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DAY AFTER 13 MLAs RESIGN IN KARNATAKA

Kumaraswamy back from US, goes into huddle with Cong to save govt

BJP preparing to form alternative govt, say leaders

JOHNSON TA & LIZ MATHEW
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, JULY 7

KARNATAKA CHIEF Minister HD Kumaraswamy returned to Bengaluru Sunday night after a 10-day US trip and began holding a series of meetings from the airport itself with leaders of his party JD(S) and its ally Congress in a bid to rescue the coalition government.

The coalition was pushed to the brink Saturday after 13 Congress and JD(S) MLAs submitted their resignations to bring its number to 105, on par with the BJP, in the 224-member Assembly even as several other rebels are reported to be waiting to exit. The resignations of the 13 MLAs, at least 10 of whom have moved to a Mumbai hotel, are yet to be accepted by the Speaker.

In Delhi, BJP sources told *The Indian Express* that the party is prepared to form an alternative government but will wait for the decision of the Speaker on the resignations, after which it would make a formal move.

"We, in the BJP, are prepared



for any eventuality. But we don't want to rush, we want to watch things closely. We are waiting for decisions of the Speaker and the Governor," BJP general secretary P Muralidhar Rao told *The Indian Express*. "Let things become clear, let there be no ambiguity," he said.

In Bengaluru, among those who received Kumaraswamy at the airport was the chief of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Bengaluru Police, which is probing a ponzi scheme allegedly run by the IMA (1 Monetary Advisory) Group of companies in which two government officials are among those arrested.

According to sources, one of the triggers for six Bengaluru MLAs of the JD(S) and Congress



Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy arrives in Bengaluru, Sunday, from the US; (below) Rebel MLAs from Karnataka outside Sofitel Hotel in Mumbai, Sunday. PTI/Express

to feature among the rebels is a move by the SIT to arrest Assistant Commissioner for Revenue (Bangalore North), L C Nagaraj on July 5 for allegedly re-

ceiving a bribe of Rs 4.5 crore from the IMA Group. The SIT's preliminary investigations have revealed that at least

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Centre readies list of land assets for disinvestment

AANCHAL MAGAZINE, SANDEEP SINGH & SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

THE GOVERNMENT has prepared a "substantial inventory" of land assets that can be monetised, and the process of such sales will be finalised very soon. The Centre is also keen on strategic sales, and three fresh expressions of interest will be announced next week, Department of Investment Public Assets Management Secretary Atanu Chakraborty told *The Indian Express*.

Chakraborty said many measures in the Budget, like raising the limit of public shareholding in listed companies, will help in attracting fund flows to the equities market.

"In strategic disinvestment, we go case-by-case. Air India has already been announced, but that's just one case. Next week, we will announce three more expressions of interest. Therefore, there would be a continuous

EXPLAINED

Strong political will needed

THE GOVERNMENT has bet on disinvestment and land asset monetisation to raise over Rs 1 lakh crore this year. A virtuous cycle for sell-off and land asset sale can be set in motion if there is strong political will. This can help raise significant resources, especially when the economy is slowing and tax revenues are not so buoyant.

conveyor belt where we will keep putting products," he said. The government has a list of 29 companies that will be put up

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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

FOREIGN BONDS A CALCULATED RISK
BY NEELKANTH MISHRA
PAGE 10

Kalburgi case probe: Final training camp in estate near Mangalore

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, JULY 7

THE PROBE by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Karnataka Police into the shooting of Kannada scholar M M Kalburgi, 77, at his Dharwad residence on August 30, 2015, has revealed that just days before the incident, a final training camp was allegedly held for the suspected killers on the rubber estate of a businessman from the Mangalore region.

A key suspect in the murder, Praveen Prakash Chatur, 27, who was arrested by the SIT on May 31

this year, took police to a rubber plantation at Dharamsthal in Dakshina Kannada district last month and identified it as the place where he was allegedly trained before the murder.

Police have identified Chatur as the rider of the motorcycle that brought the alleged shooter, Ganesh Miskin, 27, to the home of Kalburgi.

The estate has been identified as belonging to a Mangalore businessman, K Ananth Kamath, who is known to be associated with the radical Sanatan Sanstha and its affiliate Hindu Janajagruti Samiti (HJS), police sources said.

The name of Kamath, who is the owner-managing director of Mangalore-based KMK Group with interests in marketing, real estate and agriculture, had figured earlier in the SIT probe of the September 5, 2017, murder

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Centre nod to drilling, Telangana forest officer says won't let anyone in

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JULY 7

WITH THE Centre granting "in-principle" clearance for uranium exploration in Amrabad Tiger Reserve in Telangana, despite objections by forest officers, Telangana's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests P K Jha has said they won't allow anyone inside to drill unless full approval is given by the National Tiger Conservation Authority. "We did not allow it till now though the proposal is two-three years old," Jha told *The Indian Express*.

The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), had submitted a proposal to carry out survey and drilling of boreholes



In-principle nod to drill for uranium in tiger reserve

in four blocks of the reserve, of which three are located inside its core tiger protection area known as Rajiv Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary. "The aim is to establish uranium deposits in these areas," the DAE had said.

The Centre gave the clearance at a May 22 meeting, with a Forest Advisory Committee of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Deora eyes Delhi role, joins Scindia, others in quitting Congress post

MANOJ CG & ZEESHAN SHAIKH
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, JULY 7

THE YOUNG vs old battle in the Congress was out in the open on Sunday as two close associates of Rahul Gandhi, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Milind Deora, made public their resignation from their respective party posts ahead of the Congress Working Committee meeting.

This will mount pressure on the elders to follow suit even as the party is battling turmoil triggered by Rahul's resignation as party president, taking responsibility for the Lok Sabha election defeat. Both Deora and Scindia told *The Indian Express* they had resigned several days ago.



Says looking forward to 'a national role to help Cong'

In a statement, Deora interestingly added that he was looking forward to "playing a national role to help stabilise the party". This comes a day after Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh demanded that a "young leader" take over as Congress president.

While the obvious choices are considered to be Scindia and Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, Deora, many believe, has now thrown his

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



WORLD



IRAN ANNOUNCES NEW BREACH OF N-DEAL LIMITS

'PAK JUDGE BLACKMAILED IN SHARIF CASE'
PAGE 13

Author Amish is guest at Express Adda today

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EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

IN 2010, the global publishing industry was reeling under the wave of low sales, and bookstores all over the world were on the verge of shutting down, seemingly unable to combat the threat of the e-book. But in India, a first-time author's modern retelling of the life and legend of Lord Shiva captivated the imagination of the masses. The book was *The Immortals of Meluha*, and its author, a 35-year-old who signed his work as Amish.



Amish is the bestselling writer of *The Shiva Trilogy*

Recently named director of the Nehru Centre in London, Amish Tripathi will be the guest at the Express Adda Monday in New Delhi. The Express Adda is a series of informal interactions

organised by The Indian Express Group and features those at the centre of change.

A graduate of IIM-Calcutta, Amish had worked for over a decade in the financial services industry before he decided to drop his surname, and set out to make a name as a writer.

After the thumping success of the first book, he brought out the next two installments of *The Shiva Trilogy* in quick succession — *The Secret of the Nagas* (2011), and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* (2013) — making it, arguably, the fastest-selling book

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

This 30-year-old mother braved abuse at home and doubts in her village to build toilets for all

One of 55,000 women masons behind ODF tag, Devi is Jharkhand's Swachh Bharat face

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, JULY 7

SUKKU ORAIN is relieved that she does not have to accompany her young daughters in the dark to the bushes near her home any more. Budhlal Munda says the memory of sitting out in the fields is now a

thing of the past.

Orain and Munda are among the 400 residents of Gutuotoli village near Ranchi in Jharkhand who say that their "madam sahiba", Foolmani Devi, has changed their lives forever. Devi, 30, heads a team of four women masons who have built 125 toilets in the village under the Swachh Bharat Mission.



Foolmani Devi (right) in Gutuotoli near Ranchi. Abhishek Angad

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The four are among the 55,000 Rani Mistris, or "empowered women masons", trained under an initiative by the Jharkhand government's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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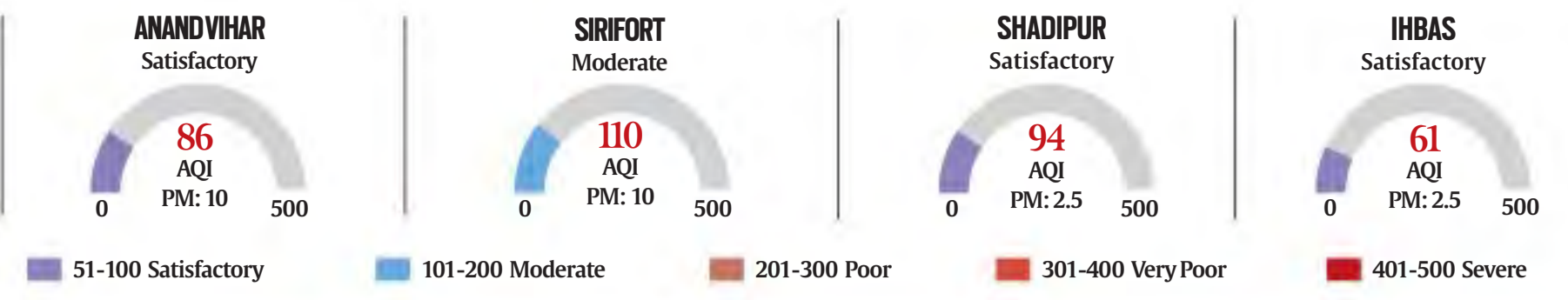
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3 THE CITY



TARGET: 10 LAKH NEW MEMBERS IN DELHI

BJP kickstarts membership drive, singer Sapna Chaudhary joins party

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

HARYANVI SINGER and dancer Sapna Chaudhary Sunday joined the BJP in the presence of senior party leaders, including Delhi unit chief Manoj Tiwari and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. She was introduced during an event held at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium to kickstart the BJP's country-wide membership drive.



Sapna Chaudhary with former Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister Harsh Vardhan and Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari. Prem Nath Pandey

A senior BJP leader said Chaudhary is keen on entering active politics but whether she will be given a chance or not in next year's Assembly elections in the capital is a decision left to top leaders and the parliamentary board. Chaudhary had also campaigned for Tiwari, the North East Delhi MP, in the Lok Sabha polls.

Before the general elections, she was rumoured to have joined the Congress after UP party chief Raj Babbar tweeted a picture of her with Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and welcomed her into the party.

The BJP is likely to rope in Chaudhary for its Assembly poll campaign to target constituencies

with a sizeable Jat and Purvanchali population such as the South, North East and West Delhi parliamentary constituencies and villages of Delhi bordering Haryana.

Besides Chaudhary, seven others, including a differently abled youth, a first-time voter, retired Army officers, bureaucrats and a street vendor, joined the BJP on Sunday.

Chouhan, who is the national in-charge of the BJP's membership drive, asked workers to ensure the party's victory in the Delhi Assembly polls by enrolling members from every booth and

all sections of society.

"According to the 'Sarv Vyapi, Sarv Sparshi' slogan of the campaign, you have to work hard to ensure that new members come from each booth and each section of society.. Ensure no section remains untouched," he said.

Against its original target of adding 20% new members to the party, the Delhi BJP has decided to bring in 10 lakh people, said Kuljeet Chahal, campaign in-charge in Delhi.

National general secretary (organisation) Ramlal asked party workers and leaders to

make efforts to enrol 50% new members from the over 13,000 booths in Delhi, with a special focus on those where the party strength is low. The BJP's membership drive in Delhi will conclude on August 11. Members will be enrolled online as well.

Party sources said senior leaders are vying with each other to rope in more people and big faces, after BJP working president J P Nadda had pointed out that the actual contribution of a leader is when he brings more people into the party fold.

Nadda had said, "Many people tell me they have been working for the party for years... but I tell them that I see them alone. You come to party programmes, well-dressed, but you do not bring people along. So you are in the party, but you are not contributing."

"How many new people have joined the party because of you? If you do this (bring new people), then your strength will increase and so will that of the party," he had said.

Since then a former Congress MLA, a BSP MLA and Chaudhary have been brought into the party by the state unit.

AFTER L-G TWEET ON 'DARK SHEEP'

CM asks ministers for list of 'tainted' officers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

DELHI CHIEF Minister Arvind Kejriwal has directed all cabinet members to prepare a list of 'tainted' officers in their departments so that they can be made to retire compulsorily under sections of the CCS Rules. The direction comes after the CM and Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia met Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal on Saturday.

Bajjal, in line with the Centre's decision to compulsorily retire all officials who had corruption and professional misconduct cases against them, had written to the heads of different agencies in Delhi on Thursday, asking them to take action against such officials.

"Action is essential to weed out the 'dead wood' and 'dark sheep' to remove corruption from government functioning," Bajjal had tweeted.

The L-G had written to the Delhi Chief Secretary, DDA vice-chairperson, Delhi Police Commissioner and municipal commissioners. Decisions regarding personnel come under the L-G in Delhi and administrative control of the DDA and MCDs is under the Centre. Kejriwal also discussed the issue with Chief



Kejriwal met L-G Anil Bajjal Saturday

Secretary Vijay Dev.

On Saturday, the government set up a review committee to check service records of officials from the Delhi Administration Subordinate Service and Steno cadre so that officials not meeting the mark can be retired. The committee will look at annual confidential reports, complaints and vigilance cases before suggesting names.

In a statement, the Delhi government said: "During the last four-and-a-half years, the elected Delhi government has come across officials who opposed public welfare policies for extraneous considerations and harmed the interests of Delhi. The government is aware of some cases in which officers refused to implement welfare policies for completely untenable reasons, which require a thorough

probe into their acts of omission and commission. However, due to lack of agencies like Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB), the Delhi government has been only able to raise the issue of corruption with the L-G..."

The Centre and Delhi government have been at loggerheads over the issue of services — which includes appointment and transfer of officials. The Delhi government has contested the Centre's stand that since Delhi does not have an independent cadre of its own, service matters should be handled by it through the L-G. The matter is currently in court. In the same case, the Delhi government was not given control of the ACB.

Last month, the Centre compulsorily retired 27 IRS (Income Tax) officers following charges of corruption, extortion and professional misconduct against them.

BRIEFLY

Woman hangs self

New Delhi: A woman in her early 20s allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at a hotel in Central Delhi's Paharganj on Sunday, police said. The woman checked into the hotel with a man, but the latter allegedly left the room after they had a fight, police said. No suicide note was found, police added. **ENS**

5 held for phone thefts

New Delhi: Five people were arrested in connection with a mobile phone theft racket in Delhi, police said on Sunday. Police said they recovered 13 stolen mobile phones from them.

Two held for duping people

New Delhi: Two men were arrested from Tughlakabad Extension for allegedly cheating more than 500 people of nearly Rs 80 lakh after luring them with lucrative offers on a fake shopping portal, police said Sunday.

Men try to rob bank, arrested

New Delhi: Inspired by a Hollywood movie "Baby Driver", two men allegedly tried to rob a bank in Shahdara's Krishna Nagar by firing in the air, following which they were arrested, police said, adding that a motorcycle used to commit the crime was seized. **PTI**

Expect light rain today, no dip in temperature

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

DELHI SAW a muggy Sunday, with the maximum temperature touching 35.8 degrees Celsius and the maximum humidity at 83 per cent.

Monday, IMD officials said, is expected to bring moderate rain and the temperature is expected to be between 27 and 35 degrees Celsius.

Despite monsoon arriving in Delhi Friday, rain has been sparse with only light showers recorded in several parts of the city so far.

According to rainfall data maintained by IMD, Delhi's rainfall deficit is 87% since June 1. By July 7, the city normally receives 91 mm of rain. This year, it has received only 12.2 mm so far.

Officials said that Delhi is expected to receive only light or

WEEK'S FORECAST		
Day	Min	Max
Monday	27	35
Tuesday	26	35
Wednesday	25	36
Thursday	27	36
Friday	27	37
Saturday	27	38

moderate rain during the week. The temperature, too, is expected to climb starting Friday.

"Heavier rain is expected only after July 15. We are hoping that the rain deficit will be wiped out then as heavy rain is expected," said a senior IMD official.

Delhi usually receives monsoon rains on June 29. This year, however, the rain was delayed by a week.

Cong observers to look for new block chiefs

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

THE DELHI Congress is all set to depute observers to initiate the process of appointing block committee presidents. On June 28, state party chief Sheila Dikshit had dissolved all 280 block committees in the capital. The decision was taken after a report was submitted by a five-member panel, constituted to assess the party's poor performance in the Lok Sabha polls.

According to sources, these observers will reach out to former MLAs, MPs and local councillors to get an idea about the constituencies and issues.

"The party will appoint observers for each ward, who will meet workers on the ground. Once block presidents are appointed, office bearers will shortlist names for Assembly

polls," said a senior party leader.

However, the move to dissolve the committees had run into trouble with AICC in-charge of the national capital P C Chacko overturning the decision. He also wrote a letter on the same to Rahul Gandhi and Dikshit. Last week, a section of Congress leaders met party general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal and Chacko and protested the move to dissolve the block committees.

Several leaders said the party's future hangs in the balance as no decision has been taken on who will be appointed Congress president. "Many states have Assembly polls coming up; if the party continues to work at this pace, it is going to affect the overall performance. Party members must take a decision quickly so that state units can also start functioning," said a senior leader.

Water woes persist in Tughlakabad

SARAH KHAN & RITHUPAR PATHY
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

DURING A "padayatra" on June 2, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal promised piped water supply in pockets of the Tughlakabad constituency within a week. A month later, residents of Sanjay

Colony are still waiting for the CM to keep his word. While pipelines have been laid in several colonies in the area, supply is an issue.

"A group complained to the area MLA. He increased the number of water tankers but didn't take any steps to solve the problem of pipelines in our block," claimed Uday Mourya, a resident. Tughlakabad MLA Sahi Ram

said work is still in progress. "The pipeline to Block A burst... We are working on it and supply will commence soon," he said.

DJB vice-chairperson Dinesh Mohaniya said, "The previous line didn't have enough capacity... so we're laying a new line. Work will be finished soon."

(The writers are interns with The Indian Express)

25-year-old 'kills' mother over money to buy liquor

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

A 25-YEAR-OLD man allegedly stabbed his mother to death after she refused to give him money to buy alcohol. The incident took place in North West Delhi's Model Town in the early hours of Sunday. Police said Deepak Singh, a member of a wedding band, was arrested the same day after he surrendered. A case has been registered under IPC section 302 (murder).

"A man came to us at 1.25 am and said he had killed his mother. We sent officers to his residence, who found a woman lying on a bed with her throat slit. They also found a blood-stained kitchen knife beside the bed. The woman was rushed to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital where she was declared dead on arrival. The accused was then arrested," said DCP (North West) Vijayanta Arya.

Police claimed the accused was drunk at the time of the incident.

The victim, Asha Devi, worked as a domestic help. She lived with her three sons, including the accused, in a two-bedroom house in Model Town's Vijay Nagar.

"Deepak was an alcoholic... He and his mother would often fight because of this. Asha wanted him to quit drinking and get married," said Gurcharan, the landlady who lives near the victim's house.

Apart from the victim and the accused, police said no one was home at the time of the incident. The family arrived at the hospital on Sunday morning to claim the body. "Further investigation is on to verify all claims," said Arya.

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STABBED MULTIPLE TIMES: POLICE Central govt auditor found dead at home

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

A SENIOR auditor in the office of the Director General of Audit (Central Expenditure) was found dead inside his bedroom in South East Delhi's Jaitpur early on Saturday.

Police said Anand Singh (43) was stabbed multiple times on his back inside his house and have registered a case under IPC section 302 (murder).

"We received a call at 5 am from a man who alleged that his brother was found murdered in his bed. We rushed to the spot and found a man lying in a pool of blood, with multiple stab injuries on his back. Singh was taken to the nearest hospital where doctors declared him dead. A post-mortem was conducted the next day and the body was



The victim, Anand Singh (43)

handed over to the family," said Chinmoy Biswal, DCP (South East).

Singh lived in a three-bedroom house with his wife Suneeta, two sons Deepak and Pradeep and his daughter Pinky. His younger brother Mukesh also lived with them.

Police haven't zeroed in on any suspects and are investigating the murder as a blind case. Singh's family told police that he came home late from work on Friday night and immediately went to his room to sleep.

Family members alleged that all entrances to the house were locked except a window near Singh's bedroom, which was

open.

"Singh was sleeping in one room while his family members were in other rooms. Family members said that at 3.30 am, Suneeta woke up to get water from the kitchen and saw blood seeping out from below the door of Singh's room. She alerted Deepak and Mukesh, who opened the door and found Singh lying on his bed with multiple injuries on his back."

The family told police that the last time they saw Singh was at 11 pm on Friday.

Singh's relative, Ranjeet, who lives nearby, told *The Indian Express*, "Singh did not speak to many people. It is hard to imagine why anyone would kill him. He and his family have been living in Delhi for over five years."

Singh hailed from Uttarakhand and was posted in the Receipt and Dispatch section of the DGACE.

DU entrance delayed after fire breaks out at centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

A FIRE broke out inside an examination centre in South West Delhi's Dwarka Sunday morning. The Pariksha Test Centre in Dwarka's Kakrola village was booked for a Delhi University MA entrance test.

More than 250 people were inside the building when the fire broke out, said officials from the Delhi Fire Services (DFS). No casualty was reported.

"We received a call around 11.45 am about the fire and rushed to the spot within 20 minutes. The electric meter on the building's ground floor had caught fire due to a short circuit. The fire was doused in 15-25 minutes. A total of 260 students and 40 staff members were safely evacuated from the building," said DFS chief Atul Garg. The centre is a four-storey building with a basement, and without emergency exits, the DFS said.

The exam was scheduled at noon for the MSc course in DU. The students were seated in the classrooms.

"One of the staff members saw the blaze erupt from the electric meter. Soon, everyone was alerted. Security personnel at the building helped students escape and tried to douse the fire. Initially, there was a lot of chaos. Once the DFS came, people calmed down," said P N Baburaj, father of a student who was sitting for the exam.

The test resumed in the same building 30-40 minutes after the incident, the DFS said.



The centre where the fire broke out. Gajendra Yadav

Bike ambulance service gets 2,000 calls since Feb launch

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

THE DELHI government's bike ambulance service, which started as a pilot project in February, has received over 2,000 calls in the first four months, as per data obtained till May. In almost 68% of the total calls, patients were not found at the spot, while the rest of the cases were successfully attended to by the ambulances.

The ambulances, also called first responder vehicles (FRVs), were inaugurated with an aim to reach patients living in congested areas and JJ clusters in East Delhi, North East Delhi and Shahdara.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Health Minister Satyendar Jain had launched the fleet of 16 bikes at the Delhi Secretariat. The project cost is Rs 40 lakh, and it was approved by the Cabinet last year. Fitted with a portable oxygen cylinder, first-aid kit, dressing material, air splints, GPS and a communication device, these ambulances will be monitored for a year.

"On an average, we get 20 calls per day on 102, our helpline number. Out of that, we are able to pro-

FIRST RESPONDER VEHICLES			
Month	Total calls assigned to FRVs	Number of patients attended to	Number of calls where patients were not found
February	318	104	214
March	618	200	418
April	646	182	464
May	500	171	329

vide services to a third of the patients. The idea is to reach through the congested lanes before ambulances and provide basic care to patients," said L R Rana, administrative officer, Centralised Accident Trauma Services (CATS).

As per data, the number of calls made to FRVs is increasing every month. A total of 2,082 calls were made from February till May. The service has attended to 657 patients, while in 1,425 cases, the patient was not found on the spot.

"Sometimes the patient has already been taken to the hospital by a local or a police officer. In many cases, by the time the FRVs reach, the patient has left. The service has benefited many people and we hope to expand it to other areas by the end of this year," said Shaleen Mitra, officer

on special duty to Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain.

When someone calls the number, FRV and CATS ambulances leave at the same time. "Bike ambulances examine patients till the ambulance arrives. Accident victims and those who have sudden cardiac arrest benefit the most," Mitra said.

There are 45 drivers working in three shifts with the department, from 7 am to 11 pm. Recently, the project hit a roadblock after a PIL was filed in the Delhi High Court challenging the launch of the bike ambulance service. The AAP government then informed the court that these vehicles are only responsible for providing basic care to patients till another vehicle or ambulance arrives, and will not transport patients.

Laxmi Nagar snatching: Action against probe officer



The woman was robbed by 2 men in front of her house

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

POLICE HAVE taken disciplinary action against the investigating officer in the snatching case reported from Laxmi Nagar, wherein a 65-year-old woman, Maya, was violently thrown to the ground outside her home, when two men on a bike snatched her bag.

A senior police officer said sub-inspector Arvind was sent to District Lines, after the woman alleged that he filed a case of theft instead of robbery. The incident took place at 9.45 pm on Tuesday, when the woman was returning home from the market.

Maya, a retired Delhi government employee, had told police that the officer filed an e-FIR of theft instead of recording the snatching complaint. The sections dealing with snatching (robbery) were added to the FIR after Maya and her husband approached police again with footage from a CCTV camera outside their house which captured the assault. Police have not made any arrests in the case yet.

SIGNATURE BRIDGE 99% work on viewing deck finished: Official

ASHNA BUTANI
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

AFTER MISSING two deadlines, the viewing gallery of Signature Bridge is set to be completed within six weeks, an official said. "Most of the work (99.8%) is done, barring a few technical operations," said Shishir Bansal, Chief Project Manager, Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation Limited (DTTDC).

A highlight of the Signature Bridge project, the 154-metre, 51-storey-high viewing deck will give people a panoramic view of the city. The project has missed two deadlines so far — first in March, following which it was extended to June 30.

Bansal said, "If we install a roof right away, we will be unable to bring up the material for installing the lifts. A machine called the Pylon Access System also needs to be installed on the roof to clean it. We have procured all material and installation will be completed in six weeks."

Comparing the gallery to the



The project has missed two deadlines. Abhinav Saha

Eiffel Tower, he said, "There will be four lifts, two on each side of the bridge. The lifts will transport people to a height of 132 metres. Those wanting to go higher will have to climb a ladder." Bansal said the lifts will be able to carry around four people at a time and around 50 people can be on the deck at any given point in time.

The DTTDC is also simultaneously undertaking beautification work along the stretch, he added.

The bridge connects Wazirabad and East Delhi.

NOTICE BOARD

CORPORATE ASSOCIATE DIARY EVENTS, HONOURS



SWACHH BHARAT PAKHWADA - INDIAN OIL

Indian Oil is observing 'Swachh Bharat Pakhwada' across the nation from July 1 to 15. B V Rama Gopal, Indian Oil's Dir (Refineries), flagged-off the event at the HQ, in the presence of Functional Heads & Swachhta Ambassadors.



RELEASE-SCOPE

Union Minister for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises Arvind Ganpat Sawant released a booklet on activities of SCOPE. Dr. U.D. Choubey, DG, SCOPE took this opportunity to brief the minister highlighting the achievements of public sector enterprises.



FAIR- EPCH

12th edition of IFJAS will be held from 4th to 6th July, at India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida concurrently with 63rd India International Garment fair to reflect and display the rich legacy of traditional Indian workmanship.



LAUNCH-GAIL

'Hawa Badle Hum' campaign was launched recently by BC Tripathi, CMD, GAIL (India) Ltd. in New Delhi. A squad of specially designed auto rickshaws fitted with live pollution meters will ply on the roads of Delhi NCR under this initiative.



ELECTION- PRSI

Dr Ajit Pathak, Ex GM in-charge, Corp Comm, Administration and Welfare, Indian Oil has once again been unanimously elected as the National President of PRSI, at the National Council and AGM held in Jaipur.



CLEANLINESS DRIVE- INDIAN OIL

Brij Behari, ED-Haldia Refinery and Shyamal Adak, Chairman-Haldia Municipality, along with senior officials of Haldia Refinery, initiated cleaning of water body at Haldia. Indian Oil is committed to clean 37 water bodies across the nation.



LAUNCH-PUNJAB & SIND BANK

Punjab & Sind Bank has setup Centralised MSME & Retail Group (Cen-MARG) at its Head Office in New Delhi. With launch of Cen-MARG, all approvals of MSME & Retail credit will be performed at the Cen-MARG.



AGM-CORPORATION BANK

PV Bharathi, Managing Director & CEO of the Bank addressed the Shareholders on the occasion of Annual General Meeting of Corporation Bank held at Head Office of the Bank at Mangaluru.



MOU-DELHI POLICE

MOU signed between Delhi Police & Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) for implementation of Rooftop Solar Energy Systems in Delhi Police Establishments Delhi Police & SECI have agreed to cooperate for implementation of rooftop solar energy systems on Delhi Police Establishments by signing MOU. Signing of MOU to this effect took place at Delhi Police Headquarters recently afternoon between JN Swain, IAS, MD, SECI & Rajesh Malik, IPS, Spl. CP/GA & P&I in the presence of A Kumar, IAS, Secy, M/ of New & Renewable Energy Sources (MNRE), GOI & A Patnaik, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Delhi. Senior Officials of MNRE, SECI & Delhi Police were also present on this momentous occasion. Solar Energy is economical as well as environmental friendly. Rooftop solar systems have their added advantages. Besides utilizing the otherwise vacant space, the solar energy generated is utilized at the location of generation itself, hence neutralizing transmission and distribution losses.



FOUNDATION DAY-ICAI

The 70th Chartered Accountants Day of ICAI was celebrated on July 1st all across the country with great enthusiasm and zeal. July 1st is a landmark day in the history of ICAI as on this day ICAI was set up to regulate the Profession of Chartered Accountancy in India in the year 1949. This CA Day was more special as the Institute has reached a significant milestone i.e. Platinum Jubilee of its glorious existence. The 70th Chartered Accountants Day in Delhi was inaugurated by M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice-President of India. The event was also graced by Shri Injeti Srinivas, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs & Dr. In-Ki Joo, President, International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). Present were CA. Prafulla P Chhajed, President & CA. A K Gupta, Vice-President, ICAI and over 1200 CA Members and stakeholders. ICAI has achieved significant milestones in the field of accountancy and is poised to play a greater role in changing the global landscape and strengthening the foundation of resurgent India by taking the profession to the newer zeniths.

6 HARDLOOK

FOOT OVERBRIDGES



EVERY MORNING, six days a week, Dinesh Kumar, who hails from Bihar and works as a driver for a family living at Gurgaon's MG Road, walks from his rented accommodation in Sukhrali village to the foot overbridge (FOB) on his side of National Highway 48. Here, he boards one of many shared autorickshaws, and travels with co-passengers to IFFCO Chowk. He disembarks at the junction in front of ABW Tower.

A bag strapped across his shoulder, Kumar looks left, then right, then left again, before making a dash across the road. He reaches the other end after having to step back once midway, barely avoiding being hit by a motorcyclist driving towards the Expressway.

"Today was a comparatively smooth crossing. I am always nervous walking across this intersection, but I really have no choice," he said, even as a foot overbridge, opened to pedestrians barely a year ago, looms in the background.

Kumar is among scores of residents and commuters in Gurgaon who travel to and from their homes and offices on foot each day, but choose to ignore the foot overbridges installed at crucial junctions for their convenience. Almost all of them are aware of the risk of manoeuvring through the maze of high speed vehicles.

The reasons range from a desire to take the shorter route to lack of maintenance and safety on the overbridges.

Even as the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) contemplates permitting construction of three more foot overbridges at two major junctions in the city — one at Shankar Chowk and two near the HUDA City Centre Metro station — *The Indian Express* found that those already installed find few takers and lie in a dilapidated condition.



It was in 2016 that the Haryana government announced that development work would be undertaken at three major junctions in Gurgaon — IFFCO Chowk, Rajiv Chowk and Signature Tower junction. Apart from construction of underpasses and flyovers, the intersections would see creation of subways for non-motorised transport, and installation of two foot overbridges for pedestrians at each junction.

In June 2018, the six overbridges were opened to those travelling on foot. A year later, however, five of the six structures are barely utilised, and the sixth, although receiving a better response, sees almost as many people crossing the roads below it each day.

Visits to each of the six FOBs revealed that the structures appeared neglected, with escalators not working, *paan* stains lining railings and walls, and the smell of urine at several entrances and exits.

At the foot overbridge installed towards the HUDA City Centre side of Signature Tower junction, for instance, only one of the three sets of escalators — both up and down — work. As a result, more people cross the roads below it rather than using the structure.

Shalini Sharma, who works at a firm in the area and lives in DLF Phase IV, said she crosses the road each day to hire either a three-wheeler or a cab to get home.

"Drivers are usually reluctant to take a U-turn across the Expressway, so I end up having to cross the road most evenings. But with escalators not working, I prefer to do so on foot. I have a laptop bag, a purse and a lunch bag, and lugging all of those up and down the stairs is too much effort. Instead, I just cross the road carefully. There are many others who do so," she said.

Even at the second overbridge at the jun-

Bridge less travelled

Amid plans to build three new foot overbridges in Gurgaon, a visit to six existing ones shows they haven't found many takers. SAKSHI DAYAL tries to understand why people still take the risky route underneath



(Top) The foot overbridge located near Westin Hotel at IFFCO Chowk junction is an exception as it sees hundreds of pedestrians using it each day; (above) another bridge at Rajiv Chowk. Photos: Tashi Tobgyal

THE EXISTING FOBs

■ Foot overbridges were constructed as part of development work at three critical junctions in Gurgaon
 ■ Project announced in 2016
 ■ Foot overbridges opened in 2018

THE THREE MAJOR JUNCTIONS

IFFCOCHOWK

■ Foot overbridge in front of Westin Hotel

■ Foot overbridge towards Sukhrali

SIGNATURE TOWER JUNCTION

■ Foot overbridge towards HUDA City Centre

■ Foot overbridge towards Gurgaon road side

RAJIVCHOWK

■ Foot overbridge towards Sohna road

■ Foot overbridge towards Old Gurgaon

PEDESTRIAN DEATHS IN GURGAON

545 pedestrians died in accidents in the last 3 years



tion, which lies towards the Gurgaon road side, two of three sets of escalators work. The third appears to have been lying defunct for some time, with berries and leaves scattered along its length and breadth, and layers of dust accumulated on it.

Officials from Bloom Companies LLC, responsible for maintenance of the structures, insist they are regularly checked and fixed.

"The escalators usually do work. Sometimes there are electricity issues. The other problem is that these escalators operate in the open, as a result of which dust tends to collect in the machines. In addition, people also tend to throw garbage on the escalators, which gets stuck and clogs them. We try to ensure regular maintenance from

our end but these are issues even we have to combat," said Saurabh Singal, team leader and traffic transportation expert, Bloom Companies LLC.

For the former, the direct route to the entrance is obstructed by an underpass created for non-motorised transport at the junction. As a result, anyone looking to access the structure has to first walk either 100 metres towards one side or 200 metres towards the other, and then double back and walk the same distance to the stairs.

At the other foot overbridge, while the entrance to one side is clear, that to the other is hindered by overgrown shrubs and plants to the extent that it is completely inaccessible via the original route visualised for it. The

RIGHT OF PEDESTRIANS



SEVERAL STUDIES in Asian countries, where foot overbridges are most common, show that usage remains a persistent problem.

According to researchers from Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, who conducted a study on utilisation of foot overbridges, the lack of usage stems from the extra time and effort that taking a foot overbridge involves.

European countries, such as Austria, Germany, and Czech Republic, which built foot overbridges in the 1960s and 70s have dismantled most of them.

What they do, instead, is recognise the right of a pedestrian on the road over that of a vehicle, especially in market areas and city centres. Traffic calming measures such as rumble strips, roundabouts, cycle lanes and partial road closures, are used instead used to make streets and roads safer for crossing. Heavy fines for breaking traffic rules and endangering pedestrians are also levied.

Transport experts have for long argued that building foot overbridges and subways shows that the government prioritises vehicular traffic over pedestrians.

A study commissioned by the Delhi government last year also showed that utilisation of foot overbridges is low because of the effort, along with factors such as lifts and escalators not working and the general lack of cleanliness and lighting. Subways, the study said, were preferred over bridges.

When Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajal inaugurated the foot overbridge at ITO — called the ITO Skywalk — he too pointed to the issue of utilisation.

"Several urban planners and administrators, including me, have seen how these bridges go underutilised," he had said at the inauguration last October.

along its railings and floors, along with *paan* stains and a stench at one of three entrances.

A tattoo artist who set up shop on the overbridge a week ago claimed nobody had come to clean the structure in the time he had been there. Officials from Bloom Companies LLC claim otherwise. "Cleaning of the foot overbridges at all junctions is done daily, but it makes little difference due to a lack of respect for the infrastructure on the part of pedestrians. People tend to throw garbage and spit while using the overbridges and, despite our efforts, it becomes dirty by evening. Commuters need to be sensitised to keep such infrastructure clean," said Singal.



Studies conducted by different organisations and statements by transportation experts and urban planners indicate pedestrians in Gurgaon are not alone in ignoring foot overbridges.

According to an 'Assessment of Road Accidents and Accident Hotspots' conducted by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), "about 16 people die and 58 are injured every hour in India due to road accidents".

"Globally, walkers and cyclists together make up a quarter of the road injury and death victims. In India, the national database on pedestrians and cyclists is very poor, but data from individual cities shows very high risk," states CSE.

Despite this, the assessment insists foot overbridges are not a viable solution. "There is a growing tendency to remove people from the road while making signal-free corridors — by building foot overbridges and subways for crossing. But as the traffic police's own review of foot overbridges indicates, this has actually increased the safety risk as people still prefer to cross roads," states the assessment.

An opinion survey conducted by CSE similarly showed that "90% of walkers and cyclists prefer crossing on the ground as foot overbridges and subways increase the distance and are inconvenient".

A survey conducted by Anik Das and Saurav Barua on 'Foot Over Bridges in Perspective of Dhaka City' in September 2015 similarly found that a "significant portion" of pedestrians avoid such structures because they "require long walk to climb" and "pedestrians have to spend more time to cross the road".

"Proper law enforcement and blocking unlawful road crossing by providing high guard rail in the median can force people to use the foot overbridge," Das and Barua suggested.

This suggestion finds an example in another part of Gurgaon — Cyber City. Here, two foot overbridges are the only way for pedestrians to cross the road, since the median is lined by guard rails.

According to Rohit Baluja, president, Institute of Road Traffic Education, the only way to ensure foot overbridges are better utilised is through more effective planning and proper provision for maintenance and security of the structures.

"The biggest issue is that we are constructing foot overbridges without any understanding of the people who will be using them — do they have luggage, are they differently abled, are they older people... People will not climb such high overbridges. The height of foot overbridges must be reduced and, in fact, foot underbridges should be preferred because their depth is not so much," said Baluja.

"Maintenance, safety and security must also be taken care of. The mindset of planners has to change. We make everything for the convenience of motorised traffic, but pedestrians are not considered important stakeholders. They must be given priority; in fact more priority than motorised traffic."

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY RAMNATH GOENKA
BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Opening a window

Budget takes a calculated risk to fund part of borrowings through foreign currency bonds



NEELKANTH MISHRA

THE GOVERNMENT HAS chosen to retain the fiscal deficit target presented in the interim budget, continuing its commitment to the path of fiscal consolidation, and demonstrating faith that the private sector would respond to the resultant lower rates. Given that the budgeted expenditure growth of more than 20 per cent over the actual spend last year is already the highest since 2009, it was prudent to let the rest of the heavy-lifting be done by the lower rates that measures announced in the budget should help drive.

In what should please the bond markets, this budget is more credible than the interim one: Underneath the unchanged deficit and expenditure targets, there were several changes to estimates of receipts that make the budget numbers look more achievable. Use of extra-budgetary resources (that is, borrowing by public sector enterprises, often called off-balance sheet financing) as a share of GDP also falls from a high 3.6 per cent in 2018 to 2.5 per cent in 2020, close to the 2-2.5 per cent range that prevailed earlier.

One of the most interesting developments is the clear evidence of a rethink on how open India's capital account should be. The decision to fund part of the fiscal deficit through bonds sold outside India is a radical departure. Earlier, such a move was eschewed to prevent global financial market volatility from infecting the Indian economy. The directive to SEBI to consider raising the minimum public shareholding limit from 25 to 35 per cent also appears to be an attempt to increase India's weight in global equity benchmarks that equity investors measure themselves against. In these, the theoretical maximum that foreigners can buy affects the weight a country has. The "Foreign Inclusion Factor" for India, which is amongst the lowest in the world, should increase meaningfully once this change is implemented. A higher weight in the benchmarks means greater equity portfolio flows to the country. This transition may cause some volatility in the equity markets — nearly Rs 3.7 trillion of equity would need to be sold by promoters — but a reasonable time-frame to reach this threshold should minimise that.

These are important decisions at a time when foreign capital inflows as a share of GDP are at multi-year lows. As stated earlier in this column ('How to use the mandate', IE, May 31), the last time capital account convertibility was discussed in-depth and a consensus built on the framework, India's economy was the 15th largest in the world, struggling with chronic high inflation and no demonstrated commitment to fiscal responsibility. Not only is the economy now much larger, inflation has fallen (with a framework to manage it), and the government is demonstrably committed to fiscal discipline. In a world struggling to grow, with a surfeit of savings, India can afford to take some calculated risks to attract the capital it needs.

This is akin to opening a window to let fresh air in: It can occasionally let in stormy winds too, but if the house is strong enough, and the residents alert, such a risk can be managed. That said, isolated moves like these can cause imbalances, and there should be an attempt to holistically review the implications before embarking on such steps. Too much capital inflow too soon can cause growth to reach unsustainable levels and thus drive undesirable volatility. Too little would not have much of an impact. For example, a well-structured multi-year plan of government dollar bond issuance, one that leads to India's inclusion in global bond indices (necessary to keep the flows stable), should precede the first sale. Once such a benchmark interest rate is available, it would also help Indian corporates raise debt globally.

The increase in the disinvestment target is in sync with the stated view of this government, that "the government has no role being in business". The Niti Aayog has already provided a long list of privatisation and asset monetisation options to the government: Not just sales of companies to the private sector, but also better utilisation of land and other assets owned by the government and public sector enterprises (like golf courses and stadia). Some defunct government-owned companies, for example, own thousands of acres of prime land with clean titles, good logistical connectivity and access to

electricity and power, something that global firms looking for alternatives to manufacturing in China are looking for. Attractive as the government releasing under-utilised assets for better use by the private sector may be, the disinvestment process has so far been underwhelming (Niti Aayog's list was submitted in 2016). Demonstrated success on this front would significantly improve growth prospects for the economy.

The additional capital infusion into public sector banks as well as the provision of the liquidity window for non-banking finance companies is an acknowledgement that financial system capacity is currently in short supply. While it may slow down the slide in growth, one fears that without a clear blueprint of the financial system architecture, and the role that PSU banks would have in it, this may not be a long-term solution. It is unclear if the PSU banks can grow rapidly, and even if so, without creating future risks.

There are some surprising measures, too. The tax surcharges on super high income individuals make the tax targets look more credible, but one must note that this is the first time in decades that India has a 40 per cent plus tax bracket. Among the around 30,000 people who disclosed taxable income above two crore two years back, the salaried tend to be mobile, and those disclosing business income would be tempted into evasion. Even if a few thousand chose to migrate to low-tax jurisdictions, it would undo the additional revenues accruing from these new surcharges. The increase in customs duties for a fairly large number of products, some of which do not appear to have even a strategic intent, also gives a wrong signal of protectionism. On the other hand, the push for photo-voltaic cells, batteries, and hardware technology through a mix of government push (competitive bidding for large manufacturing units and income tax exemptions) as well tax incentives (like lower GST rates) to accelerate the move to electric vehicles shows a stronger resolve than in the past.

The writer is co-head of Asia Pacific Strategy and India Strategist for Credit Suisse

One of the most interesting developments is the clear evidence of a rethink on how open India's capital account should be. The decision to fund part of the fiscal deficit through bonds sold outside India is a radical departure. Earlier, such a move was eschewed to prevent global financial market volatility from infecting the Indian economy.

DON'T PICK & CHOOSE

Government must provide public goods, extend investment-linked deductions across sectors, instead of picking winners

SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT be in the business of "picking winners" — identifying particular industries that it sees as worthy of promotion and offering special incentives targeted at these? The latest Union Budget has sought to do this in respect of certain "sunrise" and "advanced technology" sectors. Thus, it is proposed that global companies will be invited to set up mega-manufacturing plants for semiconductor fabrication, solar photovoltaic cells, lithium storage batteries and computer hardware. Such investments will be allowed income tax exemption against capital expenditures incurred. Equally significant is the focus on leapfrogging and making India a "global hub" for manufacturing of electrical vehicles (EV). Not only will the goods and services tax rate on EVs be reduced from 12 to 5 per cent, consumers will be provided income tax deduction of up to Rs 2.5 lakh on the interest paid on the loans taken to purchase these vehicles.

On the face of it, there are persuasive arguments for such industry-specific schemes. In 2018-19, electronic items accounted for \$55.47 billion out of India's total imports of \$514.03 billion, next only to petroleum (\$140.92 billion). Emphasis on greater domestic manufacture of the former, and giving a fillip to renewable energy and battery-powered vehicles in the case of the latter, certainly makes sense from a balance-of-payments standpoint. The East Asian tiger economies, China and Japan, have all used "industrial policy" — via a mix of subsidies, tax breaks, directed bank lending and even import protection — to achieve global leadership in core sectors. Japan's steel industry, South Korea's shipbuilders, Taiwan's chip foundries and China's solar panel or telecom equipment makers are products of such targeted government intervention. India's auto industry — the country's exports of vehicles and components/parts added up to \$14.28 billion in the last fiscal — is equally the result of a phased manufacturing programme (PMP) that forced the likes of Suzuki to raise local content in their cars by developing a domestic vendor base.

But will such industrial policy work in today's times? The idea of attracting "mega" investments in electronic manufacturing is old wine: There's already a Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme from 2012, under which not a single project has taken off the ground. The success story of PMP is an exception that only proves the general rule at least in India — about the government's limited ability to promote select industries through a time-bound programme of incentives, without risking return of protectionism or capture by special interests. The government should stick to providing public goods (education, health, law and order, contract enforcement etc) and extend investment-linked deductions across sectors. The job of "picking winners" is better left to private industry. EVs are now 50-100 per cent costlier than regular vehicles. Continuous technology innovation will ensure they will, like solar power, get cheaper. And consumers will definitely buy when there is reliable charging infrastructure.

CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY

Rahul Gandhi's resignation provides an opening for the Congress — it must hold organisational polls, rebuild itself

THE PROTRACTED DRAMA over Rahul Gandhi's exit as Congress president ended last week after he posted his resignation letter on social media. In the four-page letter, he took responsibility for the poll debacle and, possibly in a signal to party seniors, pointed out that "accountability is critical for the future growth" of the Congress. He also said it would be improper for him to select his own successor. It is to Rahul Gandhi's credit that he has refused to bow to pressure from the party to either stay on as president or to dictate or guide the succession plan.

The Congress needs to see this crisis as an opportunity to make a break with its over-dependence on the Gandhi family and the culture of nominations to leadership positions. Party faithful claim that the Gandhi family is the glue that holds the Congress together. This may well be the case. But it is also true that the dependence has left the party comatose — it has destroyed internal democracy and undermined the principle of merit within the party. Regional satraps, taking a cue from the top leadership, have promoted their kin and transformed the Congress into a coalition of political dynasties. This has stultified the party at the grass roots and alienated it from the people. Rahul Gandhi's resignation is a moment for the Congress to pause — and to draw pointers for the way ahead from its own rich history. The Congress once used to conduct membership drives and hold elections for party posts. Many party stalwarts of the past rose from the grass roots to leadership roles by winning organisational elections. The party's decline coincides with the rise of the nomination-culture.

The Congress must revive elections to the Pradesh Congress Committees, All India Congress Committee and Congress Working Committee. This is how the party functioned under leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru. Now, reports suggest that top leaders, with the exception of Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, would prefer to have one among them nominated to the president's post — Singh has publicly said that a young leader must helm the party. Whether the party privileges the old or chooses the young, it needs to quickly set its house in order if it does not want to risk an implosion. Taking advantage of the leadership vacuum, many Congress legislators are exploring opportunities elsewhere. This may even cost the party the government in Karnataka, the only one it has in South India.



GAURAV JUJAL

A DIFFERENT GAZE

A new show is trying to change the cliched depictions of women in animation

"IT IS a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

This iconic quote from *Pride and Prejudice* sets the tone for the mainstream representation of women in fiction, and how female characters have always been assigned identities based on their relationships with male characters.

For a long time, the depiction of women in popular culture has served to reinstate stereotypical notions about womanhood, marriage, relationships and sexualities. The accusation (and rightfully so) against mainstream content is its unwillingness to speak of and for women-centric narratives. Animation movies and web series are, unfortunately, yet more spaces where the conventional portrayals of women find shelter. It is truly exhausting, and not to mention demeaning, how women are mostly depicted in animation — powerless stock characters with no significant ability to further the plot. It's difficult for women to relate with the unrealistic standards set therein — beautiful, slender, pale-skinned, emotionally vulnerable girls who exist to serve the men (read: Male writers and audience) and their fantasies. An unusually long (and needless) shot of Wonder Woman's thighs in DC's *Justice League*, the over-sexualisation of Scarlett Johansson's Black Widow in Marvel's *Avengers*, for instance, add to the already extensive list of female characters who exist to cater to the male gaze. Women are tired of watching their stereotypical selves on screen, and, if we cannot depict



Tuca & Bertie is a refreshing web series based on the friendship of two 30-year-old bird-women, and their struggles with the anxieties of life. Their struggles extend not only to rummaging through the drawers for a dress and applying make-up, but fighting sexual harassment at the workplace, and having conversations about mental illness.

their honest representations in 2019, I don't know who will.

Netflix's animated comedy series, *Tuca & Bertie* (2019) has come as a relief, if not cure, from the conventional characterisation of females in the animation world. Created by *Bojack Horseman*'s production designer, Lisa Hanawalt, *Tuca & Bertie* is a refreshing, chuckle-filled web series based on the friendship of two 30-year-old bird-women, and their struggles with the anxieties of life. Their struggles extend not only to rummaging through the drawers for a dress and applying make-up, but fighting sexual harassment at the workplace, and having conversations about mental illness.

What Hanawalt has been able to achieve with the show — made by and about women — is a genuine representation of real-world women. Complex themes of female friendship, gender and mental health prevail in what is a surreal and unapologetic universe of birds that live like humans. The show follows Tuca and Bertie, two "bird" best friends living in Birdtown, where buildings have breasts and plants wear clothes and walk. Females in *T & B* are loud, unrefined, funny, brave, and independent. The show talks about the new-age working women, their misadventures and forbidden desires. From the mundane to the larger issues, everything about the show is laced with dark humour — sex, sex bugs, sexism, sexual harassment and sexualities. From periods to past traumas, unemployment to unmarried life, there is something for practically all women to relate to. And yet, there

is no dearth of amusing jokes delivered at full pelt.

In most animation for adults, women's bodies are presented in an overtly sexual way, appealing only to a particular male fantasy. Hanawalt believes that our bodies are weird, funny and floppy — and should be shown as such. In an interview, Hanawalt revealed that she chose birds as her characters because they are funny and weird in a way, just like people are. Animation gave Hanawalt the liberty and depth to design her strange world, no holds barred. Breasts are an integral part of her world — just like ours, minus the objectification and judgements that real life throws at women. Sound effects are objects, snakes form subways, sexually transmitted infections are sentient bugs and Bertie's left breast decides to leave her body and walk away. Unlike any universe we've seen, *Tuca & Bertie* is created by a woman and boasts female protagonists based in a town that is indisputably non-conforming at its core.

Hanawalt didn't shy away from playing with and transcending the boundaries of animation to suit her story, rather than putting the brakes on her imagination. Perhaps, animation can lead the way for other modes of artistic expression to show things as they really are, especially women's characters.

The writer, 21, is a Masters student at English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, and is currently interning with The Indian Express

FREEZE FRAME

EP UNNY



JULY 8, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

SOCIALISTS MEETING
FORMER SOCIALIST PARTY members, now in the Janata Party, want to form a "lobby" within the Janata Party in order to mobilise opinion and build up pressure groups for the speedy implementation of the Janata Party policies. They would like to link up such an effort with other "like-minded" elements in the party. The was the trend of the speeches on the first day of "informal consultations" at the meeting of socialists convened by the Minister of Industry George Fernandes. Fernandes is former chairman of the erstwhile Socialist Party. A declaration is expected tomorrow, the concluding day of the meeting.

QUESTIONING GOVT
A BLISTERING ATTACK on the Morarji Desai government is on the cards when Parliament reopens on Monday for the five-week monsoon session. Members of Parliament of various political parties are already assembling in the capital after a long summer recess and from their consultations it was clear that they will subject the government to severe criticism, particularly the government's handling of the recent revolt in the Central Police Forces. Already at the meeting of the MPs Consultative Committee last week, the opposition members demanded resignation of the home minister, HM Patel, over the question of police unrest.

EARTH IS SAFE
THE POSSIBILITY OF the debris of the Skylab falling in any part of India and causing damage to life or property is extremely low, an official statement issued in New Delhi said. However, the Centre has, as a measure of abundant precaution, asked the state government to keep the police and fire services on full alert during the time of the Skylab's expected return to earth. The optimism that the debris will not cause any loss of life or property is based on the fact that during the last 10 years about 6,000 pieces of assorted junk have returned to earth from space without causing any loss of life or injury to human beings.

THE IDEAS PAGE

More of the dismal same

The budget needed to break new ground, provide a thrust to a slowing economy. This budget lacks innovation



PRABHAT PATNAIK

ECONOMICS HAS NEVER been a strong point of the NDA government. Its only two major economic forays, demonetisation and the GST, have both turned out to be pretty disastrous. It was futile, therefore, to expect much from the Union Budget for 2019-20. Even so, one is surprised by the budget's lack of engagement with the current problems of the economy, which are serious: A slowing down of activity, agrarian distress, massive unemployment, and external payments worries exacerbated by Donald Trump's belligerence.

There has been a perceptible slowdown in revenue growth of late, partly because of the slowdown in activity, but mainly on account of poor GST collections. The finance minister quoted the revised estimates of receipts for 2018-19, which are close to the budget estimates for that year, but these are well above the latest figures given by the Comptroller General of Accounts. According to the latter, there has been a shortfall of Rs 1.6 lakh crore in GST revenue of the Centre in 2018-19 compared to the budget estimates. The situation in 2019-20, originally expected to be better, is unlikely to be so.

Expenditure in the budget, both overall and in critical areas affecting the people, scarcely shows any significant increase. At the most, expenditures grow roughly at the same rate as the expected nominal GDP. Curiously, however, MGNREGS shows a slight absolute fall compared to the 2018-19 revised estimates, which is incomprehensible in the midst of acute joblessness.

Even these expenditure figures have been projected on the basis of 2018-19 revised estimates. With actual receipts falling well short of the revised estimates, and this shortfall continuing into 2019-20, it is doubtful if even these expenditure targets will be realised without increasing the fiscal deficit substantially, which the NDA's desire to appease globalised finance will not allow. Even these expenditure targets will not be maintained, compounding the recession that is setting in.

What was needed was not a budget that just projected receipt and expenditure figures on the basis of existing trends, but that broke new ground by bringing in some additional revenue source, some exogenous element, which could provide a thrust to the economy. But the NDA government, true to form, has rejected any innovation. By simply projecting existing trends of receipts to the future and providing for expenditure accordingly, the budget becomes pro-cyclical rather than counter-cyclical.

The most obvious exogenous element that could have been introduced to break out of this pro-cyclicalism is a wealth tax, at least on the billionaires of the country, whose wealth is estimated at present to be around Rs 560 lakh crore. Even a 1 per cent wealth tax on these billionaires would have fetched Rs 5.6 lakh crore and an inheritance tax, that must accompany a wealth tax to prevent evasion, could have fetched more. Even assuming that 5 per cent of billionaires' wealth gets passed on every year, an inheritance tax that took away a third of this wealth getting passed on, would have fetched an additional Rs 9.3 lakh crore.

These two taxes alone, both imposed only on billionaires, would have raised around Rs 15 lakh crore, quite sufficient for financing a rudimentary welfare state in India. Such a state could guarantee every Indian five basic economic rights: A right to food, a right to em-



Suvajit Dey

ployment, a right to quality education up to the secondary level, a right to quality health-care through a government-run National Health Service, and a right to old age pension of Rs 2,000 per month (against the current paltry Rs 200 per month) and adequate disability benefits.

Indeed, prior to the budget there was speculation that an inheritance tax would be introduced. This, not surprisingly, did not materialise. On the other hand, there is much talk of enticing foreign direct investment. If there is any strategy at all behind the budget, it consists in attracting FDI to the country (even by suppressing workers' rights and making land takeover easier), and thereby stimulating growth, which, it is hoped, would eventually alleviate unemployment. Instead of government spending, and above all government welfare spending, being the means of introducing dynamism into the economy, getting foreign investment into the country appears to be the weapon the government hopes to use.

To expect this strategy to usher in development is a pipe dream, especially at this time when the world economy is slowing down, and when multinational corporations have low inducement to invest anywhere anyway. After all, this was the idea behind Narendra Modi's "Make in India" slogan. How much did that achieve?

Besides, even assuming for a moment that some investment does occur as a result of these blandishments, how many jobs will that create? The rate of growth of labour productivity along the trajectory of multinationals-led, or Indian big-business-led, growth is so high that even rapid GDP growth rates do not generate enough employment to absorb fully the natural increase in the work force. To expect such growth to alleviate unemployment is utterly unrealistic. All this is well-known by now but the Modi government, like the

The most obvious exogenous element that could have been introduced to break out of this pro-cyclicalism is a wealth tax, at least on the billionaires of the country, whose wealth is estimated at present to be around Rs 560 lakh crore. Even a 1 per cent wealth tax on these billionaires would have fetched Rs 5.6 lakh crore and an inheritance tax, that must accompany a wealth tax to prevent evasion, could have fetched more. Even assuming that 5 per cent of billionaires' wealth gets passed on every year, an inheritance tax that took away a third of this wealth getting passed on, would have fetched an additional Rs 9.3 lakh crore.

Bourbon kings of France, "learns nothing and forgets nothing".

Two aspects of the budget are fraught with serious consequences for the future. One is the desire to access international financial markets for government borrowing. There is no earthly reason for this, since the limit on government borrowing comes from the self-imposed ceiling on the fiscal deficit, not from government's inability to borrow from the domestic market. Raising government loans abroad, vastly and directly, increases the hold of international finance upon the Indian state, whereby the slightest delay in debt servicing can cause the imposition of draconian "austerity" upon the country. Besides, it links the foreign exchange market with the financial market, so that a depreciation of the rupee would raise the debt burden of the government, and hence of the country, manifold, which would make the government particularly vulnerable to external manipulations.

The second issue relates to federalism. The GST itself was a massive attack on the federal structure of the Constitution, which the state governments unwisely acquiesced in. The failure of the GST to garner adequate revenue has put state government finances in a bind. On top of that, in the current budget, the Central government has resorted to cesses and surcharges for raising revenue, which means that this revenue is not shareable with the states. This budget, in short, has been used to centralise resources in the hands of the Union government. This is dangerous, for when the states are pushed to a corner and come to the Centre for help, it can play favourites and penalise "inconvenient" state governments. This is dangerous for federalism and democracy.

The writer taught economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Those Western forces who have long accused Xinjiang of improper governance should re-examine their consciences." — GLOBAL TIMES CHINA

No will to rebuild

For Congress, the basic exercise of politics seems a tall — and perhaps impossible — order



SEEMA MUSTAFA

THE CONGRESS PARTY seems to be gasping for breath with a party president who has resigned, and squabbling leaders in the states, even where it is in power. Bereft of introspection and hence a strategy, India's oldest party has sunk into a level of disrepair that it does not have the leadership to emerge from.

Morning newspapers last week suggested that the Congress and the Left, when approached by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for support in her increasingly lonely fight with the Bharatiya Janata Party in the state, responded with words to the effect that she should first admit that she created the grounds for the rise of the BJP. If true, then the response itself encapsulates the state of the Congress (and of course the Left) today.

The BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has moulded its rise, one, on measures that the Congress-led UPA government brought in and, two, on the demise of the Congress. It built governance on Congress-initiated measures that include surveillance, control of the media, gradual isolation of minorities, neo-economic policies reflected in the withdrawal of the state from the public space, harsh laws, with even the updation process of the now very controversial National Citizens Register starting under the Manmohan Singh government in 2013. This is to name just a few.

And two — in a direct corollary the BJP evolved — a direct confrontation with the Congress for political space. This came from a clearly thought-out strategy that the advance of the BJP is linked to the retreat of the Congress in the national arena. And it made dramatic progress on this front through a multi-pronged attack on the history of the Congress (that it has been unable to defend), on the first family of the Nehru-Gandhis, and a systemic targeting of the party in key states, particularly those where it is in direct confrontation with the BJP.

The Congress has been unable to withstand the onslaught, as it has never really been able to come to grips with the new reality. The absence of thought within the party made it believe intrinsically in its own invincibility. The fact that it relied on the there-is-no-other-alternative factor and the charisma of the First Family was very visible not just in 2014 but again in 2019. Unlike the BJP that began preparing for the Lok Sabha 2019 polls from the day after it assumed power five years ago, the Congress leadership was unable to comprehend the challenge, and the impact the present defeat would have on not just the party but on the nation itself. Hence, elections remained business as usual for the Congress, with no effort to build an organisation, delegate responsibility, build cadres and revive mass organisations.

Instead, Rahul Gandhi was sucked into

the trap of a presidential style of politics, and became the face of the Congress campaign with other leaders disappearing from view. And as is apparent from the results, from the field as well, the internal differences within were visible in the states that the Congress had won in the last Assembly elections with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath and Digvijaya Singh at loggerheads and Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and state party chief Sachin Pilot falling further apart on the candidates and the campaign. This was the story throughout, with the party non-existent in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Bihar, to name just a few states.

Rahul Gandhi was thus pitted against Narendra Modi and obviously given feedback that the strategy was working in his favour. No one wanted to acknowledge the fact that Modi came with a charisma that had penetrated the countryside; that the BJP was led by a party president who worked hours in the field, plotting and planning; that the BJP was backed by the RSS and affiliates that had grown exponentially in the past five years and that the propaganda machinery of television channels, print media, social media with a mix of fake news, loud discussions and loyal anchors had a penetrative reach.

No one wanted to tell Rahul Gandhi that there was actually no comparison, just an illusion. And although he was doing well in his own sphere, it fell far short of the political heights the BJP and PM Modi had scaled. And that the only way out for the Congress, with its shortfalls, was parliamentary democracy, a federal structure, with thought-out and close alliances with the regional parties. Instead after Karnataka, where he had shown some signs of this understanding, he moved away rapidly to first bust a move to form a coalition before the elections, and then from even state coalitions altogether. Delhi, UP and West Bengal have demonstrated the folly of this approach.

If possible, it has become even worse now for the party. The Congress is headless. It has brought in an MP from West Bengal as the Leader of the Lok Sabha, which has created unnecessary friction with the Trinamool Congress at a time when the Opposition needs to unite. And the end result is silence. Silence on the 150-plus deaths of children in Muzaffarpur in Bihar with token tweets barely passing for action. Silence on the latest lynching in Jharkhand in Parliament, until after the issue made the international headlines. Rahul Gandhi then tweeted some concern, but so did PM Modi. No political outreach by the Congress in either case has led even the die-hard Congress supporters to question their "alma mater".

Revival lies in a leadership that breaks all boundaries to build a counter-narrative based on ideas, ideology and democracy. That forges new relationships, that cements old ones, that build cadres and mass organisations, and that is seen in the field with the people of India in their day-to-day lives and struggles. But given the state of the Congress, the basic exercise of politics in itself seems a tall — and perhaps impossible — order.

The writer is founder-editor of The Citizen

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CORRUPTION DELUGE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Mumbai's tragedy' (IE, July 5). The unqualified disaster in the financial capital last week is mainly attributable to the gross mismanagement of the city, where year after year, the onset of the monsoon brings with it a tide of misfortune. The civic authority in cahoots with the unscrupulous corporates and contractors cash in and line their pockets following the flood damage. The need of the hour is eternal vigilance against corrupt authorities.

SS Paul, Nadia

BUILD CONSENSUS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A new deal for Kashmir' (IE, July 5). All political parties in particular and the Indian people in general must be taken on board if the constitutional status of Kashmir is to be changed. The course chosen must also be vigorously pursued irrespective of which party in power. The international community will stand with India as it is fatigued with jihadi violence, which is also sustaining the Kashmir insurgency.

HN Bhagwat, via email

MOITRA'S WORDS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'A convenient dissent' (IE, July 5). It is curious that the article implies that Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra's oratory is

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

not enough reason for her to be in Parliament. Her winning an election, in fact, is enough and the speech was an added bonus. It is also unreasonable to argue that a TMC MP criticise the West Bengal state government in Parliament. Do BJP MLAs in Bengal attack their party colleagues and sympathisers for the many instances of hate speech?

Bishwadeep Chatterjee, Delhi

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



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

THREATENING MEDIA

LAST WEEK, FOR a brief period, the top-trending hashtag on Twitter in Pakistan was #ArrestAntiPakJournalists. The July 4 editorial in Dawn raises important questions about the conditions of possibility and implications of such a discourse against the media, which are relevant across South Asia, including in India.

The editorial points out that the Twitter attack on journalists was not spontaneous, "but rather an orchestrated campaign with a limited set of messages and visuals — including calls to 'hang' media persons — being reproduced en masse by dubious accounts". As has been increasingly the case in India, despite such calls to violence being illegal, those attacking critics of the government and military often appear to be acting with impunity. The editorial argues that "irrespective of whether these perceptions are true", the campaign is worrying for several reasons.

There is, of course, a fear that such targeting endangers. The first casualty of this is often journalistic and critical integrity, whether consciously or not. Essentially, a form of self-censorship, and sometimes bravado, can result as a response to such threats. "Secondly, it creates a false narrative, misleading the public directly through misinformation within the information broadcast, and indirectly by sug-

gesting this is what people truly think."

Third, such words and threats, even on social media, can actually "embolden the small majority" that would undertake violence against journalists. And finally, blatant attacks on Pakistan's citizens reduce its credibility for the outside world.

ROHINGYA AND LABOUR

IN COX'S BAZAAR, in Chittagong, Bangladesh, there reside one million "nobodies". Khawaza Mainuddin writes in *The Daily Star*. There is a reluctance in Dhaka to grant the Rohingya as refugees, while the government in Myanmar has refused to recognise these individuals as citizens. The writer, a celebrated journalist, after recounting the toll that these refugees have taken on Bangladesh's economy, makes some uncomfortable points: "Since the harsh reality of today is that the Rohingya Muslim people are living here with no possibility of immediate repatriation in sight, it's neither honourable for them nor affordable for a densely populated country such as Bangladesh to spoon-feed them for years."

He then argues, essentially, that the Rohingya in Bangladesh should be put to work: "When their status as refugees in Bangladesh and settlement in other countries are also not assured, why don't the

stakeholders of the Rohingya crisis response process, especially the government and the United Nations, come to an agreement that they need livelihoods?"

While the argument is seemingly callous, Mainuddin does make a case for gainful employment being key to the "outsiders" not being idle and helping them gain an identity. Also, their being gainfully employed could help reduce emerging tensions with the local population.

IIFA IN NEPAL

BOTH THE NEPAL government and the International Indian Film Academy have confirmed that the 19th IIFA awards will be held in Kathmandu. Almost as soon as this was announced, the move has been criticised, according to an article in *The Himalayan Times* on July 4, "by all strata of Nepali society".

The article by Sumitra Chakaraborty, editor of *Stardust*, then attempts to argue the benefits of holding the IIFA in Kathmandu, citing largely the "glitz and glamour" of Bollywood and the "millions" that would be poured into Nepal for the function.

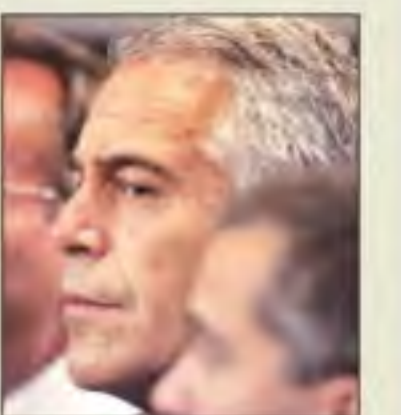
According to the article, the greatest criticism has come from "many stalwarts from the ailing Nepali Film industry which accused the government of having a 'lackadaisical attitude' towards them and yet in-

jecting "ridiculous" amounts into the IIFA which according to them were already cash rich and did not need support from the Nepal government."

The article claims that while the criticisms against the government "may be justified", they ignore the positive impact the IIFA can have on the industry. It then cites the example of Belfast, Ireland, where *Game of Thrones* stormed the globe and ended up becoming the foremost hit series in the world. And suddenly, Belfast became a buzzing hub for curious tourists who wanted to see where the hit series was shot. It not only injected a boost into the tourism sector but pumped in a record millions into the economy. Suddenly there were hundreds of jobs created and available, and the country flourished as visitors pumped in more than 2.5 million pounds into the economy everyday."

What the article does not take into account is the politics behind the protest. First, people may well argue that comparing IIFA to *Game of Thrones*, the most successful TV show in history is ridiculous. Second, part of the chagrin in Nepal stems from India's perceived will to dominance — cultural, economic and political — in the region. Talking about Bollywood as a saviour may not help matters.

TOPOF THE WORLD



USA Billionaire Epstein held on sex-trafficking charges New York: Wealthy financier and registered sex offender Jeffrey Epstein was arrested Saturday in New York on new sex-trafficking charges involving allegations that date to the early 2000s, according to law enforcement officials. Epstein, a wealthy hedge fund manager who once counted as friends former US President Bill Clinton, Great Britain's Prince Andrew, and President Donald Trump, was taken into federal custody and is expected to appear Monday in Manhattan federal court, three officials said. One of the officials said Epstein is accused of paying underage girls for massages and molesting them at his homes in Florida and New York.

AFTER CHINA ARREST Wife of former Interpol chief sues agency Paris: The wife of former Interpol President Meng Hongwei is suing the international police agency, accusing Interpol of failing to protect him from arrest in China and failing to protect his family. Meng's wife Grace Meng said her lawyers filed a legal complaint in the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, Netherlands. She says Interpol "breached its obligations owed to my family" and "is complicit in the internationally wrongful acts of its member country, China." Interpol said Sunday it strongly disputes the allegations.

USA Starbucks apologises to Arizona police Tempe: Starbucks apologised after an employee reportedly asked six police officers to leave or change their location in one of the company's shops in a Phoenix suburb because another customer reported feeling unsafe. Starbucks said it has "deep respect for the Tempe Police Department" and was apologising "for any misunderstanding or inappropriate behaviour that may have taken place" during the encounter. The Tempe Officers Association said the officers had just bought their drinks when a barista made the request.

GREECE ELECTIONS Conservatives take strong lead in exit poll Athens: Greece's opposition conservatives were on track to return to power by a landslide on Sunday, exit polls suggested, unseating incumbent leftist Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras blamed for pushing the crisis-hit country further into debt. Two exit polls gave conservative New Democracy a commanding lead of between 38 and 42 per cent of the vote, suggesting an outright majority in Greece's Parliament. "The basic reason (for the result) is the economy," said analyst Theodore Coulombis. "In the past 4.5 years people saw no improvement," he said.

Iran announces new breach of nuclear deal limits, threatens further violations

Set to break uranium enrichment cap, says will take more steps in 60 days if it doesn't get sanctions relief promised by deal

DAVID D KIRKPATRICK & DAVID E SANGER JULY 7



Spokesperson for Iran's atomic agency Behrouz Kamalvandi, government spokesperson Ali Rabiei and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Tehran Sunday. AP

IRAN SAID on Sunday that within hours it would breach the limits on uranium enrichment set four years ago in an accord with the United States and other international powers that was designed to keep Tehran from producing a nuclear weapon. The latest move inches Iran closer to where it was before the accord: on the path to being able to produce an atomic bomb. In recent weeks, Tehran has been making deliberate but provocative violations of the accord, as part of a carefully calibrated campaign to pressure the West into eliminating sanctions that have slashed the country's oil exports and crippled its economy. Last week, Iran broke through similar limits on how much nu-

clear fuel the country could stockpile. The steps Tehran has taken are all easily reversible. Yet the new move Iran vowed to take — to increase enrichment levels beyond the 3.67 per cent purity that is the ceiling under the deal — is the most threatening. Speaking at a news conference on Sunday in Tehran, the deputy foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, said Iran would take additional steps over the limits of the accord in 60-day intervals unless international powers provide sanctions relief as detailed in the deal. President Trump withdrew the US from the accord last year. In violating the limits on uranium enrichment, Tehran still remains far from producing a nuclear weapon. It would take a major production surge, and enrichment to far higher levels, for Iran to develop a bomb's worth of highly enriched uranium, experts say. It would take even longer to manufacture that ma-

AFTER U.S. EXIT, A NEW DEAL MUCH HARDER

THE TRUMP administration "has discredited the very concept of negotiations, and strengthened the hand of those inside Iran who would argue that it is no use talking to the Americans because you can never trust them," Rob Malley, a former US National Security Council official who helped negotiate the 2015 deal, told the New York Times. HAVING ALREADY gone through a period of sanctions, negotiations and a deal, and this time it will be harder because the distrust is even greater than it was, Malley said. FOR A year after Trump withdrew the US from what he called a "terrible" deal negotiated by his predecessor, Iran stayed within the accord's limits. It pressed UK, France and Germany to keep their promises to compensate the country for losses resulting from American sanctions.

terial into a nuclear weapon. But for Iran's President, Hassan Rouhani, who signaled in May that he would order the country's engineers to cross both thresholds if Europe did not compensate Iran for American sanctions, the breach of the enrichment limit would be a watershed. He is betting that the US will back away from crushing sanctions or that he can split European nations from the Trump administration, which the Europeans blame for setting off the crisis. In a phone conversation on Saturday seeking to head off a confrontation, President Emmanuel Macron of France asked Rouhani to explore by July 15 whether a new negotiation was possible. Rouhani agreed, according to news reports, but said that "lifting all sanctions can be the beginning of a move between Iran and the six major powers." NYT

In leak, Britain's envoy to US says Trump administration inept, clumsy

ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON, JULY 7

LEAKED DIPLOMATIC cables published Sunday in a British newspaper reveal that Britain's ambassador to the United States described President Donald Trump's administration as "clumsy and inept" while grappling with international problems.

The memos, containing highly negative comments from Ambassador Kim Darroch, provided a rare candid look at how a senior British diplomat views the government of Britain's closest and most important ally. "We don't really believe this administration is going to become substantially more normal; less dysfunctional; less unpredictable; less faction riven; less diplomatically clumsy and inept," Darroch wrote in one of the documents published in the Mail on Sunday newspaper. The US and the UK enjoy what each describe as a "special relationship" that has held strong since World War II. But the ambassador's assessment indicated deep unease with Trump's foreign policies, which have broken with Britain's on key issues such as climate change and preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Britain's Foreign Office did not challenge the authenticity of the leaked documents, which covered the period of 2017 to the present. It called the leak "mischievous behaviour".

RELEASES VIDEO OF 'JUDGE'S CONFESSION'

Pak judge blackmailed into issuing verdict against Sharif: Maryam

M ZULQERNAIN LAHORE, JULY 7



Maryam Nawaz is the daughter of the jailed former prime minister

PAKISTAN MUSLIM League-Nawaz leader Maryam Nawaz has released a video clip purportedly showing an accountability court judge allegedly confessing that he was "blackmailed and forced" to convict former premier Nawaz Sharif in a corruption case. Addressing a press conference in Lahore on Saturday alongside the top leadership of the PML-N, Maryam, the daughter of 69-year-old Sharif, said her father's entire judicial process was severely compromised. Sharif has been serving a seven-year prison term at the Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore since December 24, 2018 when the accountability court convicted him in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills case — one of the three corruption cases filed in the wake of the apex court's July 28, 2017 order in Panama Papers case. Maryam claimed Accountability Court Islamabad Judge Arshad Malik, who sentenced Sharif to a seven-year im-

prisonment in the Al-Azizia corruption case, confessed in his conversation with PML-N supporter Nasir Butt that he was "blackmailed and forced" to give verdict against the former premier. The video purportedly shows the judge speaking to Butt and claiming that he was coerced to hand down the prison sentence against Sharif despite there being no proof of corruption against him. The Imran Khan government termed the leaked video "doctored" and demanded its forensic audit, saying that "it is an attack on the judiciary." PTI

Hong Kong protesters march again, reaching out to visitors from mainland

FELIX TAM & FARAH MASTER HONG KONG, JULY 7



Anti-extradition Bill protesters march to West Kowloon Express Rail Link Station at Hong Kong's tourism district Tsim Sha Tsui on Sunday. Reuters

TENS OF thousands of protesters marched through one of Hong Kong's most popular tourist areas on Sunday, trying to gain support from mainland Chinese visitors for the city's opposition to an extradition Bill which has caused political turmoil. Protests against the now-suspended Bill have drawn millions of people to the streets in the former British colony in recent weeks, posing the biggest challenge Beijing has faced to its rule in the territory since Hong Kong returned to Chinese control in 1997. On Sunday, protesters marched through streets of Tsim Sha Tsui, a popular shopping destination, to try to deliver their message directly to mainland Chinese tourists in the hope of garnering sympathy. At times they shouted slogans in Mandarin, mainland China's official language, as opposed to Hong Kong's main language, Cantonese. They also handed out flyers and sent messages by social media and Apple's phone-to-phone AirDrop system written in the simplified form of Chinese characters used on the mainland. The short march finished at the city's West Kowloon high-speed rail station that connects Hong Kong to the mainland, one of the main entry points for Chinese visitors but a sensitive spot. The march was the first major demonstration since Monday when protesters besieged and ransacked the legislative building in the heart of the city on the 22nd anniversary of the handover before being driven back by police firing tear gas. The authorities took no chances. Police and train staff guarded every exit of the station. All entrances to the West Kowloon station, apart from a route for passengers, were closed. REUTERS

West Kowloon station is a controversial link to mainland China HONG KONG'S West Kowloon station connects the city to mainland China's high-speed train network. When it was opened last September, it stirred controversy because Chinese laws apply to the parts of the station that deal with customs and immigration, and the platforms. Hong Kong's pro-democracy activists say this is a further erosion of the "one country, two systems" framework under which different laws apply to the city, giving its residents more rights and freedoms compared to the mainland.

'Terror funding': Regional head of NGO held in Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PESHAWAR, JULY 7

Human Concern International, on terror financing charges, Dawn reported, quoting a CTD official. On Saturday, Nawaz was presented before an anti-terrorism court, which handed him over to the CTD for three days. The FIR said millions of rupees had been transacted from 11 bank accounts of the charity and Nawaz was unable to provide satisfactory answers regarding these funds.

PAKISTAN'S COUNTER-TERRORISM forces have arrested the regional head of an international NGO, who is accused of receiving huge sums in the name of charity and diverting them to Al-Qaeda terrorists. The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) arrested Ali Nawaz, the regional head of

UK refuses to extradite murder accused couple to India

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, JULY 7

On the same day that Mallya got permission to appeal, July 2, Chief Magistrate Emma Arbuthnot of Westminster Magistrates' Court handed down her judgment in a case involving an Indian-origin UK citizen Arti Dhir and husband Kaval Rajjada, wanted in India for the murder of their adopted 11-year-old boy Gopal and his brother-in-law.

Judge Arbuthnot, the same judge who had found a prima facie case against Mallya in her ruling in favour of extradition in December 2018, "discharged" Dhir and Rajjada on human rights grounds under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. "In the light of my finding that Ms Dhir and Mr Rajjada if extradited will be subject to an

irreducible sentence. I find there are substantial grounds for believing that they would face a real risk of being subjected to treatment, a lack of review of a life sentence, which would be inhuman and degrading. This would be a breach of Article 3," notes Arbuthnot in her ruling. The case dates back to June 2017, when Dhir and Rajjada were arrested in the UK and re-

leased on conditional bail. The duo are alleged to have adopted Gopal Sejani, an orphan from Gujarat, insured his life and then arranged for his murder. He was attacked, kidnapped, stabbed and he died from his injuries on February 11, 2017, near Rajkot. His brother-in-law Harsukhbhai Kardani was also stabbed in the process, and died a few days later. PTI

CAIRO SAYS LOOTED ANTIQUITY SHOULD BE RETURNED, BUT CHRISTIE'S SAYS SALE LEGAL

Tutankhamen head sells for \$6 mn, despite protests from Egypt

SCOTT REYBURN LONDON, JULY 7

with the features of the pharaoh Tutankhamen during his brief reign, was the star lot of Christie's annual "Exceptional" auction of trophy objects from across the centuries. Dated by the auction house to about 1333 BCE to 1323 BCE, and described as having a "particularly sensual" mouth, the head sold for 4.7 million pounds, or about \$6 million, with fees. But competition was subdued. The lot attracted just two hesitant bids from anonymous telephone bidders. Did the limited bidding reflect the controversy that swirled round this object before its sale? Weeks before its auction, the 11-inch-high head had been the focal point of protests from Egyptian authorities, who ob-



Egyptian authorities believe the object was stolen from the temple of Karnak in Upper Egypt in 1970. Reuters

"It WAS smuggled. It belongs to Egypt," said Magda Sakr, one of a dozen protesters gathered outside Christie's auction house minutes before a stone head of the pharaoh Tutankhamen was set to be sold on Thursday night. "I believe these things should be in a museum. They shouldn't belong to one person," added Sakr, holding a placard that read "Save Tutankhamen Head, Egyptian History is not for Sale." But despite protests from Sakr, and from Egyptian officials, the sale went ahead. The brown quartzite sculpture of the god Amen, carved

taken from the temple of Karnak in Upper Egypt and illegally exported in 1970. He added that if Christie's did not have papers to prove that it left Egypt legally, then the sculpture should be returned. The date of 1970 cited by Hawass is significant: That year UNESCO instituted a landmark international convention to prohibit and prevent the illicit trade in cultural property. Objects without documented ownership histories, known as provenances, that extend beyond that watershed have become regarded as problematic for museums and those involved in the legal trade in antiquities. "The sale of such precious Egyptian artifacts is a huge shame," said Tarek Adel, Egypt's ambassador to Britain, in a state-

ment on Wednesday. He said that Christie's proposed auctions reflected "a deep lack of respect to our efforts to stop this happening as well as a total disregard for relevant international legal provisions and conventions". In a statement issued Tuesday, Christie's said it had "established all the required information covering recent ownership and gone beyond what is required to assure legal title." The sculpture "is not, and has not been, the subject of a claim, nor has it been previously flagged as an object of concern, despite being well known and exhibited publicly," the statement added. The provenance published by Christie's states that the stone head was acquired in 1973 or

1974 by Josef Messina, the director of Galerie Kokorian & Co., in Vienna, from the collection of Prinz Wilhelm von Thurn und Taxis, who is "understood" to have owned the piece by the 1960s, according to the catalogue. The sculpture was subsequently owned by two further private individuals, Christie's said, before being acquired in 1985 by the German-based Resandro collection, which was the seller in London. The object's pre-1970 provenance was confirmed by Messina in the form of "a notarised affidavit which is part of our provenance documentation," Catherine Manson, Christie's global head of communications, said in an email. NYT

HONG KONG'S PROTESTS

Anti-establishment day

Protesters expose a fractured Hong Kong, but China's grip only tightens



People wave flashlights during a gathering of Hong Kong mothers to show their support for the city's young pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong on July 5. Reuters

IT WAS a dramatic rebuke of Chinese rule of Hong Kong, on the day it was meant to be celebrated. On July 1st, a public holiday known as Establishment Day in honour of the handover of the territory in 1997 from Britain to China, anti-government protesters stormed into and ransacked the city's Legislative Council, displaying a British-era colonial flag for cameras and live social-media feeds. Hours after Carrie Lam, the territory's chief executive, had toasted the putative success of 22 years of mainland rule, protesters laid bare for the world the reality of a deeply fractured, fractious Hong Kong.

The violence provided Mrs Lam and Chinese leaders in Beijing, on the defensive after weeks of massive but mostly peaceful protests, an opening to harden their line against protesters. They moved quickly to take it. Mrs Lam held a press conference at police headquarters at 4am on July 2nd, condemning the break-in and defacement of the Legislative Council, known as Legco, and vowing that perpetrators would be caught and punished (there have already been some arrests). The Chinese central government's Liaison Office in Hong Kong declared that the "savage acts were an outright provocation

and trampling of the city's rule of law." On July 3rd Liu Xiaoming, the Chinese ambassador to Britain, denounced Hong Kong's "ultra-radicals", saying they had "challenged the bottom line of one country, two systems", the framework, negotiated in a treaty with Britain, under which Hong Kong's freedoms are meant to be protected until 2047.

Mr Liu had taken the unusual step of holding a press conference in London to admonish the British government, which had warned China to abide by its commitments under the bilateral treaty. "The UK government chose to stand on the wrong side," Mr Liu said, warning of "consequences" to the relationship with China if Britain continued to "interfere". "Hands off Hong Kong," he said. "It is not what it used to be under British colonial rule."

There will be no confusion about that. The tough, co-ordinated response to the Legco break-in, and to critics abroad, will reinforce concerns that Chinese custodianship of the territory will grow only more stern with time. The protest movement this year is the latest of several since the handover that have been sparked by fears that freedoms in Hong Kong are eroding under Chinese rule. This

time the tinder was an extradition bill that would allow people accused of crimes in mainland China to be sent there for trial, a power which many worry would be wielded to stifle dissent. On June 15th, after massive protests and clashes with the police, Mrs Lam suspended consideration of the bill. A day later a crowd estimated by organisers at 2m people marched, in a territory of 7.5m; many demanded that the bill be withdrawn entirely, and that Mrs Lam resign. She did not, but as the demonstrations kept going in the weeks following, Mrs Lam decided to lie low and adopt a more contrite tone.

As long as the marches remained peaceful, the authorities waited them out, as they did in 2014 when large democracy protests went on for months in what became known

as the Umbrella Movement. It dissipated, its ringleaders later arrested and jailed, without any democratic concessions from the government. The successes in Hong Kong protests have been almost exclusively defensive: stopping the government from passing a security law, or from mandating patriotic education.

A sense of powerlessness may have informed protesters this time. On the morning of July 1st Mrs Lam promised that the government would be more open and would listen to the people of Hong Kong. Outside, protesters were facing police on the streets. Across town, crowds were gathering for another march through the city to demand political reform, an annual rite on Establishment Day; organisers say this one drew 550,000 people (the police say

190,000). Many walked peacefully past the government's offices in Admiralty. But hundreds heeded calls to turn towards Legco, where some protesters had been gathering since the early morning.

One group used a makeshift battering-ram, fashioned from a trolley, to break a large glass door on the outside of the building. Later, at about 9pm, they breached a metal gate and got inside. Some sprayed graffiti and ransacked offices. From the main council chamber they read out a list of demands, which included the removal of unelected politicians from Legco. One protester unfurled a colonial-era flag; another painted over the part of Hong Kong's official title which describes it as being part of the People's Republic of China. Again they repeated calls for Mrs Lam to resign.

Many in the protest movement are sympathetic to those who ransacked Legco, while disavowing the violence. On July 2nd Joshua Wong, one of the leaders of the Umbrella Movement, who on June 17th emerged from a third stint in jail, posted to Twitter that Mrs Lam suspended the extradition bill only after police clashed violently with protesters around Legco, on June 12th.

"Months of Hong Kongers and the world expressing concern did not matter to her at all until she saw blood," he tweeted. He also has called for Mrs Lam to resign.

Demonstrators should be careful what they wish for. Some veterans of the democracy movement have privately told foreign contacts that Mrs Lam's resignation as chief executive is something to fear, because only the fiercest of hardliners would be willing to take her job in the present climate. Others worry, too, that the Liaison Office would exert more influence, pushing Hong Kong towards more political integration with the mainland.

Yet China has its own reasons to fear an early change of chief executive before the end of Mrs Lam's first term in 2022. To remove Hong Kong's leader now would be to re-open the painful question of how chief executives are chosen—a process which involves a pre-establishment selection panel and endorsement by Communist Party bosses in Beijing, rather than anything approaching a free, democratic election. That would provide more tinder for protests.

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On July 1st, a public holiday known as Establishment Day in honour of the handover of the territory in 1997 from Britain to China, anti-government protesters stormed into and ransacked the city's Legislative Council, displaying a British-era colonial flag for cameras and live social-media feeds

EU TOP JOBS

The Leyen's share

EU leaders' arduous deal on top jobs may yet fall apart

EMMANUEL MACRON is a lucky man. His rivals and opponents have a habit of doing themselves harm. In the French presidential election in 2017 his main centre-right rival was consumed by a corruption scandal. Earlier this year anti-government *gilets jaunes* protesters surged then faded in part because disorganisation and public-relations mistakes took their toll. And this week Mr Macron obtained something close to a dream outcome in the allocation of big European jobs. Once again this was largely thanks to others' mistakes.

After three days of talks the EU's leaders (minus Theresa May of Brexit Britain) agreed to nominate Ursula von der Leyen, Germany's defence minister, to the presidency of the European Commission, the EU's executive. A moderate Christian Democrat close to Angela Merkel, Mrs von der Leyen shares some of Mr Macron's federalist inclinations. Also, she did not run in the recent European election campaign as a *Spitzenkandidat* or "lead candidate" for the commission job—a convention that the French president wants to kill off. The presidency of the European Council (ECB) goes to Christine Lagarde, the French head of the IMF who, like Mr Macron, is on the doveish side of Europe's economic debates. The presidency of the European Council, the group of EU heads of government, goes to Charles Michel, Belgium's liberal prime min-

ister and a Macron ally. The final appointment sees Josep Borrell, a veteran Spanish social democrat, as the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy.

"Macron is delighted with the outcome," observes Mujtaba Rahman of the Eurasia Group, a consultancy. He points out that the result was less Mr Macron's design than the product of others' errors.

The first was made last November, when the European People's Party (EPP), the group of centre-right parties, picked Manfred Weber, a Bavarian member of the European Parliament, as its lead candidate. The EPP came first in the European Parliament elections that took place from May 23rd to 26th, which under the *Spitzenkandidat* convention would have made Mr Weber the prime candidate for the commission. But he has no executive experience, little profile outside Brussels and his native Germany and a reputation for making excuses for Hungary's authoritarian government. Moreover, the EPP lost seats, along with its traditional partners in the centre-left Socialists and Democrats (S&D) group. Mr Weber was too contentious a figure for the newly fragmented parliament to settle on his candidacy, or on a single alternative. Although Mrs Merkel, the EPP's most powerful leader, backed her compatriot, other leaders objected to him at a summit on June 20th. Unable to reach a deal, the leaders postponed their talks to June 30th.

It was Mrs Merkel who made the second mistake. In discussions with Mr Macron and the prime ministers of Spain and the Netherlands, the German chancellor agreed to a compromise whereby Frans Timmermans, the S&D's lead candidate and a Dutch vice-president of the commission, would take the commission presidency, with Mr Weber becoming president of the parliament and a liberal running the council. Mrs Merkel's colleagues in the EPP, such as Leo Varadkar of Ireland, objected that the parliament job was too puny a prize for coming first. The leaders of eastern states and Italy, too, dislike Mr Timmermans for his record of tough action against illiberal abuses.

The summit on June 30th dragged on into July 1st. By breakfast it was clear that neither Mr Timmermans nor Mr Weber could command the necessary support. Leaders suspended the talks until the following morning, when Mr Macron floated the idea of Mrs von der Leyen. Acceptable to Mrs Merkel, the rest of the EPP, the easterners and to left-of-centre governments, she was the tolerable candidate exhausted leaders could accept. With a German heading for the commission, Mr Macron could press for a Frenchwoman at the ECB.

Yet the package did not inspire universal approval. Some, especially in the EPP and S&D, complain that Mrs von der Leyen lacks a democratic mandate, having not campaigned as a



German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen, who has been nominated as European Commission President, attends the weekly cabinet meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany, on July 3. Reuters

Spitzenkandidat. Her struggles to modernise the armed forces cause some to question her competence: "Germany's weakest minister", sneered Martin Schulz, a German former president of the European Parliament. Other objections have also bubbled up. All four of the big jobs settled at the summit go to western Europeans at a time of heightened tensions between easterners and westerners.

All of which makes support for the package in the parliament uncertain. In votes on

the parliament's own presidency on July 3rd MEPs from the "grand coalition" of moderate pro-EU parties—the EPP, S&D and liberals—splintered as some social democrats backed the Green candidate and easterners in the EPP backed a Czech from a more right-wing group. David Sassoli, an Italian social democrat supposedly supported by the grand coalition, won with only 345 of its 442 votes, and no others, meaning that he does not enjoy a majority among the parliament's 751 members.

That may suggest that Mrs von der Leyen is also not guaranteed the majority she needs to secure the commission presidency. That vote is due to take place between July 15th and 18th. If she fails, leaders will have to return to the drawing board. They might then turn to Margrethe Vestager, the liberal competition commissioner who was a *Spitzenkandidat* in all but name and fairly widely acceptable. Otherwise the options are few.

But if she does succeed, what sort of a commission president will Mrs von der Leyen make? It is true that after five years of her as defence minister, the German armed forces are still plagued by equipment shortages and technical faults. German opposition parties are holding an investigation into her extensive and expensive use of consultancies. Yet her job is known as a graveyard of careers for good reason—the problems long predate her tenure—and Mrs von der Leyen has done well to survive in it. Multilingual and instinctively Atlanticist, she is respected by NATO colleagues for having fought for budget increases for Germany's armed forces and presiding over expanding German military missions in places like Mali and Lithuania. She has recently warned against European complacency about China's rise and intentions. Addressing MEPs in Strasbourg on July 3rd she struck a conciliatory tone in comments in German, French and English.

There may have been better candidates for the commission job—for example, Ms Vestager—but there were certainly far inferior ones. Likewise, Ms Lagarde, Mr Michel and Mr Borrell are all competent figures. The Spaniard will be the most heavyweight person to hold the foreign-policy role since its creation in 2009. Europe runs on compromises like this one. It could do worse.

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CROSSWORD 3852



ACROSS 1 For certificate see master after swim (7) 5 Go back in public transport intended to take in others (5) 8 A fair exchange in sight (2,3,3,2,3) 9 Bound to have spirit (5) 10 Space for some oar movement (3,4) 11 Do get accustomed to being put out (6) 12 A new paper to be published (6) 15 Sees I am different nationality (7) 17 They hang from the ears (5) 19 To take up the post is to increase the risk (5,3,5) 20 Agitated nun that is upset about the tedium of life (5) 21 Doctor needs transfer to a city of China (7)

Solutions Crossword 3851: Across: 1 Quack, 8 Roulette wheels, 9 Abeam, 10 Alsatian, 11 Perks, 12 Ate, 16 Florid, 17 Learnt, 18 Owl, 23 Whist, 24 Embalmer, 25 Stand, 26 Uncouple, 27 Screw. Down: 2 Umbrella, 3 Crackers, 4 Job lot, 5 Clear, 6 Strip, 7 Seine, 12 Ado, 13 Ell, 14 Pathetic, 15 In a sense, 20 Debut, 21 Aback, 22 Flour.

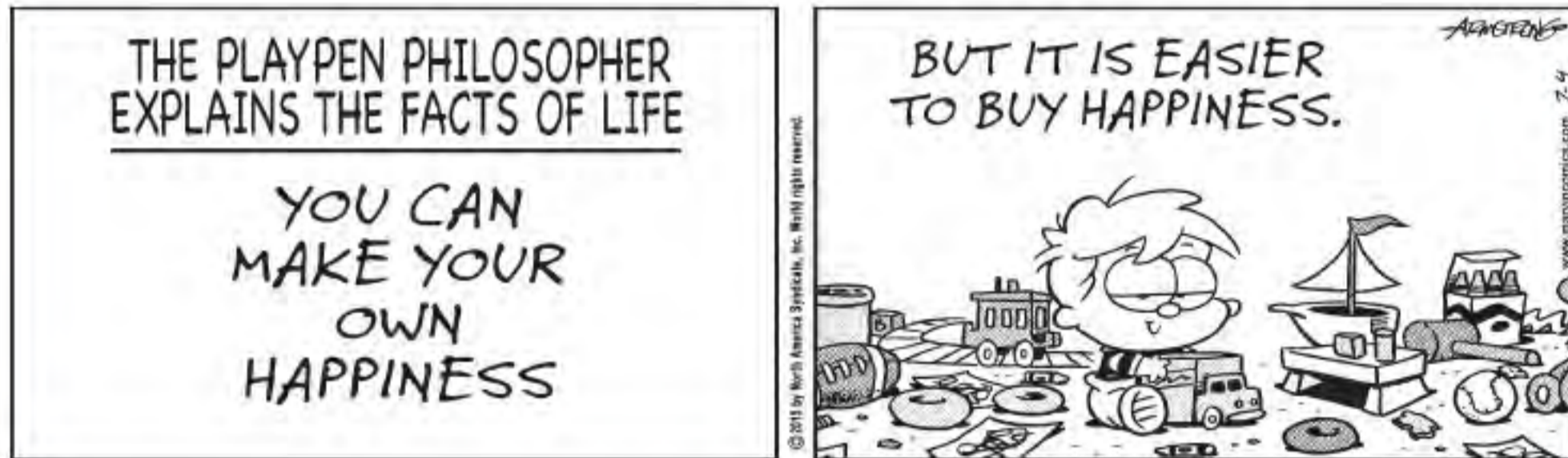
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quiz.

PPUAEE SYZZCU BOTOR EEFRUG

SOLUTION: PPUAEE: RPUAEE, ROBERT, SCUTZRY, REFURGE Answer: Many would be cowards if they had courage enough - Thomas Fuller

SUDOKU 3901 Difficulty Level 2s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

SUDOKU 3902 Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 3900

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) The moment you relax your grip on financial affairs, you'll run the risk of making losses. These may be minor (perhaps you will be overcharged for goods), but will nonetheless be easily avoidable.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) This week's constructive atmosphere may mark a turning-point between two phases in personal aspirations. The transition may not always be smooth, but you'll handle your affairs with great care and understanding.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) You may feel as if you're caught between two opposing options, uncertain which is the best way to free yourself from an impasse. The answer lies in your own hands and it's absolutely necessary that you truly understand your deeper motivations.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) Your friends and partners may now be under much more pressure than you, which makes for a change. Why not use this opportunity to help those in need and repay past favours?

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) The point to grasp is that contrasts and contradictions between your personal and professional lives will always be with you, and that you can only do yourself good by dealing with awkward choices and facing hard facts.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) You are well-known for your sympathetic and compassionate qualities, and friends will be trooping to your door with problems for you to solve.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) All the signs point to the likelihood that you've just had, or are about to receive, a serious financial opportunity. In the final analysis, you know that only you are responsible for any losses or gains.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) Recent events should have been good for your morale. Emotionally you might be wondering just what has hit you, and why you have been singled out for such intriguing treatment.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23) It's difficult to think of a more fascinating astrological pattern than that which will be affecting many people around you. It could be a little while longer before the old certainty returns.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) Friends have been sending out mixed messages, and while you're willing to trust that events will work out as planned, a degree of doubt is creeping in.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) It would be an understatement to suggest that current stars are confused. But, then, sometimes it's good to have your options all mixed up.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) This is a fine time to hold important discussions, not least because partners may at last be ready to see your point of view.

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REVIVAL OF A GLORIOUS PAST
The process of restoration of Rembrandt's famed *The Night Watch* (pictured) will happen in a specially constructed glass chamber at the Amsterdam Museum. People can watch as the largest and most elaborate public art restoration in the history takes place.

WEEK AHEAD



Paying Tribute

ONE MONTH following the demise of veteran theatre personality Girish Karnad, an ensemble of theatre artists from across the city gather to pay tribute. They will perform vignettes from several of Karnad's plays including *Nagamandala*, *Tughlaq* and *Boiled Beans on Toast*. For ages 16 and above. On July 10, 8 pm, at Oddbird Theater, Chattarpur. Tickets are Rs 150 onwards and available on [oddbird.org](#)



Reading Fashion

FASHION DESIGNER Tarun Tahiliani (pictured) will deliver a talk titled 'Evolution of Fashion and Modern India'. Best known for infusing Indian craftsmanship and textile heritage with tailored silhouette, his signature style is to combine traditional aesthetics with modern design. On July 8, 6.30 pm at India International Center, Lodhi Estate.



Life in Words

AN ENGLISH documentary film, *Geetanjali* that follows the journey of a terminally-ill girl named after the collection of poems by Rabindranath Tagore, will be screened in the Capital. She prayed to live up to this name and she did through her poems that were discovered post her death. The film was directed and released by Arun Chadha in 1995. It will be screened on July 10, 7 pm onwards at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), and will be followed by a discussion with the director.

Jazz Time

SINGER PARVATI Krishnan likes to explore varied genres and styles of singing. She will be accompanied by pianist Rythem Bansal who has always been drawn to jazz and improvisational music. He has performed with various musicians including George Brooks, Rainer Pusch, Matteo Fraboni, David Soin Tappeser, Pranai Gurung and Vasundhara Vee, among others. On July 9, 9 pm onwards at Piano Man Jazz Club, Safdarjung Enclave Market. Tickets on [Bookmyshow](#).



Anubhav Sinha (below); with actors Sayani Gupta, Manoj Pahwa and Ayushmann Khurrana in a working still from *Article 15*

'The internalisation of tragedy is dangerous'

Writer-director Anubhav Sinha on why he placed the camera on the shoulders of the privileged class to tell the story of caste-based atrocities

ALAKA SAHANI

The audience response to *Article 15* seems to have come as a surprise for you.

Even though I was hoping that the film would be watched by many, I knew that it's not very uplifting and raises questions. No one likes questions unless it's *Kaun Banega Crorepati*. That's why I had my apprehensions.

Did having a Brahmin protagonist (Ayushmann Khurrana), who is clueless about the realities at the grassroots level, in some way soften the blow of these questions?

For me, it's the story of the privileged, what they have done and what they need to do. I'm trying to tell a story where the camera is on the shoulders of a member of the privileged class, then why not make him someone from the top-rung of the society — be it his social class or position in the organisation. When I first broached this idea, many said that caste-based discrimination was a thing of the past. Now, many people are writing to me on social media about the extent of this problem.

Before you worked on the script, what kind of preparation did you do?

My co-writer (Gaurav Solanki) had experienced life in rural areas. We stationed ourselves in Delhi for some days and met people who are working on this subject and watched documentaries related to it. We read books like *Republic of Caste: Thinking Equality in the Time of Neoliberal Hindutva* by Anand Teltumbde and *Jhoothan* by Omprakash Valmiki too.

Both, in case of *Mulk* (2018) and *Article 15*, the audience is not looking at a teacher talking to them but watching a story unfold. The information and discourse are delivered on the side which will weigh heavier after



My responsibility is to raise questions and try to answer them in my own way. People will, hopefully, carry those questions forward and respond to them in their own way.

ANUBHAV SINHA

they have watched the movie.

Why did you choose to revisit the alleged murder and rape of two girls in Badaun?

I was affected by the image of their bodies hanging from a tree. In *Article 15*, I wanted this image to be stark and disturbing. We often get used to such incidents. When the first case of lynching was reported, we were disturbed by it. Today, it is just another news. This internalisation of tragedy is dangerous.

The scene where the protagonist tells a young girl upfront about her brother being a rapist was disturbing.

Cinematographer Ewan Mulligan was dead against it. He said we couldn't do it to the girl. The day we were shooting this scene, I had to do a headcount to see how many

people were in favour of it. I agree, it's a cruel scene. The first line that Ayushmann's character says to the girl is: "*Beta, rape samajhi ho?* (Do you understand what is rape?). He had to do it as there was no choice. The girl would get to know about it eventually. So, he sat her down and told her.

You have used a real-life manual scavenger in *Article 15*. How did you shoot that scene?

We had built the set of a police station at an abandoned government building in Lucknow's Malihabad. We shot there for 10 days. Behind this building, we created this underground tank, filled with muck, that you see on screen. We asked Shadab, a real-life manual scavenger, to train the actors. He volunteered to do the scene himself with another local who is holding the rope as he

goes inside the tank.

You wrote an open letter when controversy cropped up around *Mulk*. You did the same again now.

There are 300 trolls saying 400 different things. The best way to tackle this is to talk. That's why I wrote an open letter to Karni Sena (saying that the movie doesn't disrespect the Brahmin community).

You have taken digs at different political parties.

I'm not taking digs at the parties. I've given up on them. I'm taking digs at the voters. One of the characters says: "*Mujhe nahi pata kisko vote dun. Phool ya hathi ko. Toh meine cycle ko diya*". I'm trying to convey that this is how they cast their vote.

As a filmmaker, you will move to another project. So, what's your social responsibility?

My responsibility is to raise questions and try to answer them in my own way. People will, hopefully, carry those questions forward and respond to them in their own way.

You were considering legal action against the Roorkee district magistrate for stopping *Article 15*'s release.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has certified the movie. There is no way it can be stopped from releasing in theatres. That's a Supreme Court ruling. The fact the movie's release has been stopped means that the local administration is not doing its job. I must question it.

You are shooting your next with Tapsee Pannu soon. How do you manage to work at this pace?

Together with my team, I have found this rhythm where I can finish shooting a film in 30-45 days. *Article 15*'s shoot took about 30 days. I spend a lot of time prepping for a film and I won't be surprised if we finish shooting of our next in 25 days.

ON THE LOOSE



LEHER KALA

Bag Brag

The Birkin signals you are somebody or Hermes wouldn't be selling you the bag

AN IMAGE of Nita Ambani holding a white Birkin bag in London has been at the center of heated debate. For the uninitiated, this elusive and exclusive Hermes handbag is considered the epitome of luxury and indeed, descriptions of Ambani's purchase certainly suggest it's very special. According to [www.christies.com](#), the virtually logo-less, ivory coloured, crocodile skin purse is encrusted with more than 240 diamonds on its 18-karat-gold hardware. It cost \$379,261, well over Rs 2 crore.

As any economist will attest, luxury is a function of scarcity — and awfully seductive to people obsessed with rarity. The wildest of legends surround the iconic Birkin: you can't just enter a store and buy it, you need to register and patiently wait your turn, for two years. (The lucky few who eventually manage to grab one can jubilantly take their place at the top of the style pecking order, their social capital suddenly unquestionable). It turns out, a Birkin resting gloriously on a delicate elbow assuages a lot of upwardly mobile anxiety — the buyer inhabits the rarified stratosphere of the obscenely wealthy who scoff at procuring a variety of acquisitions and instead, concentrate only on the very, very best. It's hardly surprising that Ms Ambani bought a Birkin, after all, if not her, who possibly could be more eligible? More surprising are the reactions to the purchase, ranging from righteous indignation to sarcastic comments on vegetarianism.

One particularly galling headline in one of those zillion 'news' websites that have sprung up recently went: "Nita Ambani is 'carrying' my entire lifetime's salary". Maybe this writer was hinting she needed a raise and may this unsophisticated tactic spout dividends, but comparing the purchasing power of the 18th richest person in the world to the lifestyle of a poorly paid journalist is bizarre logic. It's tragic that this newswoman will earn a mere 2.6 crore in her career, but surely, that's an outlandish amount for approximately three-fourth of Indians who survive on less than Rs 200 a day. We reach our own conclusions of what "adequate" means based on our incomes and live accordingly. All wealth is relative. As far as spending disparity goes, it's futile to resent the one percent, since, seen from another perspective, the merely solvent and middle-class have benefited from policies that promote unequal growth. So, nobody but Ms Ambani gets to decide if she should or shouldn't aspire for the Birkin and these sneering moral diktats on what makes for an 'appropriate' high, are ultimately personal.

The other banal argument doing the rounds is that a card-carrying vegetarian has no qualms about wearing an exotic skin for which a beautiful crocodile was slaughtered (after being bred for the precise reason of ending up as a handbag). There are complex ethics at play here and it is almost certain that Hermes follows due diligence when it comes to using ethically sourced skins. There's no point getting riled up about expensive leather when we commit folly upon folly and actively participate in the destruction of other species, unthinkingly. Over 6,000 silkworms are boiled inside their cocoons to make just one kilogram of silk. The clothes we wear are manufactured by killing millions of insects with pesticide. If there's any justice, perhaps in an alternate universe, lemurs are gassing humans but in our current one, the cosmetics industry relies on palm oil, whose production kills and destroys the natural habitat of orangutans. Conservation is a collective responsibility and it's unclear how Ms Ambani's purchase deserves more flak than everybody else.

More interestingly, every international fashion survey conducted of late suggests that the future of companies manufacturing luxury goods lies in the East, in India and China. In an immature market, women are yet to discover the joy of buying into a brand that stands for sheer fabulousness, nor are they discerning enough to outright reject it (for sustainability reasons). It's worth pondering on, however, if we've got to this place even in India, that more than gold and diamonds, a fancy clutch is the fashion accessory most worth having.

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Speaking Freely

Farhad Karkaria and Navin Noronha on being hosts of India's only queer podcast and a no holds barred approach to their conversations

ANUSHREE MAJUMDAR

I'VE BEEN getting so many messages like 'Love the honesty!' Screw guests, we should just talk about ourselves," says 35-year-old Farhad Karkaria with a laugh. An hour before the next recording of *Keeping It Queer*, a podcast hosted by Karkaria and Navin Noronha, we're sitting in a room at the IVM (Indus Vox Media) office in Mumbai's Khar West, home to a number of popular podcasts such as *Geek Fruit* and *Cyrus Says* by Cyrus Broacha. "I've been getting quite a few messages from the listeners too. Some are about the episode and things we've talked about. And then there are some that want to know if I'm open to hooking up," says Noronha, 27. Karkaria laughs knowingly: as the hosts of India's only queer podcast, heartfelt comments and thirst texts are all in a day's work. Podcasts have been a popular platform

in the West for nearly a decade or so now. In the beginning, the space was dominated by straight white men discussing sports or cracking jokes about their wives and families but as smartphones became more available, and individual podcasts gained listeners around the world, the medium transformed into a safe space for a number of communities to share their stories. In the last five years, the global LGBTQ community has produced some of the best podcasts in the scene.

Closer home, Noronha, who is also known as India's first openly gay comedian, launched *Keeping It Queer* in 2016. "I was already working with IVM on a podcast, and was producing and co-hosting a show with Cyrus Broacha. As a stand-up comedian, which is something I pursue in the evenings, I offer a humorous and queer perspective on things. So IVM and I decided to start a show that would offer a space to talk about



Navin Noronha (left); Farhad Karkaria

all things queer in fun way," says Noronha. Next year, he roped in Karkaria, a digital media marketer, as co-host.

"What we've wanted to do with the show is not just talk about our experiences as gay men, but open the conversation up to other members in the community. Some of our guests have talked about love



and rejection, but also abuse, and you realise that you can't be flippant about these subjects," says Noronha. "The show has been a learning experience for us as well, especially when we interact with some of our guests who have gone through so much, or the work they do for the community," says Karkaria.



Colours in sepia

Day games, routine totals, retro jerseys, dropped catches... the post-modern era World Cup is soaked in vibrant vintage



EXPRESS AT WORLD CUP

SRIRAM VEERA
MANCHESTER, JULY 7

MOSS SIDE, Manchester. The ground beneath English feet is paved with Indian sandstone. In fact, around this city and even across the country. No wonder, Indian natural stones are the second-biggest Indian export after iron ore in minerals. The English are obsessed with Indian sandstones in particular. Their driveways are paved with them and their homes are tiled with them. Retro-style, durable, cheap, and good-old nostalgia. Just like this World Cup in some ways.

What a difference two games have made to this tournament. It started with Sri Lanka's lone but epic contribution when they beat England, triggering chaos. England panicked, raising hope in teams like Pakistan and Bangladesh. Pakistan, in particular, kept winning after that but when England started to recover with wins, threatening to anaesthetise the tournament again, New Zealand stepped up with three straight losses that dragged the World Cup right down to the wire. And then, just when things seemed to settle down, the second tournament-turning game came along when South Africa beat Australia – and the feet beneath the cricketing world once again slipped.

It's been all retro thus far. 350 plus totals, they said, teams have huffed and puffed to chase 250. Big players usually dominate World Cups; Rohit Sharma, David Warner, Kane Williamson, Jasprit Bumrah, Trent Boult and the like. Apart from Shaheen Afridi and Alex Carey, most of the top performers have been known names. 10.30 am starts and no floodlights meant tosses shouldn't matter as much with the dew factor, they said, but again retro style, win toss, bat first has more often than not worked.

Two new balls might hamper spin, they said, but that tribe has been doing all right. Modern fielding is so sharp that we see breathtaking catches but many a catch has sunk to the green English grass. The English have been training for slip catches with a set of foam stumps to mimic last-instant deflections off the wicketkeeper's gloves. Of course, all that intense micro-management is better than going through the motions but it reflects how things haven't always gone according to expectations in this tournament.

Even the English booing is a cliché. Not born out of impulsive reaction but a mass-produced emotion of sorts. Ahead of every game, the media would ask a player, he would utter some tripe that gets transferred onto television and print, and the next day, more of the same from the crowds. Sometimes it feels nothing of consequence erupts spontaneously. Even the hitting from the batsmen. The World Cup has seen some wonderful hitting, but without any associated violence. It's beautiful and boring, if you get the idea. Shahid Afridi would have sneezed in contempt if he isn't promoting his autobiography that he hasn't read.

Sand-stoned Manchester and India. Robert Clive, a "unstable sociopath", in the words of historian William Dalrymple, the man called Clive of India, and the man who engineered British rule in India with his association with the East India Company, spent his formative years in this city. Clive, known for the battle at Arcot that defeated the "Carnatic" and then the Battle of Plassey that helped British annex Bengal, grew up in Manchester with his uncle.

When he was seven, his uncle would write to his father about his penchant to fight and rowdiness. As he grew up, fanciful tales



PARTING GIFT

Before South Africa flew home, they inflicted a 10-run defeat on Australia, which displaced them from the top and changed the semifinal line-up. Reuters

built around him – setting up a protective racket in town, expelled from numerous schools – and so his father sent him to India as a clerk with the East India Company in Madras. He unleashed much mayhem in India, looted its wealth back to his home, almost single-handedly laid the foundation of the British Empire.

Later, once he returned to his homeland, he would slit his throat and be quietly buried in an unmarked grave that was discovered years later. In Dalrymple's telling, in 1765, around the time Clive entrenched himself as the governor of Bengal, a Mughal official named Narayan Singh, said, "we have to take orders from a handful of (English) traders who have not yet learned to wash their bottoms?"

Barely five kilometres from where Clive grew up in Manchester, a cricket ground would come up which would now host a World Cup semifinal involving India.

History, often brutal when associated with India, is littered across streets and graves in England but this has also been the land where since then, Indians have come in droves to build a life for themselves. As in life, as in sport, as that cliché goes. Manchester might have been the place that produced India's greatest villain, so to say, but now in sport it's been assumed that it would provide a free passage to the World Cup final.

In fact, it has already been assumed that India would walk over New Zealand. The reasoning is that the Kiwis are usually champions of World Cup semis, and barring the last edition, that's where their inspiring journey ends. And the reasoning is based on the fact that New Zealand have lost their last three games – one decently close against Pakistan and then two horrible defeats. Not a bad deduction, one might say, but those three pitches were slow and sluggish. And only Kane Williamson had the game to bat on those tracks. As one saw in the match between Australia and South Africa, Manchester can throw up a batting track with 300+ totals.

On such a track, New Zealand won't be the team that one saw in the last three games with no one barring Williamson having any clue on what to do to buy a run. Would the bruising losses leave psychological scars that they can't recover from? It's a lovely line when one hears it from the voice of Ravi Shastri, the commentator, but Shastri, the coach, won't be buying that. Well, he shouldn't.

In the end, it might come down to whether Boult can take down Sharma early. If anyone can, apart from Mitchell Starc, he can. Bend the ball in, make Sharma move, force him to flick square – and hope for the best. If that happens, it's game on, folks. Else,

India dominate, go to the final in London.

But if that happens, the others have to work hard to earn that passage. And on a flat track, New Zealand's batsmen can come into the picture. Of course, India would still enter the game as huge favourites, but why not hope for a good close game?

Hope is what Friedrich Engels, the father of communism, might have clung on to when he lived in Manchester. He arrived as a fresh-faced 22-year old in 1842, on exile from Germany. Another father worried about his son (he was called "scabby sheep of the family" by his wealthy factory-owning father) and sent to Manchester to reform himself. Instead, he grew even more radical here. Asa Briggs wrote in his book *Victorian Cities*: "All roads led to Manchester in the 1840s, the shock city of the age... If Engels had lived not in Manchester, his conception of class and his theories of role of class in history might have been very different. He might not have been a communist but a currency reformer."

As it turned out, moved by industrial degradation, Engels wrote "The condition of the working class in England," here in Manchester, the manifesto of Communism. He would also meet Karl Marx at the oldest library in UK, the Chethams's, which still ex-

ists in the city. The desk where Engels and Marx sat is still out there and in 2017, a statue of Engels came up in a public square – a development that the many Ukrainians in the city didn't like.

Hope would also be New Zealand's overriding emotion as they walk into Old Trafford on Tuesday morning. They are led by a world-class batsman and a pretty good leader, quietly ambitious, who likes to lead by example. One thought does pop up though: In this scenario when they have lost three in a row, would they need someone like Brendon McCullum, who could be all bombastic with his batting and an extrovert who liked to dream big and tried to infuse the same in his men. Williamson's batting coach David Johnston doesn't quite see it that way. "He is a very level-headed chap with great understanding of the game. All through his life, he has been the captain in various sports. It comes naturally to him and he is at home as a leader."

Also, one suspects they are at a place they would love: those three losses have meant that they have again retreated to being underdogs, and nobody loves living in that illusion like the Kiwi cricketers. The fans dread the hope, and are at home in despair. They have got what they wanted and now let's see what they conjure from it.

Consolation for South Africa, but concerns for Australia

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
MANCHESTER, JULY 7

DAVID WARNER'S brilliant century went in vain as a Faf du Plessis-inspired South Africa beat defending champions Australia by 10 runs to pull the curtains on their disappointing World Cup campaign on a high here. Australia needed to win to top the standings after India's clinical victory over Sri Lanka earlier on Saturday, but the defending champions fell short despite Warner registering his third ton of the tournament (122 off 117 balls) and wicket-keeper Alex Carey's 85 off 69.

Already eliminated, South Africa were inspired by Du Plessis' fluent 100 of 94 balls and Rassie van der Dussen's career-best 95 to post a challenging 325 for six in the last league game of the tournament. The Proteas came out with purpose and defended the target with Kagiso Rabada (3/56), Dwaine Pretorius (2/27) and Andile Phehlukwayo sharing the honours with the ball, as Australia were bundled out for 315 in 49.5 overs. Australia finished the league stage in the second spot with 14 points from nine game and will take on hosts England in the second semi-final at Birmingham on Thursday. India will play New Zealand in the first-semifinal here on Tuesday.

Besides Warner and Carey, no other Australian batsmen could make any notable contribution with the bat. Australia were reduced to 119 for four in 24.1 overs before Warner and Carey stitched 108 runs off just 90 balls for the fifth wicket to keep the title holders in the hunt. But once the duo departed, Australia's chase fell apart.

Earlier, openers Aiden Markram (34) and Quinton de Kock (52) came out with positive intent after South Africa opted to bat. Du Plessis and Van der Dussen carried forward the good work on a batting friendly pitch with a 151-run stand for the third wicket and in the process, the South African skipper raised his 12th ODI century. After taking some time, Du Plessis worked the ball around nicely in the middle overs while Van der Dussen shifted gears in the latter stage of the innings. Van der Dussen raised the team's 300 with a six off Pat Cummins but he holed out to Glenn Maxwell at the deep midwicket boundary while trying to hit a six off the last ball of the innings.

Wade and Marsh as cover

Australia have called in wicketkeeper-batsman Matthew Wade and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh as cover for their injured duo of Usman Khawaja and Marcus Stoinis ahead of Thursday's Cricket World Cup semi-final against hosts England. Number three batsman Khawaja retired with a hamstring injury in Saturday's defeat to South Africa and though he returned to bat later in the innings, he clearly looked in pain and may miss the rest of the tournament.

BRIEF SCORES: South Africa 325/6 in 50 overs (Du Plessis 100, van der Dussen 95, de Kock 52) beat Australia 315 in 49.5 overs (Warner 122, Carey 85; Rabada 3/56) by 10 runs.



David Warner's third century in this World Cup went futile. AP

HERO'S WELCOME

Defiant in defeat, Sarfaraz vows he can take Pakistan to the 'next level'



Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed flatly refused to give up captaincy. PCB

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, JULY 7

NEITHER ASHAMED nor in a mood to quit after Pakistan failed to qualify for the World Cup semifinals, skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed on Sunday said he can take his young team to the "next level".

Addressing a press conference, hours after returning from London, the wicketkeeper-batsman said the team did not fare poorly and was close to making the knockout stage. "I don't think we need to be ashamed of anything. We had a tough time in the first five matches specially after the defeat to India but I am proud of the way the team fought back to win the last four matches," Sarfaraz said.

He flatly refused suggestions that it's time that he gives up captaincy. "The Pakistan Cricket Board will decide on who will be the captain. But personally, since you asked me, I know these players very well now. Most of

them are young and if we learn from our mistakes in the World Cup, I can take this team to the next level, especially with the World T20 Cup coming up next year in Australia," he said.

Pakistan finished fifth in the World Cup after they lost the semifinal race to New Zealand on Net-Run-Rate. "I am satisfied with our performance and we should have reached the semis but in overall context and given the tough conditions we faced in England I think we did respectably well. I have not thought about leaving the captaincy. I know that if I get a chance to continue, we as a team will make more progress," he said.

Sarfaraz said Pakistan had not only encountered tough conditions but the criticism and reaction of some people after the defeat to India was very hurtful.

"There were some incidents with the players including myself in London which we reported to the Board. They were not needed and it hurt and shook the players. We were upset at losing to India but we

didn't expect such reactions, even though isolated."

He said that after going through so much after first five matches, the team had really fought back well to win four matches on a trot. "It was a great performance and I think the washout against Sri Lanka and the performance against West Indies in the end kept us out of the semis. But the pitches variation was something which we didn't expect in the tournament. We were tested and we played badly against Australia and India."

The Pakistan captain made it clear he had no problems or differences with either head coach Mickey Arthur, chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq or any players. "The teams we selected in the World Cup, it was the three of us doing it. There was no dispute. There was no interference in my authority. I think we did our best but yes mistakes were made."

Sarfaraz said after the defeat against India, the team had a week-long break and he had called all the players and had a frank talk with

them on every issue. He also defended the decision to not play young bowler Muhammad Hasnain. "There were senior bowlers available and we did not get a match, where we could give him an opportunity. We picked Wahab Riaz after the bilateral series with England and realising we needed some pace and experience in our bowling attack."

India didn't lose on purpose

Refusing to believe in the perception that India deliberately lost to England, hurting Pakistan's semifinal chances, skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed said it's incorrect to cast aspersions on the Virat Kohli-led side. A lot of former Pakistan cricketers doubted that India did not give their best against England, putting obstacles in their side's road to semifinals.

"No, no, it is not right to say this. I don't think India lost because of us. England played well to win," Sarfaraz told reporters.

Sarfaraz also gave a dressing down to a journalist at the press conference after she used

I have not thought about leaving the captaincy. I know that if I get a chance to continue, we as a team will make more progress."

SARFARAZ AHMED

the word 'Bengalis' while asking about the match against Bangladesh. "Please don't use this word. It could become an issue for you on the social media. I think you should address them as Bangladesh. You are using objectionable word," the Pakistan skipper told the television reporter after she asked why the team management did not give Shoaib Malik a farewell in the match against the "Bengalis".

"Shoaib is our senior-most player and though he did not have a good World Cup, he has served the country a lot. His presence in the team was very good for all of us," Sarfaraz said. Malik announced his retirement from ODIs after the World Cup and will now only focus on playing T20 cricket.

On seventh of July, USA add fourth star to their jersey



Megan Rapinoe with the World Cup trophy after USA defeated Netherlands 2-0. AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LYON, JULY 7

THE UNITED STATES women's football team was as good as American players promised — maybe even better. Especially Megan Rapinoe, the pink-haired captain who emerged with the Golden Ball as top player, the Golden Boot as top scorer and a world-wide stature as a champion for gender equity. The US won its record fourth Women's World Cup title and second in a row, beating the Netherlands 2-0 Sunday night when Rapinoe converted a tiebreaking penalty kick in the second half and Rose Lavelle added a goal. Rapinoe scored in the 61st minute after a video review determined Stefanie van der Gragt had fouled Alex Morgan with a kick to the shoulder in the penalty area.

Two days past her 34th birthday, Rapinoe topped the ball past goalkeeper Sari van Veenendaal for her sixth goal of the tournament. The oldest player to score in a Women's World Cup final, she struck a familiar victorious pose with arms outstretched.

It's surreal. I don't know how to feel like now. It's ridiculous," said Rapinoe, also awarded the Golden Ball as top player. "We're crazy and that's

what makes us so special. We just have no quit in us. We're so tight, and we'll do anything to win." Lavelle, at 24 the team's up-and-coming star, added her third goal of the tournament on an 18-foot left-footed shot in the 69th after a solo run up the center of the field.

She's superstar, not even in the making, she's straight up superstar at this point," Rapinoe said. Fans, many dressed in red, white and blue, chanted "Equal Pay!" at the final whistle, a reminder players sued the US Soccer Federation in March claiming gender discrimination. Rapinoe drew the ire of US President Donald Trump during the tournament by saying she and teammates would refuse to visit the White House, part of the team's wider push for gender equity. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio needed just a few seconds after the final whistle to invite the team to a ticker-tape parade up the Canyon on Heroes in Manhattan on Wednesday.

The Americans never trailed in the tournament and set records with 26 goals and a 12-game World Cup winning streak dating to 2015. US coach Jill Ellis became the first coach to lead a team to two Women's World Cup titles, and the US joined Germany in 2003 and 2007 as the only repeat champions.

"It's just chemistry. They put their hearts and soul into this journey," Ellis said. "They made history." FIFA president Gianni Infantino handed over the trophy, a stark contrast to four years ago in Canada, when then-president Sepp Blatter was a no-show as US prosecutors investigated corruption in football's governing body. While the US added fourth star to its jersey, Germany is the only nation that has even two.

With confidence and brashness that some called even arrogant — triggering a backlash that the angry response was sexist — this American team established a standard of excellence that exceeded the US champions of 1991, 1999 and 2015, becoming a goal for all others to match. Former American players joined the current generation on the field for the postgame celebration. Alyssa Naeyer, the 31-year-old who succeeded Hope Solo in goal, faced repeated questions entering the tournament but allowed just three goals in the tournament and finished with her fourth shutout.

Video review, adopted by FIFA for the men's World Cup last year, showed its impact when Stephanie Frappart, the first woman to referee a men's Ligue 1 match, went to the screen at the side of the field and then signaled toward the spot.

NUMBERS GAME

26 The number of goals scored by the USA in their seven matches, a new record for a single World Cup.

12 Number of consecutive wins for USA in the World Cup — a record (men or women) in a single edition.



Yes! Fourth star. Back to back. Congrats to the record breakers on the @USWNT, an incredible team that's always pushing themselves—and the rest of us—to be even better. Love this team.
@BARACK OBAMA

1 WORLD CUP • 10 COUNTRIES • 1000 OPINIONS

Match made in (rainy) heaven

The business end of the World Cup is here, with a last-minute twist to the semifinal line-up, thanks to South Africa winning against Australia and flipping the playoffs. *The Indian Express* looks at how the teams have come to terms with the upcoming week.

Sun rains down on Eng hopes

How can you not trust *The Sun* when it comes to predicting rains? The reputed rag has delivered the bad news for everyone on planet cricket, except, of course, the Australians. UK's favourite Peeping Tom, the sensationalist tabloid, *The Sun*, has poured a cloud-full of cold water over the World Cup. The heart-breaking headline that desperately fights to get noticed on sports pages that have the typically *Sun* stories about "England's Lionesses' BAPS (that's boyfriends and partners)" and "Brazilian referee receives proposal to work as escort after viral video" says: "RAIN PAIN: England facing World Cup washout with Australia going through if rain stops play... and forecast is drizzly." Once the pain of the semi-final setback at Edgbaston kicks in, comes the second blow: Eoin Morgan's men could be knocked out of the tournament without a ball being bowled should the weather intervene.

The ICC rules say that two wash out means the team higher up on the league table makes the cut. In other words, Australia, after profusely thanking weather gods, would move to London to play either India or New Zealand in the final since they were better placed than the hosts. This would easily be England sports' most traumatic heart-break — much brutal than the kick in the gut they regularly receive from their footballers or the choke they have so often suffered when sprawled on the Henman Hill.

For the Barmy Army this would be a dagger straight through their heart that has been pounding furiously this last one week. The MCC members would be gritting their teeth while collecting their golden-red stripped blazers from the dry cleaner contemplating the very bright possibility of watching the Aussies at Lord's this Sunday. Even for the neutrals, the clash of the Ashes rival in the semi-final doesn't seem right. Here are more details about the story that has two screen shots from a weather website that shows lots of clouds and rains on the match day, Thursday, and also reserve day, Friday. If it helps, the caption for the Thursday graphic says: "The weather forecast for Thursday looks worryingly drizzly." And for Friday, it is — "The reserve day looks set to be even wetter in a real worry for England." No but can you trust *The Sun*? In England, maybe you can't.

Early exchanges

The junior days were when Virat Kohli spat his dibby dobbles. Innocuous though his bowling action was and harmless his projectiles seemed, he was quite resourceful. He purchased four wickets in the 2008 U-19 World Cup, none as vital as Kane Williamson's in the semifinal. Williamson, ever-so-cool even back in those days, threatened to stroll away with the match until Kohli decided to bring himself on. The New Zealand skipper played him with the same composure he exuded these days, before Kohli set him up.

The latter bottled him up with a spate of off-stump deliveries before he slipped a full ball on the leg-side with "considerable in-drift" as *Cricinfo's* ball-by-ball commentary notes. Williamson, trying to work him down the legside, over-balanced himself, lost the footing, missed the ball and was stumped. Shreevats Goswami's nimble stumping was appreciated but the *Wisden* reporter was smitten by Kohli's smarts. He wrote: "Kohli, though at best military-medium pacer, the sort of bowler Williamson might have played day in and out in his country, demonstrated shrewdness. It could be a valuable asset as his career progresses. Williamson, though promising enough a batsman he is, has to



CATCH US IF YOU CAN

Poised to face table-toppers India in the first semifinal in Manchester, New Zealand are happy to play the underdogs. *Black Caps Twitter*

ensure that he doesn't throw away his wickets. Not to a leg-side-bound ball."

Kohli picked one more wicket, that of number four batsman Fraser Colson, beating him for pace (yes to read it right). Combined with his 43 in a low-scoring match, he was a straightforward man-of-the-match pick. But Williamson wasn't finished. He exacted revenge on Kohli with a blinding catch at short cover, "plucking the ball inches off the ground" as the commentary gushed. *The Wisden* report listed it as "one of the catches of the tournament," before portending greatness for both. What caught their eyes was the batsmen's cover-driving penchant. "Their driving was a feast for the eyes. Williamson elegant and classical, Kohli wristy and punchy. Both seem ready for international cricket." Kohli did, two months later. Williamson waited for two more years, but there's no denying that both have emerged as batting talismans of their teams. And haven't cover-driving charmed the world?

Mind games begins

Few are good at mind games and banter than the Australians. And it hasn't taken them long to train their guns on the Englishmen. Reports in Australian media are flush with praise for England but each comes with an asterisk mark. Take, for example, this one in *The Sydney Morning Herald*: "Australia may be the defending champions but England were the pre-tournament favourites as they boast a formidable — but still questionable — batting line-up when conditions suit their style." The report goes on to wonder if "England batting line-up contained a bunch of bully boys who only thrived in favourable conditions."

This question was then posed to Nathan Lyon, who wasted little time in joining the bandwagon. "It's all on them. It's their World Cup to lose, if you ask me. We have nothing to lose, we only have stuff to gain," Lyon has been quoted as saying. There's concern over Australia's confidence taking a hit following the defeat to South Africa and playing at a venue — Edgbaston — where they haven't played in this World Cup. There's just one regret from the stinging defeat, though. "They squandered the opportunity to take on a limping New Zealand in the semifinals."

Could've been Ind vs Pak semis

Table-toppers India would be licking their lips at the prospect of facing New Zealand in the World Cup semis. Despite losing three matches on the trot, Black Caps will be no pushovers. But Virat Kohli will admit that they pose as far less daunting opponents than Pakistan in a high octane World Cup knock-out match. With a bit of luck, and perhaps, a slight tweak in the rules, Pakistan could well have overtaken Kiwis for the fourth spot in the points table. It was their inferior net run rate that saw them finish fifth, even though they had accrued the same number of wins and losses as Kane Williamson's team.

Not surprisingly, Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur was critical of the net run-rate tiebreaker rule and suggested an overhaul in a round-robin format. He believed that it would have been fairer to split two teams tied with the same number of wins and losses on who-beat-who basis. Had this rule been implemented, Pakistan would have progressed as they defeated New Zealand in their league encounter at

Edgbaston. "I would certainly have liked them to consider head-to-head because then we'd be in the semifinal... I do think it needs a look. I think amount of wins, head to head, and then if there's three teams all together, then I think net run rate can sort it out," Arthur said. Kohli, though, will not be complaining.

Tightening of Noose Zealand

Except for runs, Colin Munro got everything right when he spoke at the start of the World Cup. "The guys can keep talking about Australia and India, but we will sneak in as the third or fourth favourite and see what happens thereafter," he had said before the start of the campaign. This sneaking in on the back of three losses to Pakistan, Australia and England, has seen bookmakers hand the Black Caps odds that make them distant outsiders going into the semifinal — placed at \$9 to win the Cup. India was \$2.90 favourites to win the World Cup, with England at \$3 and Australia at \$3.40. Black Caps have won only 1 of their 7 semifinals.

South Africa's little parting gift to NZ by shuffling around the semis lineup was ensuring NZ ended with their longest odds of the tournament in the semifinal — installed at \$3.26, with India at \$1.36. While the Black Caps twitter handle got cheeky as South Africa strangled Australia's efforts to finish tops and flipped the playoffs order ("We see you @BCCI & can't wait for our @cricket-worldcup Semi Final on Tuesday in Manchester?? #BACKTHEREBLACKCAPS" they posted with a picture of Kane Williamson snapping at the heels of Kohli and Sharma

from an old match), doom was evocatively widespread.

Coach Gary Stead's job is to stay optimistic in this situation where neither fans nor press are particularly hopeful. "We haven't played our best cricket, but we've also played some very good cricket at times. We just need to try and put a complete performance together. If we want to be the best, we've got to show that we can stand up and find a way and fight against these guys as well. I have no doubts the capabilities are there in our side. From here, anything can happen when you're two games away," Stead said. "Stead is right — anything could happen. But 44 years of history suggests a Black Caps World Cup triumph is unlikely to be one of them," NZ Herald sulked.

NZ Herald have dredged up the most gloomy stat: 16 teams have come into the knockout stage of the World Cup off the back of a loss — and none of those sides have ever won the World Cup. That's 44 years of melancholy along with their perennial despair of "just 4.5 million people."

The two sides haven't met at a World Cup since 2003, after their group stage clash in Nottingham was washed out last month, and the lurching campaign has left no one upbeat. Here's a few numbers that might cheer them up: Trent Boult has 5, 3 and 4 wickets in the last three games against India, NZ's chokehold on oppositions is between overs 11 and 40 (according to ICC stats) with Kiwi bowlers conceding just 4.74 runs per over, and boasting the best bowling average of 28.63 wks apiece — which could nicely side in with India's middle order wobbles. "Colin de Grandhomme has proven tough to get away and Lockie Ferguson's pace packs a punch, so India's customary gradual acceleration might be stunted at Old Trafford," the ICC claims. Nay, hopes. **ENS**

Won't be scared by run chase against Aussies, says Bayliss

AFP/PTI
LONDON, JULY 7

ENGLAND COACH Trevor Bayliss has warned Australia that his side won't crack under pressure if they have to bat second in Thursday's World Cup semifinal. Bayliss's side lost to Australia at Lord's in the group stage, failing to chase down the holders' total of 285-7. England were bowled out for 221 and also lost to Pakistan and Sri Lanka after batting second.

Those defeats raised concerns about the World Cup hosts' ability to cope with the stress of chasing. But Bayliss has no concerns that England will panic if they find themselves in the position of chasing down a score at Edgbaston. "Over the past four years, we have won 14 of the last 17 times we have batted second," he told BBC Radio 5Live's Sportsweek programme. "So batting second doesn't scare our guys and the wickets are a little better now than they were earlier in the tournament. We are full of confidence and happy to be in the semifinals."

Asked about losing to Australia earlier in the tournament, Bayliss added: "I think it was more to do with the way we approached the game. We came in off a bad loss to Sri Lanka in the game before where we got completely away from our style of play, I guess, and I think there was still a bit of a hangover in that next match."

"After that, the boys made a commitment to going out — win, lose or draw — to play to their strengths and we did that in the next two games and put in a good performance, so it is about sticking to our processes and how we play well."

Whether they bat first or second, semifinal success for England is likely to depend on whether openers Jason Roy and Jonny Bairstow can enjoy another impressive partnership. The pair have been key in recent matches, with Roy restored to the team following a hamstring injury. The 28-year-old has developed into a pivotal part of the England limited-overs set-up, but Bayliss admits he is under consideration for a place in the Ashes squad against Australia later this year.

"I think so. Jason has had success at international cricket and that goes a long way to being able to handle the pressure so it is a definite option," he said.

'Loss to SA, injuries not ideal'

Australia's assistant coach Ricky Ponting has admitted that his injury-ravaged team, beaten by South Africa in the last league game of the World Cup, is facing a tough situation but says the players can find a way to play their best game in the semifinal.

Australia's defeat in their final group stage game to South Africa on Saturday was compounded with injuries to Usman Khawaja (hamstring) and Marcus Stoinis (side) that saw Matthew Wade and Mitchell Marsh pulled out of the Australia A tour to join the World Cup squad as cover. Shaun Marsh was already ruled out of the tournament after suffering a fractured wrist in a net session. "It's not unusual to have disruptions in World Cups. In the last group game before a semifinal is probably a little bit different. If you're totally honest, it's not ideal to have these sort of changes going into a World Cup semifinal, especially now we know we're playing England, the favourites coming into the tournament," Ponting said.

"It's up to us coaches to make it as easy as possible for those guys coming in, talking through scenarios and situations and just trying to keep them as free in the mind as possible," he was quoted as saying by *cricket.com.au*. Despite losing to South Africa in their last league match, which resulted in India taking the top spot in the points table, Ponting said Australia have been the best side in the tournament till date.

"We've beaten England already in the tournament. I think it's fair to say we've been the standout team of the tournament to date. A loss now, although it's not ideal going into a semifinal, it's probably not the worst thing either. It could be a bit of a wake-up, a bit of a freshen up and a bit of a reset. It might just make us a better team. "Australia's best game has to be in the semifinal, it's as simple as that," he said.

BRIEFLY

Intercontinental Cup:
Tajikistan beat India

Ahmedabad: India began their defence of the Intercontinental Cup with a stinging 4-2 loss to Tajikistan, the tournament's lowest-ranked team, in Ahmedabad on Sunday. Tajikistan staged a stunning comeback and scored four goals in the second half after going down 2-0 in the first half. Sunil Chhetri (3', 41') scored twice for India while Komron Tursunov (55'), Sheriddin Boboev (58'), Muhammadjon Rahimov (71') and Shahrom Samiev (75') were the goal scorers for the visitors. India's next match will be on July 13 against North Korea, who will open their campaign against Syria on Monday.

Kashyap enters final
of Canada Open

Calgary: Former Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap produced yet another stellar show to enter the men's singles final of Canada Open Super 100 tournament, outplaying fourth seed Wang Tzu Wei of Chinese Taipei in a gruelling three-game encounter here. Kashyap, seeded sixth, came from a game down to pip Wang 14-21 21-17 21-18 in a hard-fought semi-final contest that lasted an hour and 10 minutes Saturday night. He had defeated the World No 30 at the India Open in March earlier this year. The Indian will take on unseeded Li Shi Feng of China in the title clash of the USD 75,000 tournament.

Archery WC: India
return with no medal

Berlin: Recurve mixed pair of Atul Verma and Bombayla Devi Laishram lost to Italy 3-5 in the bronze play-off here on Sunday as India concluded their campaign in the Archery World Cup Stage IV without a medal. Ranked fifth in the qualification round, the Indian duo drew the first set 36-36 but the Italian pair Mauro Nespoli and Elena Tonetta went ahead shooting two 10s. The Indian combo then put up a strong show to take the third set 37-36 but cracked under pressure in the decider.

ENS & PTI

When stars align

Andy Murray, Serena Williams impress in their mixed doubles opener at Wimbledon

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
LONDON, JULY 7

SERENA WILLIAMS confessed to almost being overcome by the pressure of partnering British sporting icon Andy Murray in the Wimbledon mixed doubles but it all worked out in the end as they won their first round match, beating Germany's Andreas Mies and Chile's Alexa Guarachi 6-4 6-1. Seven-time singles champion Williams had fulfilled Murray's search for a partner -- world number one Ashleigh Barty had been previously mooted.

However, as the match loomed on Centre Court her nerves began to jangle as she feared she would let down Murray on the court where he won two Wimbledon singles titles and the 2012 Olympic.

"At some point I started feeling a lot of pressure," said Williams on Saturday. "Oh, my God, I have to do well because this match is so hyped that I want to see it. "I didn't even want to be in it, I kind of just wanted to watch it." "Maybe I'll try to get a video of it or watch it somewhere."

Overall I think I was able to handle my nerves pretty good, do better than I thought I was going to do," Murray and Williams -- both former world number ones -- had little trouble in dispensing with their opponents. "Obviously I had lost in the doubles earlier (with Pierre-Hugues Herbert) so all my energy is focussed on the mixed but it was a good start," said Murray. He said physically he felt fine after two matches in one day, save for a stiff back. The hip he had 'life-changing surgery' on earlier this year had not given him any trouble. "I feel good and am happy to be alive in this," said Serena.

'My horrible English accent'

There was an element of farce when they let slip a set point in the opener as Williams ended up tumbling over and landing unceremoniously on her backside at the net. The incident caused them much merriment after the match. "I just remember I slipped, then I was going to get back up. I saw a ball coming towards me, so I just kind of went back down," said Williams. "Then I couldn't get back up after that." "Did you see the video?" asked Murray

"Yeah. It was hilarious," replied Williams. "I decided to just stay down and



Serena Williams and Andy Murray beat Germany's Andreas Mies and Chile's Alexa Guarachi 6-4 6-1. Reuters

KEY CLASHES

MEN'S SINGLES

R. Bautista Agut vs B. Paire;
D. Goffin vs F. Verdasco
S. Querrey vs T. Sandgren
J. Sousa vs R. Nadal
K. Nishikori vs M. Kukushkin
G. Pella vs M. Raonic

WOMEN'S SINGLES

S. Zhang vs D. Yastremska
E. Svitolina vs P. Martic
A. Barty vs A. Riske
B. Strýčová vs E. Mertens
K. Muchová vs K. Plíšková
S. Williams vs C. Suárez Navarro
S. Halep vs C. Gauff
J. Konta vs P. Kvitová

Federer posts new Slam record

Eight-time Wimbledon singles champion Roger Federer posted yet more landmarks as all the main contenders encountered few problems in reaching the last 16.

Federer registered a record 350th win in Grand Slam matches in his 7-5 6-2 7-6 (7/4) victory over Lucas Pouille of France on Saturday and in the process reached the fourth round for an unprecedented 17th time. "It's a nice number to achieve. I've enjoyed my time at the Slams," said Federer, who next plays Matteo Berrettini of Italy, of his Grand Slam record.

"It's been nice winning that much." Earlier, his great rival and two-time Wimbledon champion Rafael Nadal had a much more enjoyable experience than his previous match as he eased into the last 16 with a 6-2 6-3 6-2 romp over French veteran Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

No time to make changes to boost Tokyo Olympics haul: Rijiju

SHAHID JUDGE
MUMBAI, JULY 7

THERE'S JUST over a year left for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, and while the scramble for quota spots is on, sports minister Kiren Rijiju believes there is not much scope for changes that will boost the chances of a successful Indian charge in Japan.

"Tokyo is a year away, so there are not many changes that we can make. There's not much time to create new athletes," he said during a visit to the Sports Authority of India campus in Mumbai. "The only thing we can do now is to go forward with whatever preparations that have been made so far."

Rijiju, who was Minister of State for Home Affairs before coming to the sports ministry in May-end, is currently on a tour of all the prominent sports facilities in the country. Prior to his trip to Mumbai, he visited the Army Sports Institute in Pune -- an athletics hub.

Rijiju did not conceal his disappointment at India's medal tally in the past editions. Since independence, the country has amassed a total of 15 medals in individual events -- including a solitary gold -- and eight in hockey.

Waning dominance

"The traditional sports that we used to dominate in, like hockey, even in that our last medal came in 1980. That was a long time back," he says. "We have won individual medals, but not as much as we should have. In Rio (2016), we got a silver and a bronze. We have a country of 1.3 billion people, so according to that we haven't got many medals at the Asian Games and Olympics. Especially the Olympics, the performances haven't been good."

In the bid to produce a bigger pool of stronger athletes at the international level, Rijiju has introduced a few "basic" changes to the way facilities in the country function. Citing the dietary issue, the sports minister has increased funding.

"What I've seen in the past is that junior athletes would get less food than the seniors. That has to change," he claims. "Whatever the athlete needs, in consultation with the coach and nutritionist, that will be provided. It's the most basic thing and not a major policy, but it needs to be done."

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