

Bolster public transport to reduce air pollution: EPCA

Agency asks Supreme Court to intervene for approval of Metro Phase IV project

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

To reduce air pollution in Delhi, the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) requested the Supreme Court to intervene in the "grossly inadequate" public transport infrastructure of the city.

In a 'special report' submitted to the SC on July 1, the EPCA urged it to intervene for the approval of Phase IV of Delhi Metro, which is stuck between the Central and Delhi governments. It also requested the SC to ask the government to speed up the process to purchase more buses. "Cities like Beijing have 107 buses per lakh people while Delhi has 17 buses per lakh people," the report



stated. The proposal for phase IV of Delhi Metro was submitted in 2014 and work was to begin by 2016 and "further delay will cost the city enormously", the report said.

"The stalemate between the governments are on different financial aspects of the project. The Delhi government has on April 10, 2019, communicated its direction that Delhi Metro Rail Corporation would not start the work till these issues are re-

solved," the report stated.

The EPCA said there are four issues between the governments – taxes, sharing of land cost, bearing operational cost and repayment of JJICA loan. Two of these are "notional", the report stated, adding that the Centre says operational cost should be borne by the Delhi government while the latter demands a 50:50 share. The DMRC stated that the costs involved in the project costs would increase with delay.

The Supreme Court in 1998 stated that the city should have 10,000 buses, but there are only 5,279 buses in the city, the report states. "All DTC buses are above 8-10 years. The maintenance contract for the opera-

tion of the buses is for 10 years... so replacement becomes critical as more and more buses would be phased out in the coming 2-3 years," the report states. "It is clear that the number of additional buses that will be on Delhi roads by January 2020 would be 1,000 and an additional 650 buses could be on roads soon after. This would not be sufficient and therefore, the procurement strategies of the remaining buses must be expedited," the report states.

Delhi Dialogue and Development Commission vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah said, "We are in the process of procurement of 4,000 buses and 1,000-1,500 buses will hit the roads by December 2019 and the rest in 2020."

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	127	Gurugram	95
Ghaziabad	150	Faridabad	88
Noida	177	Greater Noida	180
Good	0-50	Satisfactory	51-100
Moderate	101-200	Poor	201-300
Very poor	301-400	Severe	>401

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

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Health discussion on "How can we stop India's youth from killing themselves?" by Prof. Vikram Patel, Professor, Dept. of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre (IIC), 6:30 p.m.

Talk: Dr. Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Chairperson, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations will speak on issues relating to water, as part of conversations on urbanisation series at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Wild and Free", a solo show by Anil Kumar Goswami at Convention Centre Foyer, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "The Food Diplomacy Mekan Nggá Mekan Asal Kumpul", a group art show by curated by M. Haryo Hutomo at Exhibition Gallery, Korean Cultural Center, A-25, Lajpat Nagar IV, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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

Uniform Civil Code issue awaits 22nd Law Commission

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court was on Monday informed that the issue of framing a Uniform Civil Code will be placed for consideration before the 22nd Law Commission once it is constituted. Centre's standing counsel said on receiving a reference from the government, the issue was considered by the 21st Law Commission, which sought the views of various stakeholders and met several religious groups.

'Kejriwal is looting public funds by installing CCTVs'

Faulty cameras are not repaired: Cong.

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee on Monday alleged that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's move to install CCTV cameras in residential areas a "source of corruption" and the AAP government is "making false promises" with an eye on Delhi Assembly elections due next year.

Claiming that the Mr. Kejriwal is trying to gain "political capital" by installing the cameras, DPCC spokesperson Ramakant Goswami said the State exchequer is being "looted" by the party. "They said the installation of the CCTV cameras is a good concept as it would help to maintain law and order. But Mr. Kejriwal has been trying to take political capital out of the installation of the cameras without bothering to find out

Kejriwal has been trying to take political capital out of the installation of the cameras without bothering to find out whether the installed ones are functioning properly

RAMAKANT GOSWAMI
DPCC spokesperson

whether the installed ones are functioning properly," said Mr. Goswami.

Stating that the government is "looting public funds", DPCC spokesperson Jitender Kumar Kochhar said, "We challenge Mr. Kejriwal to come and see the condition of the CCTV cameras already installed in Malviya Nagar. Even though maximum funds have been utilised for the cameras, the local MLA has not bothered to get the faulty cameras repaired."

60 malaria cases reported so far: report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The number of cases of malaria this year so far has touched 60, according to the latest municipal corporation report released on Monday.

Last week, 16 cases of malaria were reported by the municipal corporations with two from south Delhi, one from east and up to 13 were "untraced after investigation." With the onset of the monsoon, the number of cases in the vector-borne diseases has gone up. For instance, last week, 13 cases of malaria were reported.

Meanwhile, the cases of dengue have been comparatively lower at 26 cases this year and four reported this week. For chikungunya, the numbers have been low as 12 have been reported this year. The civic bodies have reportedly sprayed up to 3,39,010 houses with insecticide.

Tribunal seeks report on allegations of open burning of waste in Okhla

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following a plea alleging open burning of garbage near the waste treatment plant in Okhla, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to look into the matter and furnish a report.

Noting that the petitioners had provided photo-

graphs as evidence, a Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said, "Let the DPCC look into the matter, take appropriate action in accordance with law and furnish a factual and action taken report in the matter within one month."

The directions came when a Jasola-based residents' welfare association

moved the green court alleging open burning of waste in the presence of officials and guards near the waste treatment plant.

Earlier the green panel had held that non-biodegradable waste and non-recyclable plastic should be segregated at landfill sites and used in the construction of building roads and embankments.

NGT panel to look into 'illegal factories in park'

'Ensure restoration of ground in a month'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has formed a panel to look into the allegations of encroachment and operation of illegal factories in a Ghaziabad park.

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed authorities to ensure restoration of the ground within one month.

Directing the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) to be the nodal agency for coordination and compliance of the order, the Bench said, "This will be in addition to prosecution and recovery of compensation for damages to the environment." The committee will comprise the Ghaziabad District Magistrate, Vice-Chairman Ghaziabad Development Authority, Municipal Commissioner and member Secretary of the UPPCB, the Bench added.

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a plea moved by Ghaziabad

The report confirms illegal construction in the park. There are also illegal plastic and textile factories operating without valid permit. Order of closure has been passed.

NGT BENCH

resident Hari Kishen who sought the removal of encroachments from the park in Sahibabad.

Earlier, in a report dated March 2019, authorities had acknowledged the operation of illegal factories in the park.

"The report confirms illegal construction in the park. There are also illegal plastic and textile factories operating without a valid permit. Order of closure has been passed. However, there is no material to show whether the closure has been given effect to and the park has been restored," the Bench observed.



Remains of the day: (From left to right) Rescue efforts in full swing after a Delhi-bound UPSRTC bus skidded off the Yamuna Expressway and plunged into a drain in Etmadpur in the early hours of Monday; the mangled remains of the bus; and family members of the victims at S.N. Medical College in Agra. • SANDEEP SAXENA

Third crash at same spot on Yamuna E-way leaves residents shocked

Bus was scheduled for Ghazipur, route later changed to Delhi

SAURABH TRIVEDI
AGRA

Twisted metal parts of the white bus were scattered all over the ground near the drain where it landed upside down after hitting the safety railing between the carriageways on the Yamuna Expressway on Monday.

Local residents said that it was the third bus accident at the spot but they had never seen such a terrible crash on the expressway.

The bus was scheduled for Ghazipur in U.P., but due to fewer passengers, the route was changed to Delhi.

"After hitting the middle railings, the bus turned turtle and landed in the drain from a height of 40 feet," said Hari Singh, a resident of the area.

Family members of one of the victims, Ariba (22), said she was a sales manager with a software company in Mumbai. She wanted to work somewhere close to



One of the survivors at the hospital on Monday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

her family and was looking for a job in the national capital region.

"Ariba was on her way for a job interview in Delhi and was scheduled to return on Tuesday. Little did we know that her attempt to come close to the family will take her away from us forever," said Mohammad Ali, a cousin.

Sunita, a resident of Raebareilly, was returning after attending a marriage function along with her husband Bhanu Pratap and two children. Her daughter was in her lap and son sleeping

beside her when they heard a loud sound, followed by water gushing inside the bus. "No one is informing me about my husband and one-year-old daughter, Riya. They are missing after the accident. My husband works with a factory in Delhi," she said.

In a state of shock
Doctors say she is in shock and they cannot break the news of her husband and daughter's death to her. They are waiting for her family to arrive.

Kamal Khan, who had come to receive his uncle Mujameel Khan's body, said that the bodies are beyond recognition. He identified his uncle by the ring he was wearing.

"The family members have got pictures of all 29 deceased on WhatsApp for identification, as it is tough for them to find their kin among the piles of bodies," said Suresh Singh, a man searching for his relative.

Over 700 lives lost in nearly 5,000 crashes since 2012

Figures revealed in RTI reply; NGO urges U.P. government and Centre to take urgent measures

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Yamuna Expressway, one of India's longest six-lane highways connecting Greater Noida to Agra, witnessed nearly 5,000 crashes between August 9, 2012, and January 31, 2018, resulting in over 700 casualties, according to a Right to Information (RTI) reply.

The RTI query was filed by an NGO, SaveLIFE Foundation (SLF), which works towards reducing India's "extremely high" number of road crash deaths. There have been over 8,000 victims in the accidents recorded within the time period.

The Expressway has been operational since 2012 and spans over 165 km. "There is an urgent need to improve enforcement on our highways. In 2017, over

Cause for concern						Accidents on Yamuna Expressway continue unabated
Year	Total crashes	Fatalities	Major injuries	Minor injuries	Total casualties	
2012*	275	33	87	304	424	
2013	896	118	356	989	1,463	
2014	771	127	371	964	1,462	
2015	919	143	403	989	1,535	
2016	1,219	133	421	1,103	1,657	
2017	763	145	407	1,020	1,572	
2018#	37	4	20	54	78	
TOTAL	4,880	703	2,065	5,423	8,191	

* DATA IS FROM AUGUST 9 ONWARDS | # DATA IS TILL JANUARY 31 | SOURCE: SAVE LIFE FOUNDATION

9,000 people have lost their lives in preventable bus crashes," said the NGO's founder, Piyush Tewari.

'Engineering issues'
"Urgent action is required on engineering issues. Most of our highways are missing crash barriers and other in-

frastructure measures that can prevent a crash from becoming fatal. We hope the Uttar Pradesh government, as well as the Union, take an urgent policy and on-ground measures to control it," he added. The NGO had made a fact sheet based on a report – Road Acci-

Speed limit won't help reduce accidents: Gadkari

NEW DELHI
Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari informed the Rajya Sabha on Monday that speed limit on highways would not help reduce the number of road accidents like the one that occurred on Monday at expressway near Agra killing 29 people. He said the Centre was looking for technical solutions like improving the design of the buses to check such accidents.

Pradesh in total road crashes was the fourth highest at 8.3% and the highest in total road crash fatalities at 13.6%, the NGO said. There was an 8.9% increase in road crashes in Uttar Pradesh from 2016, a 9.5% increase in persons injured and 4.1% increase in road crash fatalities.

Out of the total of 38,783 cases of road crashes in 2017, 25,862 occurred on National and State Highways, which resulted in 13,908 fatalities out of 20,124 fatalities in Uttar Pradesh.

In 2017, Uttar Pradesh saw the highest number of deaths two-wheeler commuters registered at 5,699 and the second highest death of Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) users due to road crashes recorded at 3914, the NGO added.

IN BRIEF

Judo Federation told to disclose files on selection

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court has directed the Judo Federation of India to disclose all files relating to how players were selected to represent India at the Judo Olympics scheduled for this month in Budapest, Hungary, to a judo player, who sought fresh conduct of selection trials.

HC rejects plea on ban on condom advertisements

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected a petition seeking to quash the Centre's notification banning telecast of advertisements of condom between 6.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. The High Court also said it has "no expert knowledge" about the issue and there was "no violation of the Constitution or any other law in force" by the government's decision.

Enough rules in place on phone tapping: court

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking directions to the Centre to frame rules on the phone tapping noting that there were enough guidelines in place with regard to tracing, tapping and surveillance of phone calls. The HC Bench said the rules were already provided under the Indian Telegraph Act.

Kejriwal and Shekhawat lay foundation stone for STP

Minister unhappy over no credit to Centre

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat laid foundation stone for "India's largest" Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Okhla, at a cost of ₹1,161 crore. The work for setting up the plant will be executed by France-based Suez Group and is expected to be completed in 42 months.

Though the plant has a capacity of 124 million gallons per day (MGD), it would not increase the total sewage treated by Delhi as it would be replacing the four existing plants in Okhla, which has the same combined capacity.

Currently, Delhi generates 720 MGD of sewage, but the existing STPs have a capacity of only 617 MGD. Of this, only about 500 MGD is utilised, leaving about 220 MGD of untreated sewage into Yamuna, according to the DJB. The new plant will cater to around 40 lakh residents.

Expresses displeasure

"While coming here, I saw a number of posters in which Kejriwal has congratulated Delhi... You could have ex-

pressed a little gratitude to the Central government too. After all, we gave 85% of the funds [for the project]," Mr. Shekhawat said on a lighter note. He was referring to posters with "Congratulations Delhi" message, most of them bearing Mr. Kejriwal's face, on the foundation laying of the STP.

Replying to this during his speech, Mr. Kejriwal said, "As DJB was organising the event, officials could only see their boss' photo. It should be taken care of that all stakeholders would get the credit." He also thanked the Centre for funding the project.

Sewage to water

Mr. Kejriwal said that Delhi Jal Board is planning to release treated sewage back into Yamuna and then treat it again and supply it for drinking. The DJB is working to put treated sewage from Coronation Pillar STP to Yamuna at Palla, the point at which the river enters Delhi and then draw it at Wazirabad, which is downstream. It will be then treated in a water treatment plant and supplied for drinking purpose, he added.

Auto driver shot dead a few metres away from house

Murder was a fallout of personal enmity with local goons, claim victim's family; one detained

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man was shot dead by a few men a few meters away from his house in north-east Delhi's Seelampur on Sunday night. The victim's brother is an eyewitness, he said.

The victim has been identified as Noor Mohd, an au-

torickshaw driver. He was standing on the street near his house after the day's work when the incident happened. His brother Aas Mohd said that he was working in a fruit godown on the same street when the incident happened.

Recalling the incident, he said, "Around 9 p.m., I

heard several rounds of fire. I thought someone was bursting crackers. I stepped out and saw that four men had come in an SUV and fired indiscriminately at my brother. They stepped out of the vehicle which they had kept in ignition, shot at him and then fled. I ran towards my brother. He was lying in a

pool of blood," Aas said. The family then rushed the victim to Jag Pravesh Chandra Hospital from where he was referred to Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital. But, in the early hours, he succumbed to injuries.

The family claimed that the murder was a fallout of personal enmity with local

goons, which had been building up for over two years.

DCP (North East) Atul Thakur said that one person has been detained in connection with the case. "CCTV footage is being examined. Personal enmity appears to be the reason behind the murder," he said.

HC declines plea on LGBT law

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday declined to entertain a plea seeking to make appropriate changes to the law to recognise the rights

pertaining to marriage and adoption of members of LGBT community. The High Court Bench said drafting of a law is an exclusive power of the legislature and not the judiciary.

Operation Milap: over 300 children rescued in 7 months

They were missing since January 2019 from across India

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Crime Branch has rescued 333 children from the Capital. These children were missing since January 2019 from various parts of the country and found in the Capital, the police said.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Rajiv Ranjan said that they have also tracked down 57 people, including 14 minors, who were kidnapped, abducted,

or went missing from various areas in the national capital. "Of these, 14 are minors, 37 are females. Most of these children have been rescued from bus stands, railway stations and other crowded places in the city. During the last one week, the AHTU has found 15 people who had been reported missing or kidnapped in Delhi" said Mr. Ranjan.

The operation Milap under which children are rescued was launched in De-

cember 2014. Under this project, the Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Delhi Police develops information, rescues the trafficked or kidnapped person and arrests the kidnappers, he said.

The rescued children are counselled and also given requisite medical attention. Police are trying to find out the parents of the children rescued, so that they can be reunited with their families, the police said.

IN BRIEF

Criminal, constable injured in encounter

NEW DELHI
A 20-year-old criminal and a police constable sustained injuries during an encounter in north-east Delhi's Khajuri Khas on Monday, the police said. DCP (North-East) Atul Thakur said that accused Arik Rehman is a resident of Mustafabad and was involved in a 2016 murder case.

Three arrested for supplying ammunition

NEW DELHI
Three persons have been arrested for allegedly supplying ammunition in Delhi-NCR and other States, the police said on Monday. DCP (Special Cell) Manishi Chandra said that the accused have been identified as suppliers Praveen Kumar Verma, his son Prateek, and receiver Sonu Singh. A total of 1,250 live cartridges have been seized, the police said.

Auto fare hike: HC refuses to stay govt.'s decision

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to stay the city government's decision to increase autorickshaw fares but sought its response on a petition seeking to set aside a June 12 notification revising the fares. It sought response from the Centre, Delhi government's Transport Department and the fare revision commission on the plea claiming that the revised fare would have severe impact on the public.

DU releases third cut-off with marginal dip

Admissions for popular courses closed in several colleges; fourth list to be out on July 15

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The third cut-off list for merit-based undergraduate courses at Delhi University was released on Monday night.

Admissions for courses at several colleges under the unreserved category closed with a marginal dip in some courses. Entrance to some colleges also reopened with students having withdrawn admissions following the release of the second list. For instance, at Ramjas College, B.Com admissions have been reopened with a cut-off of 97%, which is the same as the first list. Similarly, admissions to B.A.(H) English at DRSD, B.Com(H) at Daulat Ram and B.Sc(H) Physics courses at Maitreyi College have been reopened.

At Lady Sri Ram College, admissions to most of the courses are closed except for B.Com(H) and B.Sc(H) Mathematics and a few B.A. programme combinations. Hindu College has a similar situation, with most courses closed except for B.A.(H) Economics and B.Sc (H) Zoology. Several courses remain up for grabs at Kirori Mal College and Ramjas College, including B.Com, B.Com(H), B.A.(H) English, B.A.(H) Economics, B.Sc(H)

COLLEGE	B.Com	B.Com (Hons.)	BA (Hons.) English	BA (Hons.) History	BA (Hons.) Pol Science	BA (Hons.) Economics	B.Sc (Hons.) Mathematics	B.Sc (Hons.) Physics	B.Sc (Hons.) Chemistry
Aryabhata	93	94.25	91.5	88	CLOSED	95	92.25	-	-
ARSD	93	95.75	94.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Daulat Ram	CLOSED	96.25	94.75	94.5	95.25	CLOSED	CLOSED	95.33	94.66
DCAC	95.75	96.75	95.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	96.25	-	-	-
Dyal Singh	93.5	95	92	CLOSED	CLOSED	95	CLOSED	CLOSED	93
Gargi	95	96.25	95.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	94.75	95	94.33
Hansraj	-	97.25	CLOSED	CLOSED	-	97.75	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Hindu	-	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	98	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
IP	-	96.25	CLOSED	94.75	96.25	96.5	95	-	-
Kamala Nehru	CLOSED	CLOSED	94.5	CLOSED	94.5	95.75	CLOSED	-	-
Kirori Mal	97	97	92.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	95.25	95.75	95.33	94.66
LSR	-	97.75	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	96.25	-	-
Maitreyi	CLOSED	CLOSED	94	92.25	94	CLOSED	CLOSED	94	93.66
Miranda House	-	-	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	97.75	CLOSED	96.33	CLOSED
Motilal Nehru	CLOSED	CLOSED	92.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	95.5	93.5	94.66	93
Ramjas	97	96.75	96	96.25	CLOSED	97.5	96	96	95
Bhagat Singh	95	96.25	94.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	96.5	CLOSED	-	-
Sri Venkateswara	96.25	97	CLOSED	94.75	96	CLOSED	95.5	96.33	CLOSED
SRCC	-	97.75	-	-	-	CLOSED	-	-	-
Zakir Husain	92.5	92.5	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	91.5	-	92

ALL FIGURES IN % | SOURCE : DELHI UNIVERSITY

Physics, B.Sc(H) Chemistry and B.Sc(H) Mathematics.

Among one of the most sought-after courses, B.Com(H) at Sri Ram College of Commerce continues to invite admissions with the cut-off having been brought down to 97.75% from 98.5%. Up to 465 stu-

dents have been admitted to the course under different categories so far.

This year there are about 63,000 seats allocated for students, an increase from 56,000, estimated last year. However, it must be noted that colleges are not allowed to refuse admission to

anyone who makes the cut-off. As long as an eligible student approaches the college during the requisite time period the colleges are obliged to approve their admissions.

Students seeking admissions under the third list are required to approach the colleges with their docu-

ments between July 9 and July 11 to confirm their admissions.

However, those whose marks are higher than the second cut-off list will not be eligible for admission under the third list.

The fourth list will be released on July 15.

Court summons Kejriwal, Sisodia in defamation case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday summoned Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia on July 16 in a criminal defamation complaint filed by BJP leader Vijender Gupta.

Mr. Gupta had accused the AAP leaders of "maliciously" his image by accusing him of attempting to kill Mr. Kejriwal. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Sa-

mar Vishal said the allegations of the accused persons were "prima facie defamatory" and referred to Mr. Gupta.

"There exists sufficient ground to proceed against the respondents... Accordingly, Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia are summoned for commission of offence of defamation under Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code," the court said.

Plea seeking appointment of LoP in Lok Sabha rejected

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking directions to the Lok Sabha Speaker to appoint a Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the House.

The court said there was no reason to entertain the petition as there was no law which prescribed the appointment of an LoP. It also said there was no statutory requirement for appointing an LoP. Hence, there was no reason to direct the framing of a policy for such an appointment, it remarked.

The court disposed of the petition filed by advocates

Manmohan Singh Narula and Susmita Kumari, claiming that the Speaker was not performing his statutory duty of appointing the LoP. The petition alleged that recognising a member of the House as the LoP was "not a political or arithmetical decision, but a statutory one".

"The speaker has to merely ascertain whether the party claiming this post is the largest party in the Opposition," the petition stated. It added that denying the second largest party in Parliament – the Congress – the leadership of the Opposition sets a wrong precedent and dilutes democracy.

HC rejects AAP MLAs' plea on disqualification proceedings

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected pleas of AAP MLAs Anil Bajpai and Col. Devender Sehrawat, objecting to the Legislative Assembly Speaker hearing disqualification proceedings against them.

Justice Vibhu Bakhru said there was "no infirmity" in the procedure adopted by Speaker Ram Niwas Goel and rejected the MLAs' contention that he should have first decided their applica-

tion, alleging bias on his part, before going ahead with the proceedings. The court, however, said that "the Speaker will address all the contentions advanced by the petitioners [MLAs]".

The lawyers for Mr. Bajpai and Mr. Sehrawat contended that the Speaker might not impartially adjudicate the disqualification proceedings and said that the issue be sent either to the Deputy Speaker or a committee be constituted to hear the matter.

Not interested in contesting polls: Sapna

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A day after joining the BJP, Haryanvi artist Sapna Choudhary on Monday said she had no interest in contesting elections but would "obey her party's command" on this front.

When asked if she would contest the upcoming Delhi Legislative Assembly election against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal if required, Ms. Choudhary said she would rather quit than contest election against the AAP chief as she "does not want to be near him or even see his face".

Army officer found dead

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 51-year-old Army Junior Commissioner Officer was found dead at his accommodation in south-west Delhi on Monday evening. A note left behind by the deceased has been recovered, the police said.

DCP (South-West) Devender Arya said that the officer lived in his official accommodation. "The PCR received a call around 7 p.m. When the police reached the spot, the officer was found hanging," the DCP said.

His family has been informed and his body has been preserved for post-mortem, the police said. Inquest proceedings have been initiated, they said.

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

Couple killed in landslide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DARJEELING

A middle-aged couple was killed in a landslide in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal early on Monday, police sources said. According to reports, the landslide, triggered by heavy rainfall, struck the couple's brick house around 2.30 a.m. at the Pubung Fatak area of Sukhiapokhri in Darjeeling.

The victims, 60-year-old Kumar Lopchan and his 55-year-old wife Bal Kumari Lopchan, were found buried under the debris, the sources said. Though the victims were pulled out of the debris and rushed to the Darjeeling district hospital, the doctors there declared them brought dead, they said.

Man arrested for running gang of juvenile thieves

Allegedly used his two minor sons to break into locked houses

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

The Berhampur police have arrested a man for allegedly running a gang of juvenile thieves, including his two minor sons.

Following a series of thefts at locked houses in different parts of the city since May, a special police team was formed to track down the gang. According to Berhampur Additional Superintendent of Police Mayadhar Sethi, the gang was involved in at least eight major thefts.

Stolen gold ornaments weighing 135 grams, ₹25,000

cash, silver ornaments and electronic goods were seized from the possession of the accused, who hails from Ganesha Nagar under Badabazar police station limits of Berhampur.

The man was arrested on Sunday. His minor son was also detained and produced before the local Juvenile Justice Board, which sent him to the Government Special Observation Home for Boys in the city. His other minor son, who was taken into custody earlier, is lodged in the same observation home, said Mr. Sethi. Another juvenile member of the gang has managed to escape. The accused was using the three boys as they could easily enter locked houses through small openings.

Naveen tasks Ministers, MLAs with BJD victory

With no 'Modi wave', party appears to be in good position

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

Biju Janata Dal president Naveen Patnaik on Monday tasked seven senior Ministers and 18 MLAs with ensuring the party's victory in the Patkura Assembly election. He also directed the MLAs to work under the supervision of the Ministers in specific areas of the constituency.

The Patkura seat is witnessing a fierce contest between the ruling BJD and the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party despite the fact that the former's support to the latter in the recently held Rajya Sabha bypoll had put leaders of both the parties in an awkward position.

Counting on July 23

Polling is scheduled to be held on July 20 and the counting of votes will be held on July 23.

Senior Odisha Ministers who were assigned the task of ensuring the BJD's victory are Prafulla Mallick, Ranendra Pratap Swain, Arun Kumar Sahoo, Sushant Kumar Singh, Samir Ranjan Dash,

The fate of Sabitri Agarwal of the BJD, Bijoy Mohapatra of the BJP and Jayanta Kumar Mohanty of the Congress to be decided on July 20

Raghunandan Das and Divya Shankar Mishra, the sources said.

'Two sides of same coin' With electioneering gaining momentum in the constituency where polling was postponed twice, the Congress, the third major contender for the seat, is now taking on its rivals terming them two sides of the same coin.

The BJP also has engaged many of its leaders in campaigning and making all-out efforts to bag the seat.

The BJD has fielded Sabitri Agarwal, wife of Bed Prakash Agarwal. Polling for the seat was first adjourned due to Mr. Agarwal's death. Polling was postponed again due to Cyclone Fani.

The BJP has fielded former Minister and senior leader Bijoy Mohapatra, who had quit the party in November last year after a 10-year stint and returned again in March this year.

The Congress has fielded party old-timer Jayanta Kumar Mohanty.

An uphill task

In the changing scenario, Mr. Mohapatra, *bête noire* of the BJD president, is facing an uphill task. A founder member of the BJD, he has failed to get elected to the Assembly ever since he was ousted from the regional party days before the 2000 elections. And the BJD is trying hard to prevent him from winning yet again.

The BJD appears to be in a good position in Patkura since it comes under the coastal district of Kendrapara, its stronghold since long. And the 'Modi wave' that hit the State during the general election is also missing, making it further difficult for Mr. Mohapatra.

(With PTI inputs)

W.B. Minister calls Salt Lake Mayor 'traitor'

'It would be good if he leaves the TMC'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

Senior Trinamool Congress leader and West Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim on Monday referred to party MLA Sabyasachi Dutta as 'Mir Jafar', and said "it would be good if he leaves the party".

The ruling TMC on Sunday had stripped Mr. Dutta – the Mayor of Bidhan Nagar [Salt Lake] – of his powers on the charge of making anti-party statements and gave the additional responsibilities to his deputy Tapas Chatterjee.

"Sabyasachi Dutta is a traitor. He is a Mir Jafar. It would be good if he leaves the party. He can go wherever he wants to. We are not bothered. But we would not tolerate indiscipline in the party," Mr. Hakim said.

A senior TMC leader said that the party leadership has decided to ask Mr. Dutta to immediately resign, but all calls and messages to him have gone unanswered. "If he doesn't resign on his own, the councillors of the corporation might bring a no-confidence motion against him," he said.

'Safe Drive' campaign has reduced road deaths: CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said that Safe Drive, Save Life campaign of the State government has resulted in reduction of road accidents and fatalities.

"From 407 fatalities in 2016, the number has dropped to 294 in 2018 in

the Kolkata Police area. This is a decline 27.7%," Ms. Banerjee said at an event to mark the anniversary of the campaign.

The Chief Minister added that across the State, the number of fatalities in road accidents in 2016 was 6,951 and dropped to 5,711 in 2018, recording a decline of 17.8%.

Nagpur police begin probe into threat letter on jobs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NAGPUR
A three-page letter about hiring in companies, with an anti-reservation stance and signed off with a threat, surfaced on Monday in some parts of Nagpur, following which the police started a probe.

One of the letters was pasted on a bus stop near Nagpur University campus, according to the Ambazari police station in charge Smita Patil.

The letter asks companies to "hire open economically backward students (EBC)" and then follows it up with a demand to "free up education loan of EBC students". It goes on to claim that "now in India every life will be killed only for the reason of reservation".

The letter further asks companies based in India to start the process of "giving jobs for open EBC candidates by giving paper advertisements", and by conducting interviews.

The letter then moves on to a threat by stating that "we can hack any network system and latest designs of angular made guns, bombs, techs etc".

Raj Thackeray wants ECI to shun EVMs, go back to ballot paper

In rare appearance in New Delhi, MNS chief meets CEC, Sonia Gandhi

ALOK DESHPANDE MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray met Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora in New Delhi on Monday and demanded that Maharashtra Assembly polls, due later this year, be conducted through paper ballots instead of Electronic Voting Machines.

In a rare appearance outside Maharashtra, especially in New Delhi, Mr. Thackeray submitted a letter to Election Commission of India (ECI), demanding the switch back to paper ballot. Later, he termed the meeting a "mere formality".

"There are doubts in the minds of voters that the votes they cast do not go to their chosen candidates. In such a scenario, the Election Commission should switch back to paper ballots and conduct the Maharashtra polls through it. We strongly feel that the EVMs can be tampered with," said Mr. Thackeray.

The MNS chief in his letter cited media reports on differences in the tally between the votes cast and votes



Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray at the Election Commission of India office to meet the Chief Election Commissioner in New Delhi on Monday. •PTI

counted in nearly 220 Lok Sabha constituencies. "This gave rise to suspicion in our minds. The doubts over credibility of the EVMs further increased when the Election Commission removed this data from its website," he said in the letter to ECI.

He also sought to know how secure are the Public Sector Undertakings - Bharat Electronic Ltd and Electronic Corporation of India - which manufacture the EVMs.

Two weeks back, opposition Nationalist Congress

Party (NCP) leader Jayant Patil too had dared Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in the Assembly to pass a resolution asking ECI to conduct Assembly polls on ballot paper. Mr. Fadnavis had ridiculed the NCP leader asking him to stop blaming EVMs for their defeat.

Courtesy visit
Meanwhile, Mr. Thackeray also called on UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi. While no official word was given about the meeting, sources within both parties

indicated the possibility of a discussion on the upcoming Assembly polls. However, the MNS later released a statement saying it was only a courtesy visit. This was the second meeting of anyone from the Thackeray family meeting a Gandhi family member.

In the recently-held Lok Sabha polls, which MNS did not contest, Mr. Thackeray campaigned extensively across the State against Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and had attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Since the general elections results, there has been intense speculation that Mr. Thackeray would join hands with the opposition.

The meeting with Ms. Gandhi is also significant in that it was the local Congress leadership of Maharashtra which had opposed the entry of Mr. Thackeray into their alliance citing his violent protests against north Indians.

The meeting with UPA chairperson indicates that the MNS may be welcomed to take on the BJP-Shiv Sena coalition in the State.

Judge examines Pragya's bike used in Malegaon blast

The motorcycle was allegedly identified by a witness

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The motorcycle allegedly owned by Member of Parliament Pragma Singh Thakur, which was used for installing a bomb that killed six and injured 101 in the 2008 Malegaon blast, was identified by a witness in court on Monday.

A panch witness identified the motorcycle in the presence of special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court judge Vinod Padalkar and lawyers for the accused in the case. Two motorcycles and five bicycles allegedly used in the blasts were brought on a truck and parked below the city civil and sessions court premises.

On October 30, 2018, the special court had framed charges of murder, abetment and conspiracy for the blast against Lt. Col. Prasad Purohit, Ms. Thakur, Sameer Kulkarni, retired major Ramesh Upadhyay, Sudhakar Chaturvedi, Ajay Rahilkar and Sudhakar Chaturvedi. The court had said, "Abhinav Bharat organisation (alleged to be behind the blast) was formed with the common object to spread terror.



Pragya Singh Thakur •FILE PHOTO

All the accused conspired, from January 2008, to plant a bomb with RDX on a motorcycle on September 29, 2008."

'Full knowledge'

The Maharashtra Anti Terrorist Squad chargesheeted Ms. Thakur in 2009 on the ground that it was her motorcycle that was used to plant the bomb. The chargesheet said Ms. Thakur's men had acted at her instance and she had full knowledge about her motorcycle being provided for the blast.

However, the NIA had found evidence against her to be the weakest and said evidence against her was not

substantial. In its supplementary chargesheet, the agency also said the motorcycle, which was registered in her name, was used by an absconding accused, Ramchandra Gopalsingh Kalsangra, known as Ramji.

On April 25, 2017, the Bombay High Court, while granting bail to Ms. Thakur, relied on statements of witnesses to show that she was not in possession of the motorcycle used for the blasts.

"Even assuming that the motorcycle was found at the place of the incident, the fact that she was the registered owner by itself cannot be sufficient in the light of material placed on record," the court had said.

New leadership should take charge wherever needed: Chavan

Says Cong. will stand up again, efforts on to strengthen party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NAGPUR

Maharashtra Congress leader Ashok Chavan on Monday said the new leadership should take charge wherever required in the party.

His remarks came against the backdrop of resignations by various Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, Milind Deora and Jyotiraditya Scindia, from senior party posts.

Mr. Chavan, who also resigned earlier as president of the Maharashtra Congress unit, said efforts were underway to restrengthen the grand old party.

On the Karnataka government crisis, he said attempts were being made to destabilise the Congress-run State governments, and accused the BJP of trying to "finish" the democratic system.

He was speaking to reporters at the Nagpur airport.

To a query on various Congress leaders across the country resigning from senior party posts, Mr. Chavan



Ashok Chavan says the BJP is trying to finish the democratic system.

said there was nothing wrong in it when even Rahul Gandhi took moral responsibility for the party's poor show in the Lok Sabha polls and tendered his resignation.

"It is the responsibility of all Congressmen. I had first offered to resign and told Rahulji about it so that it becomes easier for him to make changes wherever he wants to in the country," he

said. "Finally, it is the party which is important and not the person. I feel the Congress should stand up again and efforts are going on to strengthen the party again. Besides, new leadership should be introduced where needed," he said.

Asked about the Karnataka government, which is on the brink of collapse, Mr. Chavan alleged that attempts are being made to destabilise the Congress-run governments in the country.

"What is happening in Karnataka is wrong. The BJP is trying to completely finish the democratic system in the country. However, this will not last long. I feel those ideologically committed to the Congress will not leave," he said.

"Attempts are being made to destabilise the Congress-run State governments. It is very unfortunate. Our efforts will be to stand united and save our party-ruled State governments," he added.

Delightful sight



In full flow: Iconic Someshwar waterfall in Nashik flooded after heavy rain on Monday. According to IMD, around 726 mm of rainfall was recorded in and around Nashik in the past 24 hours. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.



A tigress and two cubs were found dead at Mentepar in the Brahmapuri forest range on Monday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tigress, two cubs found dead, poisoning suspected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDRAPUR

A tigress and her two cubs were found dead in Chandrapur district on Monday morning with forest officials suspecting the big cats could have succumbed to poisoning.

The deaths occurred after the tigress and the cubs - a male and a female - devoured a dead calf that was apparently poisoned by a farmer, a senior officer said.

The carcasses were spotted on a farmland near a canal in Metepar village under the Chimur forest range by some locals, who in turn, informed the forest department, said S.V. Ramarao, Chief Conservator of Forest

(CCF), Chandrapur circle. "Prima facie, the tigress and the cubs ate a calf that was killed by some predator in the farmland. The owner of the calf, a farmer from Metepar village, embedded Thimet (an organophosphate used as insecticide) into the carcass of the calf to avenge the predator.

"Unfortunately, the tigress and the cubs consumed the poisoned calf and died," said Mr. Ramarao. He said Pandurang Chaudhari, the farmer who owns the calf, has confessed about his act.

The feline carcasses have been shifted to Khadsangi rest house after spot inspection.

Rane urged me to save his son in assault case, says Patil

Video clip shows Minister talking to NHA engineer, family members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PUNE

Senior BJP leader and Maharashtra minister Chandrakant Patil has, in a video that surfaced on Monday, claimed that Rajya Sabha MP Narayan Rane had urged him to "save" his son Nitesh Rane in the July 4 deputy engineer assault case.

Nitesh Rane, an MLA from Kankavli, was arrested after his supporters poured mud on National Highway Authority of India deputy engineer Prakash Shedekar while he was shouting at the official for the potholes and slush on the congested Mumbai-Goa highway.

Mr. Patil had visited Mr. Shedekar's residence in Pune on Friday. A video of the visit surfaced on social media on Monday.

In the clip, Mr. Patil is heard telling Mr. Shedekar's family, "After the incident, I immediately called up SP and Collector and asked them to invoke attempt to murder section in the case....(Narayan) Rane then urged me to save his son but I asked him what kind of be-



Congress MLA Nitesh Rane looks on as his supporters throw mud on deputy engineer Prakash Khedekar. •FILE PHOTO

haviour (of Nitesh Rane) was it."

Mr. Patil is also heard telling the family that Mr. Shedekar had been provided police protection.

Mr. Nitesh Rane was charged under Section 353 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty) among others under IPC and Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act based on the complaint by Mr. Shedekar. He is in police custody till July 9.

Speaking later in Baramati

on Monday about his statement in the video clip, Mr. Patil said that the mud-pouring incident had affected the morale of officials and it was necessary to initiate action in the case.

Incidentally, after the video of the assault surfaced, Mr. Narayan Rane had apologised for his son's behaviour.

"I apologise for my son's act of pouring mud on a government official. The protest (against poor condition of the highway) was for the local people," he had said on July 4.

No major deficiency in 1,352 dams inspected, says report

All dams are inspected twice a year, before and after monsoon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The latest report on dam safety has stated there are 297 dams in Maharashtra with "rectifiable deficiencies" which need immediate attention and another 1,055 have minor issues.

An official said the upside of the report was that none of the dams in the State have any major deficiency which could lead to failure.

The report studied 1,352 of the 1,358 dams in the State, he informed.

Of the 297 dams with rectifiable deficiencies, 94 dams are above 30 metres in height and are termed as Class I structures while the remaining 203 are Class II with heights varying between 15 and 30 metres, an official explained.

"There are another 1,055 dams with minor deficiencies. Of these, 171 are above 30 metres and 884 are between 15 to 30 metres in height. There are no dams with major deficiency which would lead to failure," he



A view of the Tiware dam which breached last week following incessant rains in Ratnagiri, causing a flood-like situation in seven downstream villages. •FILE PHOTO

said. Speaking about the six dams which have not been included in the report, he said, "Dahegaon and Waghdardi dams, both Class II structures, have not been inspected. Reports of Bhilawani, Maniyad, Khasapur and Panharwadi, also Class II dams, have not been received."

He said all dams in the

State are inspected twice a year, once before the monsoons between April and May and a second time around October 15 post-monsoon.

Dam safety in the State came back into focus sharply after Tiware dam, located in Chiplun tehsil of Ratnagiri district, breached late night on July 2, killing over 20 people.

IN BRIEF



A.P. CM unveils welfare measures for farmers

JAMMALAMADUGU
Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy announced a series of welfare measures for farmers on Monday. "Every farmer will get ₹12,500 under 'YSR Rythu Bharosa' on October 15 ahead of the rabi season and the government will pay premium for crop insurance and facilitate zero per cent loans to farmers," he said. The CM offered to take forward KC Canal work and other irrigation projects.

33 students in Hyderabad fall sick, hospitalised

HYDERABAD
At least 33 students from Telangana Minorities Residential Educational Institutions Society School in Asifnagar were admitted to Niloufer Hospital on Monday after they complained of vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea. While the exact cause for the sickness is not known, hospital Superintendent V. Murali Krishna said contamination of food or water could be a reason. This is the second such incident reported from TMREIS schools in the past four months.

Tirumala darshan hours restricted on July 16

TIRUMALA
In view of total lunar eclipse on July 16, the hill shrine of Lord Venkateswara here will remain closed from 6 p.m. on July 16 to 5 a.m. the following morning. Even though the eclipse is scheduled between 1.31 a.m. and 4.20 a.m. on July 17, as is the practice, the TTD has resolved to close the temple about six hours in advance. Both the massive Vaikuntam queue complexes will be kept vacant and there shall be no distribution of Anna Prasadam in the darshan lines on July 16.

All eyes on Karnataka Speaker

Congress to move petition today for disqualification of rebel MLAs

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU

All eyes are set on Assembly Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar as he returns to office on Tuesday and takes a call on the resignation submitted by the 13 MLAs last week. His decision will play a key role in how the crisis over the government pans out in Karnataka.

The Speaker, on Saturday, promised to initiate the process on Tuesday by calling all MLAs, speaking to them, and take a decision on the matter. The rebel MLAs are expected to meet him in the morning. They would, however, not be attending the Congress Legislature Party meeting, sources claimed.

'Instigated by BJP'

While the coalition government has emptied out the old Cabinet in an attempt to woo back the rebel MLAs, the Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) are also planning to fight it out legally. The Congress, which will hold its meeting on Tuesday morning, may petition the Speaker seeking disqualification of the rebel MLAs under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution for defection.

"We have evidence to prove that the MLAs did not resign voluntarily but have been instigated by the Bharatiya Janata Party and this is only a way to defect," said a senior Congress leader.

The JD(S) is also likely to move a similar petition against the three rebel MLAs.

The rebel MLAs have reportedly been promised that they would be made Ministers when the BJP government is sworn in, even before the bypolls.

The law allows a person to be sworn in as Minister and provides six months for the person to be elected to either of the Houses. "If the



'Ghoda Ghadi': Mumbai Pradesh Youth Congress workers protesting against the alleged horse-trading attempts by the BJP to poach Karnataka Congress MLAs. ■ PRASHANT NAKWE

BJP doesn't believe in dignity of parliamentary democracy: Venugopal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Accusing the Bharatiya Janata Party of indulging in horse-trading to poach Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) MLAs, AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka K.C. Venugopal on Monday alleged that the BJP does not believe in dignity of parliamentary democracy.

Addressing presspersons Mr. Venugopal said: "We have been seeing the anti-

democratic attitude of the BJP for the last five years. After this election victory, it has become all the more. They have done it in Telangana and West Bengal. They want to destabilise the government and get Rajya Sabha majority as well."

Asserting that the government will survive despite all attempts by the BJP, he said: "We strongly believe in the strength of the party in Karnataka and we are confident this

government will continue. This will be the sixth failed attempt by the BJP in destabilising the government."

Coalition government's coordination committee chairman and former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, said: "They [BJP] are misusing central agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate, Income Tax and other organisations to get our MLAs into their fold."

MLAs are disqualified by the Speaker for defection, they cannot become Ministers in the alternate BJP government till they are successfully elected as legislators," said a senior Congress strategist.

Provision of law

Section 164 (1) (B) of the Constitution stipulates that a member disqualified under the Tenth Schedule cannot be appointed Minister till the

date on which the term of his office as such member would expire or till the person is elected to either of the Houses, whichever is earlier.

"If the Speaker disqualifies them, it can be challenged even by a third party in court, which will only create a stalemate for the bypolls to be held. This essentially would create roadblocks for the rebel MLAs to become Ministers imme-

diately," the strategist said. He claimed that with all the Cabinet Ministers resigning, the rebel MLAs have a "better chance" to become Ministers in the coalition government than in a BJP government.

However, the success of this strategy would depend on whether the Speaker would disqualify the rebel MLAs for "defection".

Telangana HC orders status quo on Errum Manzil

Five PIL pleas seek stay on demolition

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Monday directed the State government not to take any adverse steps relating to the demolition of the Errum Manzil structure till five public interest litigation (PIL) petitions seeking a stay order on it, were adjudicated.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Raghuvendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Shameem Akhtar directed Additional Advocate General J. Ramachandra Rao to convey the High Court's order to the government.

The Bench observed that the government would respect the interim order.



Errum Manzil Palace in Hyderabad that is proposed to be razed to make way for the Assembly building. ■ FILE PHOTO

Responding to the direction, Mr Rao assured the Bench that the orders would be conveyed to the government and they would be respected.

Arguing for the government, the AAG sought two weeks' to file a counter in the matter. He also opposed the oral observations made

by the Bench that the government must maintain status quo till the petitions were disposed off. However, the Bench did not agree with Mr. Rao's argument.

The Bench said two weeks could not be granted when a battery of lawyers were standing before it challenging the demolition.

IMA case: Bengaluru DC Vijayshankar arrested

Suspected of taking a bribe of ₹1.5 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Monday arrested Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru District (Urban) B.M. Vijayshankar for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹1.5 crore from IMA Group of Companies founder Mohammed Mansoor Khan to bail him out of the scam.

Mr. Vijayshankar has been charged with accepting the bribe to forward a favourable report to the Karnataka government.

The government had asked Mr. Vijayshankar to probe the IMA scam and submit a report after the RBI sought a report on investment companies, including



B.M. Vijayshankar
■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

IMA, SIT sources said. DCP Crime S. Girish stated that during investigation, the team stumbled on the Deputy Commissioner's role as the final authority in submitting the report to the government.

Binoy Kodyeri appears before Mumbai police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Binoy Kodyeri, 37, son of Kodyeri Balakrishnan, Kerala secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala, presented himself before the Station House Officer, Oshiwara police station, Mumbai, on Monday for being interrogated in connection with a rape and cheating case registered against him in June.

The Maharashtra police had indicted Binoy for rape and cheating after a former bar dancer in Dubai had complained that he had cheated her into a long connubial relationship promising marriage. She alleged that they had a child.

Faithful denied decent burial: Jacobite faction

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCCHI

The metropolitans of the Jacobite Syrian Christian Church have complained that the dead among their faithful are being denied dignified burial in cemeteries.

"Though all the churches of the Malankara Sabha were built by our forefathers and the faithful have their family tombs in the cemeteries, the dead are denied a dignified burial," Joseph Mor Gregarious Metropolitan told the media on Monday.

He said the Orthodox Church was spreading a wrong interpretation of the recent Supreme Court verdict regarding the churches of Varikkoli and Kattachira.

The Kerala High Court had earlier clarified that the body of a believer shall be buried in the cemetery after completing the funeral rites outside the church, he said.

The church leaders said a conciliatory meeting convened by the Kerala government was in accordance with the Supreme Court order. The disputes between the two churches could be resolved only through negotiations and mediations, the church leaders said.

Metropolitans Thomas Mor Timtheos and Abraham Mor Severios also attended the press conference.

Recently the Supreme Court pulled up the Kerala Chief Secretary over the ownership of churches and their properties between Orthodox and Jacobite factions of Malankara Christian Church in Kerala.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday last informed the Kerala Assembly that his government was committed to implementing the 2017 order.

Loss of development



Paving the way: A road has been laid by breaking a hillock beside the Biodiversity Park at Gachibowli in Hyderabad. The road leads to the towers built on the other side. ■ G. RAMAKRISHNA

In Bengaluru, burying the unclaimed in the line of duty

Bagalur Police perform last rites for unclaimed bodies, ensure dignity of a funeral to the departed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Head Constable Amentepa, and three of his colleagues attached to the Bagalur Police Station in the city, recently performed the last rites of an unidentified woman at the Bagalur colony graveyard. She had been rescued from the streets a week ago and rehabilitated at an orphanage, only to die a few days later.

No identity

The next day, another body arrived, this time of an unidentified man found dead on a footpath. Several people had known the man for years as he had eked out a living by doing odd jobs and living on the footpath,

but no one knew his name or the place to which he belonged. When he was found dead, people refused to identify him, fearing they would be questioned and get drawn into formalities, Mr. Amentepa said.

His group of men conducted the last rites for the deceased in accordance with rituals, and await the post-mortem report to know the cause of death. It is being treated as a case of unnatural death, and the unclaimed man is suspected to have died due to alcoholism, a police officer said.

Mr. Amentepa and his team - Ramesh Halwadar, Eranna Badigere and Shivakumar - have provided last rites for eight unclaimed



The Bagalur police performing last rites of an unclaimed body. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

bodies in the last year. "Earlier, the bodies were handed over to the Kalpalli graveyard soon after post-

mortem, but from last year, we have been instructed to perform last rites as senior officials feel the departed

souls deserve a dignified funeral," the Head Constable said.

Inspector Nandakumar takes care of the expenses and also ensures that, after the burial, the police should make efforts to trace the relatives.

While Mr. Amentepa supervised the two labourers digging the grave, his colleagues carried the body from the ambulance parked a little away. The policemen placed the body in the grave, covered it, placed a garland, and lit incense sticks. "We hold a silent prayer for two minutes before dispersing," he said. Performing the last rites gives us peace of mind for having done their duty, he added.

Karnataka offers quota for girl children of trafficked women

It will be applicable in all UG and PG programmes

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

All State-run universities in Karnataka will have to provide 1% reservation for girl children of women who were victims of sexual assault or were Devadasis.

The Higher Education Department issued an order last week, which will have to be enforced by universities in the 2019-2020 academic year in all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The government's decision is the result of a letter from the trustee of Odanadi Seva Samsthe, Mysuru, an NGO working for the rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration

and empowerment of trafficked and sexually exploited women and children.

Academic reservation

The NGO sought academic reservation on the lines of that in the University of Mysore (UoM) for the academic development of victims of dowry harassment, sexual exploitation, trafficking and acid attack, in all State universities.

Since the 2011-12 academic year, students coming from Odanadi Seva Samsthe are being admitted in the UoM. The university admits two candidates for undergraduate programmes and one candidate for postgrad-

uate programmes. These students are entitled to a 50% discount on their fees.

Universities, who recently received the order, are chalking out modalities on how to implement the reservation.

"We will have to clarify with the government on the criteria to avail this reservation. We will also write to UoM and ask them to share how they implemented this reservation," said a Vice Chancellor of a State-run university.

K.S. Vimala, State Vice-President, Janawadi Mahila Sangathane, termed it a good move and the "first of its kind."



Close check: A security official stops a motorbike during a shutdown imposed by separatists in Srinagar on Monday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Shutdown in Valley on Wani's death anniversary

Separatists' call brings life to a standstill in Kashmir

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir imposed restrictions and slowed down Internet speeds in parts of the Kashmir Valley on Tuesday, as separatists called for a shutdown on the third death anniversary of Hizbul Mujahideen "commander" Burhan Wani.

Wani was killed in an encounter on June 8, 2016.

The shutdown call paralysed life, with schools, offices, banks and petrol pumps remaining closed.

There was very thin road traffic, and rail services were suspended. Mobile Internet speeds were reduced "as a precautionary measure".

The separatist Joint Resis-

tance Leadership, comprising groups led by Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Yasin Malik, had called for the shutdown.

House arrest

Mr. Geelani, the Mirwaiz and Aga Syed were placed under house arrest.

"The shutdown should serve as an eye opener for those persistently in a denial mode of the ground realities in Kashmir," Mr. Geelani said.

Several volatile pockets of the old city in Srinagar witnessed restrictions on the movement of vehicles. Additional deployments were made on the roads to keep protesters at bay.

Severe restrictions were

imposed in Wani's hometown Tral, where all roads were sealed.

Wani and his other two associates were killed in a brief encounter with the security forces in Anantnag's Bamdoora area in July 8, 2016, resulting in a five-month street agitation.

Civilian injured

Meanwhile, a civilian was injured in a ceasefire violation in Rajouri's Nowshera on Monday. An official said the civilian, identified as Ram Swaroop of Kalsian, suffered injuries when Pakistan resorted to cross-border shelling and firing along the Line of Control early on Monday. "He was taken to a local hospital," the official said.

UN report 'legitimises' terror, says India

New Delhi, Islamabad not doing enough to resolve Kashmir situation, says human rights body

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) on Monday said India and Pakistan had failed to improve the situation in Kashmir and not taken any concrete steps to address the numerous concerns raised in its earlier report.

Last year, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released its first-ever report on Kashmir, urging action by both countries to reduce tensions.

The update made wide ranging recommendations to the governments of India and Pakistan, and urged the Human Rights Council (HRC) to explore possibilities of setting up an international com-



mission of inquiry into the allegations of human rights abuse in Kashmir.

India said the report had extended legitimacy to cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. "It is a matter of deep concern that this update seems to accord a legitimacy to terrorism that is in complete variance with UN Security Council positions," said External Affairs Ministry

spokesperson Raveesh Kumar. He described the report as part of the continued "motivated narrative" against Indian sovereignty and integrity.

Mr. Kumar said the update referred to terror outfits such as Jaish-e-Mohammed as "armed groups", and reminded that the UN Security Council had blamed the group for the February 14,

2019 Pulwama terror attack that led to a deterioration in India-Pakistan ties.

Policy distorted

India also said the update had distorted its policy on the Kashmir issue and failed to recognise that the Indian state ensured justice through a strong judiciary and a national human rights mechanism.

Mr. Kumar pointed out that the new report reflected a "prejudiced mindset" which chose to ignore the "comprehensive socio-economic development efforts undertaken by the government in the face of terrorist challenges".

He said the report was crafted without taking into account the campaign by the

Pakistan-backed terror outfits "... the update seems to be a contrived effort to create an artificial parity between the world's largest and the most vibrant democracy and a country that openly practices state-sponsored terrorism," it said.

The comprehensive report from the OHCHR said India continues to use pellet-firing shotguns as a crowd control tool and criticised various laws that used for detention and arrest of political activists and civil society figures in Kashmir.

The new report said the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) had chronicled 160 civilians killed in 2018, the highest in around a decade.

(With PTI inputs)

Odisha plans scheme for witness protection

Security to be based on threat perception; standing committee to take final call

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has come up with a special 'Witness Protection Scheme' to provide security to witnesses facing threat during the course of a legal battle.

State counsel Bibhu Prasad Tripathy informed a single Bench of the Orissa High Court on Monday that the scheme has already been formulated and a gazette notification published on July 5.

According to the notification, a district-level standing committee, chaired by a district and sessions judge, with the district police head as its member and the head of the prosecution in the district as

its member secretary, will take a call on the need for protection.

Analysis report

The district police chief will submit a report with regard to the seriousness and credibility of the threat to the witness or his/her family members if the person applies in a prescribed form.

The report will detail the nature of the threat to the witness or his/her family members, their reputation or property. Besides, the intent and motive of the person issuing the threat and the resources available with him/her to execute it will figure in the analysis.



The threat analysis report, prepared with "full confidentiality", will reach the competent authority "within

five working days of its order for inquiry".

Based on the report, the authority will pass an order for protection of identity of the witness.

The Witness Protection Cell will then ensure that the identities of the witness and his/her family members, including names, parentage, occupation, address and digital footprints, are fully protected.

Provision of relocation of the witness to a safer place has also been made in the scheme.

In appropriate cases, where there is a request from the witness for change of identity, based on the

threat analysis report, a decision can be taken to confer "a new identity upon the witness through a competent authority".

A dedicated cell of the State police or Central police agencies will be assigned with the duty of implementing the witness protection order. The 'Witness Protection Fund' proposed to be created will bear the expenses incurred during the implementation of the protection order.

In case the witness has lodged a false complaint, the State home department could initiate proceedings for recovery of the expenditure from the applicant.



Niyaz Ahmed Khan

MP official wants to hide Muslim name

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Senior Madhya Pradesh official Niyaz Ahmed Khan took to Twitter to say he has been looking for a new name to hide his Muslim identity, in a bid to avoid discrimination and vigilantes.

"The new name will save me from the violent crowd. If I have no topi, no kurta and no beard, I can get away easily by telling my fake name to the crowd. However, if my brother is wearing traditional clothes and has beard he is in most dangerous situation," tweeted Mr. Khan, Deputy Secretary, State Transport and Public Works Departments.

Violence against minorities had become common across the country, he told *The Hindu*. "I wanted to express my concern over deep fear among minorities across the country. Victims from minority communities don't get justice. Also, I am looking for a title for my new book which has a chapter on mob violence," he said.

Mr. Khan said changing his name was not akin to renouncing the religion. "My religious name is the obstacle, not the religion," he added.

Asked if he would face action, he said, "Although I am a government official, nobody can stop me from free expression."

Mr. Khan has written five books including *Love Demands Blood*, a character study on gangster Abu Salem, for which he received flak.

In his 20-year service, Mr. Niyaz has been transferred over 18 times.

CISF jawan tagged doubtful voter

Though NRC centre has offered him hope, Mamud Ali feels slighted

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

A Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) jawan in Assam has been served notice as a 'D', or doubtful, voter less than two months after retired soldier Mohammed Sanaullah was declared a foreigner.

The tag relegated Mamud Ali, 47, to the additional list of people excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) being updated in Assam. This list has 1.02 lakh names that had earlier passed scrutiny to be in the draft NRC published in July 2018.

D-voters are those who have been disenfranchised during electoral roll revision for their alleged lack of proper citizenship credentials with their cases pending in



Mamud Ali.

one of 100 Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs) across Assam. But the notice that Mr. Ali received was from the NRC in the Kamrup district service centre that processed the documents of his family.

Mr. Ali is posted at an industrial unit in Bankura district of West Bengal. He took emergency leave and rushed back home in western As-

sam's Dalagaon after a panchayat leader sent him the copy of the notice via WhatsApp.

"I was under the impression that FTs send the D-voter notice, but the one I received bore the stamp of the panchayat. Nevertheless, I reached the NRC centre on July 6 for a hearing where police and paramilitary personnel were also present. They checked my documents and said my case would be cleared," he said.

But the CISF jawan, about to complete 24 years in service, felt slighted by the ordeal he was put through. "It was as if my father Karamat Ali Sheikh's school certificate of 1947 and the voters' lists of the 1960s sporting his name have no value," he said.

The citizenship of none of his four surviving siblings and others linked to his father's legacy data has been doubted.

"The CISF jawan's case smacks of a conspiracy to make people D-voters. The NRC officials may now say they wrongly identified him as a D-voter, but are they authorised to detect doubtful voters," asked Azizur Rahman, advisor of the All Assam Minority Students' Union.

On Monday, 29-year-old Amar Majumdar was found dead at his house in north-eastern Assam's Silapathar. He had been facing a D-voter case.

Members of his family said he was suffering from depression after his documents were rejected.

Aviation scam: SC issues notice to Aditya, stays HC proceedings

Investigation reveals wrongful loss to Air India

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to Aditya Talwar, son of Deepak Talwar, who is named in the multi-crore civil aviation scam in which Air India allegedly suffered huge losses, and stayed proceedings in the Delhi High Court, which allowed him to be represented through a lawyer.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi agreed with Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate (ED), that the matter is urgent. The court listed the case for arguments and final disposal on July 23.

Mr. Mehta said Mr. Aditya was a crucial link in unravelling the scam. The High Court's order on May 31 exempting him from personal appearance before the Special Judge and allowing a lawyer to represent him instead would further retard the progress in the investiga-



tion under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED petition said, "The May 31 order permits the Respondent [Aditya] to further evade the process of law and not submit to the Indian jurisdiction when his present whereabouts are not known, which scenario will have a significant impact on various other cases, in today's position of various economic offenders having evaded the process of law."

The ED said the trial court had initially issued non-bailable warrant against Aditya,

believed to have acquired Antiguan citizenship but whose exact whereabouts remained unknown. The warrants were cancelled only after a lawyer finally started representing him in the case. Subsequently, the PMLA court passed an order directing him to appear in person to respond to an application filed by the ED to declare him a Fugitive Economic Offender.

Mr. Mehta said any leniency shown now would delay the case's progress. This would be a violation of the apex court's own order of January 5, 2017 to probe the case at the earliest.

Probe in the case had revealed that the bilateral meetings held between India and UAE/Qatar resulted in wrongful loss to Air India and substantial gain to the airlines of UAE/Qatar.

Undue traffic rights were accorded despite contrary views from the Indian carrier and the DGCA.

IN BRIEF


Congolese 'Terminator' rebel guilty of war crimes

THE HAGUE
International Criminal Court judges on Monday convicted Congolese rebel chief Bosco "Terminator" Ntaganda of war crimes, including directing massacres of civilians and rape, in a badly-needed victory for prosecutors in The Hague. **AFP**

5 held in Hong Kong after night of clashes

HONG KONG
Five people were arrested during overnight clashes in Hong Kong between riot officers and anti-government protesters, the police said on Monday. Sunday night saw fresh violence break out in the district of Mongkok as police baton-charged protesters who refused to disperse following a peaceful rally earlier in the day. **AFP**

U.S. billionaire charged with exploiting minors

NEW YORK
Jeffrey Epstein, a hedge fund billionaire with ties to top politicians and celebrities, was charged on Monday with sexually exploiting dozens of young girls. Epstein, 66, was arrested at an airport in New Jersey on Saturday. **AFP**

Conservative leader Mitsotakis takes oath as Greece PM

'People gave us a strong mandate to change Greece. We will honour it to the full'

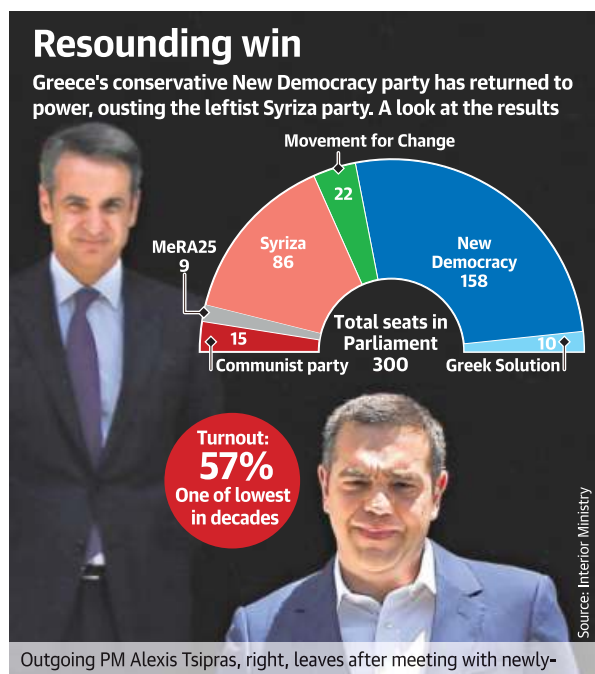
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ATHENS

Greece's new conservative Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis was sworn in on Monday after a sweeping election victory put him in charge of the EU's most indebted member with promises to end a decade of economic crisis.

"The Greek people gave us a strong mandate to change Greece. We will honour it to the full," the 51-year-old Harvard graduate and former McKinsey consultant said after taking his oath of office in a televised ceremony, his wife and three children close by. "Hard work begins today. I am completely confident that we will prove equal to the challenge."

Mr. Mitsotakis later named a Cabinet with many technocrats in junior posts and only a handful of women.

The U.S.-educated conservative faces a hefty challenge as he takes over from leftist premier Alexis Tsipras, who imposed austerity measures required under a bailout to



keep Greece in the euro-zone. The country's public debt last year stood at €335 billion, or 180% of GDP.

The debt load is forecast to fall to 168% of GDP this year, but only through belt-tightening brought in under Mr. Tsipras's Syriza party, policies which Mr. Mitsotakis's New Democracy party says is stifling growth.

Poll pledges

The tricky job of keeping Greece's international creditors onside while easing the hardship on Greeks – by lowering taxes and renegotiating fiscal targets – could re-

sult in a short honeymoon phase for Mr. Mitsotakis.

He has pledged to create jobs and "steamroller" obstacles to business. Those pledges wooed voters, who handed him 40% of the votes in Sunday's election, well ahead of the 31.5% given to Mr. Tsipras. "It's a strong message for change," Mr. Mitsotakis said on Sunday.

His party will have a majority of 158 seats in the 300-member Parliament. New Democracy was last in power in 2014, in coalition with the Greek socialists.

Syriza's parliamentary presence will shrink from 144 seats to 86. Mr. Tsipras has promised to remain an "active" voice in Opposition in defence of labour rights.

Entering Parliament for the first time are Greek Solution, a nationalist party formed by TV salesman Kyriakos Velopoulos, and MeRA25, an anti-austerity party founded by economist and former Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis. Neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn was shut out of parliament for the first time since 2012.

Iran makes new threats that would reverse steps in n-deal

Threatens to restart centrifuges, ramp up enrichment

REUTERS
GENEVA/DUBAI

Iran threatened on Monday to restart deactivated centrifuges and ramp up enrichment of uranium to 20% purity as its next potential big move away from a 2015 nuclear agreement that Washington abandoned last year.

The threats, made by Tehran's nuclear agency spokesman, would go far beyond the small steps Iran has taken in the past week to nudge stocks of fissile material just beyond limits in the pact.

That could raise serious questions about whether the agreement, intended to block Iran from making a nuclear weapon, is still viable.

The two threats would reverse major achievements of the agreement, although Iran omitted important details about how far it might go to returning to the status quo before the pact, when



A file photo of Russian-built Bushehr nuclear power plant in southern Iran. **AFP**

Western experts believed it could build a bomb within months.

In a separate standoff, Iran's Foreign Minister accused Britain of "piracy" for seizing an Iranian oil tanker last week. Britain says the ship was bound for Syria in violation of European Union sanctions.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, con-

firmed that Tehran had enriched uranium beyond the deal's limit of 3.67% purity, passing 4.5%, according to news agency ISNA.

U.N. nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, confirmed it had verified Iran's enrichment was beyond 3.67%.

Iran has said it will take another, third step away from the deal within 60 days. Mr. Kamalvandi said options included enriching uranium to 20% purity or beyond, and restarting IR-2 M centrifuges dismantled under the deal. Such threats put new pressure on European countries, which insist Iran must continue to comply with the agreement even though the United States is no longer doing so.

French President Emmanuel Macron was sending his top diplomatic advisor to Iran on Tuesday and Wednesday to try and help defuse tensions, a presidential official said.

Bullying by U.S. pushed Iran to breach uranium limit: China

Beijing pushes for diplomacy for the settlement of the issue

ATUL ANEJA
BEIJING

China on Monday alleged that "unilateral bullying" by the United States was the "root cause" of Iran's decision to expand uranium enrichment.

While regretting Iran's announcement as a breach of the nuclear deal, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang made it plain that Washington's policy of imposing "maximum

pressure" on Iran was the "root cause of the current crisis".

Mr. Geng compared Washington's international conduct to a "worsening tumour" that needed to be removed.

"The U.S. not only pulled out of the nuclear deal, but also exercised unilateral sanctions and long arm jurisdiction over Iran, creating increasing obstacles for the implementation of the deal.

And the effects have proven that unilateral bullying act has become a worsening tumour and creating greater crisis and problems worldwide," Mr. Geng said.

The Foreign Ministry followed up on its fierce attack on Washington by exhorting the "international community" to remain committed to multilateralism and seek political and diplomatic settlement of the issue under international law.

Afghanistan rivals resume talks for peace

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DOHA

Dozens of powerful Afghans resumed talks with the Taliban on Monday in Doha, where a possible ceasefire is on the table along with key issues such as women's rights.

Stakes are high for the talks which follow a week of U.S.-Taliban negotiations, with both sides eyeing a resolution to the bloody 18-year conflict.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted that the Afghan gathering "has been a long time coming" and praised the country's "government, civil society, women, and Taliban" for coming together.

Washington has said it wants to seal a political deal with the Taliban ahead of the Afghan presidential polls due in September to allow foreign forces to begin to withdraw.

Around 70 delegates are attending the two-day gathering, which has been organised by Germany and Qatar.

Qatar's counter-terrorism special envoy Mutlaq al-Qahatani said "both sides are making progress". "By the end of tonight we can reach a kind of positive conclusion that is acceptable to both sides," he said.

Germany envoy Markus Potzel said "history will remember those who were

able to set their differences aside for the sake of the country" as he opened the dialogue on Sunday.

Delegate Asila Wardak, a member of the High Peace Council established by former President Hamid Karzai to engage with Taliban elements, said good progress was being made. But she stressed that the language of a joint statement would first have to be agreed by the entire conference which could

slow progress. The Taliban spoke about "women's role, economic development, (and) the role of minorities" in a future settlement, she said.

The so-called intra-Afghan meetings follow six days of direct US-Taliban talks that have been put on hold for the two-day Afghan conference and are set to resume Tuesday, according to both sides. The Taliban said they were "happy with progress".

We're not big fans of that man, says Trump about U.K. envoy

Kim Darroch had called the U.S. President 'inept' & 'insecure'

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump has criticised Britain's Ambassador to the U.S., Kim Darroch, saying the British envoy had not served his country well.

Mr. Trump's comments, made on Sunday afternoon, came in response to a reporter's question on whether he had seen reports of leaked diplomatic cables, in which Mr. Darroch had been critical of Mr. Trump, published over the weekend by the *Mail on Sunday*, a British paper.

"No, I haven't seen it [reports of Mr. Darroch's comments]. But, you know, we've had our little ins and outs with – with a couple of countries. And I would say that the U.K. and the Amba-



Donald Trump

sador has not served the U.K. well, I can tell you that," Mr. Trump said.

"We're not – we're not big fans of that man, and he has not served the U.K. well. So I can understand it. And I can say things about him, but I won't bother."

Mr. Darroch had called Mr. Trump "inept" and "insecure" and the White House as "uniquely dysfunctional", in the leaked cables.

Attack on Sri Lankan Editor: soldier held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO

A soldier has been arrested in Sri Lanka for attacking the Editor of a popular Sinhala language newspaper 10 years ago, the police said on Monday. The corporal was arrested after his finger prints matched with those in the Editor's car.

Upali Tennakoon, the Editor of the *Rivira* newspaper, and his wife were brutally attacked by a gang of unidentified persons in January 2009, two weeks after the killing of Lasantha Wickrematunga, the Editor of *The Sunday Leader*. Mr. Tennakoon has been living in the U.S. since the assault.

The incident was one of the attacks against media during the former regime of then President Mahinda Rajapaksa between 2005 and 2015.

South Korean man defects to North Korea

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SEOUL

A South Korean man has defected to North Korea, following in the footsteps of his political parents who also made a high-profile switch of allegiance in the 1980s, according to Pyongyang's state media.

Years of repression and poverty in the reclusive North have led around 30,000 people to flee to its democratic neighbour in the decades since the Korean War, but defections in the other direction are extremely rare.

Choe In-guk – the son of former South Korean Foreign Minister Choe Dok-shin, who died in 1989, three years after moving to North Korea with his wife – landed in Pyongyang on Saturday, reported state-run



Choe In-guk

outlet Uriminzokkiri.

In video footage filmed at an airport and posted by the website on Sunday, the 72-year-old Mr. Choe said he had arrived in the North Korean capital "for residency". "I can't find words to describe my gratitude to the Republic that has embraced me," he said in the clip.

Mr. Choe added that he had decided to live in the North to "fulfil the wishes" of his parents.

Court begins hearing in Italian marines' case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THE HAGUE

An international arbitration court on Monday began hearing into Italy's request to direct India to drop all criminal prosecution against two Italian marines accused of killing two Indian fishermen off the Kerala coast in 2012 and grant Rome jurisdiction in the case.

Italy took the issue to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in 2015, saying the case should be tried under maritime law as the incident happened in international waters. India, however, insists that the accused should return to New Delhi for a final judgment by an Indian court. Currently, the two marines – Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Gironé – are in Italy. Italy's representative

Francesco Azzarello told the court on Monday that Rome should have jurisdiction over the case because the two marines were functionaries of the Italian state doing their duty on board an Italian flagged ship in international waters. Mr. Azzarello said India already considers the marines guilty. "In India's eyes there is no presumption of innocence: the marines were guilty of murder even before the charges were laid," he was quoted as telling the court by Italian news agency ANSA.

In response, India's representative G. Balasubramanian told the court, "Italy maintains it has the exclusive jurisdiction in the case but one must take into account the fact that India and the two fishermen are the victims in this case."

IN BRIEF



3 Biocon Malaysia units get USFDA observations

NEW DELHI
Biotechnology major Biocon said the USFDA had issued 12 observations after the inspection of three of its units in Malaysia. Biocon Sdn Bhd's insulin glargine drug substance, drug product and device assembly facilities in Malaysia underwent a pre-approval inspection by the USFDA between June 24 and July 5, Biocon said. "The inspection concluded with 12 observations issued on Form 483," a company spokesperson said. **PTI**

Renault India launches updated Duster

NEW DELHI
Auto major Renault launched the updated version of its SUV Duster in India, priced between ₹8 lakh and ₹12.5 lakh (ex-showroom). The new Duster is equipped with 25 brand new features and technology enhancements, including Apple CarPlay, Android Auto infotainment with voice recognition and EcoGuide along with safety features such as Electronic Stability Program and Hill-Start Assist. **PTI**

IOC, GAIL pact on stake in Dhamra LNG expires

NEW DELHI
State-owned refiner Indian Oil Corp. (IOC) and gas utility GAIL India Ltd.'s initial agreement to buy a 50% stake in Adani Group's ₹5,000-crore Dhamra LNG project in Odisha has expired, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday. IOC and GAIL had on September 21, 2016, signed a MoU with Adani Petroleum Terminal Pvt. Ltd. to take 39% and 11% stakes in the LNG import terminal respectively. **PTI**

SEBI gets teeth to probe new-age cases

It can fine up to ₹10 cr. if a person tampers with information to obstruct probe, destroy data

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR
MUMBAI

The Finance Bill, 2019 has given the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) new powers to act against entities that tamper or destroy electronic databases or fail to furnish information when sought by the capital markets regulator, SEBI, who can now also impose penalties of up to ₹1 crore on brokers for certain violations.

These new powers assume significance as the regulator is in the midst of probing the leak of sensitive data through WhatsApp and also recently passed fresh orders on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) co-location matter, which had been challenged at the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT).

As per the Finance Bill, a



SEBI can penalise brokers up to ₹1 crore if they fail to issue a contract note to clients in the prescribed format. **REUTERS**

new section – 15HAA – has been inserted in the SEBI Act that says if a person tampers with information to obstruct or influence an investigation, destroys regulatory data or tries to access data in an unauthorised manner then the

entity could be penalised up to ₹10 crore or three times the unlawful gains, whichever is higher.

"For the purposes of this clause, a person shall be deemed to have altered, concealed or destroyed such in-

formation, record or document, in case he knowingly fails to immediately report the matter to the Board or fails to preserve the same till such information continues to be relevant to any investigation, inquiry, audit, inspection or proceeding, which may be initiated by the Board and conclusion thereof," stated the Finance Bill.

WhatsApp case

Incidentally, the WhatsApp leak case or even the NSE co-location matter deal with the data being leaked through electronic means and unauthorised access to exchange data, which forms the base in most regulatory probes.

"The new section that has been inserted imposes pe-

naity on unauthorised access to regulatory data and system databases though it is not yet clear whether 'regulatory data' and 'database' as mentioned in the section refers only to SEBI data or even those maintained by exchanges, depositories and clearing corporations," said Sumit Agrawal, founder, Reg-Street Law Advisors, while adding that this is important considering the fact that SEBI is dealing with matters such as the WhatsApp leak and the NSE matter.

The Centre has also explicitly allowed the regulator to impose a fine of up to ₹1 crore on brokers if they fail to issue a contract note to clients in the format as laid down by the exchanges. Earlier, only the lower limit of ₹1 lakh was prescribed.

Tea Board to set minimum auction price,

Exports to Iran may touch 30 mn kg

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Tea Board of India is planning to set a floor price for the sale of tea at auctions.

It is also planning to take about 100 million kg of tea away from India's output basket in a bid to prop up the flagging fortunes of the estate-based tea industry.

"Our target is to suck around 100 million kg of teas from the system within two years," Tea Board Deputy Chairman Arun Kumar Roy told *The Hindu*.

This is proposed to be done through a slew of measures, including an early closure of tea plucking (started in 2018), allowing export of tea waste and insisting on increasing the

fine-count level in teas (which enhances quality but takes away teas from a lot).

Iran exports

Mr. Roy said that he expected Indian exports to Iran to touch 30 million kg this fiscal, against 27.1 million kg a year ago. "As of now, we see no problem," he said (due to the ongoing sabre rattling between the U.S. and the Iran government).

Iran is India's highly-prized export market, buying expensive orthodox teas. Importing 27.1 million kg in 2018-19, it accounted for 30% of the tea export earnings at ₹2,240.9 crore.

Unit value realisation at ₹269.6 was among the highest.

BPSL default: PNB shares tank 11%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Shares of Punjab National Bank on Monday tanked over 11% after the bank detected a fraud of over ₹3,800 crore by Bhushan Power & Steel Ltd (BPSL).

The scrip plummeted 10.95% to close at ₹72.80 on the BSE. During the day, it plunged 11.31% to ₹72.50. On the NSE, shares dropped 11.24% to close at ₹72.60. On the volume front, 50.02 lakh shares were traded on the BSE and over 8 crore shares changed hands on the NSE.

PNB on Saturday said BPSL misappropriated bank funds and manipulated its books of accounts to raise funds from consortium lender banks.

NCLT admits insolvency plea against Sivasankaran's company

IDBI Bank says the firm defaulted in paying ₹130.30 crore

SANJAY VIJAYAKUMAR
CHENNAI

The Special Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Chennai has admitted insolvency petition against industrialist Sivasankaran's Siva Industries and Holdings Ltd. for defaulting ₹130.30 crore and failing to discharge duty as a guarantor in respect of loans given to another firm.

The case was filed by IDBI Bank Limited.

Siva Industries and Holdings had given guarantee to Rudhra Minerals Pte Limited which had defaulted in paying ₹79.45 crore as on October 1, 2018.

According to court documents, Siva Ventures Limit-



Siva Ventures merged with Siva Industries and Holdings in 2013 and became liable for the loans

ed had availed credit facilities totalling ₹62 crore in 2011 from IDBI Bank. Later, the company again availed ₹15 crore and a loan equivalent receipt limit of ₹4.5 crore to Rudhra Minerals Pte Limited over and above the original sanction already provided to Siva Ventures.

Siva Ventures merged with Siva Industries and Holdings in 2013 and the latter become liable for the loans. An one time settlement for an amount of

₹48.68 crore was also rejected and IDBI Bank filed the insolvency petition against Siva Holdings.

In 2010, Rudhra had availed a working capital facility for \$50 million in the form of letter of credit and Siva Industries had given corporate guarantee, which was later reduced to \$35 million. The firm defaulted in paying \$11 million.

IDBI Bank claimed Siva Industries had failed to discharge its liability on both accounts. NCLT admitted the petition as the company did not dispute the existence of debt and default and appointed Savan Godiawala as the interim resolution professional.

Madras Fertilizers to monetise surplus land

Firm has fixed price at ₹976 per sq.ft.

N. ANAND
CHENNAI

Public Sector Madras Fertilizers Ltd. (MFL) is planning to dispose of its surplus land of 70 acres at its premises in Manali, near here.

The company had sought shareholders' approval through a postal ballot for the same.

"Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (CPCL) has come forward to buy 4.98 acres, and the balance at a later date," said a top company official.

"However, CPCL has not given us firm commitment and, hence, we are scouting for other parties to dispose of the remaining land," he said.

The surplus land is being sold following a directive

from the Department of Fertilizers last year, that asked MFL to explore the possibility of monetising surplus land available at its premises.

After obtaining a 'no objection certificate' from the State government for selling the land to CPCL, MFL, in consultation with the district collector, fixed selling price at ₹976 per sq.ft.

"The remaining land will be sold either to CPCL, any other public sector units, Tamil Nadu government or to any other party," the official said.

In a separate communication, the department had also asked MFL to comply with the listing norms for maintaining minimum public shareholding.

Bangladesh Army to get Tata Hexa SUVs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Tata Motors has won an order to supply over 200 units of the Tata Hexa four-wheel drive SUVs to Bangladesh Army for an unspecified amount.

The vehicle had met all the requirements and specifications of the Bangladesh Army.

"This order has been won against the other competitive brand SUVs and this has been the first key order from the Bangladesh Army," Tata Motors said in a statement. "The superior performance of the Tata Hexa and widely available service and spares in Bangladesh made it the most preferred brand for the army," it added.

Men in Blue may be humming, but the Kiwis can't be taken lightly

The momentum is with India as Williamson's side has lost its last three matches in the league stage



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

Blue skies turned dull, cottony tufts of clouds sauntered in but the sun was out too at Old Trafford which geared up for Tuesday's World Cup semifinal pitting India against New Zealand. A drizzle has been forecast, perhaps the rain gods are being naughty after having draped a wet curtain on the league fixture between the rivals at Nottingham's Trent Bridge on June 13.

The weather isn't exactly a cause for alarm plus there is a reserve day too though rains are predicted for Wednesday. Monday, not the manic one usually seen at Wimbledon, essentially was about the two teams putting a lid on big-game angst. India had optional training and the work-outs were more about relaxing the limbs than exerting them.

Sridhar means business
Mohammed Shami tried placing an energy drink bottle on Patrick Farhat's bald head and the physio squirmed. M.S. Dhoni, padded up for a batting stint, couldn't resist a kick when he sighted a football. Fun was the underlying theme but fielding coach R. Sridhar meant business as he made Kuldeep Yadav and Rishabh Pant run towards each other while taking high catches. The plan was to fine-



Taking guard: M.S. Dhoni, under fire for not accelerating when required, will be keen to silence his critics. • AP

tune the "it's mine" calls in the deep as in the last game involving Sri Lanka, Kuldeep and Hardik Pandya nearly collided.

Focus on staying fresh
New Zealand turned up later in the afternoon and the happy bunch at full strength, bantered away besides practising. Again the focus was to keep mind and body fresh ahead of a knockout clash. India is the tournament's form-team and New Zealand, remains the underdog that has always punched above its weight. We are talking about a unit that stays deceptive and lasts the course, like it

did in the 2015 edition where it finished runner-up.

The Black Caps will lean on its batting duo of skipper Kane Williamson (481 runs so far) and Ross Taylor besides all-rounder James Neesham. Its seam attack that includes Trent Boult, Lockie Ferguson, Neesham and Matt Henry can be a handful especially if the atmosphere turns moist. Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner may not have got too many wickets but has kept it tight. New Zealand has lost its last three contests but the squad cannot be taken for granted.

Virat Kohli will remember that his opponent had prevailed by six wickets in the

warm-up joust at the Oval on May 25. Since then India gained heft, defeated Bangladesh in a practice skirmish and enjoyed a red-hot streak barring a loss to England. Momentum, that magical thing that skippers talk about, vests with the Men in Blue.

Rohit's sizzling run

Rohit Sharma's mountain of runs (647), inclusive of five centuries and the staggering support he found in K.L. Rahul and Kohli, have helped India cope with a middle-order that hasn't exactly lit up the charts. Pandya, Pant and Dhoni had their moments and the first-named has be-

come the prime distributor of sixes while Dinesh Karthik is still feeling his way.

Primarily what helps Kohli is the knowledge that he has excellent speedsters with Jasprit Bumrah and Shami leading the way while Bhuvneshwar Kumar's expensive phase

against Sri Lanka may be deemed an aberration. It remains to be seen if Kohli will retain Ravindra Jadeja and perhaps bring in one among the wrist spinners - Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep.

The last five outings on the surface here favoured the team taking first strike including India which defeated Pakistan and the West Indies. The pitches have slowed down over the last fortnight and scoreboard-pressure becomes a raging beast at the last-four stage.

The toss will be interesting but Kohli's men would like to believe that they are fully prepared.

The teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma, M.S. Dhoni, K.L. Rahul, Hardik Pandya, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja, Kedar Jadhav, Dinesh Karthik, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Rishabh Pant and Mayank Agarwal.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (captain), Ross Taylor, Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Colin Munro, Jimmy Neesham, Henry Nicholls, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi and Tim Southee.

Umpires: Richard Illingworth and Richard Kettleborough; **Third umpire:** Rod Tucker; **Match referee:** David Boon.

Match starts at 3 p.m. IST.

Crunch time A look at how India and New Zealand have fared in the semifinals of WCs



INDIA		2003 vs Kenya, Durban	
1983 vs England, Old Trafford	India 213/10 (60 overs)	lost to India 217/4 (54.4)	India 270/4 (50) beat Kenya 179/10 (46.2)
1987 vs England, Mumbai	England 254/6 (50)	beat India 219/10 (45.3)	2011 vs Pakistan, Mohali
1996 vs Sri Lanka, Kolkata	Sri Lanka 251/8 (50)	beat India 120/8 (34.1)	India 260/9 (50) beat Pakistan 231/10 (49.5)
1999 vs Pakistan, Old Trafford	NZ 241/7 (50) lost to Pakistan 242/1 (47.3)	2015 vs Australia, Sydney	Australia 328/7 (50) beat India 233/10 (46.5)
NEW ZEALAND		2007 vs Sri Lanka, Jamaica	Sri Lanka 289/5 (50) beat NZ 208 (41.4)
1975 vs West Indies, The Oval	NZ 158 (52.2 overs) lost to WI 159/5 (40.1)	2011 vs Sri Lanka, Colombo	NZ 217 (48.5) lost to Sri Lanka 220/5 (47.5)
1979 vs England, Old Trafford	England 221/8 (60) beat NZ 212/9 (60)	2015 vs South Africa, Auckland	South Africa 281 for five (43) lost to NZ 299 for six (42.5) (D/L method)
1992 vs Pakistan, Auckland	NZ 262/7 (50) lost to Pakistan 264/6 (49)		

SERVO CRICKET TRIVIA
SERVO WORLD-CLASS LUBRICANTS
India is the only country to have won the 60 over, the 50 over and the 20 over World Cups.

'Respect for Dhoni is sky-high'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANCHESTER

Equations between a former captain and his successor can be fraught with anxiety, especially if the two gentlemen are still playing together. But for M.S. Dhoni and Virat Kohli, the passing of the baton has been remarkable for its grace and camaraderie. With Dhoni playing his last World Cup and the current edition nearing its climax over the weekend, Kohli paid tributes to his predecessor, who remains an inspiration and a sounding board for the current Indian skipper.

Speaking to the media at Old Trafford here on Monday, Kohli said: "For us, who started our careers under him, the respect will always be there because of the opportunities he gave us and the faith he showed in us and the way he handled the whole team in transition. Now we are the ones who are taking Indian cricket forward. When a person has done so much for the team you have to appreciate and acknowledge. From the respect point of view for MS, it's always going to be sky-high."

And then Kohli explained another critical facet - Dhoni's ability to step back and give space: "I know how difficult it can be to transition from being captain to just being a player within the



Inspirational: The passing of the baton from M.S. Dhoni to Virat Kohli has been graceful. • AFP

same team. He is not being too assertive or too pushy in anything. He gives you space to make your own decisions and to actually discover yourself, that has been his

biggest quality. At the same time, if I go ask him anything, he is there giving me advice. I am delighted that I have been able to play for so many years with him."

We definitely deserve to be here: Williamson

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANCHESTER

Kane Williamson stressed that his team being labelled the "underdogs" really doesn't matter as what counts is the performance on match-day. The New Zealand captain spoke to the media at Old Trafford here on Monday. *Excerpts.*
Semifinal stakes: India is a very successful and popular side. They bring so much to the sport that we are fortunate to be a part of, but it is a cricket match. We will simplify things as best as we can. Each side will want to put the other under pressure and when that happens, the next bit can be a real challenge.

Kiwi bowling: Our attack has performed well on a variety of surfaces and have adapted superbly. We will need to do that again in this match (semifinal) and assess the conditions as quickly as possible.

The underdog tag: We are in the top four and we definitely deserve to be here. We had a couple of tough losses coming into this part of the tournament, but we do need to look at those for what they were. So, whether we are underdogs or not, it doesn't really matter. It is about how we turn up on Tuesday and commit to the



Kane Williamson. • AP

plans that we want to implement and try and play with freedom.

Countering Rohit: Rohit (Sharma) has been clearly the stand-out batter in this tournament. But, as we know, we come into a semifinal and it is another day where both sides will be trying to quickly adjust to the conditions and will be looking for early wickets regardless of what the batsman's name is.

Everyone is relaxed, says Kohli

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

If there were nerves ahead of a knockout game, Virat Kohli masked it well. The Indian skipper answered every question with candour and a ready smile and felt that his men should stick to their 'A game' against New Zealand in the World Cup semifinal. Kohli spoke to correspondents at Old Trafford here on Monday. *Excerpts.*

Under-19 days and the Williamson connect: It is quite nice to realise that 11 years after we captained our respective nations (in the Under-19 World Cup at Malaysia) we are here again in the senior World Cup. Neither Kane nor I would have ever anticipated that this would happen.

The mood within the camp: Everyone is relaxed and confident. All the teams worked hard to get here and now whoever plays better will win. We are looking forward to it. It's been a long tournament, lots of hard work and intense games and we are happy that we made it to the semis. Now there's only opportunity in front of us.

A knockout game: In knockout games you need to be very precise at the same time being intense. Both teams are experienced. New Zealand was in the final last time and they have a quality

side. It is up to both the teams to bring their A-game and whoever handles pressure better is the team that is going to come out on top.
New Zealand attack: The New Zealand attack has always been balanced. Mitchell Santner brings in a lot of control in the middle overs. We know that we will have to play correct cricket to score runs because they bowl good lines. It's going to be a nice battle. It is a potent attack.
Rohit's tons and Kohli's missing century! It's great that Rohit (Sharma) is scoring so consistently which means that coming in the latter half of the innings I have to play a different role which is about controlling the middle overs and letting guys like Hardik (Pandya), Kedar

(Jadhav), M.S. (Dhoni) and Rishabh (Pant) express themselves. Personal milestones are something that no-one focuses on. Rohit said the same the other day. I hope he gets two more so we can win two more games (laughs). I have never seen anyone get five hundreds in a World Cup or any other tournament. He is at the moment the top ODI player in the world.
Five-bowler ploy: We played with five bowlers because it gives us more depth in batting. But we are up to reviewing that, otherwise, I was just told that I got Kane out (in the Under-19 World Cup) so I can bowl and I am quite lethal (laughs). Having said that, it's open for discussion because we need to be balanced on the field.



Time to deliver: Rishabh Pant needs to put his head down and play a long innings, should the need arise. • AP

Flashback: a journey that began in 2008

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
MANCHESTER

Once upon a time there were two boys split by teams but fused by talent and a common adolescent worry about acne.

The stage was the Under-19 World Cup at Malaysia in 2008 and the lads in question were Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson, who led India and New Zealand respectively, and do that even now.

Back then, just like it is going to happen here on Tuesday, the squads clashed in the semifinal and interestingly Kohli dismissed his counterpart for 37. India won that joust and the subsequent fi-



One from the album: Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson led their teams in the U-19 World Cup semifinals and are now at the helm of the senior sides. • COURTESY TWITTER

nal at South Africa's expense. Presciently both Kohli and Williamson were

marked out for higher glory. The two were reminded about those good old days

while laughter coursed through the press conference hall at Old Trafford

here on Monday. First up, Kohli forgot that he had scalped Williamson. "I got Kane's wicket, did I?" he asked and then added with a laugh: "I don't know if that can happen again now."

Later, Williamson's views were sought and the bearded cricketer, his eyes crinkling and an embarrassed smile stretching his lips, quipped: "Oh dear, tell me how. He used to be an all-rounder I think back in the day, but hasn't bowled as much recently."

The two wholeheartedly praised each other while boarding the nostalgia-train heading towards their under-19 days.

Knockouts: Anything can happen

Kiwis' ability to take wickets with the new ball will be critical



Mike Hesson
SELECT DUGOUT CORNER

India will no doubt go in as favourites against New Zealand, but in a knockout game, anything can happen. New Zealand will have to play very well though, certainly better than they have played so far.

From a batting point of view, New Zealand has not been able to put up a solid performance yet. They can take comfort from the fact that they have reached the semifinal despite their batting not firing.

If the likes of Martin Guptill, Tom Latham and Ross Taylor can hit their straps, they are capable of producing an upset.

The ability of New Zealand to take wickets with the new ball is going to be critical. Trent Boult plays a massive part in that. I believe that Boult can get Rohit Sharma out with the swing-

ing ball. If the pitch offers swing, then it becomes more of an even contest between the two teams.

However, if Rohit can get through the PowerPlay, then he'll be well set and ready to cash in.

As for the team combination, I think that Ravindra Jadeja is good enough to bat at No. 7. He should be one of two spinners in the eleven. At Old Trafford, both sides need to field six bowlers.

The challenge for New Zealand is that if you give Rohit early, you give Virat a chance to get a big one. Virat is primed and ready to go.

The creative business (L-R) Sketch and final design by Noié Noéi, Little Things Studio, Zilzom, and Amaaré • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Delhi designers in this Festive 2019 cohort

AMAARÉ BY SAHIB BHATIA, 28, distills traditional Japanese silhouettes into menswear, and blends in Australian aboriginal dot work into his collection's embroidery
@amaarecuture
LITTLE THINGS STUDIO BY ANKITA SRIVASTAVA, 30, is influenced by hand-drawings a la Matisse
@littlethingstudio
NOIÉ NOÉI BY AKANKSHA AGGARWAL, 29, is a zero-waste label with an eccentric, edgy aesthetic (yet to launch)

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

There have been papers written about this: Pashmina, the premium wool that's made of the soft down of the changthangi goat, isn't associated with Kashmir alone. A large portion of raw pashmina that the craftspeople here process, comes from Ladakh's eastern-most reaches. In these harsh terrains, a community of nomadic pastoralists called the Changpas herd pashmina goats, later combing the goat to collect and send out the wool.

26-year-old Stanzin Palmo, a graduate of Delhi's National Institute of Fashion Technology, knew something of this. But the real value and diversity of the fibers and textiles of her hometown never really hit her, until she got involved with Looms of Ladakh in 2017. At the women's cooperative -- it spun off from Project Laksh, a local training programme for women artisans of the region -- Palmo was a mentor to over a hundred women, all at least twice her age. "It took a lot of team work and mutual respect, and now Ladakh itself has become my inspiration," she says.

Grounded in this experience, Stanzin is now one of six designers, picked from over 400 applicants, to be part of Lakme Fashion Week's 28th batch of Gen Next designers. The mentorship pro-

gramme for early-career professionals started in 2005, and has been an entrepreneurial incubator for some of the biggest names in the Indian fashion industry: Masaba Gupta, Pero's Aneeth Arora, and Rahul Mishra, to name a few. The USP is of discovering young fashion-design talent, and a stated intent to nurture it.

Palmo, like the programme's alumni, is pointed in her identity as a designer, through her label Zilzom (@zilzom on Instagram). "My motive is to get Ladakh on the textile map on India, where right now it's only known for its natural beauty," she says.

These designers aren't greenhorns. One comes from a family that's been in textile trade, some have gone to the best design schools ranging from NIFT to Parsons School of Design in New York. Others have interned with big labels or designers internationally, or worked in grassroots-level initiatives.

And yet, at Gen Next, a lot of them find themselves learning in the deep end of the pool. They are all creatives, with limited to no knowledge of how to get their labels off the ground.

The real learning

While the applicant pool has matured over the last 6-8 years -- there are hardly any that apply

straight out of college any more, coming in only towards their late 20s, and early 30s -- many, despite degrees and internships, remain far-removed from designing for the real world.

"What they are exposed to here, is how a designer really runs a business," says Jaspreet Chandok, vice president and head of fashion at IMG Reliance,

A bootcamp for FASHION

The Lakme Fashion Week's Gen Next, which showcases new design talent, is now onto its 28th batch. A look into what it's really about

which jointly organises the LFW. "At school, or in an internship, they don't get to interface with a diverse set of stakeholders. At GenNext, we give them the opportunity to interact and learn from magazines, stylists, and how they can leverage social media," he adds. This includes a two-day masterclass with the likes of the show's director Neeraj

Gaba, stylist Kshitij Kankaria, and Chandok himself. The head mentor is fashion consultant Sabina Chopra, who, through the weeks that lead up to the Fashion Week, handholds the designers to have their collections ramp-ready.

"What we see as fashion in India is very different from the buying of clothes in India," Chopra, says, stressing that she spends

most of the time here teaching the designers "the business of fashion". The first stage is guiding them to create for the show. The next is to do a reinterpretation of the show, for the rack. "We take elements of the show clothing, but keep it simpler, across colour and textures, so that they can take that one collection, with smaller capsules which can go to stores every six weeks," Chopra says. The designers then will be free to make a new collection six months later. "Everyone needs to work like that. Start with exaggerated couture, then simplify it till it's value for money."

Staying practical

As a follow up to this, the cohort is taken, post show, to four retailers across the country. Called On the Road, this segment of the programme gives a taste of the market, having included stores like Bombain in Kolkata, Amethyst in

Chennai, Azra in Raipur, Urban in Hyderabad, and Aza in Delhi over the last two seasons.

Of everything they learn, this lesson in market-think and playing for a long innings, is perhaps the biggest takeaway for the batch. With both virtual and brick-and-mortar spaces flooded with designers and indie-labels, an important consideration for the jury is the potential for longevity. The jury consists of members from the Lakme Fashion Week Advisory Board, a mix of designers, editors of fashion magazines, and big garment retailers makes.

Chopra hopes that in time, as the Indian fashion industry grows, it will attract big investors, better infrastructure and management, freeing up designers to concentrate on their core competency. Until then, they'll need to wear the many hats any start-up founder does.

#DELHIMOVES

GAGAN DHILLON KULLAR

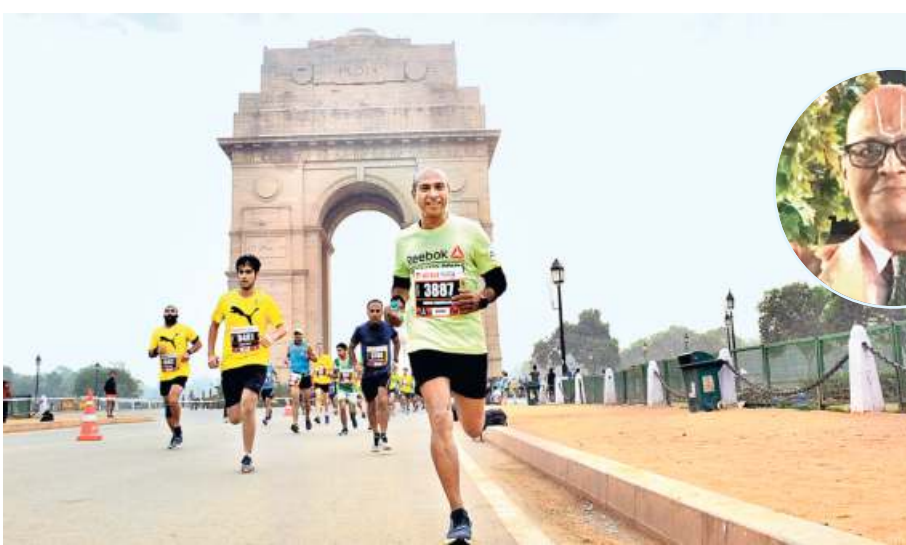
Suresh Srinivasan lost his father to cancer last year. But the lesson that has stayed with him has been to put more life into the days he has. Suresh's father fought the disease for over 18 years, first when it attacked his bladder and then the prostate. Through it all, Suresh says he didn't let the killer disease dictate how he would spend his days. Come rain or shine, Desikachari Srinivasan would head to the neighbourhood park to exercise.

"My father was first diagnosed in 2001. Despite the struggles of early months of treatment he insisted on travelling with me to Leh in an Ambassador car. He didn't want to miss out on our father-son time. Throughout his life, he never lost willpower or showed his pain," says Suresh, who he always encouraged to stay active.

Until his father's diagnosis, Suresh wasn't a regular runner. It was the diagnosis that was the trigger. He used running as a coping mechanism

The cancer cure

A dying man's hope for his son, changes his life



Man with a mission Suresh Srinivasan on the run; (right) his father • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ism and it gave him much more in return.

Within a year, he went from running 5km to 10km and the kilometres just started adding up. Today he has

over 15 half marathons and 5 full marathons under his belt. "As I approached my 40th birthday, I wanted to do something memorable. So I ran my first full marath-

on in Ljubljana, Slovenia, to mark the day," recalls Suresh. Through it all, he says it was his father's zest for life that carried him to the finish line.

As he approaches his 45th birthday this year, Suresh is training to run two of the Big Six also known as the world's six major marathons. These are Tokyo, Boston, London, Berlin, Chicago and New York. He has made it through the lucky ballot for the Chicago Marathon, scheduled on October 13th. A few weeks later he'll be running the New York marathon on November 3rd to support a paediatric cancer charity known as Tackle Kids Cancer. For this he has already managed to raise 77% of the money (USD\$2,331).

If you run, you know the aches and pains of recovering from a long run all too well. Two 42-km runs within a few weeks need tremendous motivation and training. Suresh's motivation comes from keeping his father's memory alive and from wanting to spread his message of making the most of our time on earth.

He is disciplined when it comes to training. You can

Start line

There are other ways besides meeting the stringent qualifying time to enter the six major marathons. You can enter your name in the ballot and hope for the best, or you could enter through a charity by fulfilling the minimum fund-raising target. You could also go through a tour company that specializes in this like Active Holiday Company (activeholidaycompany.com).

catch him running at Lodi Garden, Rose Garden, Siri Fort, and Nehru Park four times a week. He likes to switch between the parks because each track offers its own challenges. Occasionally, he runs on road. Twice a week he devotes time to strength training and also manages to squeeze in yoga three times a week, to help stretch sore muscles.

Running needn't be the answer for everyone. All it takes is finding an activity that supplies a steady dose of joy while keeping you on your toes.

PRODUCT

Monsoon ready

City-based brand Hastha, which specialises in hand blockprinted cotton T-shirts for women, men and children, has launched a new range of umbrellas. The latest collection has brollies in cheery shades of pink and blue, with traditional Indian motifs like the *kolam* and quirky scooter prints. The brand also works with Karthumbi, a self-help tribal group in Attapadi, Kerala, and will launch a new umbrella collection with them in August. From ₹650 onwards on hastha.co.in



For listing to be featured here, email us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



TALK

On India and Norway

H.E. Ambassador Nils Ragnar Kamsvåg, Ambassador of Norway to India, will deliver a lecture titled 'Can India and Norway take a leap into the new era of partnership?'. The session will touch upon the future of India-Norway relations and the various sectors in which they forge partnerships going forward.

VENUE: Seminar Rooms, Kamaladevi Complex, IIC
TIME: 5:30 p.m.



ART

Abstracts on display

An exhibition of abstract artworks by Yashvant Singh titled 'A Traveller in abstract universe' is on display. It showcases 12 mix-media pieces that are a melange of figures, muted colours, and abstract forms. The exhibition also depicts the Singh's journey with the art-world, and the gradual evolution of his art.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House
TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



CUISINE

Mango festival

Band Baaja Baaaraat, a restaurant that specialises in Indian cuisine, has organised a week-long mango festival. The lunch and dinner menu offers mangoes in the form of various dishes. This includes Achari Mango Chicken Tikka, Mango Chilli Fish, Tandoori Soya Chaap Mango, Mango Custard, and Spinach and Mango Salad.

VENUE: Vishal Enclave, Rajouri Garden
TIME: 12 p.m. and 7 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Watercolour

An ongoing solo show, called Colours of the Himalayas, features the recent works of Dehra Dun-based artist Shabnam Anand Singh. She uses watercolour and acrylic to depict flowers of the hills. Her creations have found place in various hotel groups across both Hong Kong and Singapore.

VENUE: Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre
TIME: 10 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

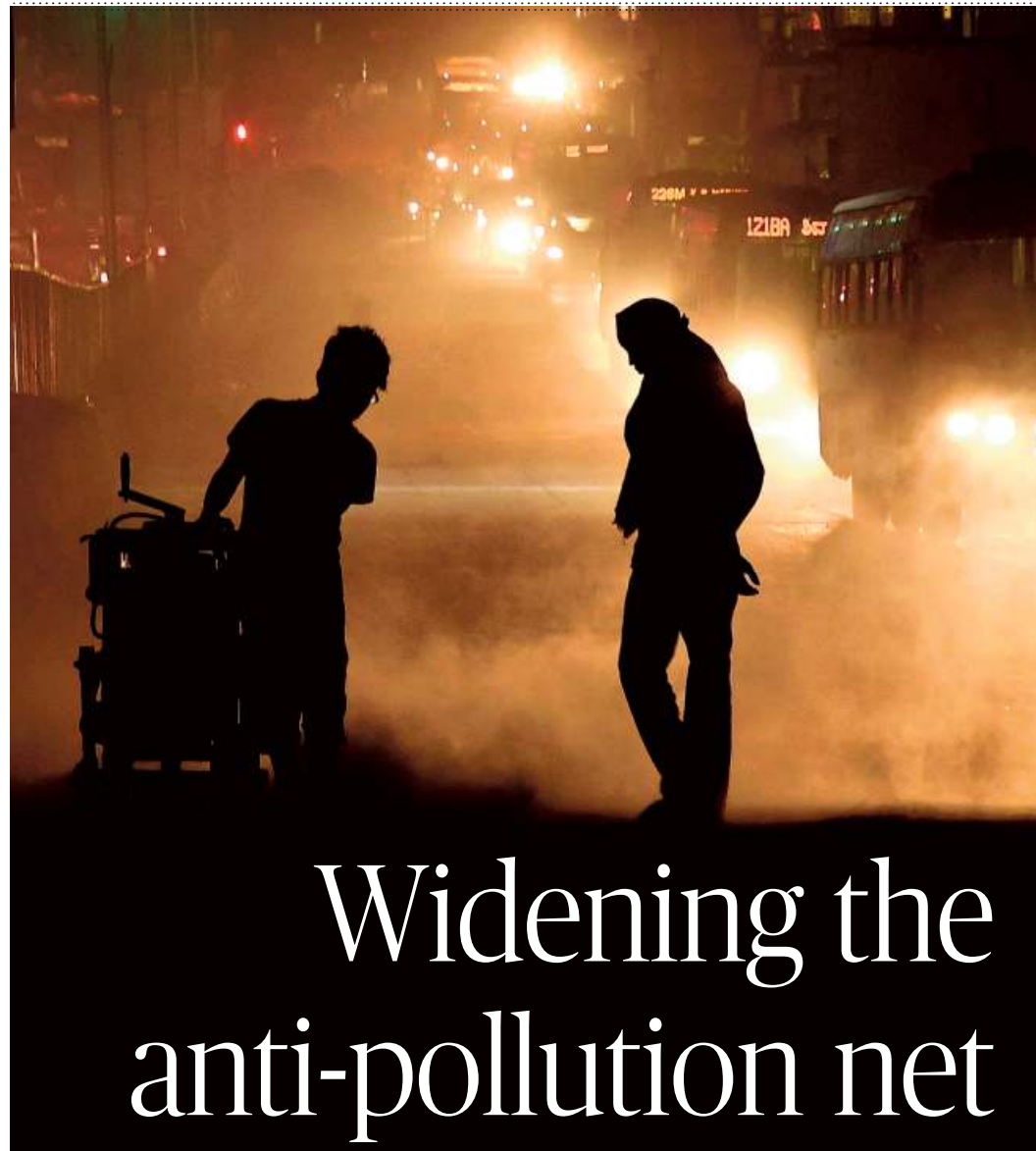


FILM

Psychological drama

Alliance Française de Delhi will screen 'L'oeil Du Cyclone', a French film. Directed by Sékou Traoré, it is a psychological drama about child-soldiers. The story revolves around a young attorney in a small African country, who endangers her career and life, to defend a dangerous rebel accused of war crimes.

VENUE: M.L. Bhartia Auditorium, Lodhi Estate
TIME: 10 a.m.



Widening the anti-pollution net

BHUMIKA SARASWATI

"Nanoclean AC Filters can turn your AC into an air purifier," declares Prateek Sharma, founder and CEO of Nanoclean Global Pvt Ltd, a company that develops affordable devices to help clean the air. Prateek, along with Tushar Vyas, co-founder-CTO, and Jatin Kewlani, Director-COO, studied Civil Engineering in IIT Delhi.

Made of a specially-designed non-woven structure, the device has been developed in tandem with Prof Ashwini K Agrawal, HOD, Department of Textile Technology and Prof Manjeet Jassal, from the same department.

The fabric structure is able to retain pollutants (PM2.5) due to its high dust-holding capacity. The journey began about four years ago when Prateek was a student.

"Starting Nanoclean Global was personal. My mother is a long-time severe asthmatic patient. She was often troubled by air pollution, the smoke and dust," he says, speaking of Delhi's air.

The discomfort Prateek's moth-

This IIT Delhi-based team is creating affordable technology to fight air pollution



A breath of fresh air Prateek Sharma, Tushar Vyas and Jatin Kewlani's AC Filter • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



er faced while wearing a face mask, led him and his team to develop their first product: Nasofilters. These are easy-to-use, nearly invisible nasal filters, which are clipped onto your nostrils to prevent particulate matter from entering while breathing. Affordable, at ₹10 a piece, this one-time-use anti-pollution filter can hold up to a day.

In December 2018, the team went on to develop the Nasofilters Pollution Net, made up of nanofibres, that can be attached to windows or doors, preventing any particulate matter from entering indoors. Nasofilter is a patented technology, and the company exports its products to upto 30 countries, such as Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and more. Currently, their manufacturing unit is based in Ahmedabad.

Indoor air can be five times more polluted than outdoor air, says Prateek, citing the reason for their latest product, Nanoclean AC Filters. "This technology pulls in pollutants, filters out particles, and delivers clean and fresh air," says Prateek, of the filter that should ideally be changed on a monthly basis.

For Vikaas Gupta, a resident of Sukhdev Vihar, living near the Okhla industrial power plant, dealing with poor air quality was a daily struggle: "I used to get a lot of dust in my house due to the plant," he says. Having recently installed the Nanofilter Pollution Net as well as Nanoclean AC Filter, Gupta feels the change: "The dust in the house has become 95% less," he claims.

They now look forward to establishing a mass Nano Fibre Development and Production unit in the country, which they say will make India among one of the few countries possessing the manufacturing expertise. Prateek

answers a few questions on Nanoclean AC Filters:

How do we use it?

● It is a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) product and can easily be placed in both a split as well as window AC. One only has to place it on the frame of the existing AC Filter. The product is unwashable.

How pure does the air get with this device?

● It can purify a room up to 90% in just 35-40 minutes (less than an hour). It removes PM2.5 and other micro-particle pollutants from the air.

Does it have any negative impact on either cooling or electricity consumption?

● No, the Nanoclean AC Filter, when fitted, occupies less than 45-50% of the space of the inbuilt cooling filter, hence cooling is taken care of. And with the use of Nanotechnology, these filters allow ACs to become purifiers at no recurrent electricity cost.

What is it made of?

● A proprietary (specially designed) non-woven structure which is able to retain pollutants (PM2.5), made up of pure PP (polypropylene) which can be recycled into other products (making it an environmentally friendly technology).

Available at nasofilters.com, Amazon and Apollo Pharmacy Stores at ₹399.

ALARM BELLS

Humans have pumped enough carbon dioxide into the atmosphere over the past 150 years to raise its levels higher than they have been for hundreds of thousands of years.

REVIEW

To track the long run

Inspire HR is a good sub-₹10k Fitbit device that offers access to their detailed app, with good workout and sleep tracking



TEAM T3

Fitbit has been one of the frontrunners in the personal fitness tracking space, and now to make its devices more accessible, it recently announced the Inspire models. The Inspire and Inspire HR are among the most affordable ones in the market.

Its function over form for the Inspire HR, and it's evident from the design. The water-resistant device (up to 50m) is slightly wider than the Alta HR, but not as wide as its other fitness band – Charge 3. The all-black tracking unit features a touchscreen display, which camouflages the small screen and surrounding bezel well, while the curve at the bottom integrates the heart rate sensor. The display is responsive, but screen legibility is an issue under direct sunlight. There's a physical button on the left that acts as a back or an action button. The bundled small and large bands are comfortable to wear

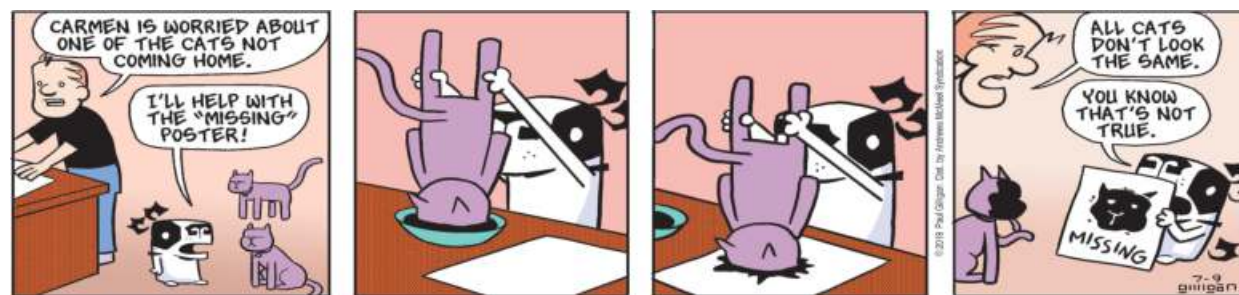
and replaceable with different colours and styles.

Fitbit devices are easy to use and the Inspire HR is no different. Scrolling down reveals the number of steps walked, current and resting heart rate, calories burned and distance. On the other hand, scrolling above opens up the exercise menu, along with an option to relax, alarm, countdown timer and a stopwatch.

Inspire HR also supports call, message and app notifications that can be customised as per the user's preference. But some kind of limited notification functionality, like rejecting an incoming call or sending a preset message would have improved the user experience.

Users can manually start a particular workout or leave it to Inspire HR's SmartTrack feature to automatically record the workout details and save it in the app. The Fitbit app gives a detailed history of the workout, sleep data and more. Inspire HR's workout and sleep tracking are good and it comes with five days of battery life.

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



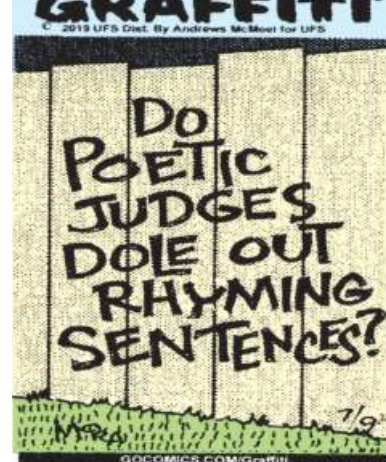
CALVIN AND HOBBS



TIGER



GRAFFITI



HEALTH CAPSULES

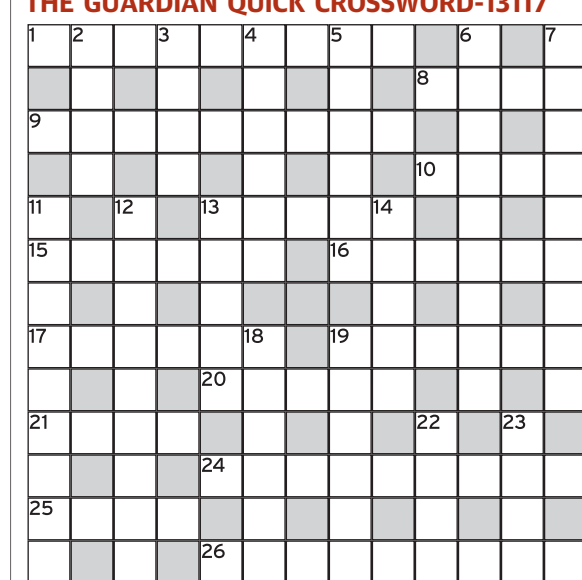
HOW MUCH SUGAR DO WE CONSUME?

SUGAR MAKES UP 17% OF THE TOTAL CALORIC INTAKE FOR ADULTS, 44% FOR CHILDREN.

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN CONSUMES OVER 100 POUNDS OF SUGAR EVERY YEAR. SUGAR BEGINS A CASCADE OF BIOCHEMICAL REACTIONS THAT LEAD TO INFLAMMATION, WHICH LEADS TO ARTHRITIS AND OTHER INFLAMMATORY CONDITIONS.

Health Capsules is not intended to diagnose or cure any disease.

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13117

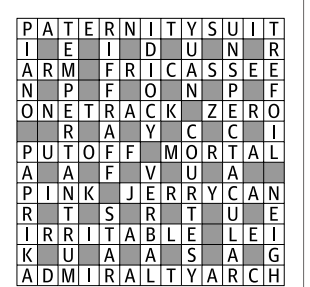


- Across
- Absolute belter (9)
 - Card – raiser (4)
 - Potential cause of harm from micro-organisms (9)
 - Killer whale (4)
 - Put to the sword (5)
 - Setting (6)
 - Evil imp (6)
 - Order restricting movements after a set time (6)

- White whale (6)
 - Three-note chord – Chinese criminal gang (5)
 - Candle cord (4)
 - Powered equipment (9)
 - Father (4)
 - Deserted urban area (5,4)
- Down
- Separate part (4)
 - James and the Giant

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated July 10, 2019.

Solution No. 13116



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



IN BRIEF



Italy's Prosecco hills join UNESCO Heritage list

Rome Italy's Prosecco hills, which have been cultivated for centuries, were on Sunday added to the UNESCO World Heritage list. The grapes grown on Conegliano and Valdobbiadene hills produce the famous prosecco wine. Also added to the list were eight buildings designed by architect Frank Lloyd Wright, including Guggenheim Museum in New York. **AFF**



Artur Brauner, producer, Holocaust survivor, dies

Berlin Artur Brauner, a Polish-born Holocaust survivor who became one of post-Second World War Germany's most prominent film producers, died on Sunday aged 100. Mr. Brauner produced hundreds of films. They included several 1960s *Dr. Mabuse* crime movies and other hits such as *Girls in Uniform*, starring Romy Schneider. **AP**



ASAP Rocky appeals against detention

Stockholm American rapper ASAP Rocky, currently detained in Stockholm over assault, has appealed his detention to Sweden's Supreme Court, his lawyer said on Monday. On Friday, a Swedish district court decided to keep the artist, whose real name is Rakim Mayers, in custody while prosecutors investigate a June 30 street brawl. **AFF**

Museum starts 'live' restoration of Rembrandt masterpiece

'Operation Night Watch' aims at preserving the painting for future generations

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam's famed Rijksmuseum will on Monday begin the biggest ever restoration of Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*, erecting a huge glass cage around the painting so the public can see the work carried out live.

The multi-million-euro overhaul of the giant 1642 masterpiece, one of the world's most famous paintings, will also be streamed online so that "everyone in the world" can see.

Dubbed "Operation Night Watch", the project is the "largest and most comprehensive research on Rembrandt's masterpiece in history", the museum said in a statement.

"Operation Night Watch aims to preserve the painting optimally for the future and takes place in front of the public in a specially designed glass room."

Rembrandt Van Rijn was commissioned by the Mayor and leader of the civic guard of Amsterdam, Frans Banninck Cocq, to paint the picture of the officers and other members of the so-called



Perfect interplay: Restorers looking at Rembrandt van Rijn's world-famous masterpiece *The Night Watch* (1642) in Amsterdam on Monday. **AFF**

"Night Watch" militia.

Experts say the groundbreaking three metre by four metre picture is the first of its kind to show such a group in motion, rather than in static poses, and features the interplay of light and shadow that the Dutch master is famed for.

Over the last three centu-

ries Rembrandt's brooding painting has endured travails including an escape from the Nazis, losing large chunks from each side during a move, and three attacks by vandals.

The last major restoration work was carried out 40 years ago after a man slashed it with a knife. It is now

housed in its own special room in the Rijksmuseum.

But experts have recently noticed changes to the painting, with a white haze appearing on some parts, especially in the area around the knife damage. Experts will use high-resolution photography and computer analysis of every layer.

Put off by U.S., Chinese students eye elsewhere

Japan, S. Korea, Europe to be beneficiaries

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

Caught in the crossfire of the U.S.-China trade war, Chinese students are looking for alternative study destinations – threatening to turn off an important source of revenue for American universities.

China accounts for nearly a third of foreign students on U.S. campuses who pour billions of dollars into the economy, but in March their numbers dropped for the first time in a decade.

Visa delays

Visa delays, concerns over being shut out of research projects and safety fears have turned off Chinese students, according to several admissions consultancies and nearly a dozen parents and students interviewed.

Rival education powerhouses such as Britain, Australia and Canada are the biggest beneficiaries, a recent survey said.

Japan and South Korea – traditional destinations for the Chinese elite – and parts of Europe, especially Germany and Scandinavian countries with strong engineering programmes, have also seen an uptick in appli-



Visa delays, hurdles in research and safety fears are among key concerns. **AFF**

cations, the survey found.

The chilling effect started mid-last year, after President Donald Trump's administration slashed the visa duration of students in science and technology fields from five years to one in some cases. "Now there's a lot of uncertainty on whether they can even finish their studies," said Gu Huini, founder of boutique college consultancy Zoom In.

Over one third of the roughly 3,600,000 Chinese students in the U.S. study in "STEM fields" – science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

But the number of Chinese students in the U.S. dipped by 2% in March compared to the previous year, the first drop since 2009, U.S. data shows.

Bible shortage? U.S. tariffs on China to blame

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NASHVILLE

Religious publishers say President Donald Trump's most recent proposed tariffs on Chinese imports could result in a Bible shortage.

That's because millions of Bibles, some estimates put it at 150 million or more, are printed in China each year. Critics of a proposed tariff say it would make the Bible more expensive for consumers and hurt the evangelism efforts of Christian organisations that give away Bibles as part of their Ministry.

The Bible is the top-selling book in the U.S. By comparison, the next best seller in 2018 was Michelle Obama's *Becoming*, which BookScan estimates sold 3.5 million copies.

The two largest Bible publishers in the U.S., Zondervan and Thomas Nelson, are owned by HarperCollins, and they incur close to 75% of their Bible manufacturing expenses in China, Mark Schoenwald, CEO of HarperCollins Christian Publishing, said. Together, they command 38% of the American Bible market, he said.

India's indigenous cinema is going places

Four films on Indian communities are showing at the ongoing International Indigenous Film Festival of Kuching, Malaysia

NAMRATA JOSHI
MUMBAI

Niranjan Kujur's *Dibi Durga* is a unique short film about a day in the life of an indigenous woman. In its duration of a mere six minutes, it manages to encapsulate the sheer range and amount of work the woman (from the Santhal tribe in the Purulia district of West Bengal) manages to carry out – be it at home, in the fields, or the

forests. "It's true of any society, anywhere in the world but we remain blind to women's labour," says Mr. Kujur, a graduate of the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, who was born in Jharkhand's Lohardaga district and grew up in Ranchi.

Dibi Durga is one of the four films on indigenous Indian communities made by native filmmakers, or in collaboration with the com-

munities, that are showing at the ongoing International Indigenous Film Festival of Kuching, Malaysia.

The other three are *Niyangiri-The Mountain of Law* by Surya Shankar Dash (Odisha), *Shot Awake* by Anungla Zoe (Nagaland), and *Strength in Diversity* by Chentei (Nagaland).

On various issues involving the indigenous communities – from State and corpo-

rate oppression to environmental degradation, and from gender to lifestyle and culture – these films are an attempt to give indigenous people a voice to raise their concerns and create awareness in the world about themselves.

Giving a voice

"The films are on a gamut of issues and subjects," said filmmaker-activist Mr. Dash,

also the founder of the International Indigenous Film Festival of Bhubaneswar.

Strength in Diversity is about an indigenous variety of millet in Nagaland, a stress resistant crop that can withstand extreme drought as well as heavy rains. *Shot Awake* is on the making of a traditional drum carved out of the bark of a huge tree and used in many community rituals. *Niyangiri - The Moun-*

tain of Law focuses on the fight of the Dongria Kondh community to save the environment and their sacred lands from being taken over by bauxite mining companies.

The film has previously been screened at venues such as the Bali Indigenous Film Festival, Ubud; the Kalimantan Indigenous Film Festival, Palangka Raya, Indonesia; and the Maoriland Film

Festival in Otaki, New Zealand.

All the four films were screened at the 1st International Indigenous Film Festival of Bhubaneswar in February earlier this year, which is where they were picked up by the Kuching festival. He hopes that the Bhubaneswar festival will become the one stop shop for global indigenous film festivals to source Indian films.

British Airways faces record \$230 mn fine for data breach

About five lakh customers lost their personal data to hackers

ADAM SATARIANO
LONDON

British authorities said on Monday that they intended to order British Airways to pay a fine of nearly \$230 million for a data breach last year, the largest penalty against a company for privacy lapses under a new European data protection law.

Poor security at the airline allowed hackers to divert about 5,00,000 customers visiting the British Airways website last summer to a fraudulent site, where names, addresses, login information, payment card details, travel bookings and other data was taken, according to the Information Commissioner's Office, the British agency in charge of reviewing data breaches.

In a statement, British Airways said that it was "sur-



Customers visiting the BA website were led to a fraudulent site. **REUTERS**

prised and disappointed" by the agency's finding and that it would dispute the judgment.

The penalty signals a new era for companies that experience large-scale data breaches. Frustrated that companies were not doing enough to protect people's online information, European policymakers last year adopted a new law, the General Data Protection Regulation, that allows regulators

in each European Union country to issue fines of up to 4% of a company's global revenue for a breach.

Previously, fines by the Information Commissioner's Office were capped at 5,00,000 pounds, or about \$6,25,000.

Facebook and Google are among other companies currently under investigation by European authorities over breaches of the landmark law. "People's personal data is just that – personal," Elizabeth Denham, the information commissioner, said in a statement.

"When an organisation fails to protect it from loss, damage or theft it is more than an inconvenience. That's why the law is clear – when you are entrusted with personal data you must look after it." **NY TIMES**

Take off



In a tight spot: A bull jumps into the water during the bull-run festival near Alicante, Spain, on Monday. Three people were gored during the first day of the festival in the Spanish town of Pamplona on Sunday. **AFF**

U.K. to return looted Iraqi, Afghan artefacts

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Looted ancient artefacts from Iraq and Afghanistan seized in Britain will be returned to their country of origin after appraisal by the British Museum, the institution said on Monday.

Among the artefacts to be sent back to Afghanistan are Gandharan sculptures illegally exported to Britain in 2002.

Another important haul to be returned to Iraq features 154 Mesopotamian texts written on clay in cuneiform script – one of the earliest systems of writing – seized on entry in 2011.

They were created between the 6th and 4th centu-



A Sumerian clay cone, dating to around 2200 BC, bearing a cuneiform inscription. **AFF**

ries BC, with many belonging to the archives from a place called Irisagrig, which was unknown until artefacts referring to it first surfaced in 2003.

They will be handed over to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad.

'Ancient Philistine town located in Israel'

Researchers claim to have found Ziklag, where 'David took refuge from king Saul'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JERUSALEM

Researchers in Israel said on Monday they have pinpointed the site of an ancient Philistine town mentioned in the biblical tale of David seeking refuge from the Israelite king Saul. Ziklag was then under the rule of a Philistine king, the researchers say.

A biblical tale says the town became the unlikely seat of David before his anointment as king in Hebron.

Ziklag's location has been the subject of debate, with 12 possible locations named in



Yosef Garfinkel, professor at the Hebrew University, at the site claimed to be ancient Ziklag, in Israel. **AFF**

southern Israel. None of the sites, however, had the necessary evidence of consecutive Philistine and Israelite settlement to fit what is be-

lieved to be the narrative.

Now researchers from the IAA, Hebrew University and Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, say they have

found a Philistine-era settlement from the historical era linked to David.

Those findings have led them to believe it is Ziklag, the statement said. The site, Khirbet al-Rai, is located near Kiryat Gat. Researchers have excavated finds typical of the Philistine civilisation as well as pottery vessels connecting it to the historical era, it said.

The Philistines are believed to have arrived in the region in the 12th century BC, with DNA tests on their bones recently suggesting their origin to be in southern Europe.

Man denies altering texts about assault by Spacey

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NANTUCKET

The man who accused actor Kevin Spacey of groping him at a bar has denied deleting or altering text messages about the alleged 2016 assault.

The man's lawyer said on Monday they cannot find the phone but have recovered a copy of its contents that were backed up to a computer.

The judge ordered the accuser to take the stand on Monday after he failed to turn over the phone to the defence. Spacey's lawyers say texts that would help the actor's case were deleted before screenshots of conversations were sent to an



Kevin Spacey

investigating officer.

The accuser said he handed over to police what he had "available" with him "at the time" and did not manipulate the screenshots.

Spacey has pleaded not guilty to indecent assault and battery.