a historic win for the Waorani indigenous tribe living there.

The government had appealed an earlier court ruling in April that the 2,000-strong tribe had not been properly consulted over the land auction plan.

The decision upholding the ruling ends the years-long legal battle over the land, campaigners said. "This victory is for my ancestors. It's for our forest and future generations. And it's for the whole world," said Nemonte Nenquimo, president of the Waorani Pastaza Organization on Friday.



Pushing back: Waorani natives take part in a demonstration against the entry of oil companies. **AFP**

The Energy Ministry said in April that the government had carried out a proper consultation process with the Waorani according to the "law and international standards".

Ecuador is pushing to open up more rainforest land and develop its oil and gas reserves in the hope of

improving its sluggish economy and cutting its high fiscal deficit and foreign debt. The move has led to heightened tensions emerging between indigenous communities and oil companies in Ecuador.

The Constitution gives the government the right to develop energy projects and

Gay giraffes and penguins play a part in Munich Pride Parade

Zoo tours give insights into homosexuality among animals

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MUNICH

Organisers of this year's Gay Pride week in Munich have a group of rather wild partners – penguins, giraffes and lions at the city zoo – where tours are being run about same-sex love in the animal kingdom.

The Munich Zoo has joined Pride week with a look into the intimate lives of animals, seeking to boost tolerance among humans.

"It is important for us to talk about" homosexuality in the animal kingdom and show that same-sex love is natural, said Munich zoo spokesman Dennis Spaeth, adding that Germany is seeing an increasing number of attacks on LGBTIQ rights. At least 91 attacks on non-heterosexuals were recorded by the police last year.

The first stop on the Pride tour is the giraffes. "In some groups, 90 percent of the facts observed are in fact ho-



No bounds: Giraffes in their enclosure in Munich Zoo. **AFP**

mosexual in nature," explained biologist Guenter Strauss.

Lifetime partners

There is also a male couple of Humboldt penguins squatting together from other, mixed pairs. "Penguins conduct homosexual relationships that can last a whole lifetime, something very rare in the animal kingdom," said Mr. Strauss. Same-sex love among ani-

mals was a taboo for scientists for a long time, says Mr. Strauss.

"On one expedition to the South Pole at the start of the 20th century, a doctor saw males (penguins) copulating – but he left out the pages dealing with the behaviour when he published the results of his research," he said. The pages were only re-discovered "eight or nine years ago" in a library in Britain, the biologist added.

Russia sends telescope into space

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

Russia launched a space telescope on Saturday from the cosmodrome in Baikonur, Kazakhstan, in a joint project with Germany.

A video posted on the website of the Roskosmos, the Russian space agency, showed a Proton-M rocket carrying the Spektr-RG taking off from the launch pad.

The launch was originally scheduled for June 21 but was postponed twice because of a battery problem.

The Spektr-RG, developed with Germany, is a space observatory intended to replace the Spektr-R, known as the "Russian Hubble", which Roskosmos said it lost control of in January. Spektr-R was launched in 2011 to observe black holes, neutron stars and magnetic fields. Its successor will take up similar duties.

Computer genius Corbató dies at 93

Worked on time-sharing systems

KATIE HAFNER

Fernando Corbató, whose work on computer time-sharing in the 1960s helped pave the way for the personal computer, as well as the computer password, died on Friday. He was 93.

His wife, Emily Corbató, said the cause was complications of diabetes. At his death he was a professor emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Corbató, who spent his entire career at MIT, oversaw a project in the early 1960s called the Compatible Time-Sharing System, or CTSS, which allowed multiple users in different locations to access a single computer simultaneously through telephone lines.

At the time, computing was done in large batches, and users typically had to wait until the next day to get the results of a computation.

In a 1963 public television interview, Corbató described batch processing as "infuriating" for its inefficiency. The advent of time-sharing, however, reinforced the notion, still in its infancy, that computers could be used interactively. It was an idea that would animate the computing field for decades.

"Long before personal computers made it possible for each person to have



Fernando Corbató

a computer, time-sharing transformed the way people used computers," said Stephen Crocker, a computer scientist and internet pioneer who worked on time-sharing systems.

Corbató explained his time-sharing methods in the 1963 interview, with the reporter John Fitch, broadcast as part of the WGBH series *MIT Science Reporter*. In place of an actual bulky computer of the day, he used a modified electric typewriter mounted on a box of electronics. Computers, he said on the programme, were so expensive to use that any idle time was a huge waste. But with time-sharing, computer time was carefully metered and wasted time all but eliminated. CTSS gave rise to a successor project called Multics, which Corbató also led. He told the Babbage Institute, "Multics started out as kind of a wish list of what we would like to see in a big computer system that might be made as a commercial model." **NY TIMES**

Chevron spills 30 lakh litres of oil and water in California



Oil flows at a Chevron oil field in Kern County, California. **AP**

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SACRAMENTO

U.S. officials began to clean up a massive oil spill on Friday that dumped nearly 30 lakh litres of oil and water into a California canyon, making it larger if less devastating than the State's last two major oil spills.

The newly revealed spill has been flowing off and on since May and has again stopped, Chevron spokeswoman Veronica Flores-Paniagua said. She and California officials said the spill is not near any waterway and has

not significantly affected wildlife.

Chevron reported that the oil and water have leaked out of the ground where it uses steam injection to extract oil in the large Cymric Oil Field. The steam softens the thick crude so it can flow more readily and is a different process from fracking, which breaks up underground layers of rock.

The State has issued Chevron a notice of violation ordering it to stop steam injections around the spill. The company also increased its

production of oil from wells in the area. Both actions are intended to relieve underground pressure that may be forcing the mix of oil and water to the surface.

Polluter pays

Chevron will pay for the clean-up, though the State will oversee the process, said Steve Gonzalez, a spokesman for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response. The clean-up and the investigation into what caused

the oil flow were somewhat delayed as officials ensured there are no dangerous fumes or sinkholes that could trap workers or heavy equipment, he said.

"At this point, they have it dammed off and they're sucking it out, sucking the oil out," Mr. Gonzalez said.

Environmental groups said the Chevron spill is another sign of weakened regulations under an embattled California agency. Governor Gavin Newsom this week fired the head of the State's oil and gas division

over a recent increase in hydraulic fracturing permits and amid a conflict-of-interest investigation of other division employees.

The Last Chance Alliance, which opposes California's oil and gas industry, said the State's Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources adopted weaker restrictions on steam injection earlier this year, "making these operations even more dangerous." Neither Chevron nor division spokesman Don Drysdale commented on the criticism.

Magazine



60 MINUTES

Meet Badeeah Hassan Ahmed — kidnapped by IS, sold as a slave and now the author of a book **p3**

FIELD NOTES

45,000 people die of snakebite each year in India. So why isn't it a healthcare priority? **p14**



LITERARY REVIEW

A weekly round-up of essays, reviews, interviews and more **p18-25**

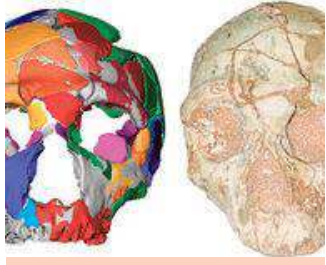
FRAMED

With limestone walls and teak beams, these century-old Chennai homes are a treasure **p16**



The kindness of strangers

The main crowdfunding platforms together raised nearly ₹272 crore for healthcare last year. It's an astonishing solution for the needy, but does it come with a catch? **p6**



Out of Africa Scientists said that a part of a skull unearthed from a cave in Greece is the oldest modern human fossil found outside Africa. The skull, believed to be 2,10,000 years old, indicated that some modern humans left Africa to settle in Europe far earlier than researchers once believed.



Curry colour A large bright orange bird that baffled people in Buckinghamshire turned out to be a seagull covered in turmeric from curry gravy. Rescuers at Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital, where the bird was taken, said it's been scrubbed and is now doing well.

Japan shrinking Last year, Japan recorded its steepest population decline in 50 years, government data revealed. The country's population was 124.8 million. For three consecutive years, Japan has seen less than 1 million births; people 65 years or older make up 28.06% of the population.



Karnataka crisis The Congress-JD(S) Karnataka government looked to be on the verge of collapse as this edition went to press, with 16 legislators having submitted their resignations. The MLAs are to meet Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar following a Supreme Court Order.



Women managers Data from the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) indicated they have admitted the highest ever number of women students this year for the two-year MBA programme. IIM-Indore will have 42% women in its newest batch and IIM-Bangalore, 37%.



India swelling By 2027, India will overtake China to become the world's most populous country, and by 2050, will have a population of 1.64 billion, says a UN report. The world's population, it projected, would increase from the present 7.7 billion to 9.7 billion in 2050.

Moon mission ISRO has released the first images of the rocket that is to ferry the Chandrayaan-2 moon mission into space. The mission, which will be launched at 2.51 a.m. on July 15, aims to land a rover on the moon. The GSLV Mark III is India's heaviest rocket at 640 tonnes.

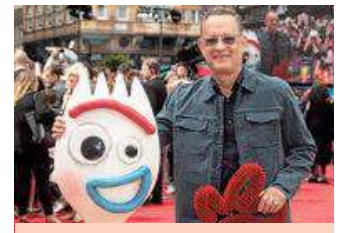


Cockatoo steps A head-banging, foot-tapping cockatoo, that had wowed the Internet a decade ago as it danced to 'Another One Bites the Dust', yielded scientific results that showed that dancing is not a purely human cultural invention.

Gold for Chand Dutee Chand won the gold in the 100m final at the World University Games with a time of 11.32 seconds. The second Indian woman to win gold at a global track event, she commented — referring to the aftermath of revealing her same-sex relationship — that this was “an answer to all who doubted me and questioned my focus”.



Knocked out India was knocked out of the ICC Cricket World Cup after an 18-run defeat to New Zealand in the semi-final. India were all-out at 221 in the 49th over. The final on July 14 will see New Zealand play hosts England.



Forky spiked The breakout star of Disney-Pixar's *Toy Story 4*, Forky, is in trouble. Disney is recalling more than 80,000 Forky plush toys after the Consumer Products Safety Commission said the googly eyes could present a choking hazard for young children.



Number 1007 This weekend at Silverstone sees the 1,007th Formula 1 Grand Prix. Notice the number? And since it's a home race for the Aston Martin team, they're making the most of it. Their two F1 cars will feature the iconic 007 logo and Bond number plates. Max Verstappen's car will have the plate from *Goldfinger*, while Pierre Gasly's car will have the one from *The Living Daylights*. Other Aston Martins from the Bond films will be on show.

88 deaths Despite the ban on manual scavenging, no less than 620 people have died cleaning septic tanks and sewers since 1993, of which 88 people lost their lives in the past three years, the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry said.

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

WITH BADEEAH HASSAN AHMED

From darkness to light

Kidnapped in Iraq by the IS, sold as a slave in Syria, and an escape to a life in Germany, this young survivor talks about her harrowing experience



Badeeah will tell her stories about Kocho before the IS attack, and about her life in Tübingen after seeking asylum.

What kept Badeeah going during her enslavement were childhood memories and a fervent faith in her religion. The Yazidis are an ethnic and religious minority in West Asia, with their largest population concentrated in Northern Iraq. They practise a monotheistic religion that has teachings and beliefs from various religions including Gnostic Christianity, Judaism, Sufi Islam and Zoroastrianism. Because of their distinct beliefs, Yazidis have often been labelled as “devil worshippers” and from 2014 onwards, the IS has waged a concerted attack against them, unleashing sexual violence on the women through slavery.

A safer world

IS fighters have raped Yazidi women and forcibly converted them to Islam by marrying them. Often, the children born of these alliances, along with their mothers, have been forced into exile because they are not accepted into their insular community. In her book, Badeeah describes her fear of returning home, how ‘al-Amriki’ frightened her that she would be rejected by her community. But Badeeah was welcomed by her family, and today practises her religion without restraint. “In fact, Easter is a big festival for us here,” she says smiling.

Badeeah is among the few Yazidi women to speak publicly and share her story. Through her book, she wants to empower not just Yazidi women, but all women affected by war and conflict. “I wanted to show that we can survive and fight,” says Badeeah. Her life in Germany bears no resemblance to the one she lived in Iraq. In Tübingen, she is provided state housing, has learnt German, and plans to study nursing. “I wasn’t allowed to study medicine in Iraq so I asked if I can do that here,” she smiles.

Badeeah had to undergo intensive therapy during her first three months in Germany. The therapist was accompanied by an interpreter who spoke Kurdish, Badeeah’s native tongue. Even though Badeeah no longer needs therapy, she feels triggered when she hears Syrian refugees in Tübingen speak Arabic. But one thing she understands – what the IS promotes is not Islam. “I have learnt that Islam doesn’t prescribe war or killing people or taking children away from their mothers,” she says. “For me, Islam is what I saw growing up.”

Badeeah is aware that her child will be born in a much safer world in Tübingen. She has no plans to move back to Iraq, even if there is political stability in the region. Eivan today is seven, speaks German, and lives with his mother in another part of Baden-Württemberg. Throughout her captivity, Badeeah recalled her mother’s words: “Always move to the light. Don’t let the darkness in. Hold onto love, so that the darkness will eventually be banished.” That’s what she continues to do, long after her nightmare is over.

KENNETH ROSARIO

Badeeah Hassan Ahmed used to believe that the Americans would come to her rescue if the IS attacked Kocho, a traditional walled village of Yazidis in northwestern Iraq. When the IS came, one fateful day in August 2014, Badeeah found herself packed off, with six other women and four children, in a vehicle to Aleppo in Syria. There she heard a man introduce himself as a translator of *al-Amriki*, the American. But he wasn’t there to save her. The American-born IS general had just bought her as a slave.

It was a harrowing time. She was just 18 and the IS had forced her into human trafficking. As weeks turned into months, she held on to her then two-year-old nephew, Eivan, pretending he was her son, to lower her value in the slave trade.

After several attempts at fleeing from *al-Amriki*’s home, Eivan was taken away to be sold off. With nothing to lose, she looked *al-Amriki* in the eye and told him his acts were against Islam. “Under my gaze, he seemed to cower,” she writes. For the first time, she had control over him, and Eivan was returned to her.

A few days later, she successfully escaped with Eivan and another captive. Hoping to look like Muslim wives out shopping, they sought help from a man on the street and ultimately met Nezar, a human

smuggler, who helped them return to Iraq.

After this, Badeeah and her family were offered asylum in the U.S., but “it was too far from home,” she recalls. So they chose Germany, where many Yazidi women were being offered asylum and even secret shelter homes, in the southern state of Baden-Württemberg. Today, all her five sisters are settled in various parts of Baden-Württemberg, while one of her brothers lives with her. But of her parents and four other brothers, Badeeah has no news. “I don’t know if they even made it out together,” she says, her eyes downcast. Four years on, does she still try to contact them? “Initially, I used to wait for a message to come, maybe they were safe somewhere. Eventually I ended up visiting the mass grave in Iraq. That was it for me.”

Telling her story

While in the U.S., Badeeah delivered talks on the Yazidi genocide. It was there that she realised her story was important, not only to help understand the plight of Yazidi women and children, but also to create awareness that many Daesh fighters are citizens of Western countries, including the U.S. “I wanted Americans to know that it’s not always others who are perpetrators,” says the 24-year-old in fluent German, when we meet on a crisp summer evening in the university town of Tübingen in central Baden-Württemberg.

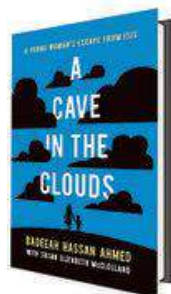
Hoping to look like Muslim wives out shopping, they sought help from a man on the street and ultimately met Nezar, a human smuggler, who helped them return to Iraq

That’s how she decided to put down her traumatic hostage experience into a book, *A Cave in the Clouds: A Young Woman’s Escape from ISIS*. Co-written with American journalist Susan Elizabeth McClelland, the book proved cathartic.

A new life

Badeeah today lives in a modestly-sized house in quaint Tübingen with her husband, youngest brother and eldest sister. The minimally furnished living room with an open kitchen is awash with sunlight as Badeeah, dressed all in black, sits down on the carpet for the interview. Ahmed, 23, her husband, sitting on a corner chair, looks at her with visible pride throughout the hour-long conversation. “He left Iraq and came here for me,” she says, as they both giggle.

It took Ahmed, her childhood sweetheart, six months to escape Iraq. The two got married in Germany, and now their first child is on the way. “It’s a girl and we are naming her Mileva after Albert Einstein’s wife,” she says with a grin. When the child is born,



I have learnt that Islam doesn’t prescribe war or killing people or taking children away from their mothers. For me, Islam is what I saw growing up

COLOMBO

Working overtime to defend a defence deal



Over the last two months, the U.S. finds itself constantly under scrutiny in Sri Lanka, where it has been accused of pushing the Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA), or at least a version of it.

With stiff resistance emerging at the top-most level, from President Maithripala Sirisena, the U.S. mission here is working overtime to defend the proposed agreement.

Tweeting on an article claiming that the U.S. was planning to turn Sri Lanka into a “military colony”, the U.S. Ambassador in Colombo, Alaina Teplitz, said: “Blatant misinformation. There is no plan or intention to establish a U.S. base in Sri Lanka. VFA negotiations only aim to facilitate cooperation and any agreement will fully respect the sovereignty of #SriLanka.”

Later, in a front-page message published in a special media supplement on July 4, she said: “Respect for Sri Lanka’s sovereignty also lays at the heart of our security cooperation.” She reiterated the point in her remarks at a reception held in Colombo to commemorate the American Independence Day. “There is an important quality to the U.S.-Sri Lankan partnership, and it’s one that I want to emphasise tonight – mutual respect. Respect for sovereignty. Respect for quality of life. And even respect for our differences as nations.”

Raging controversy

The controversy has spanned months now, and there are few indications that things might get any easier for the U.S. It was in this backdrop that U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo cancelled his scheduled visit to the island nation in late June. The U.S. Embassy attributed the decision to “scheduling conflicts”. Amid growing scrutiny by both local media and some political parties, the SOFA morphed into a ‘Visiting Forces Agreement’ (VFA). However, that has not made it any more acceptable among those resisting it.

A State Department brief on the U.S.’s security negotiations and agreements, including the SOFA and the Acquisition and Cross Servicing agreements (ACSA) that Sri Lanka signed in 2007 and renewed in 2017, notes that “collectively, these agreements facilitate the deployment and movement of U.S. forces and materiel abroad and provide protections for U.S. service members operating overseas”.

“Protections”, to many wary of the deal, only means impunity.

The concern is not confined to certain politicians or nationalist groups. The most recent objection has come



A proposed defence agreement with the U.S. has invited widespread criticism in Sri Lanka, including from President Maithripala Sirisena

from the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The leading business organisation, with prominent private sector representatives, asked the government to clarify the “exact position” in regard to the current status of the SOFA and also the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Agreement, as per which the U.S. is gifting Sri Lanka some \$480 million. In a statement, it sought “an enhanced level of transparency with respect to these agreements and their potential consequences”.

In a response addressed to the Chamber’s head, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said there was no SOFA between the U.S. and Sri Lanka, nor was one likely to be signed as it had not been presented to the Cabinet. Mr. Wickremesinghe was “perturbed” by the Chamber’s “express ignorance” on the contents of the SOFA and the MCC. “Politicisation of this reputable business conglomerate under your recent assumption of leadership is to be much regretted,” he told the newly elected head of the Chamber, apparently accusing him of siding with the SOFA-sceptics.

Almost in predictable fashion, Mr. Sirisena and Mr. Wickremesinghe are voicing very different views on the matter, in yet another manifestation of the deep divisions in the government. While Mr. Wickremesinghe has insisted that due process has been followed in all discussions with the U.S. so far, Mr. Sirisena, in a recent address, said: “During my tenure as President, I will not allow the government to sign any agreement with any world power...”

Whether it is the SOFA or the VFA, there is little information in the public domain on their specifics. Moreover, it is election year in Sri Lanka. Sovereignty and national security will soon become buzzwords. A defence deal at this point, that too with the U.S., can’t be easy.



Meera Srinivasan is the *The Hindu’s* Colombo correspondent.

KABUL

Afghan children caught in the crossfire



A massive truck bomb exploded close to a school in the heart of Ghazni city in Afghanistan last Sunday, causing one of the highest child casualties reported in a single day. The explosion caused more than 100 casualties, a majority of them children. The target though, as claimed by the Taliban, was a National Directorate of Security facility close by.

“The bomb exploded around 8.30 a.m. close to Afghan Rahmati School... a private institution for primary kids, and as a result most of the victims were below 11,” Muhib-ur-Rahman Ansar, the provincial director of education from the Ministry of Education, told this correspondent. Mr. Ansar was among the first few to reach the site of the attack to help with rescue operations. “There was so much blood, a few woman teachers were also wounded. The scenes were graphic. I have a few photos but I can’t even think of sharing them,” a discomposed Mr. Ansar said.

Total casualties have crossed 120, which include 59 children, an official from the Ghazni Public Health Directorate confirmed, adding that at least six people died, including two children. “The children have been admitted to hospital, many with severe injuries. Doctors tell us they are treating serious shrapnel wounds,” Mariam Atahi, communications manager at Save The Children in Afghanistan, said.

Peace talks

The deadly attack came on a day when Afghan representatives gathered in Doha for a rare intra-Afghan meeting with leaders of the Taliban to negotiate peace in the country. Incidentally, one of the aspects discussed at the meeting on Tuesday, two days after the attack in Ghazni, was an assurance of reducing civilian casualties. In a statement issued alongside Afghan representatives, the Taliban agreed to not attack schools, universities, mosques and markets, as well as residential areas.

The Taliban has already been in several rounds of talks with the U.S. seeking an end to the war. At the same time, they have escalated attacks in several parts of the country, with exceeding civilian casualties. A similar attack on a defence facility in Kabul a week ago also hit a school nearby, causing more than 100 casualties, half of them students.

Security analysts predict that Afghanistan will remain the deadliest conflict zone in the world in 2019, far surpassing the levels of violence witnessed in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and other hotspots. This surge of violence is



Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous places in the world for children, with 8 out of 10 conflict-related child casualties caused by explosive weapons

causing discontent and anger among locals. “The peace talks are happening in Qatar but there is bloodshed in Afghanistan. Both parties are trying to showcase their power so they can make a better bargain during the peace deal,” said Nasratullah Sultanzyoy, an Education Ministry director and a colleague of Mr. Ansar.

He recalled helping two wounded third grade boys. “They wanted to quickly get back to school after their treatment to prepare for a test the next day. They even offered to help clean the classrooms,” he said. The school building in question stands in complete ruin. “Watching them and their determination towards education moved me to tears. Their dedication gives me hope for the country,” he added, choking up at the memory. “We can’t do much, all we can do is ask for help from God.”

The indiscriminate violence, especially towards children has evoked a strong response from the international community. Afghanistan remains one of the most dangerous places in the world for children, with 8 out of 10 conflict-related child casualties, the result of explosive weapons. “Children are at increased risk to these kinds of attacks and their bodies even less able to withstand the force of a blast. Physical injuries can pale in comparison to the emotional scars many children may carry with them for years after experiencing a traumatic event like this. This is simply unacceptable,” Onno van Manen, country director at Save The Children in Afghanistan, said, appealing to all armed groups in the country to stop the killing and maiming of innocent children. “Think of the future generations.”

Agreeing with Mr. Manen, Mr. Ansar, the Education Ministry official, added: “Avoid killing and hurting the children of Afghanistan, else we will be left with an entire generation scarred and disabled.”



Ruchi Kumar is a journalist based in Kabul.

BEIJING

A 'green revolution' with Chinese characteristics

 Just two hours away from Beijing by bullet train, a "green revolution" with Chinese characteristics is quietly under way. A corner of the Hebei province, once known for its polluting industry – steel mills, cement plants, pottery kilns and coal mines – has broken away from its toxic past. Shamed not long ago as a crucible of PM 2.5 particles, which added to Beijing's foul air, Hebei's Fengfeng industrial district, 40 km west of the better known Handan city, has mutated into a pilot green-zone.

Once known for its dinosaurian coal-fired power plants or Jurassic industrial zones built on either side of dusty potholed roads, Fengfeng district has undergone a root-and-branch makeover. "Ours is a resource-based and mining area. But following the spirit of the 19th party Congress [of the Communist Party of China], which instructed us to follow the path of building a green China, we decided to turn our area into a scenic zone," said Zhang Xuejun, Deputy Mayor of Handan city, in a conversation with a team of visiting diplomats and journalists.

Later over dinner in a vast dining hall, she proudly toasted her guests over beer – a result of a local joint venture with a German partner – and explained that her administration had to face a real challenge of transforming the area.

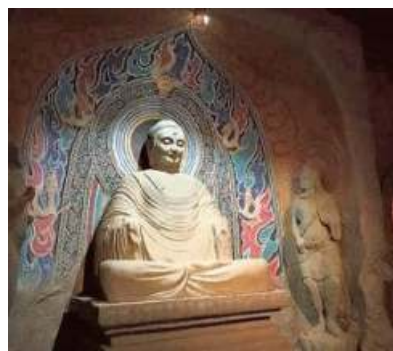
"Thousands of factories had to be closed and a large number of people that were displaced had to be re-settled. Instead of coal mines and factories, which churned out steel, cement and ceramics, new industry focussing on personal computers, tablets, smartphones and robots had to be rooted," she recalled.

Local officials said that by 2017, 70% of the targets of realigning manufacturing to industry 4.0 standards, in tune with China's hi-tech oriented 13th Five-Year Plan, had been met.

Despite the push for a cleaner ecology on President Xi Jinping's watch, the master plan of Fengfeng's green revival had actually been rolled out in 2010. "Essentially we had to clean up two adjoining mountains – Yuan Baoshan and Gushan, through which flows Fu Yang river, the mother river of the Handan area," said Wang Zhiyong, an official at the Handan Municipal Foreign Affairs office.

He pointed out that under the plan, the Baoshan area, where old factories, mines and residences were located, was on course to become an eco-tourism zone.

That task has mostly been accomplished. From the top of the Baoshan mountain, the slopes appear awash in green –



Once known for its coal-fired power plants and industrial zones built on either side of potholed roads, Fengfeng has launched a green revival plan

the result of tree plantations on an industrial scale. "Millions of trees have been planted, ranging from conifers to fruit trees. The result is that the area once known for limestone quarrying and coal mines has morphed into a picturesque south Xintiang forest park," a local official said.

Officials say they have been following the template of President Xi, quoting him as saying that "clean water and green mountains are equal to gold and silver".

Tourism industry

With the economic model changing, officials are focussing on the tourism industry as a new generator of wealth and jobs. Consequently, the Buddhist grottoes carved into the barren but imposing Xiangtangshan cliffs have emerged as a star attraction in this eco-heritage turnaround.

The 36 Buddhist caves, spread into three stunning clusters in the Xiangtangshan zone, are a big draw. The northern cluster is carved into the Gushan mountain, while the other two are at sites known as Nan Xiangtangshan and "Little Xiangtangshan".

But similar to the fate of the Dunhuang caves in the Gobi desert, where iconic pieces of Buddhist sculpture ended up in western museums and private collections, wagon loads of artwork from Xiangtangshan have been funnelled abroad.

According to some accounts, many of the pieces of sculpture were sold to American art collector Charles Freer and have been displayed at the Freer Gallery in Washington.


In order to co-link the heritage cluster with the eco-tourism zone, a 27 km road has been built in record time. Amid lush greenery, tourists can stop at vantage points on the way to soak in the view, before arriving at the Xiangtangshan cultural base, known for its sprawling Bodhi square.



Atul Aneja is *The Hindu's* Beijing correspondent.

BERLIN

Climate change knows no holiday

 A train full of children and teens, singing John Lennon's "Imagine" and Imagine Dragons' "Radioactive", arrived in Oranienburg from Berlin on the first Friday of July. "Oh hey! It's hot out here, there's too much carbon in the atmosphere!" they broke into a rather appropriate chant, since last month was the hottest June ever recorded on earth, according to the European satellite agency, Copernicus Climate Change Service.

As the train pulled into Oranienburg, a town of 45,000 inhabitants, roughly 35 km from the capital, the Fridays for Future protesters on the train and at the station merged into one. "Tell me what democracy looks like?" asked 15-year-old Tobias Fiedler, a local co-organisator, on a makeshift stage. "This is what democracy looks like!" was the thunderous response of over 350 children and teens, holding banners and placards made of recycled material. Most, aged eight to early 20s, were unaccompanied by their parents, holding banners like, "Vote because our planet can't", and chanting, "We are unstoppable, another world is possible." The weekly protests, started in August 2018, have seen students around the globe skip classes every Friday to demand political action against climate change.

The Fridays for Future paralysed Oranienburg for a few hours as the protesters walked for almost 4 km in the town centre, culminating the march outside the Oranienburg Palace. A series of speeches followed the march, including one by Luisa Neubauer, Germany's Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist who started the School Strike for Climate movement in August last year.

Ahead of elections in three east German States – Brandenburg and Saxony in September and Thuringia in October – Ms. Neubauer urged political parties to factor in climate change in their manifestos. As schools in Brandenburg have shut for summer holidays, Fridays for Future is travelling around the State. "Our demands are to make climate change a priority, because no political party is doing enough," says 15-year-old Masha Wille, who hopes the protests will influence the coming elections.

The march in Oranienburg halted outside the city administration office for a few minutes. As the students demanded better environmental policies, more public transport, less cars and a heavy tax on carbon footprint, government officials stepped outside the building looking bewildered. "Hey hey, who does not jump, he's for coal!" chanted one



Fridays for Future, a weekly protest by children and teens, demands policies to stop climate change as three German States are going to the polls soon

of the protesters as the rest jumped in support. In the last Fridays for Future in June, before the legislators went on a summer recess, protesters made a human chain around the Reichstag building in Berlin that houses the German Parliament, symbolically blocking exits. "People who don't make climate policy don't deserve a break," the organisers wrote on Twitter. June also witnessed the biggest Fridays for Future in Aachen, where over 40,000 students from around Europe gathered to demand a quicker end to coal dependency and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

'Good initiative'

The movement also got a boost after German Chancellor Angela Merkel backed the demonstrations in a video podcast early this year, calling Fridays for Future a "good initiative". The pro-environment Greens party has also been riding high on climate politics. But the movement seeks to remain independent from supporting any party. "Those using us for their political agenda should leave this demonstration now," shouted one of the speakers at the Oranienburg protest.

A week before the Brandenburg election, Fridays for Future Berlin plans to organise its biggest summer protest. But the challenge is to maintain the momentum through the summer vacation. "The break is also an incentive for those kids who don't want to bunk school for the protest," says 20-year-old Louis Motaal, one of the organisers in Berlin.

Protesters like Mr. Motaal and Ms. Wille see the movement gathering more participants. "To mobilise students, we use WhatsApp quite a lot, like in India," says Mr. Motaal, who spent a year around Jaipur on a student exchange programme. What about Facebook? "Who uses Facebook?" he smirks, before diving back into the sea of students.



Kenneth Rosario works with *The Hindu*.



HEALTHCARE

Virtual messiah

The success of medical crowdfunding is a window into the surprising generosity of strangers. But there's a catch or two

SOHINI CHATTOPADHYAY

His subjects are usually in the ICU, but Sanjay Borra likes to capture them in calm, restful moments, sometimes even smiling. In his first months on the job, he would take animated photographs – faces scrunched up in pain or in visible distress – because he imagined that would make people part with money.

Vivid symptoms of sickness – yellowed eyes, distended stomachs, monstrous tumours. Then he would anxiously follow the campaign on crowdfunding website Milaap to see how much money had been raised, refreshing his browser several times a day. It left him restless and strangely tired, but he found it hard to stop. He somehow felt responsible for those people in the ICU.

When Milaap.org first called him for an assignment a year or so ago, they had told him he would have to shoot critically ill patients who needed emergency treatment. Many of them would be in the ICU, he learned. It unnerved him a little. But he steeled himself. He took permission before touching anything, rubbed disinfectant on his hands, carried a camera that worked well in low light. He learnt on the job.

Until then, he had been a photographer of architecture and food, inanimate things mostly. Nothing prepared him for the vulnerability he found inside, the mothers and fathers who crumpled into tears and begged him to save

them. Do something. Anything. “I used to wonder if I was putting their helplessness out there in front of the whole world,” said Borra. What if these people happened to see these images later, how would they feel? Didn't he owe them some dignity?

He searched online for photographers who worked with the critically ill, who worked in hospitals, he browsed campaigns on the global crowdfunding platform GoFundMe, but found nothing similar. His own work soon gravitated towards the quiet – he started taking images that were calm, still on the surface. Borra is a quiet man with kind eyes, the sort of man you'd want to borrow some calm from. “There is no justification for shooting people at their most helpless, except the money it may raise for their treatment. Otherwise, it is exploitation.”

You'll be fine

Some months ago, Borra found himself waking up at night, his heart racing, his skin moist. He had remembered a time he was photographing a family whose son needed a liver transplant. He realised that all three children in the family had the same distended bellies. By that time, he had spent enough time around liver transplant cases to know it was ascites, the condition that fills the bellies of liver patients with fluid. Borra's doctor told him his symptoms were those of anxiety attacks. Quit this work, you'll be fine, the doctor said.

The head of the content team in Milaap, Shruti Suresh, decided to quit

her job in her second month, in 2016. “I had eight cases where the money was just not being raised. My boss told me to give it another month,” said Suresh. “That was also when we started organising therapy sessions at work. I stuck on, but attrition is high in my team. Recently, a colleague said a patient's relative held on to her and wouldn't let go. In response, she has decided to stay just out of arm's length. We are often the only people a family in crisis gets to speak with. I mean, really have a conversation with, not a meeting with a doctor or a diagnostic team.”

Borra no longer shares his email or phone number with the patients he photographs. He has realised he doesn't have the heart to speak with a family after he is done with their

photo shoot in the ICU. What he has started doing, instead, is to gather the family together for a family portrait after his shoot. “I realised that for some of them, this would be their last or perhaps only family portrait. Not all of them will make it. Not all of them will even raise the money they need.”

Bizarre marketplace

You would have seen Borra's photographs in Milaap campaigns on Facebook. Sandwiched between snazzy videos of seven quick breakfast recipes and fitness videos with shining women are posts saying: ‘My child will die unless she gets a liver transplant in the next seven days.’ Or you might have seen them on the corners of news stories on the Internet, next to the ads promising fab abs in seven days.

In the bizarre marketplace that is the Internet, it is hard not to be sceptical of all the things it claims are achievable in seven days. Yet, Milaap raised ₹124.65 crore for medical expenses in 2018 – approximately the cost of 830 liver transplants (calculated at ₹15 lakh a transplant) or 1,24,65 days of ICU care (calculated at ₹1 lakh a day) – and this was

money that actually went

to people who needed it. This was 1.7 times the amount they raised in 2017. Ketto, founded in 2012 and considered to be the second biggest crowdfunding platform for healthcare causes, raised ₹97 crore in 2018,

Borra no longer shares his email or number with the patients. He has realised he doesn't have the heart to speak with a family after he is done with their photo shoot



50% more than the amount raised the year before. And Impact Guru, which went live in 2015, raised ₹50 crore in 2018. Together, they raised ₹271.65 crore last year.

This is 11% of the ₹2,400 crore budget for Ayushman Bharat, the Central scheme rolled out by the government that promises ₹5 lakh free health insurance for the poorest 40% of the population. What Milaap, Ketto and Impact Guru do is similar: medical crowdfunding is primarily used in India to finance treatments that involve more than ₹10 lakh of expenditure in less than one month's time. Besides organ transplants, these include chemotherapy and ICU treatments, particularly paediatric and neo-natal ICU.

The campaigns that run on social media are for timelines that are tighter than a week, and for cases such as babies in neo-natal intensive care or burns patients, where funds may need to be raised overnight.

Fund a stranger

Frankly, it seems astounding that people would come together on the Internet to fund a stranger's medical emergency. This is India, after all, fertile with scams. Remember when people would knock on car windows at traffic intersections and point to a prescription on a hospital letterhead? "No one in a medical crisis has the time to beg for money," my mother would say. It seemed logical, and I resolutely avoided eye contact whenever prescriptions were waved at me. But the Internet has renegotiated our relationship with the world beyond our windows.

"We see ourselves primarily as repositories of verified human interest news stories. And as such, the reporting of every campaign we run on social media is done seriously," said Mayukh Choudhury, co-founder and CEO of Milaap. "The fact that the images are credited to us, and not the person fundraising, adds credibility. The idea is to make the reader stop (at our photograph), click (our headline), read (the content) and then donate if she is convinced. We have less than one-fifth of a second to make you stop,

assuming the average person scrolls five things on Facebook in one second. This is why the photograph is important."

The system has many checks in place. There is a 'report' tab to enable people to complain if something looks fishy. Milaap, for instance, removed approximately 1% of the campaigns from their platform in 2018 on the basis of these. Every campaign must upload medical documents from the hospital where treatment is sought, and the cost estimate of the treatment on the hospital's letterhead. This, possibly, is the most important factor in establishing credibility. Finally, the money raised is not transferred to the beneficiary directly but to the hospital. This is the framework that all three crowdfunding platforms use.

Tight timelines

The campaigns you see online are 5% of the medical campaigns on these platforms; these are the ones that need the most urgent help, people who don't have the means to raise money or are on a very tight timeline.

Usually, it is the poor who need this service, but there are also some families who have exhausted their insurance. Sometimes, people have insurance but their policies do not pay for transplants. Or they have a newborn who is not yet covered under insurance.

Sometimes in 2015, Sonal Asthana, liver transplant surgeon at Aster Hospital, Bengaluru, and his team possibly became the first doctors in India to set up a campaign on Milaap for a transplant. Since 2013, Asthana had been working with private foundations and CSR teams of corporate hospitals to fund liver transplants. "It was unacceptable that a foundry worker's daughter would

The idea is to make the reader stop, click, read and then donate if she is convinced. We have less than one-fifth of a second to make you stop. This is why the photograph is important



not get her transplant because her father earned just ₹7,000 a month. We have the facilities," said Dr. Asthana. "When I was in Canada, I saw patients using GoFundMe to raise money. I thought of trying it here. We kept our regular partner, The Pravin Agarwal Foundation, as back-up. We circulated the first campaigns in our own [doctors'] networks and found money could be raised even if it was not the entire amount. The hospital also began chipping in, because we achieved a higher volume of transplants this way." In 2018, Aster in Bengaluru performed 51 liver transplants, of which seven were crowd-funded.

Today, medical campaigns constitute 80-90% of the money raised by Milaap, Ketto and Impact Guru. The platforms now approach super-speciality hospitals to tell them about crowdfunding. Milaap has a network of 278 hospitals in 35 cities, Ketto 122 hospitals in 12 cities, and Impact Guru 70 hospitals in 15 cities. The focus is on the private sector because government hospitals often mean too many permissions, too much paperwork, too much bureaucracy.

One advantage with private hospitals is that there is comparatively less red tape: to set up a campaign, all you need are your medical

documents. Trying to procure government documents during an emergency can be nightmarish. "We do receive requests from patients in public hospitals like AIIMS and we host campaigns," said Piyush Jain, co-founder, Impact Guru, "but we have not yet initiated associations with public hospitals." In response to RTI requests, AIIMS-New Delhi, PGIMER Chandigarh and Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata, said they had no crowd-funded procedures. Other hospitals did not respond.

Chain of money

It is unusual for a crowd-funded campaign to finance the entire cost of treatment. The average campaign raises 40% of the sum. But crowdfunding animates a chain of financing, which includes private foundations such as trusts, government funds such as the Chief Minister's relief funds, as well as the hospital's own CSR funds.

All of this came together nicely for Darius Mirza of the Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in the U.K., who set up Transplant Help the Poor in 2017, and tied up with Ketto in 2018. Dr. Mirza took up an offer from Apollo Hospitals to lead their liver transplant unit in Navi Mumbai largely because he was motivated by the vague idea of doing something in India – for him, this meant transplants for poor children.

In 2018, Dr. Mirza's foundation helped crowdfund 19 patients for liver transplants, of a total of 38 transplants in the hospital: in other words, the hospital doubled its liver transplants with help from crowdfunding. Overall, the hospital had 31 crowd-funded cases last year, which included cardiac, neurology and bone marrow treatments besides kidney and liver transplants, said Kavita Pokharkar, who looks after crowd-funded treatments at Apollo in Navi Mumbai.

There is, however, one serious restriction to the generosity on offer on the Internet – the campaigns that do well in India are almost entirely those of children, infants in particular, where there is a perceived 'blamelessness' in a health condition, besides the emotive pull of a child's image. Often, these campaigns raise

Bit by bit

The three main crowdfunding sites raised ₹271.65 crore last year. (Bottom and facing page, top) A few of Sanjay Borra's photographs for Milaap's campaigns.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK & SANJAY BORRA/MILAAP



Virtual messiah

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

more than the sum targeted. Crowdfunding rarely works for adults or even older children, unless they have good social networks. The empathy factor drops off as early as age 10, said Milaap's Suresh; she was surprised when a 17-year-old boy once managed to raise a decent sum for his procedure.

Still, crowdfunding has certainly improved complex paediatric care by several notches in India. Hospital systems gain real-time experience on procedures that were rarely attempted even two years ago. Everything is naturally more intricate in paediatric care – the organs are smaller, the blood vessels tinier, the bones and skin more fragile. It is not just the presence of Western-trained

was based on 2012 figures). Although medical crowdfunding accounts for only a sliver of healthcare expenditure today, it offers a tantalising possibility – that technology and the Internet could unlock advanced medical treatment for needy families without pushing them into poverty. After all, free government healthcare seems neither sufficient nor good enough. The National Family Health Survey-4 shows that 56% of India's urban population and 49% of the rural population seek private healthcare.

Perpetuating inequity

Bengaluru's Aster Hospital offers some hopeful, although limited, data on this. In 2016, the hospital modelled a 2011 study done by PGIMER, Chandigarh, on renal

a response to inequity, it also perpetuates the inequity systemically because it is mostly available to those using the private sector. Using market forces to deliver healthcare is fundamentally flawed and unjust."

Second, it serves primarily as a solution for emergency treatments, said Professor Jeremy Snyder of the Simon Fraser University in Canada over email. Snyder, one of the earliest researchers to study health crowdfunding, said that even in Canada's public health system, far more robust than India's, he finds that crowdfunding is popular because of the long wait times in the public system and the unavailability of resources. In a 2016 paper, he and other researchers had found that automobile accidents, cancer, kidney disease, neurological problems and Lyme disease were the typical conditions for which crowdfunding was used.

"One thing we may have overlooked in our initial excitement is

Sharma is wary of the excitement around crowdfunding. A newborn who has needed ICU care is likely to be weak afterwards, and may be prone to falling ill again

new Haj. The transplant doesn't mean everything's sorted. Surgeons think in terms of numbers, the more transplants, the better for them." Sharma budgets for a year's worth of medicines and tests when she initiates crowdfunding campaigns at ILBS, but has found there is no guarantee that the money is raised. "I think of myself as the patient's advocate. Think about everything, I tell them. Think about the whole picture."

Easy marketing

Sharma is wary of the excitement around crowdfunding. A newborn who has needed ICU care is likely to be weak afterwards, and may be prone to falling ill again. "What happens to a poor family if all the resources are drained by one very sick child? Just because we have crowdfunding now, it does not put us on par with the U.S. or the U.K. India is a poor country – money-poor, time-poor, resource-poor. We get too taken with that one photograph that catches our eye online; it gives us the satisfaction of doing something."

The happy crowdfunding story lends itself easily to marketing. For instance, corporate hospitals can invite the press to listen to how a baby's life was saved, have the grateful parents up on stage to tell their story, call the super-specialist doctors to sprinkle some Latin over the proceedings. Everyone is happy – the press gets a human interest story, the hospital gets good press, the doctors get their 15 minutes of fame, and the crowdfunding platform gets credibility. The problem is with the stories that don't have this performative element – the campaigns that don't raise the money needed because they involve non-photogenic adults or a less dramatic procedure. We don't get to hear those stories.

This is the sort of question that had once made Borra uneasy. He likes to think of the aggregate of things, of how his actions add up in the universe. When his doctor told him to stop working with the critically ill, Borra decided that he would not. "At one level, it makes me uneasy, capturing a family at their most helpless, when they can fall at the feet of a stranger like me and beg. On the other hand, what did a daily wage earner have before crowdfunding? Nothing, right? If my photographs give his child a chance at treatment, whether the child survives or not, it is worth it. Perhaps it brings this man some consolation that he did what he could. Perhaps it makes him feel better about himself."

The Kolkata-based independent journalist writes on public health, politics and film.



New doors

Crowdfunding has forced private hospitals to make room for the poor, opening up new possibilities for them. (Image for representation only.)

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

paediatric surgeons like Mirza that helps, but entire care systems gain experience – anaesthesiologists, nurses, paramedics, the technologists running complex machines.

Improved outcomes

Numbers matter in the medical profession. A pioneering surgeon told me that at a prominent private hospital in New Delhi, the first seven recipients of liver transplants died. The eighth recipient lived, and then the outcomes improved dramatically thereafter. As he explained, the first seven cases were not failures, but vital lessons that made the improved outcomes possible.

There is another public service that crowdfunding serves – it forces state-of-the-art hospitals to make room for the poor, opening up a sealed, exclusive bubble of medical possibilities for them.

A 2018 study by the Public Health Foundation of India found that healthcare expenses had pushed 55 million Indians into poverty; that is 4.5% of India's population (the study

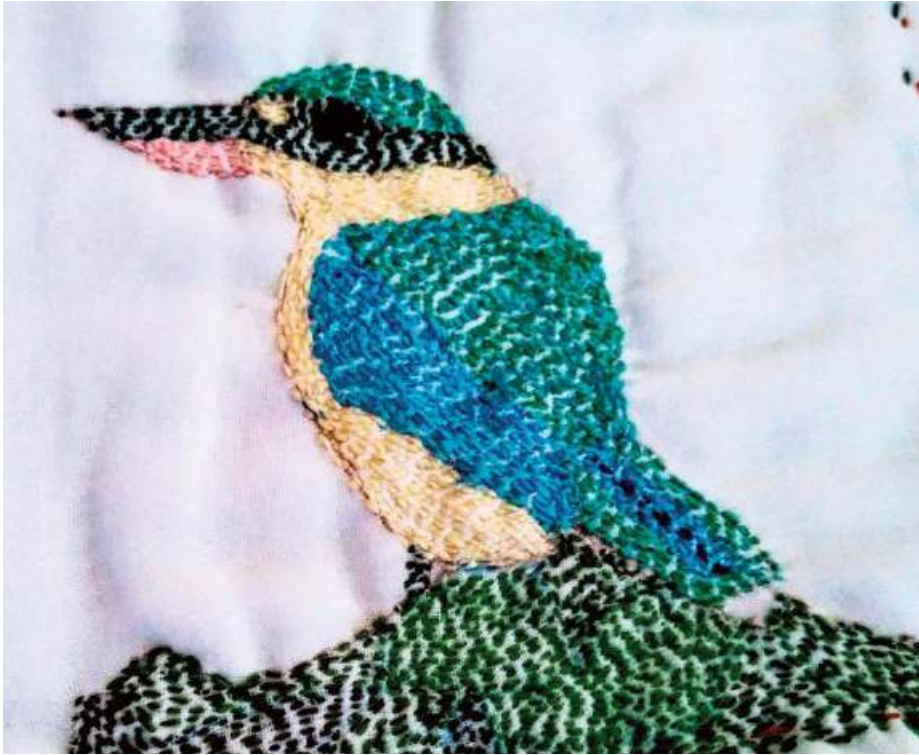
transplant cases for liver transplant patients. In the PGI study, 23 of 50 patients (nearly 50%) had sold personal property to finance the treatment. None of them had crowdfunding. But of the 40 liver transplant cases Aster reached out to, 28 had received crowdfunding donations. Only eight (20%) sold personal assets to pay for the transplant. (A kidney transplant costs roughly a third of a liver transplant).

There are worries though. For independent public health researcher Asha Kilaru, the chief concern is crowdfunding's affinity for private healthcare. "Crowdfunding is a symptom of not having universal access to healthcare; it is a market mechanism," she said. "So while it is

The campaigns that do well in India are almost entirely those of children, infants in particular. Crowdfunding rarely works for adults, or even older children

the ability of a family to sustain post-transplant expenses," said Aabha Nagral, hepatologist at Jaslok and Apollo hospitals in Mumbai. "There is lifelong cost of immune-suppression and diagnostic tests after transplants. This is a less 'glamorous' thing to raise funds for; it lacks the emotive quotient of a transplant. Sometimes, I've had patients who need hospitalisation after a transplant and I see it is harder to raise money for that. I feel very guilty when this happens because I feel we are letting down people after raising their hopes. I also worry that crowdfunding may be pushing living donor organ transplants, because that is a more immediate, more emotive procedure. I've rarely seen a campaign for a cadaveric transplant, possibly because you can't set a date for when an organ is available."

In her counselling room at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) in New Delhi, transplant co-ordinator Vibhuti Sharma can sometimes be heard warning patients against transplants. "This is not the



SEW FINE

A bird in time

Ahead of World Embroidery Day, here's how a mother passed on her love of birds to her daughter



Avian art (Clockwise from above) A collared kingfisher photographed by Srimonti Dutta; the embroidery inspired by the bird; the finished quilt; and (bottom) a proud Dutta. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

MALA KUMAR

Srimonti Dutta, assistant professor of physics at a college in Kolkata, can talk about fractals and chaos theory as fluently as she can discuss black-tailed godwits and camera lenses. Her students are lucky – after college hours, they get to discuss birdwatching treks and climate change; their professor even organises annual trips to watch migratory birds. But Dutta laments that she herself was introduced to birding too late in life.

It started during her honeymoon in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. She had been taking in the beauty of Radhanagar beach when she realised her husband, Argha Banerjee, had disappeared. “What sort of man abandons his bride on their honeymoon?” she fumed. The sort who is a keen birdwatcher, she would learn after a few agonising moments. Her husband had spotted a bird and followed it into the forest. Avid travellers, the couple later went to Karnala Bird Sanctuary and Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary. This was when Dutta began to develop a passion for photography and birding.

Dutta's Ph.D in high-energy physics took her to the National University of

Singapore as a visiting research fellow. The birds in the island country and her Nikon D5000 kept her busy. The photography opened up a new line of interest – nature and conservation. Now she uses a Tamron 150-600 mm lens with her Nikon, a Hoya circular polariser, and edits minimally. “Nature is beautiful in itself,” she says.

Two of her landscape photos were featured on the Facebook page of Incredible India, and one was published in the Bombay Natural History Society's calendar. Her paper about the sighting of the Mongolian gull was published in the magazine, *Indian Birds*.

Say it with stitches

In a unique gesture, Dutta embroidered a quilt with the images of birds as a “pictorial guide” for her daughter, with the hope that they would not become extinct by the time she grew up, especially because a lot of the birds have stopped visiting

Kolkata. The photograph of the quilt on Facebook was shared 1,805 times. It was accompanied by the caption “Will you be able to see these?”

The quilt is the traditional *kantha* that all Bengali mothers make at home using soft old sarees and dhosis layered and stitched together using a small running stitch. Dutta chose images of birds she found most visually appealing and those she would definitely want her child to see. Some were modelled on birds she had photographed, like the collared kingfisher, but others were from photographs taken by other birders or from paintings in guidebooks.

It was tedious work, but after 14 months, the quilt with 49 birds was ready. Dutta thinks the images of the Indian roller, Himalayan monal, chestnut-headed tesia, collared kingfisher, velvet-fronted nuthatch, scarlet minivet and golden bush robin have come out particularly well.

Dutta hopes to go birding with her daughter in a few years. Till then, Alaknanda has the quilt to look at. And it will probably be passed down the line, encouraging generations of Duttas to become birders.

The freelance writer is a children's author and editor.

What sort of man abandons his bride on their honeymoon, Dutta fumed. The sort who is a keen birdwatcher



BIG SCREEN

Pictures for the people

A voluntary group is taking socially relevant films to the farthest reaches of rural Bengal

**Rapt attention**

(Clockwise from left) Interactive session with children; a Little Cinema screening; (facing page) the team at Kolkata People's Film Festival; posters from the screenings.

PEOPLE'S FILM COLLECTIVE

The idea is to provoke discussion around issues in an audience that otherwise has limited or no access to it

KUNAL RAY

It was a screening held in solidarity. Six years ago, at a closed jute mill in the Kolkata neighbourhood of Naihati, former workers were holding a protest, demanding their provident fund and gratuity dues. And, right there and then, they were shown a film: Anand Patwardhan's *Occupation: Mill Worker* (1996). More than 350 people watched the documentary and animated discussions followed. It was quite a successful first outing for the People's

Film Collective (PFC), encouraging the group to approach various trade unions for future screenings.

Based in Kolkata, this cultural-political collective sees cinema as a powerful tool to reach and inform the oppressed, and seeks to build an alternative grassroots media. It has been influenced by the Third Cinema movement, which swept through Latin America in the 60s and 70s as a protest against what was seen as capitalist and entertainment-oriented cinema.

Since that first screening in 2013,

the collective has shown socially relevant, non-mainstream films in some of West Bengal's remotest locations, in venues ranging from factory compounds to village squares to primary schools. The idea is to provoke discussion and awareness around people's rights and socio-cultural issues in an audience that otherwise has limited or no access to such media.

Targeted screenings

All screenings are carefully curated, with the location's history,

demographics and politics determining the choice of film. Dwaipayan Banerjee, one of the founding members, says, "Cinema mediates meanings. It matters where and how it is being shown. In the screenings we organise, we have seen that the act of viewing in itself can be transformative because the viewers are often people who can relate to the reality of the film more than their city counterparts." Feedback forms are regularly distributed afterwards; responses have ranged from short poems to doodles to scribbles.



Though some feature films have been shown, PFC mainly concentrates on documentaries. Kasturi Basu, another founding member, explains, “The films we screen are related to the people and provoke conversations among them about things not easily seen or heard. Also, documentaries are perceived as being primarily for an urban audience. That is a misconception.”

Lively gatherings

There are also monthly screenings in Kolkata, with a conversation with the filmmaker before each screening. The shows – and the discussions – attract academics, activists and students.

When they began in 2014, the monthly screenings would draw an audience of around 40 people; it’s several times that number now. Publicity drives have played their part, with thousands of emails being sent out along with social media messages and posters.

Through Little Cinema, the group also now holds workshops and screenings for children.

PFC has been organising the Kolkata People’s Film Festival since 2014. It’s quite a democratic event, with no entry fees – audience members can donate as they wish – and no awards. Films are submitted on a digital platform with no charges.

There aren’t any big names on the selection committee either; the collective’s members themselves choose the films based on factors such as their relevance to the current socio-political scenario. In 2019, they received more than 1,600 submissions.

In 2017, the collective made its first foray into filmmaking with *Timeline Bhangar*, a documentary about the

events that led to the recent peasant uprising in Bhangar in Bengal.

PFC has around 30 members now, from various walks of life. Sayantani Khan teaches journalism and her students regularly volunteer at the festival. Dilip Majumdar is a schoolteacher and auto driver, who says the collective is the most egalitarian place he knows. Shayan Sanyal works in advertising and found the group on social media.

Resistance in print

The collective doesn’t accept sponsorships, accepting donations before the annual festival. It brings out

We have seen that the act of viewing in itself can be transformative because the viewers are often people who can relate to the reality of the film more than their city counterparts

a Bengali periodical called *Protirodher Cinema* (Cinema of Resistance), which sells around 600-800 copies. In addition, it publishes a series of booklets on socio-cultural issues through its sister organisation, the People’s Study Circle.

Recent publications have addressed topics such as the National Register of Citizens in Assam, the RSS and the independence movement, and the economic policies of the Modi government.

Basu sums it up: “We may not be directly mobilising people but we are working on the level of consciousness. There are no immediate gains. This is long-term work and we are dealing with the politics of everyday life.”

The writer teaches literary & cultural studies at FLAME University, Pune.



FILMY DIALOGUE

No small screens please

I watch ‘content’ for work; cinema is still the real pleasure

After a morning of intense discussion on stars, publicists and promotion strategies, a friend suggests I watch the French series *Call My Agent*. Names like Isabelle Huppert, Monica Bellucci, Juliette Binoche, Isabelle Adjani are thrown at me to ensure I am suitably curious. Another friend raves about the “exceptionally wicked and creepy” Meryl Streep in the new season of *Big Little Lies*. My entire Twitter timeline, if not reacting fervently to the latest Kangana Ranaut controversy or the World Cup semis, is going ga-ga over the third season of *Stranger Things*. I am strangely detached from all that is making their world spin. For someone who makes a living out of engaging with images and image-makers, I still haven’t warmed up in a big way to streaming platforms and online content. I am the last woman standing, at least in the small universe I inhabit.

I will easily pack in four films and a couple of interviews at a film festival in a single day; I will rush to catch the preview of *One Day Justice Delivered* despite the Mumbai monsoons; nothing excites me more than an invite to see an early cut of a much-anticipated film. However, the only time I have ever chosen to binge-watch is when I dedicated one precious night to viewing *Delhi Crime*, and only because I had to write about the show. I saw *Bright* to be able to engage in a conversation on the issue of race relations with Will Smith and Joel Edgerton.

Tunnel vision

More often than not I end up watching ‘content’ for work; ‘cinema’ is still the real pleasure.

Friends dismiss it as tunnel vision, a surer way of becoming swiftly redundant. It’s about missing out on the best of stories and acting, craft and politics. (“You haven’t even seen *Chernobyl*!”) The present and the future are not in films, they’re right there on your TV, mobile and laptop, I am told.

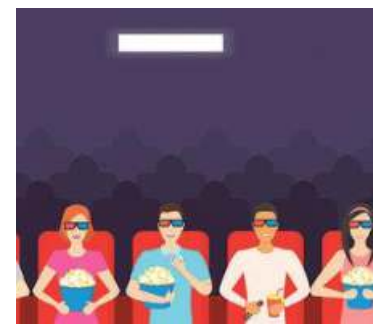
Perhaps it’s to do with a hidebound mindset. The old-fashioned ritual of watching a film, with others, on a big screen, still does the trick for me. It fires the sense and sensibility, emotions and imagination, and makes one vigorously beholden to the image even while questioning it robustly.

Unlike cinema, I don’t turn to TV and other assorted screens for entertainment.



Namrata Joshi is Associate Editor-Cinema with *The Hindu* in Mumbai.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



They are more anodyne anaesthesia to lull me into somnolence. I watch stuff at bedtime on my laptop that no one else will touch with a bargepole. Short cookery videos like ‘Amazing Chicken Fried Rice With 13 Eggs for 20 People’ in which I marvel at the amount of oil used (equal to my two litres of daily water intake). I count each egg going into the pan and dutifully rewind if the figure doesn’t add up to 13.

Hacks and payasam

Seeing the recipe of semiya payasam in Shetty’s Kitchen gives me the satisfaction of having prepared a good meal myself, even though I may not have even picked up the ladle from the kitchen shelf.

Eggs are endlessly fascinating subjects in these shorts. From the many ways to boil them to refrigerating them to separating the yolk from the white. There are other incredible hacks out there – using an iron to toast a sandwich or using a bottle of water and a fan to make a DIY AC. There’s even a hack for not letting the skirt fly up à la Marilyn Monroe on a windy day. All you need is some coins and sellotape.

Then there are bits from a BBC One series of the early 90s – *Keeping Up Appearances* – that are strewn all over Facebook. Patricia Routledge as Hyacinth Bucket (she insists that it be pronounced ‘Bouquet’) trying hard to rise above her middle-class background, the curl of her lip, her air of superiority and overbearing ways, her candlelight suppers and the typical way of answering a phone call – “The Bouquet residence, the lady of the house speaking”. It’s my chamomile tea of the moment. Pour on!

The old-fashioned ritual of watching a film, with others, on a big screen, still does the trick for me. I don’t turn to TV and other assorted screens for entertainment

SPOTLIGHT

On the face of it

For me, the challenge is maximum expression through minimum means, says master sculptor Ravinder Reddy



Bold & beautiful A migrant labourer carrying her belongings; and (right) a stark terracotta head. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SOUMITRA DAS

The *gopurams* or pyramidal towers of South Indian temples bristle with thousands of figures of deities. Rural deities or *grama devatas*, occasionally stark naked, are the guardians of villages in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. G. Ravinder Reddy strips these figures of their divinity and turns them into icons of working women of our times, transformed in his imagination into empowered goddesses who can hold their own, irrespective of class and social status. Seven such mainly polyester resin

fibreglass heads of goddesses of various sizes, mostly voluminous, are on display at Rasa, Reddy's first one-man exhibition in Kolkata. It is curated by Anupa Mehta.

Grassroots aesthetics

"They are daily wage workers. They could be vegetable sellers or fishmongers. Within their means, they save some money for personal embellishment. They have an inbuilt aesthetic sense. So-called middle-class people have no aesthetic sense," says Reddy.

Reddy pares down the facial features to the barest essentials till

they are reduced to the basic structure of the upright nose, the rounded cheeks, moulded chin and high forehead above which starts the hairline. The outcropping facial features have a lot in common with rocky terrain. This is evident when he is working with clay, adding texture and building up the basic character. These are shapes created by volumes – positive and negative spaces.

The taut skin is in glowing primary or metallic hues. The full lips suggestively thrust forward are blood red. The dark tresses are neatly combed back into either a bun or a braid. In keeping with the

conventional iconography of Hindu deities, the large dilated eyes with the black eyeballs in the middle are the focal points of these visages. They gaze straight ahead, fixing the viewer with a bold, intense, unswerving look, as if contemplating the future.

Size and colours

The luminous gaze is magnified even further because Reddy blows up these heads to a monumental scale. Their symmetry brings to mind Benin bronzes and terracottas that Reddy admires so, and the directness and frontality of antique Greek figures of young maidens known as Korai. "The more colours, the more confusion. Folk artists use only three locally available colours – yellow, white, red. For me, the challenge is expression through minimum means. The more colours you use, the more you break the volume. Primary colours are best. To break the monotony of surface I use more hairpins – stimulating the plane."

After slowly walking around them, one feels even more that these huge masses with protuberances are more like nature's creations. On his mastery of scale, Reddy says: "I work by trial and error. This is my main concern. Whether it is of 6 inches or 12 feet, it has to hold attention. The Mohenjodaro dancing girl is tiny but has vitality. Unlike European art, Indian art is not representational. It goes beyond. Indians made portraits representing personality. They were never exact."

Contemporary mode

The first of these heads was exhibited in 1989 in Delhi. As if to validate his decision to create an easily identifiable contemporary mode of expression and figuration within the ambit of Indian tradition, the 63-year-old sculptor, who trained at Government College of Fine Arts and Architecture, Hyderabad, and Royal College of Art, London, volunteers this statement: "I have been asked why I don't engage with current issues. How long do they hold interest? Newspapers grab our attention for only a few moments. I am not interested in what the West is doing. Affluent countries have to invent all the time. Ours is not an affluent country."

Distancing himself even further from contemporary art that hitches on social issues, Reddy, who is among the country's most sought-after contemporary artists, says: "Everybody is tagging on to social issues. But such works have very little impact. Art is an intellectual exercise. It does not impact the masses."

The outcropping facial features have a lot in common with rocky terrain. This is evident when he is working with clay

SCANNER

#BringPalestinetoDC

Museum of the Palestinians

Inaugurated last month, this new museum — pointedly located in Washington D.C. — features both general artefacts relevant to the Palestinian people and their culture. The inaugural show, featuring 10 works by Palestinian artists, will be on till year-end.

**Estructuras monumentales**

Cuban-American artist Carmen Herrera, 104, will finally see a 'dream project' come to fruition this month when five of her aluminium sculptures are erected in New York's City Hall Park — the first public art exhibition for an artist who has gained recognition late in life.

Asked why he continues to make these already famous heads, Reddy points out how they have evolved. They have a calmer expression. The contours of the faces are less rugged. The eyes and nostrils are not as flared as before. The shape of the bun is suggestive of a penis (“It is a phallic symbol,” says Reddy), as are the decorations on the hairbands that could easily be mistaken for a myriad lipsticks. These recondite symbols notwithstanding, the sight of six similar heads, albeit of dissimilar sizes and colours, can pall after some time. And, talking of scale, the bag containing most of her earthly possessions that one of the women carries on her head seems a trifle too small.

Beautiful women

What one misses in this show most are Reddy’s magnificent full-bodied female nudes that militate against Victorian prudery. He has also done a series of modern young women in trendy clothes as clinging as the Kalighat *pat* beauties, which Reddy himself adores. “I definitely want to bring them here,” he exclaims.

Ironically, amidst all that pharaonic splendour, the smallest and most understated of the heads, a plain terracotta piece, is the one that catches the eye. With a ruddy face, short hair and far-seeing eyes, she really stands out.

ON SHOW: Rasa, till August 8, Emami Art, Kolkata Centre for Creativity.

The writer focuses on Kolkata’s vanishing heritage and culture.



FRAMED

A beginning or an ending?

The present rebooting of ‘culture’ opens up a minefield of possibilities

In the shocked and awed reaction to the election result, the minor ministries appear to have slipped under the radar. Recent newspaper analysis has described the BJP victory as a ‘cultural’ phenomenon, one that permeates the country’s religious and social fabric.

The jeering dismissal of the ‘tukde tukde gang’ or the ‘Khan market gang’ – all reminiscently named like the Chinese post Maoist Gang of Four – have merged with a larger argument of the victory of a pervasive cultural nationalism that overrides a clutch of sub-nationalisms. Even more pressing arguments have been made in favour of a long overdue cultural homogenisation.

Effectively then, the political is not only personal, it is cultural. In the words of Yogendra Yadav, “party, government, nation and religion are merging into and becoming one identity in popular imagination.”

Where does this leave functionaries like the Ministry of Culture? Has the definition of the state’s role in cultural management irrevocably changed? How altered is the character of cultural institutions and how can we determine the nature of change?

Leading artists

Decades later, when the cultural history in India is written, 2014 to 2019 may well be seen as a decisive turning of the page. If we map a cultural trajectory of India, some periods and decades stand out for outstanding initiatives that altered the course of artistic history. The decade of the 1930s stands out for the big broad strokes mapped in virtually every area of artistic endeavour. The decade

fostered three leading artists of the 20th century – Amrita Sher-Gil, Rabindranath Tagore and Jamini Roy –



Gayatri Sinha is an art critic and curator who runs www.criticalcollective.in.



Salt March by Nandalal Bose

each of whom became a fountainhead of art practice for those who followed.

In the middle of that decade, Gandhiji commissioned Nandalal Bose to paint panels that engaged the ordinary Congress worker at Haripura. Coming out of the Progressive Writers’ Movement of 1936, headed by Munshi Premchand, the Indian People’s Theatre Association left its stamp on the theatre, literature and cinema of the 40s. Identifying with peasants and the working class, it also reflected the nationalist struggle of the time.

The spirit of a free-flowing cosmopolitanism allowed the artist to pursue a singular vision, untrammelled and free

Formed in the summer of 1943, as a protest against an “alien bureaucracy”, and a fast deteriorating food situation, it invoked the participation of Sombhu Mitra, Bishnu Dey, Mulk Raj Anand and other luminaries, who represented a consolidation of art interests.

In 1936, the Uday Shankar Academy was established, and his global collaboration with international dancers gave modern Indian dance a fillip. In the South that year, Rukmini Devi founded Kalakshetra, even as she modified Bharatanatyam for the stage.

In cinema in the 1930s, the introduction of film noir by master cinematographer for Bombay Talkies Josef Wirsching and director Franz Osten was a profound influence.

In retrospect, what drove the decade was not only the promise of Independence, or India’s forgotten arts, and certainly not the lure of well-funded institutions, cultural policies, or a grand vision. At least in part, it was the participation of individuals like Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay in the march to Dandi. It was the spirited discussion on the role of the arts in the making of a nation. Most importantly, it was a spirit of a free-flowing cosmopolitanism, which allowed the artist to pursue a singular vision, untrammelled and free.

National profile

Several of these initiatives were driven by individuals, others were collectives, some perished with technological change or depleting capital, while others grew under government patronage. In these adoptions by the state, a narrative of a loose cultural framework emerged. A national cultural profile gained a more structured approach with the forming of the three art academies, the Lalit Kala, the Sahitya and the Sangeet Natak, and the National Museum and the National Gallery of Modern Art, all in the early 50s, giving India visible sites of institutional culture. It is these which represented the country through the Festivals of India, where ‘culture’ became the face of diplomacy.

In the present context and the rebooting of ‘culture’, the shift from the past opens up a minefield of possibilities. It is hardly worth reiterating that our material culture, monuments, manuscripts and artefacts, and the immaterial heritage of languages, music and dance are already disappearing at a deadly rate. What support will be rendered and what is determined worthy of patronage will determine this government’s cultural values, institutional heft, and its reading of the public sphere.

Contemporary practices

Gallery Kolkata has begun Phase II of its 15th anniversary celebration with an exhibition of works by contemporary Indian artists who have a ‘global language’, including painters like Fawad Tamkanat, Birendra Pani and Shipra Bhattacharya. The show is on till July 27.



Masterful

Three masters of representational art — Niren Sengupta, Nupur Kundu and Niladri Pal — are being celebrated in an exhibition at Delhi’s India Habitat Centre, on till July 26. From Sengupta’s startling colours to Pal’s abstraction, the show provides a kaleidoscope of perspectives.



Pot hole Snakes kept in mudpots for venom extraction at Irula Snake Catchers' Society in Mamallapuram, near Chennai.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SNAKE CHARM

Feeling rattled

Did you know that at least 45,000 people die of snakebite each year in India? The simplest measures could bring the figure down dramatically

ASWATHI PACHA

"It must be something I did in my last life; I have been bitten by snakes some five times," rues Ameresan. We are walking through his lush paddy field in Ponneri, 30 km north of Chennai and Ameresan points to a termite mound. "Every time I get bitten, my wife runs to Nagathamman (Shakti worshipped as a snake). She pours milk on this mound and prays. And every time, I am saved. Our god is truly powerful."

Ameresan never goes to a primary health centre to treat his snakebites, even though the nearest one is just 6 km away. Instead, he goes to Chandran Vaithyar, a traditional healer. "He gives me juice made from a root and some leaves. Last time I couldn't even open my eyes fully. He poured a drop of the juice in my eye and ear. In four or five hours, I was okay."

This story shook me. It also

disturbed S. Ragunathanan, chief of the Poison Control, Training and Research Centre at Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital in Chennai. "Anti-snake venom is the only treatment for snakebite with envenomation (when venom has been injected through a bite). It is provided free at all government hospitals. We need to increase awareness among people and get them to rush to a hospital."

Big bites

The reason Ameresan escaped is probably because the snakes he was bitten by would have had mild or no venom, explains Dr. Ragunathanan. Only about 30-40% snakebites in India are by venomous snakes. "The dangerous ones are the big four – the Indian cobra, the common krait, Russell's viper and the saw-scaled viper. Anti-snake venom targets the bites of these four.

At the Poison Control Centre's ward I meet Raja (name changed on

request) from Red Hills near Chennai. Raja chirpily shows me a picture of the krait that bit him. "Technology has come in handy," says Dr. Ragunathanan; the picture taken on Raja's phone helped them treat him early. Luckily, the snake did not inject any venom – it was a dry bite as doctors call it – so he didn't develop classic symptoms such as droopy eyes, weakness or trouble breathing. "He will be discharged soon."

Deva on the next bed hasn't been as lucky. His arm is alarmingly swollen. "My friends and I tried to hit the snake. It turned around and bit me," he says. The doctor's expression says it all – not the wisest decision to attack a snake. Deva has already received about 10 vials of anti-venom.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), snakebites claim more than 100,000 lives globally. India sees 45,000 snakebite deaths every year, finds the 2011 'Million Death Study'. Interestingly, the Minister of State for Health and Family

Welfare, Ashwini Kumar Choubey, came up with much lower figures in the Lok Sabha – 689 deaths only in 2018.

At the farm

Official numbers might be low because most snakebite deaths don't happen in hospitals. "The poorest of the poor working in farms get bitten, and they rush to quacks or traditional healers. We need more studies and ground data to understand the correct figures," says Romulus Whitaker, founder, Madras Crocodile Bank Trust and Centre for Herpetology. Whitaker is one of the authors of the 'Million Deaths Study', and says that prevention is as simple "as carrying a torchlight with you at night, not sleeping on the floor, and using a mosquito net. But it's easier said than done."

Researchers are trying to end snakebite deaths in South Asia. But the lack of research, funding, data, and even the lack of prioritisation by governments are major challenges, finds a recent paper by Ravikar Ralph, researcher with the Department of Internal Medicine at Christian Medical College, Vellore.

The production, potency, and safety of antivenom are key, says Ralph. It is also essentially that regional venom collection centres develop a pooled antivenom (combination of different regional snake antivenoms) with better efficiency, he says. Whitaker and Dr.

Each public health care centre is supposed to keep at least 10 vials of antivenom

Kartik Sunagar from the Evolutionary Venomics Lab at Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, are working on identifying how snake venom varies across different States to come up with more potent antivenom.

Silent killer

On May 23, WHO launched a new programme – ‘Snakebite Envenoming: A Strategy for Prevention and Control’, the core of which is to bring down the number of snakebite deaths and casualties by 50% before 2030. In 2017, WHO included snakebite in the list of ‘Neglected Tropical Diseases’ to improve research and funding, and to draw the attention of policy-makers to this silent killer.

Priyanka Kadam is a member of WHO’s Snakebite Envenoming Group and founder of Snakebite Healing and Education Society, which works towards lowering snakebite casualties. The society conducts awareness drives, teaches people how to live with snakes, and to seek medical help in case of a bite. “Snakebite is fully treatable. If there is a fully functional hospital within a 5 km radius, the death and disability numbers will most certainly come down,” she says. Kadam and many other doctors recommend that snakebite be made a notifiable disease – that is, a condition that is mandated by law to be reported to public health authorities.

Ralph calls for subsidising antivenom in private health clinics. Each public health care centre is supposed to keep at least 10 vials of antivenom. Though there is sufficient antivenom in the country, the distribution is not even. “Just like the nationwide HIV and polio drives, the government needs to put a new programme in place for snakebite.”

This might be unlikely because snakebite “is a poor man’s disease,” as a doctor from Kochi points out. The doctor, who requested anonymity, says: “The chances of you and I, living in high-rise apartments in cities, getting bitten are low. Tomorrow, if a minister or bureaucrat gets bitten, the situation will change immediately. A policy will fall into place, awareness drives will increase. Fatalities will decrease and we will have an environment where humans and snakes coexist in peace.”



SERENDIPITIES

Rediscovering India

As the country turns more urban, the government becomes a manager – often a creator – of fragility



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Nearly eight years ago, in an insightful article called ‘Some Dismal Signals’, political scientist Pratap Bhanu Mehta asked if India was increasingly ‘ungovernable’. He traced the ‘ungovernability’ of India to three reasons.

One, the private sector was increasingly resistant to the State’s wherewithal to manoeuvre it. Two, there was a dissonance between the language of policy makers and its intended effect. Three, conglomerates with an option to exit the country often held government’s policy captive. Since then, India has gone through extraordinary changes which have only exacerbated the originally diagnosed symptoms. What has stayed constant is how we think about Indian society, and the institutions within it.

Coalition control

Our experts often speak all-knowingly that Indian society is an assemblage of coalitions. People form coalitions, and coalitions engage in a bargaining game to extract rent. The policy prescription in this framework is often a three-step move – identify incentives correctly, reduce rent-seeking, and demonstrate consistency. Implicit in this paradigm of Indian society is the assumption that its institutions are homogenous with similar abilities to withstand and react to policy or socio-economic shocks.

Every budget speech or rhetoric about economic growth reflects this



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almost evangelistic belief that policy prescriptions are similarly experienced across society.

These theoretical models of Indian society, often touted by the policy-entrepreneur-think tank class, often fold at the first contact with reality. What we need instead is a conceptual model of India that is less ‘platonic’, less interested in accurate models, and more informed by experience, heuristics, and some

What we need instead is a conceptual model of India that is less ‘platonic’, less interested in accurate models, and more informed by experience

epistemological humility, about what we can’t know. Nassim Taleb, a scholar of probability theory and ex-derivatives trader, makes a case that in much of life and government policy, instead of optimising we must ask if a particular action is making us more fragile, robust, or anti-fragile. Do the fundamentals of an institution strengthen, remain unaffected, or break down when subject to a socio-economic change or shock?

Made to stand

Fragile institutions or processes are those that easily break down when subject to instability, volatility, or chaos. Examples of this are debt-ridden banks, state-imposed secularism, civic infrastructure that plan for ‘normal’ monsoons, nuclear

reactors etc. Such systems are often made ‘efficient’ by experts who argue to reduce redundancy and streamline information. But the day-to-day functioning of these institutions can just as easily be reversed or disrupted by large-scale social unrest or policy deviations from the mean.

Social shocks

Robust institutions, in contrast, are those that can withstand social or policy shocks. Till recently, ‘traditional’ marriages were robust to external shocks because of social norms or communal pressures. So were village economies, the Sanskrit language, and the traditional diet regimen. For centuries they existed on their own, evolved in their own incremental fashion, were rarely affected by shocks, and thus rarely broke down.

But it is the ‘anti-fragile’ institutions of India that pose difficulties to understand and manage. These are systems and institutions that become stronger as social turmoil rises. In India, the greatest anti-fragile institution is the caste system. Others include sectarian identities, language chauvinism and criminal syndicates.

Recasting troubles

Once we begin to think of India as a collage of these three systems, the problems of ungovernability are suddenly recast in a different light. Each of these institutions have their votaries and interest groups. As India becomes more urban, our governments effectively become managers, and often creators, of fragility. Viewed thus, one policy decision can affect institutions belonging to each of these systems differently.

Of the three, it is ‘fragile’ institutions that our media and political narrative are most engaged with. The ‘ungovernability’ of India is thus intimately tied to our collective economic discourse that solely thinks about fragile institutions rather than other typologies. We think stock market instead of wealth, we blather on about state-mandated secularism instead of thinking about traditions of coexistence, we obsess over economic growth instead of economic security.

One consequence of this reframing is that when our experts opine that agricultural income will be doubled by pushing the agricultural population into industry – the real question is whose lives will be made fragile. What are the social reactions? There are no easy answers to these questions of governance except to think of our problems as tradeoffs and compromises rather than as solutions. This paradigm that reframes policy in terms of fragility, robustness and anti-fragility helps us to see through arguments of economic efficiency and growth, to ask harder, more critical questions.



Spiritual spaces The roughly 160-year-old house of the high priest of the Triplicane Parthasarathi temple has a modern facade in a traditional framework. *K.V. SRINIVASAN*



High glory The chandelier and ceiling of Rogerton House built around 1860 in St. Thomas Mount. It was once part of St. Patrick's Church, and was finally bought by M. Sukumaran who revived the house's original glory. *B. VELANKANNI RAI*



Gracious in age Built around the 1920s, the ancestral home of author Timeri N. Murari in Kilpauk is as tasteful as it once was. *R. RAVINDRAN*



Unusual Unlike the usual style of Mylapore, this jharoka balcony of Rajasthani architecture in Sathya Mohan Raj's house stands out. *B. VELANKANNI RAI*

HOUSE CALL

Heritage city

The gracious old ladies of Chennai have so many stories to tell

TEXT BY UJJVALA KAUMUDI

As a boy, T.S. Arunachalam loved to play resident historian from his house in Tiruvottiyur in Chennai. When he began looking for clues to the building's age, he found they were everywhere – scribbles on a wall recording a child's height from the 1900s, notes in a relative's diary about the construction of the Madras High Court in 1861...

Today, Arunachalam, fondly known as Mani Gurukkal, continues to live in this house that is as old as the 150-year-old High Court, if not older.

While Chennai's heritage structures such as the Ripon Buildings and Santhome Cathedral are celebrated, its beautiful old houses, many of them well past a century, are equally a part of the city's architectural identity. The one-foot-thick limestone walls, the columns, the beams fashioned from Burma teak, and the Madras tiles that line the sloping roofs stand out conspicuously in the urban jungle of modern, utilitarian architecture.

The Edwardian homes at Pallavaram and St. Thomas Mount, the mansions of T. Nagar and Kodambakkam, and the agraharams of Mylapore and Triplicane have surprisingly survived the real estate boom of the 1990s.

But living in a heritage home means time and money; maintaining them is no small feat – whitewashing each summer, fresh plastering before each monsoon, and the perennial cleaning of the dust-filled tiles and termite-infested woodwork.

For most people who live here, these houses are not just shelter – they are like an ageing member of the family who needs attention and who is a fascinating repository of memories.

Old is gold Karpaga Vilas in Kodambakkam was once called the airplane house because the portico looked like the nose of an aircraft. Identical ornate balconies on either sides are the wings and the backyard is the tail. *R. RAVINDRAN*



Abandoned At Mani Gurukkal's 160-year-old house in Tiruvottiyur, the well that once gushed with water is now a corner that gathers unused things. *B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM*



Tough task Maintaining heritage homes is an extremely cash- and labour-intensive affair. This once church-owned house in St. Thomas Mount is covered in tarpaulin to protect it from rain. *B. VELANKANNI RAI*



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

THE LEAD

Son, are you Mohanaswamy?

Conversations about gay lives tend to be limited to urban, upper-caste men. We need queer literature in regional languages to tell the non cis-het stories of small towns and villages

RUTH DSOUZA PRABHU

Last October, reporting from the Bangalore Literature Festival, I attended a session titled 'An Equal World: Beyond 377', which had, among other eminent names, the Kannada author Vasudhendra, whose much-acclaimed work, *Mohanaswamy* (2013), is a book about the journey of a young gay man looking for love. What he said in response to a question caught my attention. There is a lack of queer literature in Indian languages, he said, adding that it was a sorely needed category.

This is true. Hours of research later, I came across a handful of books in a few Indian languages, separated by decades in terms of publication years. In 1927, Pandey Bechan Sharma, better known as 'Ugra' (extreme), wrote a Hindi collection of eight stories about same-sex love called *Chocolate*. Ismat Chughtai's Urdu lesbian fiction 'Lihaaf' came out in 1942. Kamala Das's autobiography,

Ente Katha, published in Malayalam in 1973, is well-known. The tragically ending *Mitrachi Goshta*, a Marathi play by Vijay Tendulkar (first performed in 1981), also features among these few books. Recent years have seen some new releases as well as translations, but the fact remains that they are few and far between.

Predefined templates

A key issue that has plagued queer literature in Indian languages is that the community has not yet been normalised. In India and the world over, being queer is still viewed through multiple lenses of morality and propriety, based on religion, mores, social stature, and even governance. For a community still grappling with gaining everyday acceptance, creating literature can take a backseat or can be done only from behind a veil of anonymity.

From this lack of normalisation arises several related issues. The first is the misconception that being queer is an urban phenomenon, limited to

the English-speaking community. "Conversations around gay rights and lives of gay men are mostly limited to urban spaces, and visibly limited to 'upper caste' gay men from the English-speaking population," says Moulee, Editor of 'Queer Chennai Chronicles' and Curator of Queer LitFest, Chennai. "In reality, most of us advocating for LGBTQIA+ rights grew up in tier 2 and 3 cities or are from rural areas. The voices of working-class gay men and Dalit-Bahujan gay men are sidelined, even by the media, which looks for the 'ideal' urban gay man who they think represents the community."

This need to box queer identities into predefined templates for the sake of general acceptance led to some factually incorrect Indian-languages works. Many were homophobic and quite a few were written by straight authors with an outsider's perspective on the community. This continues to happen, perhaps not with the intensity of a few decades ago, but it does. This lack of authentic literature

in Indian languages leads to a higher visibility of books in English, further reinforcing the idea of queerness as an urban phenomenon. Moreover, we as a country are obsessed with the silver screen, which tends to portray queer characters either as comic or as caricatures. This has made coming-out all the more difficult.

Trusted circles

Gay and lesbian individuals who have come out publicly are a minority. And so are the people with the ability to write about their experience. The authors I spoke to say that it is difficult to create authentic queer literature in one's language unless one has come out publicly. This obviously limits the number of writers, even as there are efforts to change that.

Bindumadhav Khire should know. An LGBTQIA+ rights activist and founder of the Samapathik Trust in Pune, he published the novel *Partner* in 2008 and *Manachiye Gunti*, a compilation of stories about the parents of LGBTQIA+ people (translated into English as *Beautiful People*) in 2013.

Both books are in Marathi, and published through his trust. But he speaks of how it is difficult to get others to come forward and share their stories despite providing them with a platform. "Because they are not out of the closet, the fear of associating with queer literature is higher," he says. Such people, he finds, are happy in the anonymity of the online world and in small closed communities of people, offline and online, in trusted circles.

There is also the possibility of editors not understanding the intricacies of the issues faced by the community and therefore not being

For a community still grappling with gaining everyday acceptance, creating literature can take a backseat



The Man Booker International-winner, **Celestial Bodies**, is about all kinds of in-betweenness p22



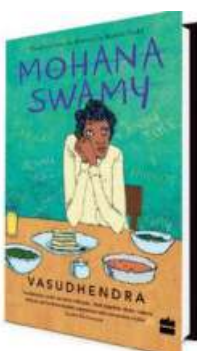
In **The RSS: A Menace to India**, A.G. Noorani explains the threat posed by the Hindu Right p24

able to do justice to books, even if manuscripts come to them. This is not necessarily the norm, however, and varies among languages. Several authors have turned to self-publication, online platforms and dedicated publishing houses like Queer Ink to create content in Indian languages.

Queer literature needs to reach out to the community as well as to general readers in their own language and through positive representation, if normalisation is to come about. The difference literature can make begins with its ability to simply open up conversations which wouldn't have been possible without it.

Common context

Vasudhendra recalls an incident where a conservative couple was concerned about their 30-year-old unmarried son. The family, being ardent fans of Vasudhendra's work, had, of course, read *Mohanaswamy* (which has recently been translated into English too). The worried mother gathered up the courage to ask her son if he was Mohanaswamy, to which the man, though surprised, simply said that he was not and was just waiting for another year to consider marriage. "What this signalled to me was that a book of this nature gave a conventional mother the courage to ask her son directly if he was gay. It gave them a common context to ask the question. Such incidents allow for the ice to be broken," says Vasudhendra.



Writers of queer literature believe that this genre has undergone a major transformation. "Over the past decade, the language of queer activism and its discourse has vastly changed," says Moulee. "You can see the difference in the literature published now. Since there is considerable discussion around queer issues today, general readers are also interested in reading this genre. Though not a widespread phenomenon, there is a small demography that seeks it out," she says.

One of the best ways to give queer literature a wider readership is, of course, through translation. What a gay man or woman undergoes varies from one region to another in India and this alone brings in a sense of uniqueness to their stories, which need to be shared. "English has become the bridge connecting these regional islands," says Vasudhendra.

"Many believe that books should be translated first into Indian languages. But the fact is that unless a book becomes popular in English, translators won't come forward to take it into their own language."

Online network

Kishor Kumar, an IT professional and author of the Malayalam book, *Randu Purushanmar Chumbikkumbol*, his autobiography of a gay life, also believes in the power of English as a link language. He is, however, still looking for publishers for an English version of his book. "Genuine queer Indian experiences will come from the pen of a Malayali, Tamilian, Bihari, Bengali etc. Unfortunately, only Westernised metro-city narratives from Mumbai or Delhi are considered 'Indian' by certain publishing houses," he says.

We must also remember that without normalisation, it may not be an option for all readers, queer or otherwise, to take a visibly queer book home. Khire recalls an incident where a young man walked into his office in Pune with a copy of *Partner* and said that he belonged to a small village where he couldn't be seen with it. "The young man bought the book, read it at a nearby park all day, and returned it to the office address printed on the back so that someone else could benefit from it. This is why we work on making our literature available for free download online, allowing for more people to read with a sense of security and privacy," says Khire.

"A lot of queer persons use the Internet to communicate with one another and also read blogs and social media posts related to their community. It helps us identify writers with whom we would otherwise not have been able to connect. There is a minuscule physical space that caters to queer literature and it's the Internet that fills the gaps. In the coming years, being online will help us network and find more queer writers and translators," says Moulee.

What queer literature needs today is more voices to bring it to the level of cis-het literature. What it also needs is a mature reading public that will view such literature as it does any other genre. With wider discourses, better understanding, translations and more writing from within the community, we are slowly but surely getting there.

The writer is an independent journalist with many stories to tell.

REPRISE

84 Charing Cross Road
by Helene Hanff



People of the book A still from the 1987 movie.

SUDIPTA DATTA

It all began in October 1949 when New York-based writer Helene Hanff reacted to an advertisement for out-of-print books by London's Marks & Co and wrote to them. "I am a poor writer with an antiquarian taste in books..." she explained, but "if you have clean secondhand copies of any of the books on the list, for no more than \$5 each, will you consider this a purchase order and send them to me?" The shop's manager, Frank Doel, replied to Hanff, starting a correspondence that lasted over two decades.

Published in 1970, it was an instant success, and Hanff, a self-admitted failed playwright, saw *84 Charing Cross Road* being adapted for stage both at London's West End and New York's Broadway, and a film version as well.

Kosher stuff

Hanff was a voracious reader and kept Doel or 'FPD', as he signed in the first few letters, on his toes with her demands ranging from essays by Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt, Samuel Pepys' diaries "for long winter evenings", Chaucer, Jane Austen, to "a book of love poems with spring coming on." Soon they were sharing personal news about each other; and

other staff members of the bookshop too began corresponding with Hanff.

In early December 1949, after she heard of the post-war rationing in Britain, Hanff sent them a Christmas present with a six-pound ham in it. She dashed off a second letter marked 'FPD! Crisis!', worried that it will arrive in a kosher office. "I just noticed on your last invoice it says: 'B. Marks. M. Cohen.' Are they kosher? I could rush a tongue over. Advise please!"

Kiss it for me

She endeared herself to everyone at Marks & Co with her wit and marvellous sense of humour, and also by sending them parcels of food for every occasion, including real eggs at Easter. Soon the 'Miss' was dropped for Helene and Doel invited her to Britain and stay at his home. Unfortunately, Hanff couldn't afford a trip to the city she grew to love through literature till 1971. By then Doel was no more and the shop had closed down.

In fact, *Charing Cross* was written in grief, after she received a letter in January 1969 that Doel had died of peritonitis following a ruptured appendix. In his last letter he had said he was "alive and kicking" though a bit exhausted with so many tourists at the shop buying "our nice leather-bound books."

Hanff wrote to a friend visiting London in April 1969: "The blessed man who sold me all my books died a few months ago... If you happen to pass by 84 Charing Cross Road, kiss it for me! I owe it so much."

The writer looks back at one classic each fortnight.

The fact is that unless a book becomes popular in English, translators won't come forward to take it into their own language

Hanff endeared herself to everyone at Marks & Co with her wit and marvellous sense of humour, and also by sending them parcels of food for every occasion, including real eggs at Easter

ESSAY

‘He dared to be free’

Translations of Ghalib that convey the multiple layers of meaning and the complexity of the couplet tradition are few and far between. Now, a welcome new addition

BARAN FAROOQI

There was a lot of brouhaha recently when the Prime Minister wrongly attributed an Urdu couplet to Ghalib. The mistake is symptomatic – while we are fond of quoting Ghalib, we hardly understand his verse or his oeuvre, or, as in the PM’s case, tend to attach his name to every Urdu verse that sounds right for the occasion.

It hasn’t helped that more than 200 years after his birth, non-Urdu speakers still have no definitive translation of Ghalib to fall back upon. But M. Shahid Alam’s exceptional English translation of some of Ghalib’s poetry, published late last year as *Intimations of Ghalib*, was a step in that direction.

Six of the selected poems in the collection have been rendered into English more than once. So some poems have more than one version. Moreover, the different versions don’t necessarily treat the same verses from a chosen ghazal.

For instance, the *mak’ta*, or the last *she’r* of the ghazal, *Na gul-e naghma hun na parda’e saaz/ main hun apni shikast ki awaz*, is not included in one of the two versions. The last *she’r*, which is, *Asadullah Khan tamaam hua/ Ae dareegha woh rind-e shahid baaz*, is translated as: *He’s gone: Asadullah Khan. Sinner, lover: Ah what a man!*

This verse has the brevity and poignancy of the original. It comes out so well in the translation that it’s not surprising that Alam did not attempt

Ghalib is a difficult, even obscure poet. His poetry depends a great deal on the historical meanings of the key words of the ghazal



Swagger in surrender The late Tom Alter (right) playing Ghalib in a play of that name directed by Saeed Alam. A.M. FAROOQI

another translation in the second version of the ghazal.

Alam is aware of the intricacies of the project of translating Ghalib. The love for the man who was Ghalib, for his poetic utterances, and the sheer glitter and glamour of Ghalib’s verses have tempted many a translator into embarking upon the challenging journey of translating him.

But nobody has yet been able to arrive at a foolproof theory for translating poetry as ambiguous, clever and beautifully worded as Ghalib’s. Perhaps the intent of translators all this while was to write good poetry that may be said to portray Ghalib’s verses in English.

Unfolding angles

The focus has thus been on writing good English poems, and to not foreignise the translation by recovering the echoes of the long, complicated strains of imagery (and meaning) hidden in the original Urdu. These meanings have evolved over a period of time and would require a deep understanding of the tradition of ascribing literal meaning to

metaphorical statements and then going on to build finer and artistic situations upon which poetic statements are made.

Ghalib is a difficult, even obscure poet. His poetry depends a great deal on the historical meanings of the key words of the ghazal – this can be traced to the theory and practice of treating the same theme over and over again from new points of view and new angles.

For example, the ideal death for the lover is to be killed by the beloved. This meaning has evolved from the idea that one is willing to die for someone (to express the great passion of love). Being killed, therefore, becomes the desired goal. A new angle which emerges from this premise is that the beloved is unwilling to kill or kills indiscriminately. The verses translated under Number 30 open with the *she’r* *Dhamki mein mar gaya jo bab-e naburd tha* *Ishq-e naburd pesh talab gar-e murd tha*

Alam translates this as: *He blanched, nearly died, at love’s*

first swagger.

If love takes your head, surrender it, be free.

The trope of dying at the beloved’s hands as the ultimate desire for the lover doesn’t appear here. But the translation manages to create double or triple meanings and also indicates that the lover is riddled with the pain of love, his raging passion makes him lose his senses and death is a release for him.

The lover dies here (in the translation) as a result of love’s ravages – it demands his head, and the idea that one craves to die at the hands of the beloved is marginalised.

In the world of the ghazal, love is a public affair, because loving is one of the major aspects of humanity, and shared by all. The lover is reviled not just by the beloved but also by the world – he is an exile, such a one who is celebrated for having given up the world.

Yeh laash-e bekafan asad-e khasta jaan ki hai

Haq maghfirat kare ajab azad mard tha

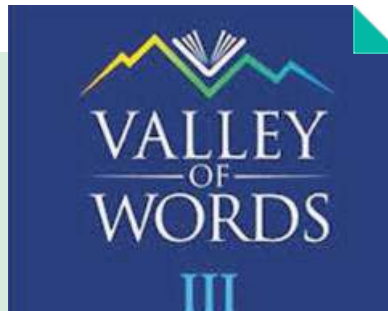
Alam translates this, again perfectly, as:

BOOKMARK



The Sandman series

Netflix and Warner Bros. Television are adapting Neil Gaiman’s fantasy comic book series *The Sandman* for the screen. It will have 10 episodes, with an option for an additional one. *The Sandman* series is poised to be the most expensive TV series for its producer, DC Entertainment.



Valley of Words Book Award

The Valley of Words Book Award, a non-profit and volunteer-driven initiative of The Shivalik Hills Foundation Trust, will be held in Dehradun from November 14 to 16. The shortlist includes *A Day in the Life* by Anjum Hasan, *Swerving to Solitude* by Keki N. Daruwalla, *Night of Happiness* by Tabish Khair, and many more.

*In death, Ghalib lay uncoffined,
unwashed.
May God bless the man. He dared
to be free.*

This is one of the best translations in this volume. Alam has almost been able to convey the grandeur in lying unwashed and uncoffined. The sheer *fakiri* of the man, the swagger in the surrender, the courage to defy the world. It is up to the reader to deduce whether he defied the world because he was the ideal lover from the world of the Urdu ghazal, where to lose is to win, or the fakir who questioned and rejected dogma and ritual.

Tradition of dissent

One can only hope that the target-language reader will not limit herself to knowing how Ghalib sounds in English but will make efforts to understand the historicity of the tropes and themes employed by Ghalib. Literal translations of Ghalib have failed even more miserably than poetic translations, which at least read like good English poems. The literal ones make for unreadable reading more often than not.

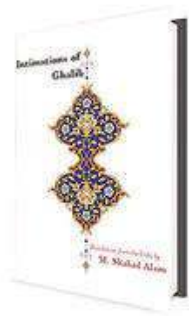
Alam shows great awareness of the tradition of the ghazal, the adumbration of meanings from the series of what he calls *dramatis personae*, which have been generated in the discourse of the ghazal, apart from themes and suppositions. He tells us that the ghazal embodies the tradition of dissent in Islamic discourse and takes positions which are critical of religious orthodoxy both in theology and practice.

Presenting two or more versions of the same *she'r* demonstrates, in practical terms, the multivalence of Ghalib's poetry. This multivalence is highlighted by Alam time and again: the word, 'intimations', in the title is an acknowledgement of the compromises every translator, and more specifically, a translator of Ghalib has to make when he renders Ghalib's verses into English.

Alam expresses the hope that the compromises are "good compromises". However, what we need to ask ourselves, as lovers of Ghalib, is this – to what extent does the translation revive the cultural and poetic assumptions, even discourse, of Ghalib's poetry in the Urdu original? Will it ever be possible to make English readers aware of his exact cultural idiom so that they become more than mere admirers alone of the glamour of Mirza Ghalib?

The writer is Professor of English, Jamia Millia Islamia.

The word, 'intimations', in the title is an acknowledgement of the compromises every translator, and more specifically, a translator of Ghalib has to make when he renders Ghalib's verses into English



WORD COUNTS

Independent options

What is a 'good bookstore'?

Last month, Priyamvada Gopal, who teaches in the Faculty of English at Cambridge University, announced the publication of her new book, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent*, on how the struggle for liberation by colonial subjects affected Britain itself. But in her notice on Twitter, on June 25, that the book "should be in 'all good bookstores' today", she added the request, "please try to patronise independent ones".

Free of the corporate graphs

The case for independent bookstores has been made often enough – and in this age when the old bricks-and-mortar chains are shivering under Amazon's dominance, the worry can extend to them too. But Gopal's exhortation is such an admirable one, at a time when authors perceive themselves to be under pressure to publicise the sale of their books any which way, that it is a nudge to survey some of the ways in which independent bookstores nourish our reading and thinking lives.

A reminder came earlier this year when Lam Wing-kee highlighted Hong Kong's draft, and for now shelved, legislation to allow extradition from the territory to mainland China for trial. He was one of the city's booksellers who had disappeared in 2015, till it emerged he had been detained in China. With the possibility of the extradition law being passed this year, he sought refuge in Taiwan. His Causeway Bay Books was among the many bookstores in the city that sold books that had been banned in China.

As Lewis Buzbee recounted in his 2006 classic, *The Yellow-Lighted Bookshop: A Memoir, A History*, bookstores have



Mini Kapoor is a Delhi-based journalist.



always been key sites of resistance to censorship. Buzbee, a former bookseller himself, writes: "For most of its history, the bookstore has remained free of the constraints of government regulation. Writers and publishers have often suffered under explicit censorship, but the bookstore itself, in part because it appears to be a mere store rather than a powerful force in society, has been ignored. Anonymity has its rewards." Plus: "Because the bookstore has also remained – again for the good part – a mom-and-pop, little- or no-profit institution, it's also remained free of the corporate graphs and margins." These two things have combined to make the bookstore "a stronghold of the rights of free expression".

Buzbee writes about the role Sylvia Beach and her iconic bookshop in Paris, Shakespeare and Company, played in the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Even Ernest Hemingway was roped in to help get copies of book to the U.S. and get around the postal and customs curbs in that country, "and for twelve years Shakespeare and Co.'s was the only legitimate edition" of the novel. This has been recounted in greater detail in Kevin Birmingham's *The Most Dangerous Book*.

Versions of the world

There is another role the bookstore plays, curating a choice for readers and browsers. In the introduction to his edited volume, *Browse: The World in Bookshops*, the critic Henry Hitchings writes that during his teens bookshops served as "places of furtive self-education" and that he

likes the idea of the "bookshop as an informal library". As someone who likes to be rereading a book simultaneously with so-far unread ones, I am sometimes indecisive about which old book to pick up. On a visit to a bookshop or a library, an old favourite is sure to suggest itself – it may even be a book I own, but it needs that discovery elsewhere to compel me to pick it up.

Bookshops, however, cannot replicate the role that libraries play in cataloguing, providing access, building communities. But it's also interesting to see what bookshops may do in their own way that libraries cannot. In his majestic, around-the-world tour of bookselling establishments, *Bookshops*, the Spanish writer Jorge Carrión demarcates differences between a bookshop and a library. For one: "The history of bookshops is completely unlike the history of libraries. The former lack continuity and institutional support."

Also, unlike the great libraries that keep acquiring without discarding, the bookshop caters to a permanent present, with each bookshop trying to forge a mix of what customers may come looking for specifically and what books may recommend themselves. No two independent booksellers could possibly come up with the same selection – and this is something that big chains, such as Waterstones in Britain, are now trying to emulate, to build collections locally so that each outlet distinguishes itself from the other. In Carrión's more evocative phrasing: "Each bookshop is a condensed version of the world."



'The Message'

A short story, 'The Message', by Hugo award-winning writer Ken Liu will be made into a movie. Published in *Interzone*, a British sci-fi magazine, in 2012, the story is about an archeologist who investigates extinct civilisations on distant planets and in the process finds a teenage daughter he never knew about.



The Anarchy

William Dalrymple's new book, *The Anarchy*, on the East India Company, will be released on September 10 this year, according to publisher Bloomsbury. The book is about how the Mughal empire disintegrated and was replaced by an unregulated private entity, the East India Company.

BROWSE FICTION

Raavan — Enemy of Aryavarta

Amish
Westland
₹399

• Here, in Book 3 of the Ram Chandra series, Raavan is a formidable teenage pirate, filled with equal parts courage, cruelty and resolve. He wants to be a giant among men, to conquer and seize greatness. The novel reveals Raavan's dark spots. Is he the greatest villain in history or just a man who happened to be born in a tumultuous place and time?



Fear of Lions

Amita Kanekar
Hachette India
₹399

• Set 12 years into the rule of Aurangzeb, in a time of wealth and want, this novel tells the story of an unlikely rebellion rumoured to have been inspired by Kabir and led by a witch, whose militant followers, many of them women, called themselves 'Followers of Truth'. Had Kabir, the revered saint-poet, really incited violence?



Fragrant Words

Rajni Sekhri Sibal
Bloomsbury Prime
₹399

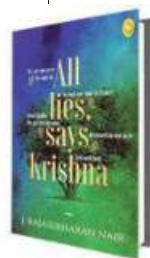
• This is a collection of verses: some soft, others heady, while others evoke the scent of a long-forgotten memory. The poems are pithy — often with short lines and two-word images. They are like the various colours on a poet's palette — black, white and all the shades in between — in imitation of life.



All Lies, Says Krishna

J. Rajasekharan Nair
Fingerprint! Publishing
₹299

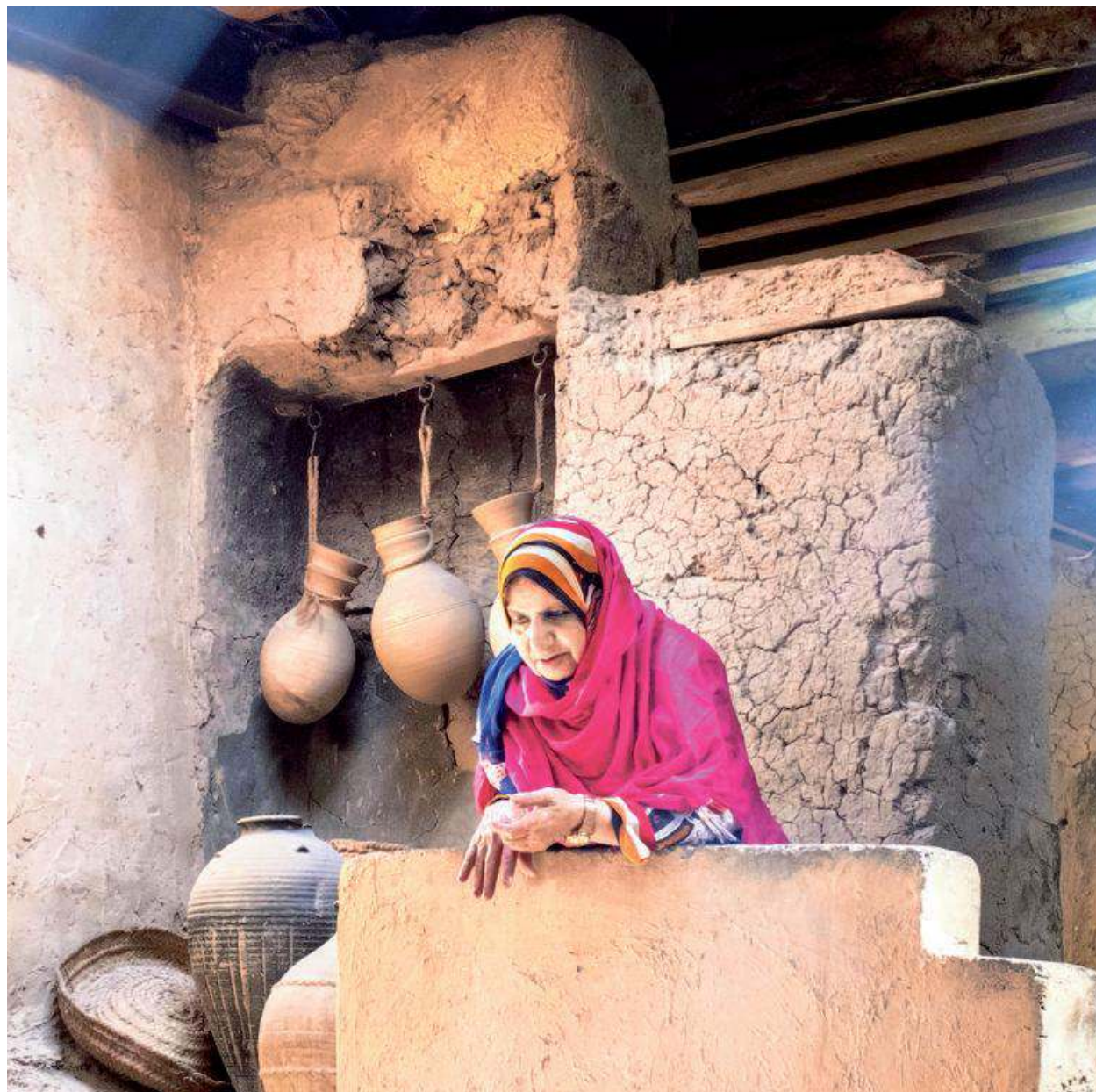
• Thirty-six years after the Kurukshetra war, Krishna journeys to Vrindavan to spend the concluding hours of his life with his childhood friend and lover Radha. In her presence, Krishna peels off the layers of the myth that has portrayed him as the incarnation of god. He retells the story of the Mahabharata in the process.



Skin Deep

Ajay Monga
Rupa
₹395

• In a world that has commoditised femininity and idealised only one body type, this is the story of four girls with very different views about beauty and how their lives get enmeshed. They get a rude awakening when an incident reveals how the big bad world of glamour breeds cradle-snatchers.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

FAMILY SAGA

Three sisters of Oman

The Man Booker International-winner uses many varied voices and tones and some of them ring true and the others...

JERRY PINTO

But first congratulations are in order. *Celestial Bodies* won the Man Booker International for 2019. Did you notice? I have to say that until the literary ladies of the Hindu Review contacted me, I had not. This must be something to do with our cultural myopia; or it may have to do with my sour grapes. I can't say.

The question that perplexes me is this: do we read novels as windows into another culture? Or do we read novels as windows into ourselves? Do we do both these things at once? Or is it a code-switching: Y/N where Y is 'Oh gosh, that's what I've always thought but never put down into words' and N is 'I would never think like that so this must be the effect of the Other

Culture'? It is with some relief I remind myself that I am not a literary theorist and so I can simply say that I don't think it is a good idea to read a novel as a way of looking at another culture.

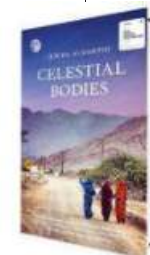
Window gazing

You are looking through several prisms. The first prism is that the novel is not about happy people, or normal people or ordinary people who are mostly boring. I mean, which Omani woman would name her child London? Yes, there are Florences and Indias and Jamaicas but I have never heard of a Muslim girl named London. So that's the first prism.

The second prism is the author's prism. This is a world she has thought into being and brought into being; there's a small difference. We all think

in stories, only some write them down. And a smaller few turn them into full-length novels. But in all this, the author is the prime mover of the universe of the novel. She is in charge. And it is as she wills it to be, not as it is. Then there is the prism that you are. Your experiences, your wishes, your history, your demographic, all this will play into the way you read the novel.

But novels are very important to our understanding of other



Celestial Bodies
Jokha Alharthi,
trans Marilyn Booth
Simon & Schuster
India
₹499

cultures. We know Mother Russia through *Anna Karenina* and Red Russia through *Mother*; we know 19th-century France through *Madame Bovary* and 20th-century France through Marguerite Duras but that's not all we know. We've gathered a huge amount of other information and that forms part of the apparatus we bring to our window gazing into these worlds.

I don't know much about Oman so I had to keep reminding myself that this was a novel. It concerns three sisters, Mayya, Asma and Khawla, and already you are thinking back to Chekhov. They are part of a family in Oman that dealt in slaves – slave-trading, the Internet tells me, was only banned in 1970 in Oman. I must say that I was transfixed by the idea of a woman giving birth standing up, hanging on to a rope and refusing to allow herself the relief of a scream because to do such a thing would be to ruin the honour of her family. And I worry that I was transfixed because I could not be sure that I was not Orientalising this woman in the pangs of her literary childbirth.

Wavering, switching

I was not as sure when a man began to talk to me. This novel uses many

I must say that I was transfixed by the idea of a woman giving birth standing up, refusing to allow herself the relief of a scream because to do such a thing would be to ruin the honour of her family

varied voices and tones and some of them ring true and the others... sorry, I'm doing it again. I don't know how an Omani businessman might speak inside his head especially when he is caught between the past and the present, wavering between love and tradition, transiting between Europe and the Gulf, switching his tongue between English and Arabic. He asks his wife, do you love me, and I went back to *Fiddler on the Roof*. His wife takes a cinematic route too: Have the Egyptian films eaten your mind?

This is where I give up and say: I have been defeated by my own ignorance. But it is an interesting defeat. I was wondering what exactly I would be entitled by my knowledge to write upon and found that I ended up in a small solipsism called Jerry Pinto.

The writer is a poet and novelist.



POETRY

'Car horns bring the sax to life'

With its arresting images, this slim volume marks an interesting debut

MANOHAR SHETTY

An altruistic endeavour run by the Marathi poet Hemant Divate, the publishing house Poetrywala, set up in 2003, has so far published over 100 titles of poetry, mostly in English and a few in Indian languages. This is a staggering record, putting to shame the list of regular publishers who always seem chary of publishing poetry. Poetrywala has also produced two gigantic books – the collected poems of Jayanta Mahapatra and K. Satchidanandan, the first running into 744 pages and the second into 664.

River Wedding, a first book by Amlanjyoti Goswami is, of course, slimmer. It is an intriguing and interesting work. While it is customary to be kind to a debut collection (unless it's downright awful), this collection needs no such patronising.

The opening poem, 'Bard', sets the tone with these lines: *I cannot talk/ When she sits there, wheel chair strapped, alone/ Not when she dreams of sending her daughter/ Pistols for dowry*. I would have preferred 'knives' instead of "pistols", but, still, the spirit of the poem comes through.



And the poet does indeed talk in the ensuing 100-odd pages. As in 'City Lights', with these arresting images: *Streetlights are Van Gogh's sunflowers/ Car horns bring the sax to life;*



River Wedding
Amlanjyoti Goswami
Paperwall
₹300

and in the poem, 'Two Sisters' (presumably tribal), that follows immediately: *they are, so beautiful, like air and water/ And the dark forest nearby*. Though the liberal use of commas throughout the book is a little disconcerting, they do not usually detract from the intrinsic poetry evident in such lines as *To life, more life. / The kind that, like a child, / takes in a morsel, when nobody's looking* ('Lunch') and on miners trapped

underground; *They could see us from a great bird in the sky/ How our destinies hung like bats, / Upside down on the black wall. And on rain: A drop that brushed my cheek on the way to eternity.*

There are also some touching poems on loss like 'Mr Ahuja' and a fine narrative poem, 'A Philosopher Meets His Match', besides the finely wrought, crisp last poem, 'The Weather in Benares'. Goswami could, however, have avoided clichés like *Our love met/ And blossomed like a /Spring flower*. And he could profitably have left out two weak poems, 'Leaving the Building' and 'Time Keeping'.

The writer has published *Full Disclosure: New and Collected Poems (1981-2017)*.

ROMANCE

Guns & roses

Stands out as a love story, falls flat as a thriller

VINEETHA MOKKIL

Kabir follows Diya, the most beautiful girl he has ever laid eyes on, into a Mumbai mall. In his pocket is a letter from Aman, Kabir's dear friend and the love of Diya's life. Kabir is a man on a mission – he has travelled far to deliver Aman's letter to Diya. But the heart wants what it wants... Kabir finds he has fallen in love with Diya after hearing Aman's stories about her.

Into this tangled web, Keya Ghosh throws in a volatile political situation, when terrorists storm the mall and take a group of people – including Kabir

and Diya – hostage at gunpoint. Tensions mount when they threaten to start killing a hostage by the hour if the government fails to meet their demands.

As the situation escalates, Kabir's and Diya's past is revealed. The two share their stories, both past and present, in the first person, in alternating chapters.

The bonds – of friendship, touchingly protective camaraderie, unrequited love – that the hostages form under duress inside the mall are convincingly sketched. So is the "musical" romance between Aman and Diya; the relationship between Aman and his father, a cop with a heart; and the doomed ties between the Kashmiri Kabir and his elder brother, who has turned to the gun to avenge the torture he was subjected to when he was wrongly held in custody by the Indian army.

The strength of *House of Stars* lies in the human connections that are made

and unmade on the pages. Ghosh gives each relationship a distinct shape and enough space to blossom. As a result, the emotional heartbeat of the novel is strong and it draws readers in.

But the narrative's thriller element is tripped up by the use of too many clichés. Ghosh channels popular hostage dramas – both books and films – and throws in tried and tested tricks into the mix that fail to surprise. Terror, both Islamist and Hindu; communalism; and the growing fissures in contemporary Indian society all feature here, and Ghosh gives in to the temptation of sermonising about them.

The characters often sound like authorial mouthpieces. They dispense advice. They mourn the state of the nation. Though well-intentioned, all these discourses end up taking the "thrill" out of the thriller.

The writer is the author of *A Happy Place And Other Stories*.



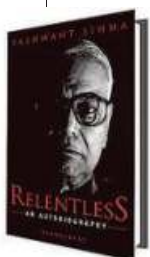
House of Stars
Keya Ghosh
Penguin Metro
Reads
₹199

BROWSE NON-FICTION**The Courtesan, the Mahatma & the Italian Brahmin**Manu S. Pillai
Context/Westland
₹599

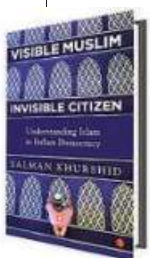
• From a Maratha prince who parodied caste to a Muslim deity in a Hindu temple, and other stories, this collection opens a window into India's past. In the introduction, the historian writes that the essays seek "to reflect the fascinating, layered, splendidly complex universe that is Indian history..."

**Relentless: An Autobiography**Yashwant Sinha
Bloomsbury
₹799

• Having worked with three Prime Ministers and two chief ministers, former bureaucrat and Union minister Sinha has been a part of India's transformation from a fledgling democracy to one of the world's most exciting economies. Sinha shares his journey while giving us a commentary on politics, religion and democracy.

**Visible Muslim Invisible Citizen**Salman Khurshid
Rupa
₹595

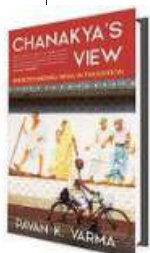
• A former law and external affairs minister attempts to place Islam in the context of modernism, and the Indian Muslim in the perspective of contemporary Indian politics. The book explains Islam to "those who do not know enough about it" and deciphers the Muslim mind in a social context.

**Whither Rural India?**Edited by A. Narayanamoorthy & Others
Tulika Books
₹950

• This is a festschrift for Venkatesh B. Athreya, the academic economist who has been a part of many social movements. His research interests and publications have been in the areas of agrarian and rural transformation in India. Eminent social scientists write about all aspects of the rural economy.

**Chanakya's View**Pavan K. Varma
Westland Books
₹699

• Writer-diplomat and politician Varma analyses the challenges India faces today. In a frank critique, he points to behavioural change as the need of the hour. Indians, he says, need to respect institutions, shun intolerance, accommodate dissent, follow strategic diplomacy and increase their moral quotient.

**POLITICS**

The enemy within

A.G. Noorani argues that the RSS has always pushed the fiction of Hindu primacy and purity

ANANYA VAJPEYI

Constitutional expert, Supreme court lawyer and author of over a dozen books, A.G. Noorani opens his history, polemic and manifesto about and against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) with these words: "What is at stake is not only the Indian Dream. What is at stake is the soul of India." He titles his book in no uncertain terms: *The RSS: A Menace to India*. What he attempts to do through 25 chapters and 550 pages is describe the battleground of ideas on which modern India has been made and remade from 1857. The contemporary dominance of Narendra Modi and the BJP cannot be explained without understanding a war that has been raging for well over a century, between 'Hind Swaraj' and 'Hindu Rashtra'.

The story of how India won freedom from colonial rule has conventionally been told as the outcome of a clash between a dominant British imperialism and a resistant Indian nationalism. But alongside this narrative, there was simultaneously a running struggle between communal and secular visions of India's history, culture and nationality. The successful repudiation of colonialism and the end of British Raj allowed the birth of the Indian and Pakistani nation-states. But the failure to resolve the deadly conflict between communal and secular ideas of India led to the moment of independence and decolonisation also being awash in the blood and fury of Partition.

'Unfinished business'

Where we are today, at the start of a second term of a popularly elected government of the Hindu Right, is the reverberation, more than seven decades on, of the unfinished business of Partition. And all along, stoking the fire of communalism in both colonial and postcolonial India, and keeping it at a slow burn until the conflagration of Modi's first election in 2014, there



Swords and sticks RSS volunteers at an event in Bhopal. A.M. FARUQUI

has been the menacing hand of the RSS. In his magisterial study, Noorani draws our attention to the role of this entity in consistently repudiating the centuries-long reality of Muslim presence, participation and integration into the historical life of the subcontinent. From its founding in 1925, the RSS has always pushed the fiction of Hindu primacy and purity in any past and future of India. It has sought to pervert Hindu identity so as to dismiss the inherently multi-faceted and decentralised character of Hinduism and to supplant it with an exclusivist and fundamentalist new ideology, i.e., Hindutva.

Noorani emphasises that the notion of the RSS being a mere 'cultural organization' – an image the RSS itself likes to project – is utterly false and misleading, even though it does not enter the electoral fray directly like other political parties. In fact it has always had a political agenda, which is of constructing a Hindu Rashtra, where "Rashtra" should be understood less as 'Nation' and more as 'Reich', with all of the attendant connotations of Fascism, and Nazism that inspired the founders of the RSS. In this Rashtra, there is no place for Muslims, or indeed any religious minorities.

For Noorani, even the most conservative and avowedly Hindu of the mainstream nationalists, including figures like Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malviya, definitely on the right relative to Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru, were nevertheless not communal in their thinking about how different religions figured in the Indian mosaic. RSS ideologues like Veer Savarkar, M.S. Golwalkar and K.B. Hedgewar, by contrast, were unequivocally anti-Muslim and majoritarian from the 1920s onwards, drawing sustenance from totalitarianism in Italy and Germany and supporting the colonial

antagonism to Muslim power in India and elsewhere in the British Empire.

Ideals under threat

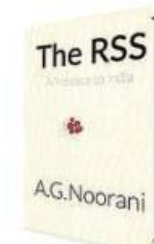
They fantasised about a Mother India (Bharat Mata) populated solely by followers of Hindu Dharma, speakers of Hindi language, worshippers of the Holy Cow, and members of caste society, occupying a geo-cultural terrain stretching from the Himalayas in the north to the sea-girded peninsula of the south.

Nathuram Godse, a votary of the RSS and a follower of Savarkar, murdered Mahatma Gandhi in January 1948. Nehru and Ambedkar saw

through and thwarted the RSS at every step and carried the day by writing an egalitarian and secular Constitution, promulgated in January 1950. This Constitution has stood as a bulwark against continuous attempts to hijack the Tagorean 'Idea of India' and recast it as Savarkar's 'Hindu Rashtra'.

By looking at every twist and turn in the saga of the RSS, Noorani wants us to grasp unequivocally that Gandhi's swaraj, Tagore's 'unity in diversity', Nehru's secularism and Ambedkar's Constitution, are all under threat from the Hindu Right. This includes progeny of the Sangh Parivar like the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal. Supposed differences between the BJP and the RSS; between economic nationalism and cultural majoritarianism; between soft saffron Hindutva and outright Islamophobia are cosmetic at best.

Whatever the distortions introduced momentarily into the democratic process by populism and authoritarianism, ultimately the Hindu Right is bound to be washed up on the shores of history, its lies overwhelmed by the one principle that Gandhi taught us actually upholds politics: Truth.



The RSS: A Menace to India
A.G. Noorani
LeftWord Books
₹1,500

SPIRITUALITY

A political history of a religion

Christianity's journey to India and the local and external processes at work

K.R.A. NARASIAH

When did Christianity arrive in India? Why is it sometimes considered an “inevitable adjunct” to the colonial experience? Where does the truth lie? In *Carpenters and Kings: Western Christianity and the Idea of India*, the writer traces the advent of Christianity in India, pointing out that it arrived in the subcontinent during the Apostolic Age, sometime in the first two centuries CE.

Though the subject has been well-researched, one is disappointed that Siddhartha Sarma seems to have a one-point agenda in the narrative, of faulting the Hindu right for not giving the religion its due place in history. Sarma says “revisionism becomes a key tool for reimagining Indian history through a very narrow nativist and bigoted lens, it has become increasingly necessary to examine the history of Christianity in India and set the record straight.”

Antiquity established

Much research has been done on Christianity in India and as history cannot be written according to the will



Apostolic influence An artwork showing the Syrian Christians of Kerala. WIKI COMMONS

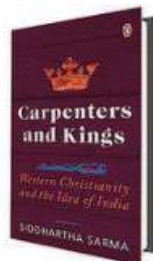
of some group, his statement that the record should be set straight is quite unnecessary. In *The Bible and Asia*, Prof. R.S. Sugirtharajah establishes the antiquity of Christianity in India and it is a well-known fact that when the Bible reached India, Christian scriptures bore the traces of “Asian commodities and Indian moral stories.” Sugirtharajah compares the verses from *The Kings* and Sangam poetry to establish the early links.

Sarma declares that for the Hindu right “it is necessary to delegitimize the presence of Islam and Christianity by creating a narrative that claims that the history of these two Abrahamic faiths in the subcontinent was a disruption in an otherwise harmonious society.” He builds his case to defend against two “wrong” notions – that Islam spread primarily by the sword and Christianity because of the colonialists. With the help of

three key sections, ‘Antiquity’, ‘Medieval Ages’ and ‘Colonial Period’, the book narrates the story of Christianity in India.

In ‘Schisms’, we get a glimpse of the local and external processes at work, from Greek trading activity, the arrival of the Mongols, the influence of the Arabs, to the politics of Western Europe, and their impact on Christianity. He tells us about the councils of Nicaea, Chalcedon, and about Manichaeism and how it weakened due to lack of support from the state. According to him, when the faith disappeared from the rest of the world, Indian Manicheans would either have reconverted to the larger Christian or Jewish faiths.

We are told of the legends of Barlaam and Josaphat and the story of conversion to Christian faith in the “exotic land of India”. There are several misses. For instance, while talking about Socorta, he doesn't mention a study done in 2001 by a group of Belgian speleologists who discovered a large number of objects, including inscriptions in the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts. Sarma only mentions that the Christian communities were thriving there.



Carpenters and Kings: Western Christianity and the Idea of India
Siddhartha Sarma
Hamish Hamilton/
PRH
₹599

SOCIETY

Counting the numbers

With official figures hard to come by, a State-wise compilation of atrocities on Dalits

PRAKASH BAL JOSHI

Lynching; rape; violence following inter-caste marriages; compelling Dalits to follow norms of untouchability – atrocities on Dalits and Adivasis have been perpetuated for a long time in the country and there is no need for any survey to make people aware of such a blot on society.

However, there have been few attempts to present a comprehensive picture of such oppressive conditions even after 72 years of independence. These incidents are reported in an isolated and sporadic manner by the mainstream media and regional press, but we don't get the big picture or the extent of the malaise.

Bhed-Bharat, brought out by Dalit Shakti Prakashan and edited by writer activist Martin Macwan, gives us an account of incidents of atrocities committed on Dalits and Adivasis in different parts of the country from 2014 to 2018.

Macwan compiles incidents and has listed them State-wise, without adding any commentary to these



Big force The country has a large population of Dalits and Adivasis. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

stories of atrocities. At the outset he explains the need to compile such a list: “The absence of such a comprehensive picture is a major reason for a weak social and political consciousness among Dalits as well as non-Dalits.”

In the preface, Macwan generates a dialogue with his readers by asking questions and providing answers. The

book does not contain a list of all such incidents of atrocities but is a compilation of the news stories which appeared in national and regional media. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, from 2014-2016, a total of 1,19,872 incidents of atrocities on Dalits and 19,671 incidents of atrocities on Adivasis took place while data for 2017 and 2018 is yet

to be prepared and presented. Macwan points out that the figure does not include cases where sections of the ‘Atrocities Act’ have not been applied; it also does not include instances where people did not register complaints with the police out of fear.

The country has a large population of Dalits and Adivasis. Macwan claims that despite the ruling NDA getting good support from reserved constituencies, the number of atrocities against Dalits and Adivasis has gone up in the last five years.

The book also highlights the fact that though atrocities on Dalits are reported and there is a fair amount of consciousness within the community giving rise to protests seeking justice for victims, there is no such awareness among Adivasis. The common law passed by Parliament in the late 1980s for dealing with atrocities on both the communities has not helped much in creating awareness. Macwan's book, based on heart wrenching stories rather than data, is welcome as it may help to create an understanding about such social discrimination.



Bhed-Bharat: An Account of Injustice and Atrocities on Dalits & Adivasis (2014-2018)
Edited by Martin Macwan
Dalit Shakti Prakashan
₹350

NOSHTALGIA

The magic of a lunch on grass

Our picnic age started with the Ambassador, into which families crammed themselves and went in search of a hidden spot by a poolside



Nomadic spirit
Édouard Manet's painting *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863) or *Luncheon on the Grass*. WIKI COMMONS

After lunch, the group split into the searchers and the nappers. The younger crowd disappeared into the hillside and returned with stories of wasp stings and love bites

GEETA DOCTOR

Who killed the spirit of picnics? Was it Harry Potter – invited to dine on cockroach clusters and maggoty haggis instead of homemade sandwiches like the Enid Blyton generation of find-outers? Is it the American-style super highways that insist we speed along to identical restrooms and fast-food bars? Or the glamorous, clamorous charm of a resort-style life, where food is laid out in such abundance that all you want to do is stretch out and murmur to the young and exquisitely turned-out chef's assistant: "Yes, yes, quail eggs with caviar will do fine for me."

It's the abundance of choice. Canned entertainment for a pre-packaged life embalmed in plastic.

The hunger lies in the digital eye. It relentlessly beams images of celebrities endorsing exotic locales wearing designer labels. The global village has become a bazaar of banalities.

Picnics on the other hand bring out the nomadic spirit that lurks somewhere within us. They suggest a spirit of rebellion from the drudgery of everyday life. Consider, for instance, one of the most celebrated and fiercely debated images of a picnic between two men and two women under the trees in a secluded forest glade in Paris. When it was first exhibited, Napoleon III declared that "It was an offence against decency".

The painting by Édouard Manet is called *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863) or *Luncheon on the Grass*. It depicts the essence of what it means to leave

the constraints of city life and become a part of nature. The main figure is of a woman in splendid rose-tinted nakedness looking straight at the viewer as though to ask: "Would you like to join me?"

Inclusive gatherings

Picnics are like that, they tend to include people, not exclude them. The two men are fully dressed. They are involved in a serious discussion, maybe about business. Another half-clad woman appears to be washing herself, or maybe the picnic plates, at a small pool in the distance.

What is fascinating is to look at their lunch. It is casually thrown together on a piece of cloth spread on the grass. There's a marvellously shaped round crusty bun, figs, cherries, plums, more bread, and we

should hope some cheese, lurking in the depths of the basket. A clear glass bottle lies empty on the grass, maybe they have just finished drinking it. This was the golden age. Lust and food casually spread on the grass to be enjoyed in all its complementary decadence.

For us, the picnic age started with the Ambassador. Joint families crammed themselves into an Ambassador car or two, and rode out in a convoy looking for a deserted spot just like Manet's wood. It could be under the shade of a spreading tree, or near a rock pool under a hidden bay, or the ruins of a fortress standing atop a hill. The nuclear family did not exist then. Uncles, aunts, grandparents, friendly neighbours, a motley bunch of girls who could sing and long-haired

young men with a guitar were welcome. There was no dress code. No one had heard of sunscreen creams, and shoes and sandals, if worn, were invariably Bata.

Luncheon spread

Lunch was, of course, the main point of a picnic. Aunties – I particularly recall a favourite one called Padma Mukundan, who at 92 has written a cookbook of recipes – would consult each other on what they might bring. Sandwiches were a must, but mince cutlets, chicken patties and maida puffs, made at home, in small crescent shapes, their edges crimped with a fork and stuffed with potato for the most part were also deemed necessary. My mother's speciality was Russian salad, difficult to make in the days when mayonnaise had to be hand-whipped with a wooden spoon; others would bring fruit cakes, pies and roast chicken English-style. The uncles, especially if they were in the Army, looked after the drinks. These were stuffed into ice-boxes, or taken out and cooled by the rocks if there was a river nearby. After lunch, the group split into the searchers and the nappers. The younger crowd disappeared into the hillside and returned with stories of wasp stings, love bites and nettles. The older ones dozed.

Then, in its more elevated form, there was the 'midnight picnic'. I recall a magical one drifting down the backwaters of a river off the town of Mahe in North Malabar. We were in a boat that was punted along the river bed. There were no lights from the palm-fronted banks except the luminous eyes of wild animals, the occasional leap of a fish from the phosphorous-rimmed water. What we ate were called "bullets", deep-fried stuffed mussels, and what we drank was liquid fire.

Is it any wonder that I still have fond memories of a picnic under a night of stars?

The media critic and commentator decodes the baffling variety of human behaviour in our global village.

Notes from Korčula

KUMAR SAMPAT IYENGAR

The island of Korčula, off the Pelješac peninsula on the Dalmatian coast in the Adriatic Sea, is spectacularly beautiful and away from the hordes of tourists now descending on Dubrovnik and Split in Croatia.

So what's the connection between Korčula and a recent news item saying Italy had joined the Belt and Road Initiative, the Chinese brainchild to facilitate trade and infrastructure, on the lines of the old Silk Road?

The beauty of this mediaeval island, shimmering in the twilight with its architectural gems, labyrinth passages and cobbled pathways, has been laced with an interesting conflict between Croatia and Italy. Both lay claim to being the birthplace of that great Venetian (as we think him to be!) traveller, Marco Polo.

Ironically, Polo's travels may never have come to light if it hadn't been for his heroic exploits in the great naval battle between the Venetians and the Genoese, fought along the north-eastern coast off Korčula (then under the control of the Venetians) in the Pelješac Channel in September 1298. Polo,

fighting for the Venetians, commanded a galley that was equipped by his family, and in the words of the Genoese poet and chronicler, Luchetti, "was captured because he was slipping with his galleon into the front lines and courageously fought".

Book of wonders

Wounded and taken to Genoa in chains, he was imprisoned until 1299; during this time he dictated his adventures to his fellow prisoner, the writer Rustichello of Pisa. He recounted his long years at the court of Kublai Khan – and thus was born the first (and arguably the greatest) travelogue in history, called *The Book of World Wonders*, recorded in Old French at first and later translated into Italian as *Il Milione*. Printed for the first time in 1477, it's a fascinating bit of trivia that, for at least 300 years, this was the most widely read book in the world after the Bible!

The first insight to Europeans of faraway lands, payment with bank notes, cheap porcelain, coal burning asbestos and silk manufacture, all came from Polo's stories



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

And to think, the "patron saint" of all travel writers may never have come to light had it not been for the Battle of Korčula!

But what of the birth of this mediaeval figure, ace explorer, traveller and travel writer?

Noble house

The manuscript chronicle of the history of Venice in the 15th century mentions a list of the noble families who lived in Venice, confirming the Dalmatian origins of the Polo family. Documents in Korčula reveal the grant of a house placed on the east side of town to the Polo family, and a century after Polo's death, his descendant Mateo Polo requested the Korčula community to allocate him the land for a shipyard near the one where his great-grandparents had built ships.

Croatia claims the Polo family was one of many Croatian families settled in Venice, where they arrived after the birth of Marco.

But coming back to Polo. His journey to China began in 1271, when his father Niccolò

took the young Marco with him. He spent 17 years in the service of the Mongol ruler Kublai Khan, exploring many unknown places and wonders. The first insight for Europeans into faraway lands, payment with bank notes, cheap porcelain, coal burning asbestos and silk manufacture (hence the term 'Silk Road') all came from Polo's stories.

Sipping Croatia's most popular red wine, Plavac Mali, seeing the evening shadows bathe the Gothic St Mark's Cathedral in Korčula's spectacular sunset, I understand why the Croats would love to lay claim to Korčula being the great traveller's birthplace.

Have the Italians cocked a snook at them by collaborating with the Chinese on the new version of the Silk Road discovered by Polo? Croatian or Venetian, may the great travel writer's journeys inspire all those bitten by the travel bug!

The Bengaluru-based travel writer is a compulsive trekker, theatre aficionado and management consultant.

SUNDAY RECIPE

Bullets or stuffed mussels

INGREDIENTS

Mussels — 1 kg, approx. 15 mussels
2 cups of boiled rice
Grated coconut — half a cup, freshly scraped
1 tsp fennel seeds and cumin.
Chopped green chillies, chopped shallots, ginger, curry leaves
Salt
For the batter: 1 tbsp rice powder, small amounts of chilli, turmeric, fennel powder, salt
Oil to fry the bullets

METHOD

1. Make the rice paste first by soaking two cups of boiled rice for five hours. Add freshly grated coconut, a tsp. of fennel seeds and cumin, a small quantity of chopped shallots.

Green chillies, ginger ground fine, a few chopped curry leaves and salt. Grind and mix well into a firm spicy dough
2. Meanwhile, wash and clean the mussels thoroughly under cold running water and steam till all the shells have half opened. Gently prise open the bivalves. Take the mussels out and remove the hair-like beards, the innards, and any other marine detritus.
3. Make pellets of the rice dough and gently stuff the mussel into each pellet and carefully put the stuffed pellet back inside the shells. Tie with a coconut fibre string. Steam cook these until the rice feels firm to the touch.
4. Remove the steamed pellets



and dip each of them in a thin batter made of rice powder, chilli powder, turmeric powder, fennel powder, salt and a little water. Deep fry each pellet till brown and crisp. They can be served in the mussel shell itself.
Known as *Arikadukka* in Malayalam.

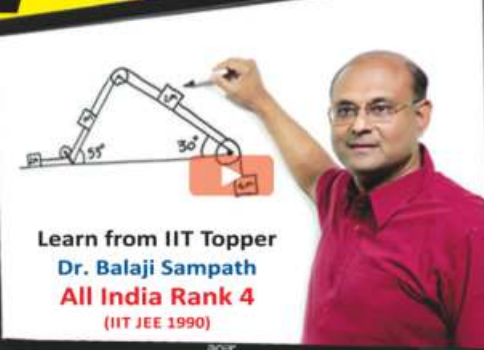
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Unity and truth
S. Ambujammal (front row, extreme left) takes part in a women's procession in Chennai in 1965.

S. KOTHANDARAMAN

OFF-CENTRE

Forgotten, female, footsoldier

How a slim manuscript discovered by chance in the Tamil Nadu archives unveiled a chapter in the freedom struggle that's not about the Big Men

ADITYA IYER

Among the stacks of documents in the research hall of Chennai's Tamil Nadu State Archives lies a battered and worn manuscript, its nondescript brown paper cover containing only the words 'Particulars of Women Freedom Fighters' in ballpoint ink. The title is vague, but the slim collection's contents are not. It has details of the women in the former Madras Presidency who participated in the Independence struggle.

The entries are concise almost to the point of being terse. Names, addresses, and dates of birth of individuals are recorded along with a brief description of their activities

against the British. Some, like V.K. Lakshmi from Coimbatore, took part in individual Satyagraha protests and also joined the Indian National Congress. Lakshmi spent three months in jails for women in Coimbatore, Cuddalore and Vellore. She was in good company; one of her fellow prisoners was Krishnabai Nimbkar, jailed for six months under the Defence of India Act for boycotting of foreign cloth and who later organised underground activities in Madras during WWII, including operating a wireless radio station.

Other women participated in the foreign cloth boycotts of 1932, influenced by the Swadeshi movement, and actively organised Congress activities across the South

Indian province. For example, S. Ambujammal, born in 1899, was the vice-president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, and helped disseminate the ideologies of Gandhi and Tilak through Tamil texts.

Armed struggle

Then there were those who rejected the methods of the Home Rule movement in favour of Subhas Chandra Bose's call for armed struggle. The records show how women from different communities and regions of South India joined the Indian National Army to fight for independence. P. Devaki from North Arcot, Govindammal from Salem, and Velayammal from Vyasarpadi, for example, came from vastly different

backgrounds, and all three enlisted as sepoy in the Rani of Jhansi regiment, one of the few all-women combat regiments on any side during WWII.

There are frustratingly few details beyond this; and yet these scant scraps had me instantly interested in how ordinary women engaged with India's freedom struggle in ways overlooked by traditional historical narratives.

The Big Men paradigm of recording history often ignores the complex involvement of various other sections of people, ideas, and politics inherent in any freedom struggle. Names like Netaji and Gandhi and Tilak are important, of course, but so too are the great number of people who marched, were imprisoned, and

Krishnabai Nimbkar was jailed for six months for boycotting foreign cloth, and organised underground activities during WWII

fought alongside them.

There are few easy-to-access repositories, physical or digital, of the lesser known freedom fighters. Google 'women freedom fighters of India' and you will be beset with a plethora of listicles that are frustratingly lacking in details. The People's Archive of Rural India has a section titled 'Footsoldiers of Freedom' that has interviews with some of the freedom fighters who are still live.

Overall, though, there is still a lack of information, scholarly or popular, on the experiences of those who fought for freedom at the grassroots level.

Drowned-out voices

Perhaps it is because of India's multifarious identities – language, caste, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic status – and how that impacts whose voices get heard in 'national' narratives. Perhaps it is because the state views events of the past as a vehicle for the politics of the present. The current government, for example, is now engaged in rewriting India's histories and not interested in restoring lost truths.

Or maybe it is just the lack of interest in documenting the lives and contributions of these participants. After all, historians need primary material to analyse. How and who writes these is important too. "Vernacular histories," as Partha Chatterjee once wrote, "seek their legitimacy in the domain of the popular."

We can piece together only the fragments of a narrative from the manuscript in the Egmore archive. We know that the Rani of Jhansi regiment was largely made up of the descendants of Indian rubber plantation workers in the Malay peninsula – which makes Velayammal and her peers unique because they were born in India.

We know the regiment trained in Singapore, before being deployed to Imphal as part of Bose's plan to enter Bengal's Gangetic plains. But where did they fight? Why did they believe in Bose's vision and not in the ideas propagated at home? It turns out, we know very little.

Ambujammal would later found the Srinivasa Gandhi Nilayam, a charitable trust for underprivileged children in Mylapore on a street now bearing her name. But the stories of many of the other female freedom fighters from Madras Presidency are missing. They are, presumably, a part of family histories; but are notably absent from national history.

The lesson to be learned from the inconspicuous manuscript is that the stories of many people who participated in the Independence struggle have only been hinted at so far.

How many more such documents lie undiscovered in state and private archives across the subcontinent? Uncovering all of them, and all the participants, may be impossible. But reflecting on these forgotten aspects of history can only enrich our understanding of the past.

The London-based journalist writes on history, arts and politics.

PASSING BITE

Exploring the inauthentic

Going out with my friend is a kind of Restaurant Russian Roulette



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

A couple of weeks ago my friend calls me up and says, "Listen, there's this new Chinese place that's opened and you have to try it. We're going there the day after." My friend is a great cook herself, and a sophisticated food-knowing person with a strong personality, so I know not to argue with her. I also know that she gets excited about all sorts of new places that open in Kolkata and her choices don't always work out. Going out to eat with her is always a kind of Restaurant Russian Roulette, but after long practice I've now understood that the thrill is in the adventure, the not-knowing, and the risk of occasionally (well, half the time) being hit point-blank with terrible food, while the reward is some unexpectedly great eating experience.

So, two days later I find myself in a taxi, in a party of three, swerving towards what used to be the old Chinatown. The place, in a small lane off the main road, is an old Chinese building lovingly refurbished. The restaurant on the ground floor is tastefully done up in a minimal Chinese style, which is a good sign. It's empty on a Friday night, which is not a good sign.

Being the only customers we immediately attract the attention of all five waiters, who stand around while one man takes us through the menu. First off, they don't have a liquor licence, which is okay in this heat. Then we rapidly realise that there is no pork on offer because this is now a predominantly Muslim area; equally quickly we are told that there is no beef, because, you know, these *Achhe Din* are not exactly good

times, even in supposedly food-liberal West Bengal. Mutton? "Oh, we stopped getting it because not many people order mutton in a Chinese restaurant."

Flying saucers

I don't eat fish or seafood because I'm challenged like that, but both the women I'm with love crustacean and pescatarian offerings. "You can have chicken," says my foodie friend in her best consolation-prize voice, "their chicken is very good and then we can order some nice Chinese veggies." The starters come and they are quite

We realise there is no pork because this is now a Muslim area; equally quickly we are told there is no beef, because, you know, these *Achhe Din* are not exactly good times

good – steamed chicken wontons and some deep-fried, sesame-flecked chicken sticks. The sauces are really fresh and have a good kick of chilli, garlic and soy.

For the main course my companions have got themselves a load of fresh flying saucers of crab in some pepper and black bean sauce. Me, I find myself eating another chicken dish (with gravy) mixed with noodles (with chicken). There is some vegetable element as well – quite okay – but by now I'm feeling like I'm the one who's caught the bullet this evening. I suffer through the meal as my table-mates crack open crab after crab, going ooh and aah as they extricate slivers of shell from their mouths and lay them at the side of their plates like tiny little trophies. So good is the damned crab, apparently,

that it even makes the chicken-on-chicken combo taste good to my (by now almost former) friends.

As we leave, we pass quite a few street-side kabab kiosks. I run the gauntlet of the wonderful smells, keeping my bitter, hungry eyes focused straight ahead; my friends are both genuinely happy; I tell myself that sometimes you have to take one for the team. Reaching home, I tell myself I'm never going out with those two again.

Procession of plates

The next morning I find myself heavily nostalgic for the late 70s and a certain kind of extended Kolkata Chinese restaurant lunch, usually partaken on a weekend, where the emptied beer bottles are lined up on the next table like some terracotta army in the Emperor's palace in old Peking, where the procession of plates is constant, resplendent with all kinds of meatey, (leavened with dead water-creatures for the many who wanted them), with gravy dishes and dry dishes, piles of rice and noodles, with ketchupy-sweet crispy American chop suey for the one idiot who insisted, with the variations of chilli chicken openly taking out a mortgage on your digestive tract – instalments to be paid over the next few days – with cigarette smoke hanging in the air, sometimes joined by ganja smoke.

I'm sure this is a semi-false memory, and it brings back the question of what is authentic vs. what is pleasurable and memorable. This latest Chinese meal was no more authentic than the 1970s ones; both times, what we were eating was evolving Cal-Sino cuisine, which has not that much to do with Szechuan or Hunan, so the difference lay not in the food so much as the overall experience.

A couple of days ago, my foodie friend calls me again. Come home for dinner. I don't argue, I go. I don't regret it. There is plentiful drink, and lovely food with a fusion Japanese-Goan theme. There are two kinds of pork, two kinds of chicken, all sorts of great veg, all of it done with unpretentious flair. And the most exotic and expensive element is some kind of superior wasabi mixture to go with the perfectly rendered pumpkin tempura. At the end of the meal I almost forgive my friend for the Chinatown excursion. "So, listen," says my friend, "there is this new, experimental north-eastern place that has opened near Gol Park. We should go next week!"

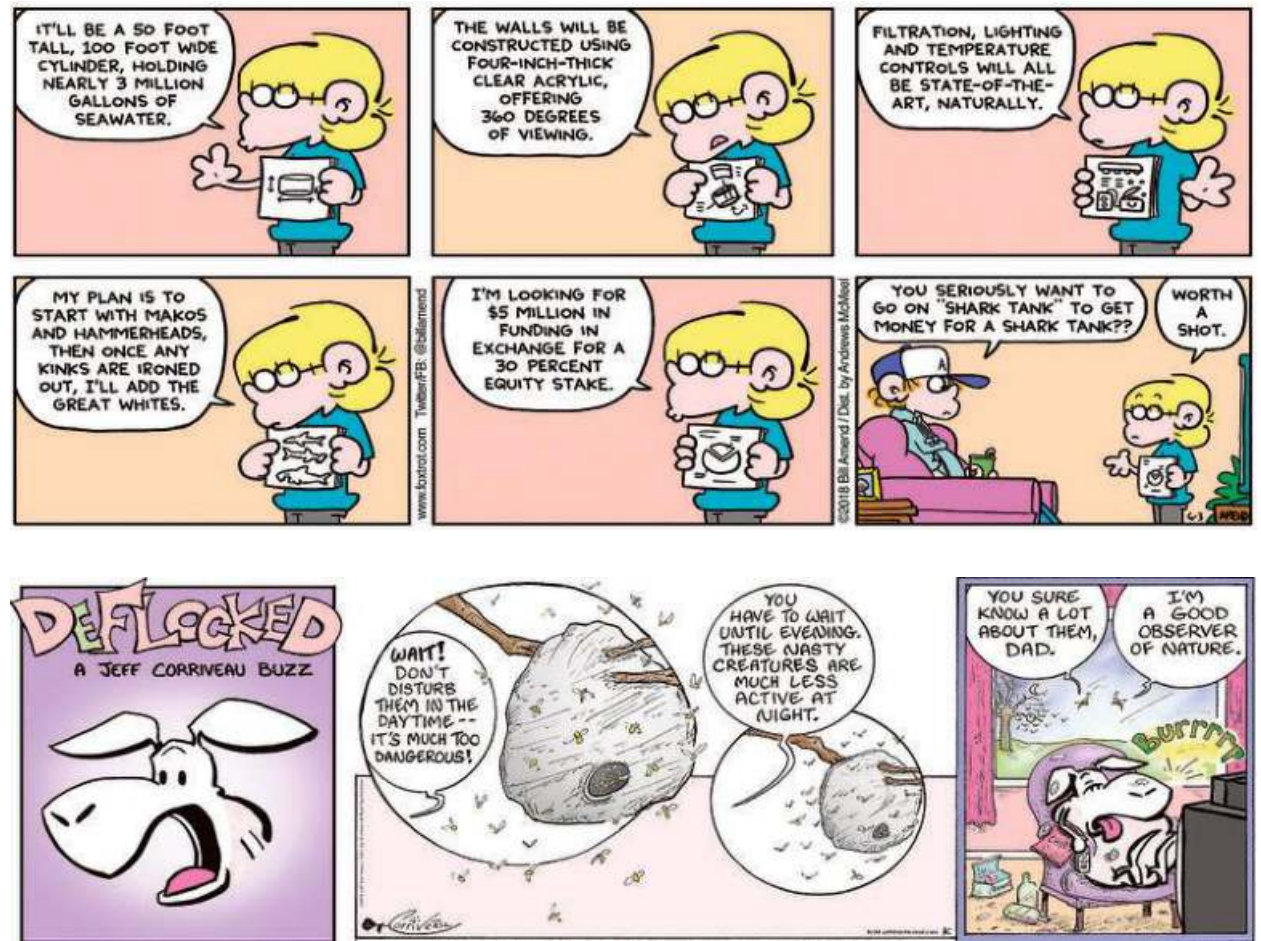


Ruchir Joshi is a writer, filmmaker and columnist.

BROWN PAPERBAG BY SAILESH GOPALAN



FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

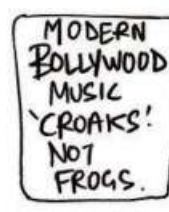


F MINUS BY TONY CARRILLO



GREEN HUMOUR BY ROHAN CHAKRAVARTY

MONSOON MELODIES BY INDIAN FROGS



GOREN BRIDGE

Suit or no trump?

Both vulnerable,
South deals



BOB JONES

NORTH
▲ K 10
♥ A K 7 3 2
♦ 8 7 2
♣ Q J 8

WEST
♥ 7 4 3
♦ Q 8
♠ 10 5 3
♣ 9 7 4 3 2

EAST
▲ A 8 6 5 2
♥ J 6 4
♦ A K 9 6
♣ 6

SOUTH
▲ Q J 9
♥ 10 9 5
♦ Q J 4
♣ A K 10 5

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♣ Pass 1♥ 1♠
1NT Pass 3NT All pass

Opening lead: Four of ♠

otherwise balanced and his partner's hand is completely balanced, nine tricks at no trump might prove easier to take.

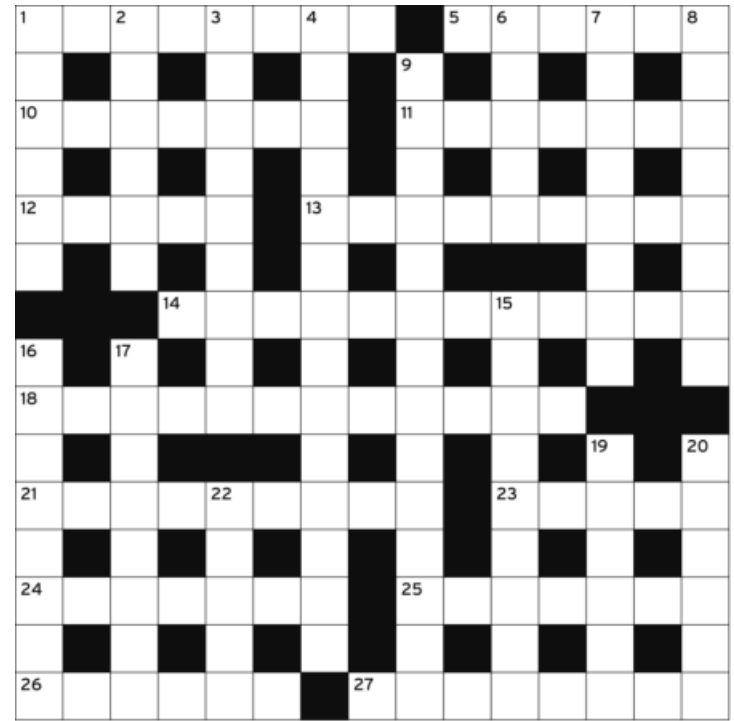
Today's deal is from a team game. At this table, East won the opening spade lead with his ace and shifted to a low diamond, setting up three potential diamond tricks for himself. South won the shift with his queen and led the 10 of hearts to the queen and ace. He crossed back to his hand with a club to lead the nine of hearts. He was hoping West would cover and East would have a doubleton eight, but that hope vanished when West played the eight. Declarer rose with dummy's

ace and took his nine tricks – two spades, two hearts, one diamond, and four clubs. Making three!

At the other table, North-South "found" their eight-card heart fit. There were four certain losers and declarer never had a chance. Down one.

No trump is often best when one player has a six-card minor suit. Be on the lookout for hands that might play better in notrump despite a five-three major suit fit. It is almost always right to play in a major with a four-four fit, unless both hands are "mirrored," meaning they have exactly the same length in all four suits.

THE SUNDAY CROSSWORD NO. 3056



Across

- 1 Florida's flashy, unruly sportsmen (3,5)
- 5 Where Tamworth is, in the sticks (6)
- 10 Debtor's note includes a one-time Murdoch company that's hard to credit (1,3,3)
- 11 Under canvas, by the sound of things, getting passionate (7)
- 12 Poem, when recited, evokes shrill birdcall (5)
- 13 Story concerning wabbit: Bugs Bunny heads off; what will hunter do? (3,2,4)
- 14 Sets exam, gets confused, gives very short bursts of information (4,8)
- 18 It doesn't matter which clothes shop now, I've seen everything (8,4)
- 21 'Gut-rot.' 'How?' 'Dodgy sprout.' (9)
- 23 Energy follows natural process (5)
- 24 Following ousting of duke, relinquish claim to dynasty (7)
- 25 Time running out – cue botox shot: that'll make this dish tastier (3,4)
- 26 Dines fancily, engorging Italian – so has to do these? (3-3)
- 27 Sees term restructured to become half-year course of study (8)

Down

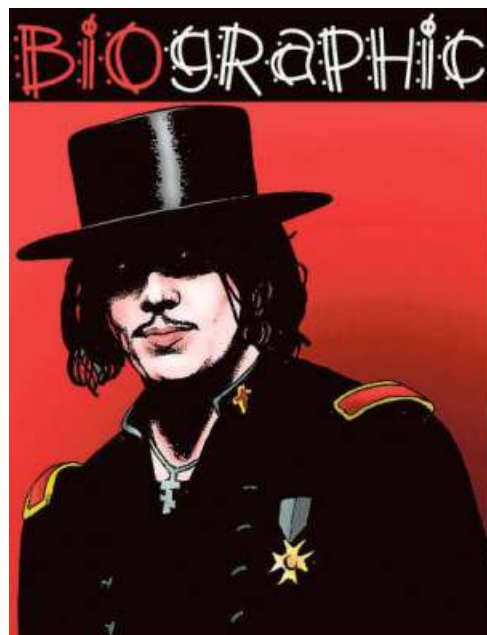
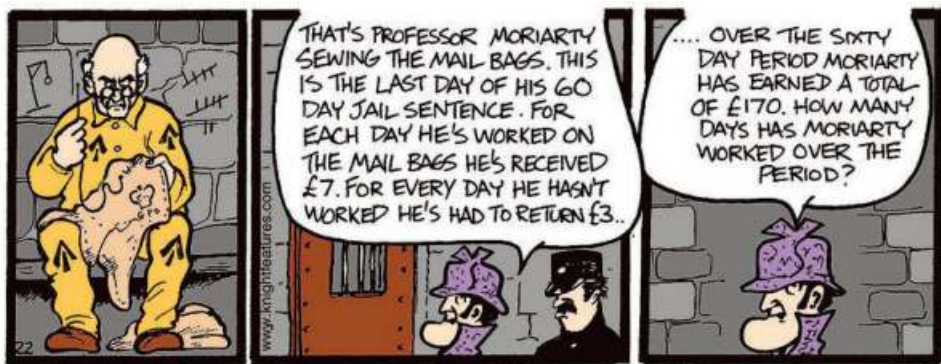
- 1 Running away from argument about Latin (6)
- 2 The old ship's on fire, losing bow and stern: aye-aye! (3,3)

- 3 See, our way worked? Never mind (2,3,4)
- 4 For 'rutted', lower, coarser profanity (4-6,4)
- 6 Goddess from The X Factor wearing bronze (5)
- 7 Foxtrot, then Latin dance, saving time for another dance (8)
- 8 Leader in Scandinavia to go with tax that's dearest (8)
- 9 Where rounds follow rounds? (10,4)
- 15 Old invader's truncated call with horn (9)
- 16 She's describing romances with airy sounds (8)
- 17 What fisherman might do to catch something resembling a shell (8)
- 19 French author in drunken stupor (6)
- 20 What's remote, hurtling? (6)
- 22 To create excitement in vicar, utter profanities for starters (3,2)

Solution No. 3055



BAKER STREET



BIOGRAPHIC

BORN THE YOUNGEST OF 10 CHILDREN IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN, ON JULY 9, 1975, JOHN "JACK" ANTHONY GILLIS WORKED AS AN UPHOLSTERER WHILE PLAYING IN VARIOUS LOCAL BANDS. HE MARRIED MEG WHITE IN 1996 AND, BREAKING WITH CONVENTION, TOOK HER LAST NAME. SOON THE COUPLE WERE COLLABORATING MUSICALLY, AND THE FOLLOWING YEAR THEY DEBUTED AS THE WHITE STRIPES AT DETROIT'S GOLD DOLLAR CLUB, MEG'S DRUMS UNDERPINNING JACK'S DISTINCTIVE GUITAR AND VOCALS. ALTHOUGH THEY DIVORCED IN 2000, JACK AND MEG CONTINUED TO WORK TOGETHER AS A DUO, INSISTING IN INTERVIEWS THAT THEY WERE BROTHER AND SISTER.

BY 2001 THE WHITE STRIPES WERE A SENSATION IN BRITAIN, AND THE SINGLE "FELL IN LOVE WITH A GIRL" HELPED FAN THE FLAMES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC. 2003'S "ELEPHANT" ALBUM, WHICH CONTAINED THE HIT SINGLE "SEVEN NATION ARMY," WAS A U.K. CHART-TOPPER AND TOOK THE BAND INTO THE U.S. TOP 10. BOTH THE SINGLE AND ALBUM WENT ON TO WIN GRAMMY AWARDS. SUCCESS OPENED UP NEW DOORS FOR JACK, FROM PRODUCING FOR COUNTRY LEGEND LORETTA LYNN TO ACTING IN THE MOVIE "COLD MOUNTAIN." AFTER HIS HIGH-PROFILE ROMANCE WITH ACTRESS RENEE ZELLWEGER ENDED, HE MARRIED SUPERMODEL KAREN ELSON IN 2005. THE MARRIAGE LASTED 8 YEARS AND PRODUCED TWO CHILDREN.

FOLLOWING 2005'S "GET BEHIND ME, SATAN" ALBUM, WHICH CLIMBED TO NO. 3 ON THE BILLBOARD CHARTS, JACK TEAMED UP WITH FRIENDS TO FORM THE SIDE PROJECT THE RACONTEURS (KNOWN AS THE SABOTEURS IN AUSTRALIA). THE BAND TOURED EXTENSIVELY IN 2006 IN SUPPORT OF THE ALBUM "BROKEN BOY SOLDIERS."

IN 2009, JACK DEBUTED ANOTHER SIDE PROJECT, THE DEAD WEATHER. THREE STUDIO ALBUMS OVER THE NEXT SIX YEARS ALL HIT THE BILLBOARD TOP 10.

JACK HAS AN EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF GUITARS AND ROCK MEMORABILIA AND IS A BOARD MEMBER OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' NATIONAL RECORDING PRESERVATION FOUNDATION. SINCE 2012, JACK HAS RELEASED THREE SOLO ALBUMS, EACH OF WHICH HAS TOPPED THE U.S. CHARTS. A 12-TIME GRAMMY WINNER, HE IS CURRENTLY TOURING, PLAYING DATES IN NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE THROUGH SEPTEMBER.

THE WHITE STRIPES RESURFACED IN THE SUMMER OF 2007, WITH THE ALBUM "ICKY THUMP" HITTING NO. 2 ON THE CHARTS. 2008 BROUGHT A SECOND ALBUM - "CONSOLERS OF THE LONELY" - WITH THE RACONTEURS. THAT SAME YEAR, JACK TEAMED UP WITH ALICIA KEYS ON "ANOTHER WAY TO DIE," THE THEME SONG FOR THE JAMES BOND MOVIE "QUANTUM OF SOLACE."

QUIZ

Easy like Sunday morning

Life feels like Pac-Man sometimes... It's the same game all over again — *This Is Us*

BERTY ASHLEY

1 On July 14, 1983, this video game was released by Nintendo in Japan as an arcade game. It featured an Italian-American plumber dressed in red overalls running through alien landscapes and through sewage tunnels in search of a kidnapped princess. He also had a younger brother who wore green overalls. The game designers named the lead character after the owner of their flat. What is the name of this incredibly popular video game?

2 Studies have found that people from this life-saving profession who played video games for more than three hours per week made 37% fewer errors and performed tasks 27% faster than their peers. It was concluded that the video games result in better hand-eye coordination, an important skill in this profession. What is this profession?

3 In 2011, players of an online puzzle video game about protein folding, called Foldit, decoded the crystal structure of a retroviral protease from Mason-Pfizer Monkey Virus (M-PMV) in 10 days, shocking scientists who had been working on it for over 15 years. PMV causes symptoms very similar to another life-threatening disease, hence the result of this video game led to acceleration in the path to treatment of a worldwide epidemic. What is the disease?

4 SPARX (Smart, Positive, Active, Realistic, X-factor thoughts) is a free online video game designed with the help of researchers from the University of Auckland. In a study, it was shown to produce excellent results in helping teenagers beat a certain illness. The game guides players through a number of challenges that help practise handling various life situations and emotions that come with them. What prevalent disorder is this?

5 The ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board) assigns age and content ratings for video games. It came into existence because of a game that was released in 1992. It was originally designed as a Jean-Claude van Damme fighting game. When he wasn't able to commit his likeness, the character was changed by the designers to 'Johnny Cage'. It was the first ever fighting game to introduce a secret fighter, the level reached if the player fulfilled a set of requirements. What is this game that has become one of the highest grossing media franchises of all time?

6 This video game allows the player to build with a variety of different blocks in a 3D generated world that gradually evolves. In 2012, this game partnered with UN-Habitat to offer children who did

not have training in architecture the chance to design changes they would like to see in their environment. Using this platform, 300 public spaces were upgraded by the UN-Habitat's Sustainable Urban Development Network. What is this game?

7 The human reaction to a virtual pandemic simulated disease in a popular multiplayer online role-playing game so closely resembled historical records of real plagues that epidemiologists are using the data to evaluate the potential response to a future epidemic. During the epidemic, players in the game reacted as if there was real risk to their well-being. What is this popular game with a three-letter acronym?

8 Starcraft is the national e-sport of South Korea, and in 2005, around 1,20,000 people gathered to watch the finals. It centres on a galactic struggle for dominance among four species. In 1999, Daniel T. Barry took a physical copy of the game with him on a particular



mission he was chosen for. Fittingly, where did Barry take the game, making Starcraft the first computer game to achieve that status?

9 Assassin's Creed Unity is a multiplayer adventure game that revolves around the fight between the Assassins and the Templars. It is set in Paris during the French Revolution and one of the stand-out features of the game is the incredible detail that went into modelling the landmarks that served as locations in the game. This feature turned out to be a saving grace for engineers who were looking for blueprints after a devastating fire in April 2019. What iconic landmark is being reconstructed with help from this videogame?

10 Toru Iwatani is a Japanese video-game designer who in 1980 released a game in which a character has to make his way through a maze while avoiding the bad guys. Legend has it that the design was inspired by some half eaten pizza slice but Iwatani maintains it's the Japanese symbol for 'mouth', which plays an important role in the game. What popular arcade game is this?

Life lessons This game called SPARX was shown to help teenagers beat a certain illness.

ANSWERS
1. Mario Bros.
2. Surgery
3. HIV/AIDS
4. Depression
5. Mortal Kombat
6. Minecraft
7. World Of Warcraft
8. Outer space
9. The Notre-Dame cathedral
10. Pac-Man

A molecular biologist from Madurai, our quizmaster enjoys trivia and music, and is working on a rock ballad called 'Coffee is a Drink, Kaapi is an Emotion'. @bertyashley

LETTER FROM A CONCERNED READER

Real shame means this

Respected Madam/Sir,

Humiliation. Disgrace. International shame. Total nose-cutting in front of the whole world.

Non-stop these words are coming out of my son's mouth since India vs. New Zealand cricket match.

Madam/sir, whether you are remembering my son? Maybe you are thinking, "Oho, Mr. Mathrubootham has not written one single word about his working from home son for decades. Whether son has finally got some nice job in office in America or Bombay or Koyambedu or anywhere but guest bedroom?"

No chance. He is still in house only. And he is still doing work from home only. Once a week I will ask him, "Son, what and all you have done this week?" He will say some big words like internet and ecommerce and all. And I will say, "All the best as long as you are enjoying and it's not against Indian Penal Code I have no problem. But if police is coming to this house even once then promise on Tirupati Balaji I will take bail money and give it to constable and say, 'Thambi, take this pocket money and beat him for two-three more hours.'"

Fancy dress

Thursday morning he got up at 8 itself and sat in front of TV wearing Indian cricket uniform. I said, "Kanna, why you are wearing fancy dress like some buffoon? Tomorrow if Virat Kohli is reaching final of 100 metres swimming in Olympics means you will sit whole day in underwear? Whether it will increase chance of India winning by one milligram?" He said, "Appa, please don't make such anti-national talks."

When India started batting, he said, "This is too easy appa, India definitely winning within 40 overs. Better to start preparing for World Cup final and take leave now itself."

I said, "Kamalam, do you have phone number for Guinness Book of World Records?" He asked, "Appa why you want?" I said, "Because, kanna, I think this is first time one single person has put so many nonsense things in just two sentences. Minimum you

will get national record." He said, "Appa, how dare you, explain what nonsense I said?"

I said, "Firstly, it is Indian cricket team. Anything is possible. One minute Sachin Tendulkar will get muttai zero. Next minute Anil Kumble will score double century. Next match Venkatesh Prasad will stop ball before it crosses boundary. Ha ha ha ha, what nonsense you're saying, you will take leave. Bloody fool, as if you are RBI governor. For you what means working day and what means leave. Sitting in bedroom means working day, sitting in sitting room means leave."

He said "Appa, have you seen any cricket match since 2000? Venkatesh Prasad and all retired since Jambavan period."

Real humiliation

Madam/sir, then what happened? Exactly what I told only. India mega super defeat. And my son spent 48 hours screaming in the house. Humiliation. Tragedy. National disgrace. Etc. Madam/sir, what he knows about real humiliation? I will tell.

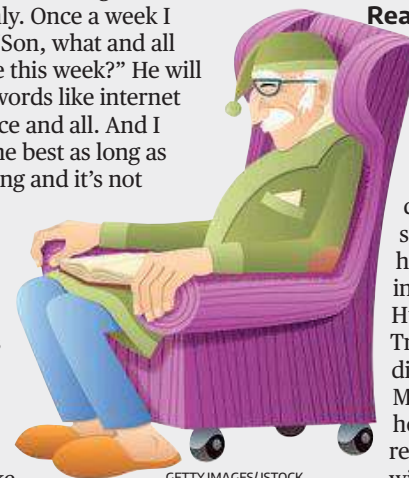
Five-six years back for housing colony annual day they said husband-wife doubles shuttle badminton tournament. We put up our names. First match no problem, we defeated Mr. and Mrs. Prathapan in 20 minutes.

Second match against Nalini and husband from upstairs. Both parties very equal. Tight competition. Then Nalini is hitting shuttle cock high in the air. Mrs. M. said, "Don't worry, I am going to smash." I said, "No problem, all the best." Mrs. M. jumped into the air like P.V. Sindhu and did one smash. First shuttlecock hit my face and then racket. I took two-three steps and fell directly on top of Mrs. D'Costa who was umpire. During fall, elastic of my shorts got stuck on handle for pulling the net up and down.

So now Mrs. D'Costa is on ground, Mr. Mathrubootham is on top of Mrs. D'Costa, and he is not wearing shorts. Photographer was there.

Madam/sir, this is real humiliation.

*Yours in happy memories,
J. Mathrubootham*



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK