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DEFENCE MINISTER IN HARYANA

Talks with Pak only on PoK: Rajnath

'Pakistan wants to break India... no reason for talks till it ends terrorism'

SUKHBIR SIWACH & SHUBHAJIT ROY
KALKA (HARYANA),
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18



Rajnath Singh, Manohar Lal Khattar in Kalka on Sunday

SIGNALLING THE hardening of India's position after the Centre revoked the special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcated the state into two Union Territories, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Sunday that talks with Islamabad will be held only on the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Addressing a public meeting at Kalka in Haryana, Singh said:

E.

A new red line

AFTER SCRAPPING J&K's special status, Delhi has gone a step further in laying out a new, hardened line on talks with Pakistan. While both countries have engaged in bilateral talks, recent efforts were aimed at resolving the issue peacefully. But Delhi's new red line is expected to elicit a sharp and negative response from Islamabad.

"Whatever talks take place, that will be on the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. No talks will

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Detained in J&K: Ex-top ministers, MLAs, Mayor

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, AUGUST 18

NOT JUST three former chief ministers and an IAS topper, the list of those detained in Jammu and Kashmir a fortnight into the J&K Reorganisation Bill 2019 includes a former Union minister, seven former state ministers, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Srinagar, and a number of legislators.

While there are talks within the government on easing the security clampdown in the state after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, there is no offi-

cial word yet on when the detained leaders will be released.

Those detained also include lawyers, businessmen, professors, members of the J&K Bar Association and civil society. Some of the key political figures who have been detained:

FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Three-time CM and former Union minister, Abdullah is president of the National Conference (NC), and Srinagar MP.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Hooda says Cong has lost its way, backs govt move on Art 370

Declares himself CM candidate

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 18

IN MORE trouble for the Congress, senior party leader and Haryana's two-time Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda signalled rebellion on Sunday, as he declared himself the chief ministerial candidate for the Assembly polls due later this year, with or without the party's support.

Addressing his "parivartan rally" in Rohtak, Hooda also criticised the Congress for not supporting the Centre's decision to revoke the special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370. He said his party had "lost its way (bhatag gayee)", and was no longer the old Congress.

With Haryana set to go to polls in October, Hooda's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Hooda in Rohtak on Sunday. Express RELATED REPORT, P.6

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



THE EDITORIAL PAGE

DEVELOPMENT DAWNS IN VALLEY

BY RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
PAGE 10

WORLD



SUICIDE BLAST AT AFGHAN WEDDING KILLS 63 PAGE 13

Law topper skips event to protest SC's handling of CJI charges

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

WHEN HER name was called out Saturday to receive the gold medal for standing first in her LL.M class at the National Law University, Delhi, Surbhi Karwa was at work. "Unfortunately, she is not here. We will award her the medal in absentia," Prof (Dr) G S Bajpai, the university registrar, said during the convocation.

Karwa knew she would be awarded the medal. But when she realised that she would most likely receive it from Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, it prompted her to skip the event.

"Everything I learnt in the classroom put me in a moral quandary over the last few weeks on whether I should receive the award from CJI Gogoi. The institution he heads failed when sexual harassment allegations were made against him," Karwa told *The Indian Express*.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

For good governance, awards for best district magistrates go to...

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

A CLUSTER of solar panels installed on a hillock as an alternate energy source; an automatic fare collection system that provides live daily reports and uses GPS to track vehicles for speeding or not stopping at bus stops and a neo-natal unit in the heart of Maoist territory.

These are among the initiatives that have won the first The Indian Express Excellence in Governance Awards that will be presented in New Delhi Wednesday.

The biennial awards celebrate the finest work done by



district magistrates across the country — the women and men at Ground Zero of governance, who script change that touches countless lives.

Awarded to the most innovative solutions to governance challenges at the district level across India, the winning entries included projects like an anti-corruption drive along the international border, a garbage dump that became a nature park, a district hospital which now boasts

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PM EAC: Need to set up GST Council-like body for public spending

PVAIDYANATHAN IYER
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

WITH THE economy on a continuous slide, the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council Chairman Bibek Debroy said it is high time the government focused on expenditure and recommended a GST Council-like mechanism for the Centre and states to strategise on public expenditure for maximum impact.

"The key question today is whether we are on a 7% GDP growth rate trend, or a 6% trend," Debroy told *The Indian Express* in an interview last week. The



Bibek Debroy

INTERVIEW
PAGE 14

Prime Minister's Office and the Finance Minister have been meeting various stakeholders over the last week to discuss the slowdown which is adversely impacting various sectors now.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Karnataka phone tapping: CM wants CBI to probe

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, AUGUST 18

KARNATAKA CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa said Sunday that he will ask the CBI to investigate the alleged illegal tapping of phones of politicians and bureaucrats by the state police during the previous Congress-JD(S) coalition government headed by H D Kumaraswamy.

"In the matter of telephone tapping, the leader of the



'Action against all those involved'

Congress party in the state legislature (Siddaramaiah) and many other leaders have demanded a probe to bring out the truth and so we are going to issue orders tomorrow to hand over the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

Taking the office out of transfers, Karnataka chief minister...

COLOUR-CODED BEDSHEETS PROTECT NEWBORNS IN NASHIK
PAGE 12

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Swachh China: Trash cans with facial ID and reward points

Pilot project in Beijing locality: Rewards include eggs, salt, toilet rolls, detergent

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SOWMIYA ASHOK
BEIJING, AUGUST 18



Smart trash cans on Xinfeng Street, Xicheng district

IMAGINE IF your trash can automatically swings open as you are approaching with a heavy pile of trash? In Yard 1, Xinfeng Street, in Beijing's Xicheng district, the trash cans "facially recognise" residents and open up as they approach with multiple packets of waste.

In addition, QR coded garbage bags help building management figure out if the right trash has been dropped into the right bin. And, good waste-sorting behaviour is rewarded based on accumulated points with eggs, salt, toilet rolls, and

detergent or erasers for kids. Simply put, residents look straight at a camera, which verifies their information and opens up the lid of the chosen trash can — seven in all. But first, residents have to be registered through an app, which also clocks points for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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EXPRESS TECHNOLOGY

Galaxy Note 10+ to Motorola One Action: Top 5 smartphones



WEB EXCLUSIVE

'INDIAN CUISINE IS GRAND AND COMPLEX, BUT NEEDS ELEVATION': CHEF PRIYAM

The chef from Kolkata, who recently became the first Indian chef to receive French honour, talks about his love for French and Bengali cuisine, and his dreams for the future. Priyam Chatterjee, mostly grew up in a boarding school in hilly Kalimpong and never really aimed to become a chef

VIDEO OF THE DAY



SACRED GAMES 2: MAKING OF TITLE THEME
Music composer Alokanda Dasgupta, talks about the theme

FULL COVERAGE



'I AM CM CANDIDATE, WITH OR WITHOUT CONG'
Bhupinder Hooda in rebellion mode at a rally in Rohtak

EXPRESS AUDIO

What the UNSC meet means for India-China ties

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

With China backing Pakistan at the UNSC closed door meet to discuss J&K issue, we unpack how this will affect India-China relations and the fraught issue of boundaries

Car crash: Biryani chain owner's son gets 12-day police remand

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, AUGUST 18

A KOLKATA court on Sunday sent Arsalan Parwez, son of a biryani chain owner, to police custody for 12 days, a day after his arrest in connection with a car crash in which two Bangladeshi nationals were killed on Saturday.

The speeding Jaguar, allegedly being driven by Arsalan (21), first hit a Mercedes and then dashed into a police kiosk, killing two bystanders and injuring one, all of them Bangladeshi nationals. The incident took place around 1.50 am on Saturday at the Shakespeare Sarani-Loudon Street crossing in south Kolkata.

While Kazi Mohammad Shafi Rahamatullah (36) escaped with minor injuries, Kazi Mohammed Mainul Alam (36) and Farhana Islam Tania (30) were killed.

Arsalan was produced in Bankshall Court on Sunday where his lawyers sought his bail. Rejecting the plea, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (in-charge) Alokanda Roy remanded him in police custody till August 29.

Seeking his police remand, the prosecution alleged that Arsalan had jumped the red signal at the Loudon Street-Shakespeare Sarani intersection in south Kolkata. Public prosecutors Abhijit Chatterjee and Snehangshu Ghosh maintained that the investigation was at an early stage and Arsalan's custodial interrogation was necessary to establish the chain of events. Arsalan has been charged with culpable homicide not amounting to murder, attempt to commit culpable homicide, rash driving, mischief and damage to public property, they said.

Debajyoti Sengupta, the lawyer representing the 21-year-old, submitted, "It is a case of accident and the management graduate from a UK university would abide by any stringent condition if bail was granted to him."

ED summons Raj Thackeray on August 22

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

MAHARASHTRA NAVNIRMAN Sena chief Raj Thackeray has received a notice from the Enforcement Directorate and has been summoned to the ED office on August 22.

The agency is presently probing the IL&FS group's loan and equity investment in the firm Kohinoor CTNL of up to Rs 860 crore. Kohinoor CTNL is the company founded by former Maharashtra chief minister Manohar Joshi's son Unmesh Joshi.

In 2005 Unmesh, along with IL&FS and the Thackeray-owned Matoshree Construction jointly bid for NTPC Limited's Kohinoor Mill, buying the 4.8-acre property for Rs 421 crore. Thackeray subsequently exited the consortium in 2008.

The ED had earlier this month recorded the statements of senior officials of Kohinoor CTNL in the case.

FROM PAGE ONE

PM EAC

Pointing to the phenomenal success of the GST Council as a decision-making body, he said, "This (GST Council) was about indirect taxes. Time has now come for a similar body on public expenditure to do exactly what the GST Council did for taxes. This body should decide on what should be public expenditure."

"There are questions within the PM EAC on whether the slowdown is 'cyclical' or 'structural' in nature," Debroy said, but advised against widening the fiscal deficit. "If I just look at it from an academic point of view, I'd probably say, yes, to expanding the deficit. But looking at the past, the moment you open the tap, there is no controlling it."

Elaborating on government expenditure, Debroy said there are limits to public expenditure because there are fiscal consolidation issues. But focused and strategic expenditure by the Centre and states together could yield efficiency gains, he said.

Some aspects of the government can address on the tax side include streamlining and harmonisation of GST rates, and reduction in direct tax rates, the PM EAC Chairman said. "A lot can be done on GST. As an economist, I would argue, there should be a single GST rate. In practice, it is impossible. No country in the world has a single GST rate. From a pragmatic point of view, we must have three GST rates. For illustrative purposes, say 6%, 12% and 18%. Everyone wants the 24% to come down to 18%, but no one wants the items under 0% to come under 6%," Debroy said.

On the direct tax side, he said the rates can be reduced significantly. "But this can be done only when both corporate and income tax exemptions are removed," Debroy said. He also advised against sectoral tax sops. "We should not have any sector-specific interventions. These will create distortions. Fiscal concessions to specific sectors will complicate the tax story even further," he said.

Phone tapping

matter to the CBI for a thorough investigation and action against all those who are involved," Yediyurappa said.

The decision was taken by Yediyurappa, who is the lone member of the state cabinet, following directions from the BJP high command, party sources said.

Yediyurappa was in Delhi over the last two days and returned to Bengaluru Sunday after consultations with party president and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on an impending Cabinet expansion on August 20, and with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on flood relief measures.

The phone-tapping scandal began as a fallout of an internal feud in the state police department for the Bengaluru city police commissioner's post, sources said. However, it assumed political contours after an internal police inquiry into the alleged tapping of a senior officer's phone revealed that phones of legislators and bureaucrats were probably being tapped illegally.

The alleged tapping of legislators' phones is reported to have occurred in recent months when the Congress-JD(S) coalition was in power. Ahead of his Delhi visit last week, Yediyurappa had sought a report on the allegations from the Chief Secretary.

"The decision to hand over the phone tapping investigation to the CBI taken by Yediyurappa is welcome. The country has, however, seen that the BJP has made the CBI a puppet and is misusing it as a weapon for vengeful politics," Congress leader Siddaramaiah said.

Former CM and JD(S) leader Kumaraswamy said he does not fear a CBI probe, which will primarily look at actions pertaining

Talks with Pak only on PoK now, says Rajnath

be done on another issue." His remarks indicate Delhi's new position, which shifts from India's stated view that the J&K issue will be resolved bilaterally. The understanding in the earlier position was that peaceful resolution will mean that the issue is resolved to mutual satisfaction.

Singh, who was earlier Union Home Minister, also said, "The people of Pakistan say there should be talks between India and Pakistan. On what issue talks should take place? Pakistan is aiding and abetting terrorism from its soil. There is no reason for talks until Pakistan puts an end to terrorism."

The Defence Ministers remarks also come days after he said at Pokhran Friday that India remained "firmly committed" to the doctrine of "no first use" for nuclear weapons but indicated that this may not be etched in stone.

With the changed status of J&K, India is now drawing the red line that there is no point in talking about the Kashmir in-

der India's control and administration. Delhi will be approaching future conversations with Islamabad on the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. This stems from Delhi's understanding that the changes to J&K are an internal matter for India, since it makes Kashmir an "integral part of India".

Known for his carefully chosen use of words, the Union Defence Minister was in Haryana to flag off the 'Jan Aashirwad Yatra' of Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar which will be carried out in all 90 constituencies of the state ahead of the Assembly polls due in October this year.

Former Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal told The Indian Express, "This is a hardening of Delhi's position. With Musharraf's four-point formula on Kashmir, waters had been muddied on this issue. The government has rightly said that now, the only discussion is about the PoK, apart from stopping terrorism."

Referring to Pakistan, Singh

said, "Our neighbour wants to destabilise India with the help of terrorism and wants to weaken India. With the help of terrorists, it wants to break India." Singh said that India has abolished Article 370 of its Constitution but "our neighbour is upset".

"It (Pakistan) is knocking doors of different countries. It is saying, save Pakistan, save Pakistan. In between, it also threatens. But President (Donald) Trump of America, which people consider the most powerful country, has asked Pakistan to go and hold talks with India, there is no need to come here."

He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given Pakistan a befitting reply after the February 14 Pulwama attack and that Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, a few days ago, said that India is planning a bigger airstrike than what happened at Balakot.

"It means that the Pakistan Prime Minister has accepted that India had conducted

airstrikes to kill terrorists while earlier he had stated that nothing has taken place (at Balakot)," he said.

Responding to Singh's remarks, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said, "We have seen the comments made by the Indian Defence Minister today. These are reflective of the predicament that India finds itself in after its illegal and unilateral actions imperiling peace and security in the region and beyond."

He said that the "completely indefensible" lock-down of the entire population in J&K is "equally condemnable". The world community, including the UNSC have taken cognizance of this utterly untenable situation, he said.

"As for the J&K dispute, Pakistan's position is based on UN Charter principles and international law and remains unchanged. The J&K dispute is to be decided on the basis of UNSC Resolutions and in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people," he said, in a statement.

Detained in J&K: Ex-top ministers, MLAs, Mayor

MEHBOOBA MUFTI: Former CM Mufti is president of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). A former Parliamentarian, she was elected to the state assembly thrice.

OMAR ABDULLAH: Former CM Omar was a Union MoS in the A B Vajpayee-led NDA-1 government.

SAJAD LONE: Close BJP ally, he once referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as his elder brother. Separatist-turned-mainstream leader, he heads the Peoples Conference. He was a minister in the PDP-BJP government and once seen as the BJP's CM candidate.

JUNAID MATTU: Mayor of Srinagar, Mattu was projected by Governor Satya Pal Malik as the new face of Kashmiri politics. When the Prime Minister visited Kashmir, Mattu was given the honour of officially receiving him. He was recently diagnosed with a bone marrow disorder.

SHAH FAESAL: Bureaucrat-turned-politician, and first Kashmiri to top the IAS, Faesal heads the Jammu Kashmir Peoples Movement, a main-

stream party he formed after resigning from the civil services.

WAHEED PARRA: In 2018, when the PDP-BJP government's popularity was at a low, he organised a sports show for Rajnath Singh in Srinagar, earning praise from the then Home Minister. He is youth president of PDP.

GHULAM AHMAD MIR: President of the Pradesh Congress, Mir is a former MLA. **SAIFUDDIN SOZ:** Former president of the Pradesh Congress, he is a former MP and Union minister in the UPA-1 government.

NAEEM AKHTAR: Former minister in the PDP-BJP government, Akhtar is a close aide of Mehbooba Mufti.

ALI MOHAMMAD SAGAR: Former state minister and general secretary of NC, Sagar was elected to the assembly for four consecutive terms.

ABDUL RAHIM RATHER: Former state finance minister, the NC leader was elected to the assembly seven times.

MOHAMMAD SHAFI: NC veteran, he is a former MP and has represented Uri in the assembly several times.

GHULAM HASSAN MIR: Former state minister, Mir is a founding member of PDP.

HAKIM YASIN: Three-time independent legislator, Yasin heads the Jammu Kashmir Peoples Democratic Front.

M Y TARIGAMI: Veteran Communist and CPM state secretary, he was elected to the assembly for four consecutive terms.

IMRAN ANSARI: Influential Shia leader, he was a senior minister in the PDP-BJP government. A friend of Sajad Lone, he joined Peoples Conference last year.

MUBARAK GUL: Senior NC leader, Gul was elected to the assembly from Eidgah for four consecutive terms.

KHALIDA SHAH: Sister of Ferooz Abdullah and wife of former J&K CM Ghulam Mohammad Shah, she is the patron of Awami National Conference.

MOHAMMAD ASHRAF MIR: Junior minister in the PDP-BJP government, he defeated Omar Abdullah in 2014 assembly elections.

AJAZ MIR: Former PDP legislator and lawyer, he hails from Wachi, known as a hotbed of

militancy in South Kashmir's Shopian.

NOOR MOHAMMAD BHAT: Former PDP legislator, he represented Batamaloo in the assembly.

KHURSHID ALAM: Was Srinagar president of PDP and member of state legislative council.

BASHIR VEERI: NC leader from South Kashmir, he was a member of the legislative council.

SYED AKHOON: NC leader, Akhoun is a former legislator.

TANVIR SADIQ: NC leader, he is political advisor to Omar Abdullah.

SHEIKH IMRAN: He is the Deputy Mayor of Srinagar.

When asked how long the detentions will continue, and what the future of these politicians are, Minister of State (PMO) Jitendra Singh told *The Indian Express* at the Idea Exchange event: "Actually I don't see any future for them. They are also realising that their political innings has come to an end. It is only some section of the media that wants to see some future, so that the story can carry on. The story has ended."

to his tenure between May 2018 and July 2019. "Let them bring any big agency to conduct investigations. They can even ask (US President) Trump to send investigators to probe the matter but they will not find any evidence of wrongdoing by Kumaraswamy. Yediyurappa has announced a CBI probe citing demands by leaders like Siddaramaiah. I congratulate Yediyurappa on behalf of Siddaramaiah for giving so much respect to Siddaramaiah's demands," he said.

"In the coming days, we will know about the internal understanding among all these politicians. Let them investigate all phone tapping done through the police even from the time Yediyurappa was the chief minister in 2008 and when Siddaramaiah was CM for five years. I welcome this probe and there is no question of fear," Kumaraswamy said.

The state Congress, however, questioned the move. "After toppling the coalition government by poaching MLAs and obtaining the chief minister's chair through the back door, you (Yediyurappa) are behaving like a mafia figure. The CBI is working like an arm of the BJP under the Modi government. A false issue like phone tapping is

being used as a tactic for vengeance politics," the party's state unit said on social media.

"The investigation should have been handed over to a state investigation agency," Congress leader H K Patil said. Yediyurappa was earlier expected to hand over the probe to a state agency like the CID. A DIG-rank officer, who conducted a preliminary probe into the alleged tapping and submitted a report to state police chief Neelamani Raju last week, had recommended a probe headed by a senior officer since the power to authorise phone taps and access to recordings vests with senior officers.

Governance

of new operation theatres and a three-month-long drive to clean a river by as many as 28,000 volunteers.

As many as 249 entries were received from 84 districts in 24 states for the awards that will be given to district magistrates in 16 categories. Among them, one district has won across two categories and a single state has got four winning districts.

From ideation to implementation and innovation to impact, the awards capture a wide range of what excellence in governance

means. The categories include: Agriculture, Education, Health, Implementation of Central schemes, Technology, Women Development, Child Development, Inclusive Innovation, Agriculture, Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Energy.

The detailed reports of the project and its implementation were submitted by district magistrates and screened by a jury headed by former Chief Justice of India R M Lodha. Also in the jury: Wajahat Habibullah, former chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities and the first Chief Information Commissioner of India; Nirupama Rao, India's Foreign Secretary from 2009 to 2011 who was also India's Ambassador to the United States, China and the High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, and K M Chandrasekhar, former Cabinet Secretary.

KPMG, the knowledge partner for the awards, conducted an exhaustive check on the parameters of innovation, impact, implementation and people participation for all the entries.

The shortlist was then verified by reporters and editors of *The Indian Express* by field visits and an audit after which the jury

chose the winners.

Law topper

"I am seeking answers for myself on the role lawyers must play in guarding Constitutional values, and that is something even the CJ mentioned in his speech," she said.

Karwa cited the manner in which sexual harassment allegations made by a female employee at the Supreme Court against CJ Gogoi was handled by the court as the reason for not wanting to receive the award from the CJ.

Although she did not turn up at the convocation, Karwa has made it clear that she has not refused the award. Karwa specialised in Constitutional law for her Master's degree and her thesis is a feminist critique of the Constituent assembly debates. "Is the Constitution a feminist document?" is the central question Karwa probed in her thesis.

In April, the female employee sent a 29-page affidavit to all judges of the Supreme Court and alleged that the CJ had made unwelcome advances at her and when she resisted, was transferred and later dismissed after an administrative inquiry.

However, an in-house probe committee that the complainant

boycotted, comprising three apex court judges, found "no substance" in her claims. The complainant withdrew from the proceedings after she claimed that she was not allowed legal representation.

In his speech Saturday, CJ Gogoi reminded graduates that the law degree is a "call of duty" to defend Constitutional values. "Say no and a big no to anything and everything that appear to your mind to be morally and actually regressive. Say yes to everything which you think can be offered to anybody," Gogoi said.

The CJ is the de-facto Visitor of the National Law University, Delhi, and the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court is the Chancellor. Last year, the then CJ Dipak Misra had been invited as the chief guest for the convocation.

This time, apart from the CJ, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Deputy CM Manish Sisodia were the chief guests. Delhi High Court Chief Justice DN Patel delivered the commencement speech. Many senior advocates, judges and academicians, including Prof Upendra Baxi, occupied the front row.

"Getting the gold medal itself is an honour and I am thankful to my parents and teachers who have helped me along the way. Receiving it from one person is not as important as getting it," Karwa said.

Hooda

supporters have been putting pressure on the party high command to make him the state party chief, replacing incumbent Ashok Tanwar.

Hooda, who enjoys the support of 12 of the 15 Congress MLAs in Haryana, said he would constitute a 25-member committee, including the 12 MLAs, to decide the "future course of action". He said the committee's decision would be announced in a week.

"Aaj main yahan, apne mann se, apne aatma se, aur apne saari paabandiyon se, mukt ho ke aapke saamne aaya hoon, aur aapki ladai ladne aaya hoon (I have come before you today after freeing myself of all restrictions, to fight your battle)," he said.

"I am ready to fight the final battle, we have fought in the past too. In 2005, they said they would support me but who would let me be the CM. When I became the chief minister, they said who would let me continue for more than six months. I ran the government for 10 years. Once again, I have the support of all 36 castes, I will not leave it (government) for another 10 years," he said.

"Meri char peedhiyaan Congress mein rahi... Lekin, sarkar koi theek kaam karti hai, chaahkeendra ki ho, Haryana ki ho, main usko theek kehta hoon. Ab (Article) 370 inhone hatai, bahut saare mere saathiyon ne bhi uska virodh kiya. Aur meri party bhi kuch bhatak gayee, woh pehle waadi Congress nahi rahi. Lekin, jahan tak sawaal hai desh bhakti ka aur swabhiman ka, main kisise samjhauta nahi karunga. Aur isi waaste maine (Article) 370 ka samarthan kiya (For four generations, we have been with the Congress. But if the government does the right thing, whether it is at the Centre or in Haryana, I say it is right. Many opposed the decision on Article 370. My party too has lost its way, it is no longer the old Congress. But I will not compromise on patriotism and self-respect. That is why I have supported the decision on Article 370)," he said.

Before Hooda's speech, his aides, including Palwal MLA Karan Dalal, former PCC chief Phool Chand Mullana, former Assembly Speaker Raghuvir Singh Kadian and Jhajjar MLA Geeta Bhukkal, also challenged the party high command, asking it to either declare Hooda as state party president or face the consequences. More than 60 former MPs and MLAs of the Congress shared the stage with Hooda.

Hooda also targeted the BJP government in Haryana on unemployment, deteriorating law and order, job scams and increased debt.

Swachh China

the reward, and can then throw all waste or four kinds of recyclables — paper, plastic, metals and textiles — by just staring at a camera.

Li Na, a staff member at the residential community's building management, told *The Indian Express* that volunteers help residents figure out what trash goes into which bin. Residents also have access to a QR-coded garbage bag dispensing machine, she said.

"With these bags with QR codes on them, we can trace the resident who bought the bags (30 Yuan each) and guide them if they have placed the wrong waste in the wrong bin," she said. This system, almost three months old, is an improvement to the older system of handing out 90 QR code stickers to each family to last them three months. "That was effective but a waste of paper. Now everything is done through an app," Li said.

Further, every Thursday morning, the building management holds educational events to explain to residents about waste-sorting. "Roughly 70 per cent of the residents are accustomed to waste-sorting, and the remaining 30 per cent need some stronger guidance," she said. Explanatory videos also run on screens inside the elevators of buildings.

This smart garbage-sorting system is a pilot project under the Desheng Subdistrict Office in this residential community which has attempted to sort trash since 2006, according to Chinese state media. Information with the building management revealed there are more than 1,900 permanent residents, and more than 80 per cent are central government employees. In all, there are 29 units of trash bins across the 16 buildings.

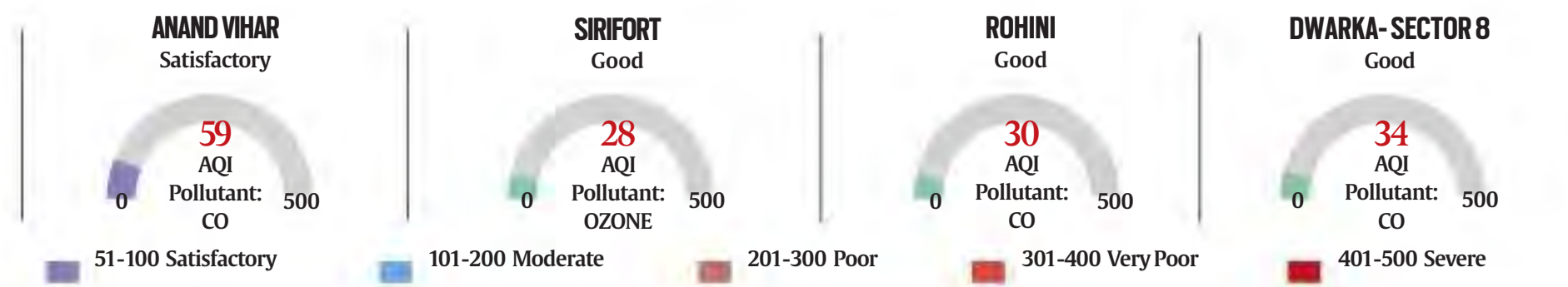
After Shanghai made it compulsory for people and businesses to sort their garbage into four types on July 1, Beijing is expected to follow suit. The efforts are part of China's national push to reduce waste and increase recycling, according to the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, through which China hopes 46 cities will recycle more than 35 per cent of overall waste by 2020.

At Xinfeng Street, garbage sorting has been a part of life for over a decade, say residents. In 2014, a workspace to process kitchen waste was built inside the community, which now processes 1.5 tonnes of kitchen waste every day, and the water residue that is produced can be discharged directly into the municipal pipe network, said Li.

Yet, the trash bins don't open for everybody in Xinfeng Street. Not for 12-year-old Zhong Zimo's grandfather who, on a sweltering afternoon, was attempting to dispose of an assortment of waste, including a red teddy bear. The 70-year-old, who did not wish to be named, said: "I don't live here. I am visiting my son and not very sure how these bins work."

At the time *The Indian Express* visited the residential community, many of the senior citizens simply pushed the button to open up the bins, instead of using the artificial intelligence system.

On 72-year-old Cheng Shifang's phone is an app she downloaded via the Chinese messaging app WeChat, to dispose waste using AI. "The app registers my personal information, links the account with family members, registers me for facial recognition, and teaches me how to put things in the waste bin, and I am informed of the points I accumulate for following the procedure," she said.



Yamuna nears danger mark, alert sounded

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

WITH THE level of water set to rise in the Yamuna above the danger mark, the Delhi government Sunday sounded an alert for those living on floodplains and other low-lying areas. Sources said over 8.40 lakh cusecs of water was released at the Hathnikund Barrage at 7 pm, the highest in at least 30 years. DM (North Delhi) Deepak Shinde said while the river's level was 203.37m on Sunday — below the danger mark of 204.83m — it is expected to breach the mark on Monday and touch 207m by 10 am. "The water is expected to reach Delhi by morning. Earlier, the quantum of water to be released was

lower, but the flow has increased suddenly," Shinde said. Evacuation from the Yamuna floodplains is an annual exercise, but officials got a short window this year because of a sudden increase of water in the Yamuna after heavy rainfall in the hills. "Tents are being erected and at least 24 boats are on standby at crucial points. A few people have already been evacuated and others are being shifted," Shinde said. In an order, he also directed all SDMs to work in coordination with Delhi Police and civil defence volunteers to ensure evacuation is complete by 9 am on Monday. Last year, water level in Yamuna had touched 205.5 metres. In 1978, the year Delhi saw its worst floods, water had reached the 207.49m.



The Yamuna was flowing at 203.37 metres on Sunday. Officials said it could cross the danger mark of 204.83 metres, and touch 207 metres by Monday. Tashi Tobgyal

Kejriwal red flags official decisions not approved by ministers

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

IN A STRONGLY worded communication, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has criticised the practice of bureaucrats getting decisions approved and passing orders without approval of Cabinet Ministers, and sought a list of all such instances from senior officials, including the Chief Secretary. The circular was issued by the Chief Minister's Office on August 8, it is learnt. Department heads have been asked to send reports to the Chief Minister's Office by August 20. The Delhi government, which has fought a legal battle with the Union government over jurisdictional matters, has always been combative about decision-making where the minister-in-charges are not kept in the loop. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislative assembly and a Lt-Governor as its administrative head. The Supreme Court had, in July 2018, ruled largely in favour of the elected government, identifying it as the centre of authority in all subjects except land, police and public order. Since then, the respective ministers have issued several standing orders, seeking to stamp their primacy in matters of governance. However, going by Kejriwal's

latest directive, "multiple instances" have come to light where ministers have flagged concern over being kept out of decision-making. In the latest circular, Kejriwal listed three types of violations: Decisions taken without approval of minister concerned, departments seeking each other's opinion without the minister's nod, and framing official positions without the ministers' concurrence. Kejriwal pointed out that despite such instructions, instances have come to light where the orders were flouted. The CM has said the possibility of this being done deliberately or with "mala fide intention" cannot be ruled out. Accordingly, principal secretaries, secretaries and Chief Secretary have been directed to submit reports listing violations by August 20. Ministers have also directed officials to expedite the process. The latest development comes against the backdrop of Law Minister Kailash Gahlot's order to departments that files need not be routed through the Lt-Governor's office in light of the SC verdict. He said the idea behind keeping the L-G in loop on various proposals and agendas of the government does not mean his prior concurrence is required on every issue.

CAR FELL 30 FEET INTO A DITCH

Out to celebrate birthday, 4 killed as SUV falls off Yamuna e-way



Police suspect the car first crashed into a barricade and fell off the Expressway. Gajendra Yadav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, AUGUST 18

FOUR PEOPLE died after the SUV they were travelling in skid off the Yamuna Expressway and fell 30 feet on to the ground below, in Greater Noida Sunday morning. Nine people were in the car when the accident took place near Zero Point on the Expressway, said police. Police suspect the car first crashed into a barricade and fell off the Expressway. Police said the SUV was purchased recently and did not have a permanent registration number plate. "We received a call around 9.45 am about the accident and rushed to the spot. The car was damaged and nine people were stuck inside. Three of them were taken to Kailash Hospital and the others to Yatharth Hospital," said a senior police officer at

Knowledge Park police station. "The victims were inside a Ford Endeavour Titanium and were driving on the Expressway when the accident took place. Officers found that the victims worked for a company named Terasys in Noida. While making a U-turn, the driver lost control and the car fell into a ditch. Three of the occupants — Ram Chandra Mohan (26), Shiv Vijay Singh (34) and Sheela (24) — were found dead on the spot. The families of the victims have been informed and a post-mortem will be conducted soon," said Tanu Upadhyay, Circle officer, Greater Noida 1. The fourth victim, Naveen (32), died at Yatharth Hospital. Car owner Ashish Sood (35), Abhishek Tyagi (25) and Nancy were taken to Kailash Hospital. They suffered severe injuries to their head and are critical, said police. Two others, Md. Saleem

(20) and Sushmita Suman (22) are stable after primary treatment. According to police, Tyagi was allegedly driving the car and Ashish was seated next to him. In the row behind were Mohan, Singh and Naveen, while Suman, Saleem, Sheela and Nancy were seated in the last row. Police said the group worked for an IT company in Noida and were returning from Aligarh. Saleem, who works in the sales department, said: "Sood bought the car on Saturday and had invited all of us for a drive to celebrate his birthday. We left office around 6 am to go to Aligarh. On our way back, Tyagi was at the wheel. As we were driving back, the car toppled and fell off the Expressway." "The medical examination report is awaited and further investigation is on," said an officer.

Impromptu plan to go to Aligarh turned fatal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

AMEESHA MOHAN (24) was waiting for her husband, who had promised to come home by 11 am, when she received a call at around 10.30 am. Her husband, Ram Chandra Mohan, was among four people killed after the car in which they were travelling in fell off the Yamuna Expressway and into a ditch 30 feet below on Sunday. "He called at 6 am and told me he was going to a party with his friends and would return by 11 am. He joined the company three months ago and was excited about his new job. His office timings were 9 pm to 6 am," said Ameesha. The couple, from Uttar Pradesh's Jogapur, had been married for a year. Mohan recently shifted to East Delhi's Mayur Vihar with his wife and younger brother. Naveen Kumar (32), who was among the victims, shifted to Noida from Meerut three years ago. "We didn't know about the party and were shocked when we heard about the accident. After we reached the hospital around 3 pm, we were told he had died due to severe head and chest injuries. He had rented a flat with his friends in Noida and would often send us money," said Sunderbhai, Kumar's father. Of the nine people in the car,



The incident took place on Sunday. Gajendra Yadav

five survived the crash. The group worked at Terasys, an IT firm in Noida, police said. Sushmita Suman (22), one of the survivors, said her colleagues invited her for a party and the group left for Aligarh around 6 am. "We were planning to go to Agra, but later decided to return from Aligarh. I was in the back-seat with Saleem (20) when the car rammed into the barricade," said Suman, who works as a web developer and lives with her parents in Laxmi Nagar. Relatives of Ghaziabad resident Abhishek Tyagi (25), who was allegedly driving the car and is currently being treated at Kailash Hospital, said he is the family's sole breadwinner. "He's been working in the company's tech support department for four years. He lives with his wife and a four-year-old son in Noida," said Amrith Tyagi, Abhishek's uncle.

BRIEFLY

Walkway connecting Blue, Aqua Lines opened

Noida: A 300-metre walkway, connecting the Noida Metro's Aqua Line and the Delhi Metro's Blue Line, was made fully operational on Sunday, boosting connectivity between the two Metro lines which are run by different agencies. The new walkway has a separate pathway for pedestrians and a dedicated carriage-way for e-rickshaws, which will ferry passengers for free. ENS

Man held for killing niece

Ghaziabad: A man was arrested for allegedly killing his seven-year-old niece, whose body was found floating in a sack in a drain at Ghaziabad's Indrapuram area, a police officer said on Sunday. A case of kidnapping had been registered following the girl's disappearance during Eid last week.

50-year-old dead as car hits bike

Noida: A 50-year-old man died after a collision between his motorcycle and a car driven by a 20-year-old student near a Metro station at Noida's Sector 72 on Sunday, police said, adding that the driver of the car was arrested from the spot. PTI

Man riding scooter injured by manjha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

A 35-YEAR-OLD man was injured after a kite string slit his neck in Outer Delhi's Paschim Vihar on August 15. This is the second case involving Chinese manjha (kite string) in the same area. In the first case, a 28-year-old engineer died after the kite string slit his throat in Paschim Vihar. In both cases, the victims were riding a scooter when the incident took place. Raman Oberoi, an engineer, was travelling with his wife and daughter on the scooter when a stray kite string slit his neck. Police said the incident took place on the elevated road when the man was heading towards Rohini. Oberoi and his family had gone to their relatives' house in Fateh Nagar and were on their way back when the incident took place. Police have registered a case under IPC section 336 (endangering life) at the Paschim Vihar

Oberoi, an engineer, was travelling with his wife and daughter on the scooter when a stray kite string slit his neck. Bystanders rushed him to the nearest hospital in an autorickshaw," said a senior police officer. Oberoi was later transferred to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, where he is undergoing treatment, said police. He lives with his family in Shah Nagar. Chinese manjha was banned by the Supreme Court in 2017. (West) police station and are investigating the matter. "We received a call around 1.30 pm about the incident. The man was heading home with his wife and daughter on a scooter when a stray kite string slit his neck. The man stopped his vehicle by the roadside and fell. Bystanders rushed him to the nearest hospital in an autorickshaw," said a senior police officer.



Extract of Statement of Un-Audited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter ended 30.06.2019

Sr. No.	Particulars	Standalone		Consolidated		
		Quarter Ended 30.06.2019 (Un-Audited)	Year Ended 30.06.2018 (Un-Audited)	Quarter Ended 31.03.2019 (Audited)	Quarter Ended 30.06.2018 (Un-Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2019 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	7,580.62	6,983.68	28,842.00	14,599.22	54,113.94
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax and Exceptional items)	1,940.83	2,054.72	9,815.79	4,062.95	17,862.03
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional items)	1,940.63	2,054.72	9,815.79	4,062.95	17,862.03
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional items)	1,382.76	1,384.02	6,952.92	2,899.74	12,640.27
5.	"Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)"	1,407.61	1,234.28	6,745.95	2,898.63	12,372.52
6.	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value ₹ 10/- each)	2,640.08	2,640.08	2,640.08	2,640.08	2,640.08
7.	"Reserves (excluding Revaluation reserves) (As per Audited Balance Sheet as at 31st March)"	-	-	40,647.91	-	44,481.17
8.	Earnings Per Share (EPS) (Face value ₹ 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)*					
	(a) Basic EPS (in ₹)	5.24	5.24	26.34	8.28	37.58
	(b) Diluted EPS (in ₹)	5.24	5.24	26.34	8.28	37.58

* EPS for the quarters are not annualised.

Notes:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results is available on the Stock Exchanges' websites www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website www.pfcindia.com.
2. The Company has adopted Ind AS 116 - 'Leases' using modified retrospective approach w.e.f. 01.04.2019 as notified by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) vide Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Second Amendment Rules, 2019 dated 30.03.2019. This has resulted in recognition of 'Right to Use Asset' of ₹ 36.09 crore and 'Lease Liability' of ₹ 8.82 crore. The impact on the profit for the quarter is not material.

For and on behalf of Board of Directors
RAJEEV SHARMA
Chairman & Managing Director
DIN — 00973413

Place : New Delhi
Date : 13.08.2019

POWER FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of India Undertaking)

Urjanidhi, 1, Barakhamba Lane, Connaught Place, New Delhi. Website: <http://www.pfcindia.com> CIN L65910DL1986GOI024862

Woman set on fire, 10-year-old daughter calls cops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

A 32-YEAR-OLD woman was set on fire, allegedly by her in-laws, in South East Delhi's Hazrat Nizamuddin Friday evening. A case has been registered against unknown persons under IPC sections 307 (attempted murder) and 34 (act done by common intention). "A 10-year-old girl called us and said her mother had suffered severe burn injuries after her uncle and paternal grandmother allegedly poured kerosene on her and set her on fire. We reached the spot and found the injured woman. She was rushed to Safdarjung Hospital, and is critical, with 80% burn injuries. An FIR has been lodged," said Chinmoy Biswal, DCP (South East). No arrests have been made yet. As per the FIR, the incident took place when the woman, whose husband died five years ago, was at home with her mother-in-law and brother-in-law. The girl was returning home after tuition with her younger sisters, when she heard her mother screaming from inside their house. The children went in and saw their mother's clothes were burning. They doused the fire and called police. The victim's younger sister alleged she was being harassed over dowry and property issues by her in-laws.

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4 HARDLOOK OLD DELHI REVAMP

ON THE 1.3-KM STRETCH

RED FORT

210
MOULSARI
TREES100
FIRE
HYDRANTS175
RED SANDSTONE
BENCHES175
STONE
PLANTERS80
FEEDER
PILLARS

FATEHPURI MASJID

180
STREET LIGHTS19
TRANSFORMERS5
TOILETS2
POLICE POSTS

No cars, pathways lined with trees, and red sandstone benches — by March 2020, a 1.3-km stretch in Chandni Chowk will sport a new look. SOMYA LAKHANI & ASHNA BUTANI explore how a redevelopment project is updating one of Delhi's busiest and oldest markets

Chandni Chowk 2.0



Praveen Khanna

BETWEEN RED FORT and Fatehpuri Masjid stands the idea of a new Chandni Chowk — one that looks towards a car-free future, and looks back at a Mughal aesthetic. The Delhi government's ambitious Rs 65-crore Chandni Chowk Redevelopment Project is underway, and with a 12-metre sample ready, chatter in the area has touched a crescendo.

"Naamumkin ko bhi mumkin kar diya hai," said a 38-year-old shopkeeper, taking a break from work to take photos of the "sample of New Chandni Chowk" for his family WhatsApp group. A woman looking for a famous wedding lehenga store stopped to inquire if work will be done by next year, while a visitor at the Sisganj Gurdwara suggested that the carriageway be painted in the colour of the Red Fort. After a 15-year delay, the redevelopment project, which will cover a 1.3 km stretch, doesn't seem like a distant dream anymore.

New beginnings

The idea of the redevelopment of Chandni Chowk was first floated in 2004, and in 2008, the Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation (SRDC) was set up by the then Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit. Even after the body was established, the redevelopment plan did not take off for a decade.

In December last year, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia launched the project and stakeholders — from shopkeepers to residents — were brought on board. Then, the digging began.

A year before the project was launched, architect Pradeep Sachdeva, who specialises in streets, joined the project as chief architect. Seated in his spacious Aya Nagar studio, he told *The Indian Express*, "What do the Mall Road in Shimla, MG Road in Gangtok or the area near the Golden Temple in Amritsar have in common? They are car-free zones. I think this is the most important aspect of the redevelopment of Chandni Chowk."

The 12-metre stretch right in front of the Central Baptist Church brings the blueprint to life. There's a 5.4-metre-wide footpath, next to it is a 5.5-metre-wide carriageway for cycle rickshaws, followed by a 3.5-metre-wide central verge with planters and bollards. Next to this is the second 5.5-metre-wide carriage-

way and then a 5.4-metre-wide footpath.

Sachdeva said, "Of the two lanes meant for rickshaws, one can be used by emergency vehicles such as ambulances, fire tenders and police vehicles. The lane can also be used for religious processions."

That the area will be car-free has been met with a mixed response by traders in the area, with some wondering how it will impact their business. Anuj Lal, who works at a shoe store, said, "Hopefully parking facilities will be ready at the same time as the project. Otherwise, where will people park? I fear business will suffer a bit because shoppers are used to bringing cars to the doorstep of shops."

Trader Ravi Kumar Jindal, who runs an electrical shop, is hopeful that at least the 1.3-km stretch will be more peaceful than the rest of Old Delhi. "The noise pollution will go down considerably, and one will be able to enjoy work and sit outside the shops."

A major concern voiced by many traders was about "off-loading" of goods. A 40-year-old man who owns a carpet shop in the vicinity said, "If no carpets are allowed, how will I unload new carpets in my shop? The rickshaws are not right for this purpose."

An SRDC official said that "from 9 pm to 9 am, vehicles will be allowed and traders can use the two lanes to off load goods". Sanjay Bhargava, president of the Chandni Chowk Sarv Vyapar Mandal, said that "at times, it takes 90 minutes to reach Red Fort from Sisganj Gurdwara... the traffic is so bad. This project will ease movement and also improve the air quality index of the area if there are no motorised vehicles allowed."

The North MCD is building a multi-level parking facility at Chandni Chowk's Gandhi Maidan to accommodate over 2,300 cars. It will have eight floors and three underground levels.

Last December, the Delhi government had also mentioned bringing back trams to Chandni Chowk. Area MLA Alka Lamba, who is the director of the SRDC, said, "Trams are too expensive, so we have proposed bringing e-trams to run along the 1.3-km stretch... these don't need tracks." A senior official attached to the project, however, said that since the distance is so short, e-trams will be of little use.



(Top) The 12-metre sample stretch in front of the Central Baptist Church; (above) Chandni Chowk before the project took off.

In May this year, Ajmal Khan Road in Karol Bagh was the first stretch in the capital to be declared a car-free zone by the North MCD — nine years after the proposal for pedestrianising the area was approved by the Unified Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning and Engineering) Centre.

Amenity packed

A water tank with a capacity of 10 lakh litres, attached to the fire hydrants being installed across the 1.3-km stretch, is being built as a part of the redevelopment project. "At every 30 metres, a fire hydrant will be installed on both sides. Approximately 100 fire hydrants will be placed. Each will be able to reach a 30-metre distance," said Mohd Zahid, project manager on site.

Opposite Central Baptist Church, one such fire hydrant has already been placed. "Chandni Chowk is not just these rows of shops at the

front, there are lanes and bylanes inside that will benefit from these fire hydrants. Before fire tenders reach, the hydrants can douse a fire," said Zahid.

Like the 500-metre stretch in Karol Bagh which has been declared car-free, the Chandni Chowk stretch too will be peppered with stone seats for pedestrians. "At least 175 red sandstone seats will be placed at regular intervals on the footpath," said an official.

Officials said a steel strip will be built on the 1.3-km stretch to guide the visually impaired and can easily be navigated by people using wheelchairs

Across the stretch, at least 175 round stone planters will be placed, along with short rows of bollards, in tune with the Mughal-era inspired architecture. "We are going to line both sides with 210 mousari trees, which will be at least 12-15-foot high. We will also procure LED street lighting," said Sachdeva. At least 150 storm water drain chambers are also being built on the footpath.

As labourers toiled day and night to finish

work, a peculiar challenge had delayed the project. The 19 transformers became a bone of contention between Chandni Chowk traders and the Delhi Urban Arts Commission (DUAC). "DUAC said the transformers shouldn't be placed on the central verge as that ruins the view. The only other option is the footpath and that was vehemently opposed by the shopkeepers as it blocks the entrance to their shops and they can catch fire," said Sachdeva.

An SRDC official said that on August 7, a meeting was held and it was decided that the transformers will be placed on the central verge only. The BSES has installed 19 packaged and compact transformers so far. A source said DUAC, in a presentation, suggested ways to cover up the transformers using graffiti. A source said, "The graffiti doesn't work with the Mughal-era aesthetic, so jaali work seen in old havelis here will be incorporated into the cover design, and possibly spread with bougainvillea."

So far, BSES has laid over 6.6-km of high tension cable in the trench from Jain Mandir to Fatehpuri Masjid, and 40 feeder pillars have been installed. Apart from BSES, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) too has been busy at work. "The Jal Board is doing rehabilitation work and the ancient sewer line is being given a protective coating and being cleaned up. There will be two DJB lines on both sides," said Zahid.

Apart from this, toilets too have been incorporated in the plan. The SRDC official said, "Five unisex toilets will be placed across locations such as the Lajpat Rai market and the entrance of Bhagirath Palace market." Earlier, the plan was to build the toilets near the footpath.

The official also said the stretch will be accessible to the differently-abled: "A steel strip will be built on the street to guide the visually impaired. The entire stretch can easily be navigated by people using wheelchairs too."

Over 100 labourers have been employed at Rs 550 a day for the last few months to work on the project. "There are two shifts — 9 am to 6 pm, 8 pm to 5 am. They have given us accommodation in tin shelters nearby and we have meals at the gurdwara," said a labourer.

When the project began, private security guards were hired to "protect" the site as cases of missing construction material were reported. For the last three months, however, 70

police personnel have been deployed.

A police officer from North East Delhi said, "We work in three shifts and our main aim is to discourage people from entering the site and safeguarding the material... at night, especially, miscreants enter the site and run away with construction gear."

Touch of the old

Interestingly, it was only in 1857, after the revolt, that the first mention of Chandni Chowk as a street came up in the form of a map. Historian Narayani Gupta said that in Mirza Sangin Beg's *Sair-ul-Manazil*, written in the 1820s, and in *Asar-us-Sanadid* written by scholar reformist Syed Ahmed Khan in 1847, Chandni Chowk is mentioned as a square.

Chandni Chowk or "Moonlit Square" was built in the 17th Century by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's daughter Jahanara Begum. Historian Sohail Hashmi said that in front of the Bibi ka Serai in Shahjahanabad was a water tank, surrounded by buildings, and on moonlit nights, the buildings would get illuminated as the moonlight reflected on them from the tank. "That's why it's called Chandni Chowk," he said.

While restoring Chandni Chowk's past beauty, as described by scholars, seems like a difficult task, efforts are on to give at least a glimpse of the era, which explains the excessive use of red sandstone and bollards.

In fact, talks are on to "rebuild" the Northbrook clock tower that once towered above all of Old Delhi. It was built in the 1870s and demolished by the 1950s. Lamba said, "The elderly in the area remember the clock tower and we have some photos from the 1940s too... I have proposed that we rebuild it."

An official attached to the project said: "It was being discussed... I don't think a replica will be built but a modern interpretation of the clock tower can be done. It's not our priority right now."

With the project expected to be finished by March 2020, some residents wonder if it will extend to other parts of the Walled City too. "The second part of the project is the redevelopment of the Jama Masjid precinct... it's been in the works for 15 years too," said an official.

CHECKING IF TEACHING BLOCK HAS VALID NOC: FIRE OFFICIALS

'Encroachment hindered fire ops at AIIMS'

Poor ventilation on fifth floor intensified blaze

SOURAV ROY BARMAN & ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

A DAY after four floors of a building in the AIIMS teaching block were engulfed in a major fire, the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) claimed that a large "temporary structure", which houses diesel generator sets, behind the block hindered fire operations.

DFS Director Vipin Kental told *The Indian Express* that the structure blocked access to the rear side of the building: "The structure was not there when DFS carried out inspections last year. It is clearly a violation. It mostly houses DG sets." AIIMS did not respond despite calls and messages seeking a comment.

Kental said the team could access the building from just one side and that firefighters could not station their vehicles near the area due to the DG sets. He added that since AIIMS has several buildings, NOCs are issued separately to them. It could not be immediately ascertained if the affected block had a valid NOC, Kental said. "We will be in a position to confirm Monday," he said. The block has now been sealed by the Crime Branch of Delhi Police.

Kental also said that modernising the infrastructure on the fifth floor without proper ventilation increased the intensity of fire. Another fire official said that as per rules, there should be a six-metre gap on all four sides for buildings higher than 15 metres. "In this case, regulations to get a fire NOC are not applicable as the building was built before 1986... but if we had access to the building from more sides, we could have reduced the scale of the fire," he said, adding that the Crime Branch will investigate this further.

A firefighter who handled operations Sunday said the floors have been completely gutted: "I saw the damage firsthand... There were a lot of obstacles blocking the entries and exits. That could have been avoided."

On Sunday, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inspected the site along with a team from DFS and AIIMS. "Fortunately, no life was lost due to swift action by AIIMS... DFS personnel worked hard... Investigations are on to ascertain reasons of fire," the CM tweeted.



Fire officials said the temporary structure houses diesel generator sets



The fire started on the second floor of the teaching block at AIIMS and gradually spread to the third, fourth and fifth floors of the building. Praveen Khanna

Lost in blaze: Medical equipment, research papers & blood samples

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

LABORATORIES OF virology, reproductive biology, AIDS; the department of Urology; offices of senior faculty members — with every passing hour on Sunday, the list of facilities at AIIMS severely affected by Saturday's fire kept growing, along with the realisation that the accident could have taken a more disastrous turn.

While the AIIMS administration is ascertaining the scale of the loss, signs emerged that the damage will run into crores with costly diagnostic equipment, reagents and ice-lined refrigerators housing samples coming under the sweep of the fire. Valuable research papers, computers and laptops were also gutted.

On Sunday, as cooling operations ended, AIIMS staffers could be seen rolling out trolleys full of files and equipment that could be salvaged.

However, parts of the building could not be accessed due to the extent of the damage. Later, the Delhi Police Crime Branch sealed the premises.

The virology section of the microbiology department, on the second floor of the teaching block, where the fire started, is the apex referral laboratory of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Program (NVB-DCP) for dengue and chikungunya.

It is also the National AIDS Control Organisation's (NACO)



Sourav Roy Barman



(Clockwise from above) Workers salvage books and equipment after the blaze; firefighters after cooling operations; Kejriwal and Sisodia at AIIMS. Photos: Remuka Puri

regional HIV reference laboratory for HIV-1 early infant diagnosis (EID) and viral load.

The centre covers Delhi-NCR and Uttar Pradesh, a senior doctor said.

"Had the fire entered the pathology lab on the first floor, it would have been disastrous as the section houses formalin which is highly combustible. The nature of the fire was such that

it kept going upwards," sources in AIIMS said, adding that a security guard in the virology lab first spotted the fire and informed the emergency staff.

"It may have been a Saturday and workload was less, but doctors are stationed in the labs round the clock. So word spread quickly and no time was wasted. But the damage could not be contained much," sources said.

A large number of PBFs (Peripheral Blood Film) have been destroyed. These samples, which are essentially blood smeared on glass slides, are used to carry out various clinical tests. They are kept in special refrigerators, temperatures of which can be as low as -54 degrees Celsius. Each such refrigerator has storage capacity of up to 250 samples.

"Samples can be taken again. Equipment can also be bought, and in many cases they are readily donated by companies. But the loss is also on account of valuable reagents getting gutted. These reagents are used during clinical tests," another doctor explained.

Hospital sources also claimed that the administration was repeatedly told about the need to expedite renovation work at the lab medicine department on the first floor. "The ceiling of the department is open and wires are dangling. Thankfully, the fire did not spread here," they said.

For now, all fresh clinical tests are being carried out at the trauma centre.

The realisation that portions of the affected floors have turned to ashes has also triggered anxiety about the fate of these papers and other documents, which were mostly stored in the offices of senior faculty members. Till Saturday, there were hopes that many papers could be salvaged.

The fire also swept through multiple seminar rooms on the upper floors, sources said.

Swift coordination ensures patient care is not hit

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

SWIFT INTER-DEPARTMENTAL coordination ensured that even as a major fire raged, AIIMS registered two C-section deliveries and provided uninterrupted care to at least 18 newborns in the ICU and four on ventilator.

Around 80 patients of the gynaecology department were shifted from the emergency ward to the Dr Rajendra Prasad Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences (RPC) after the fire broke out in the teaching block, said Dr Aswini Behera, a senior resident at RPC.

Another senior resident said an ICU of paediatric surgery, which had 10 patients including one on ventilator, and a paediatric medicine ward, with eight newborns, including three on ventilator, were also shifted to RPC due to smoke Saturday.

Behera told *The Indian Express* that ward IV A of RPC, which had 36 eye patients, was urgently vacated to make space for expecting mothers. The eye patients were accommodated elsewhere in the department.

"Further, 12 trolley beds were put up outside Ward IV A and the daycare centre at RPC was equipped for paediatric surgery. Another ward, which had eye patients scheduled for surgeries,



Firefighters with a team of doctors from AIIMS. Express

was vacated after requesting patients, who did not need constant medical attention, to go home temporarily," she said.

The lack of an internet connection was a major challenge as doctors struggled to find out available beds and other facilities.

"The nurses in the eye department put in extra hours and nurses from gynaecology also chipped in. For the first time in the history of RPC, two children were born in its operation theatre," said Behera.

By Sunday morning, the patients were shifted back to the emergency department in the main building. A scheduled conference on Glaucoma took place at RPC, where surgeries were also

carried out as usual.

"Staff worked through the night to ensure that the department's own scheduled activities are not affected," Behera said.

AIIMS said in a statement that OPD and emergency services will continue to run normally and scheduled surgeries will also be performed Monday.

"The AIIMS director met with all the heads of departments and administrative staff to review patient care services. A committee has been set up to restore full functionality of services...in PC teaching block. Additional staff has also been deployed for guiding the patients. Meeting also reviewed existing fire safety arrangements..." it said.

सीईसी-यूजीसी CEC-UGC
प्रविष्टियाँ आमंत्रित
Inviting entries for
शैक्षिक वीडियो स्पर्धा
Educational VIDEO COMPETITION
2018
अंतिम तिथि / Last Date: 15th September, 2019
अधिक जानकारी के लिए लॉग ऑन करें / For more information Log on to: <http://cec.nic.in>
अथवा मेल करें / or mail us on: cecvideocomp@gmail.com
आयोजक / Organiser
शैक्षिक संचार संकाय | Consortium for Educational Communication
(इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया पर विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग का एक अंतर्-विश्वविद्यालय केंद्र)
(An Inter-University Centre of University Grants Commission on Electronic Media)
आईयूएन-सीओ केम्पस, अरुणा अस्फ अली मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110067 (भारत)
IUAC Campus, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi-110067 (India) / PH: 011-24126418/19

40 firemen entered building, others helped from outside

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

AS THE fire raged for six hours across four floors inside a building at AIIMS on Saturday, 200 fire fighters and 40 fire tenders got to work to control the blaze and carry out rescue operations.

DFS Director Vipin Kental said a two-fold approach was adopted — a set of fire fighters doused the flames from outside, while another 40 firemen entered the building, climbed the stairs and checked every room starting from the second floor.

A senior fire official said the fifth floor bore the brunt of the blaze. With infrastructure being modernised to create rooms for doctors, the official said smoke filled up the floor as there was barely any ventilation.

Officials said reaching the terrace through the staircase was also a challenge due to the smoke. National Disaster Response Force commandant P K Srivastava said his team, along with fire officials, had to use oxygen cylinders to get past the smoke-filled staircase and reach the rooftop to create an outlet for the smoke.

Rajinder Atwal, Additional Divisional Officer, DFS, said doors and windows were also

FIREFIGHTING

6-HOUR OPERATION TO DOUSE FIRE

200 FIREFIGHTERS

40 FIRE TENDERS

- Fire started on second floor of teaching block
- Lack of ventilation on 5th floor delayed efforts

broken using hammers to create ventilation.

The surgery and urology offices on the fifth floor were also affected due to the fire. Some faculty rooms and offices were also gutted.

A fire official said, "As it was a Saturday, there were not many students inside the building when the fire broke out... as a result, everyone was evacuated swiftly and there was no casualty."

Patients and staff in nearby buildings were also evacuated as a precautionary measure. For this, fire officials adopted 'horizontal evacuation' — people are first moved to a safer area on the same floor and then brought down.

नेहरू स्मारक संग्रहालय एवं पुस्तकालय द्वारा
"उपनिवेशवाद की दफती पर निम्नवर्गीय: नीलदर्पण के विशेष संदर्भ से"
विषय पर आयोजित वार्ता में आप सादर आमंत्रित हैं।
वक्ता: कुंवर प्रांजल सिंह
शोधार्थी, दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय, दिल्ली
अध्यक्षता: डॉ. राजेश कुमार
दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय, दिल्ली
सायं : 3.00 बजे, मंगलवार, 20 अगस्त 2019
संगोष्ठी कक्ष, प्रथम तल, पुस्तकालय भवन
नेहरू स्मारक संग्रहालय एवं पुस्तकालय
तीन मूर्ति भवन, नई दिल्ली
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सभी का स्वागत है।

दिल्ली सरकार
आप की सरकार
Department of Art, Culture & Languages, Govt. of NCT of Delhi
URDU ACADEMY, DELHI
Organises
Annual Awards Ceremony 2018
Chief Guest : Shri Manish Sisodia
Hon'ble Dy. Chief Minister, Delhi
Guest of Honour : Shri Imran Husain
Hon'ble Minister for Food & Civil Supplies, Govt. of Delhi
To be Presided by : Shri Syed Shahid Mehdi
Ex-Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
Welcome Speech : Prof. Shehpar Rasool
Vice Chairman, Urdu Academy, Delhi
Vote of Thanks : Secretary, Urdu Academy, Delhi
Date & Time : 20th August, 2019 (Tuesday) at 4:00 pm
Venue : Auditorium, Delhi Secretariat (Gate No.6)
I.P. Estate, New Delhi - 110002.
Awardees
♦ Prof. Sharib Rudaulvi
♦ Prof. Atiqullah
♦ Prof. Wahajuddin Alvi
♦ Mr. Izhari Usmani
♦ Dr. G. R. Kanwal
♦ Mr. Shakeel Hasan Shamsi
♦ Prof. Anisur Rahman
♦ Ms. Radhika Chopra
♦ Ustad Ahmad Husain
♦ Mohammed Husain
All India Bahadur Shah Zafar Award
Pt. Brij Mohan Dattataria Kaifi Award
Award for Research & Criticism
Award for Creative Writing
Award for Poetry
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DIP/Shabdarth/0542/19-20

6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



THE BIG QUESTION

NOW THAT Sonia Gandhi has taken over as Congress president again, will she bring in one of her trusted lieutenants to the key post of organisational general secretary, replacing KC Venugopal who was appointed during Rahul Gandhi's tenure? Some in the party are eyeing the post and many others are keenly watching whether there would be a reshuffle to get a sense of the power dynamics within the party after the change of guard at the top. Many leaders feel Venugopal has an advantage. Though he has not really endeared himself to the Delhi leaders, many feel replacing him would mean replacing a Rahul Gandhi appointee. Whether Sonia would want such a message to go out is the big question.

REGULAR VISITORS

DAY-TO-DAY hearing of the Ayodhya appeals has attracted many curious faces to the Supreme Court. Two pro-temple leaders who have been regular to the hearings since the proceedings commenced on August 6 before a five-judge Constitution bench in the Chief Justice's court are BJP Rajya Sabha MP Bhupender Yadav and Vishwa Hindu Parishad national vice president Champat Rai. While Yadav, a lawyer, was spotted with fellow lawyers in the front, Rai sat in the visitors' gallery, taking notes from time to time.

WORD OF CAUTION

RAILWAY OFFICERS, who use official mobile phones with closed user group numbers provided by the organisation, are latest targets of "phishing" by telecallers. Fake callers are calling up officers and asking for details of their bank accounts, name, employee number etc. They have even asked for one-time passwords sent to their phones from banks. The matter came to light when some gullible officers gave away the details asked for and lost money. Now, to protect employees from such frauds, railways' software arm, CRIS, is sending SMSes, posting messages on salary slips and sending alerts through internal apps to warn officers.

India, Bhutan to work closely on security, national interests

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

A DAY after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met his Bhutan counterpart Dr Lotay Tshering, India and Bhutan reaffirmed their "shared security interests" and reiterated their commitment to maintain "close co-ordination" on matters affecting each other's "security and national interests".

This was the key takeaway from Modi's two-day Bhutan visit, two years after the two-and-a-half-month long border stand-off at Doklam brought the two countries pitted against China.

"No other two countries in the world understand each other so well or share so much. And no two countries are such natural partners in bringing prosperity to their people," Modi told students at the Royal University of Bhutan in Thimphu on Sunday.

Both sides emphasised the importance of "hydro-power development" as one of the most important areas of mutually beneficial bilateral co-operation. The two Prime Ministers formally inaugurated the recently completed 720 MW Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Plant.

They noted that with the coming on stream of this project, the jointly created generation capacity in Bhutan has crossed 2000 MW. The two leaders expressed satisfaction on achieving this important milestone, and resolved to continue working together to expedite the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being received by students at the Royal University of Bhutan. PTI

completion of other ongoing projects such as Punatsangchhu-1, Punatsangchhu-2 and Kholongchhu.

Both leaders also agreed to collaborate on the joint development of a small satellite for Bhutan. "They directed that a Joint Working Group (JWG) be formed to implement the project and other related activities, including developing a geoportal system for Bhutan for natural resources and disaster management, using remote sensing and geo-spatial data," the joint statement said.

The two countries agreed to further expand bilateral trade and investment. Modi assured

the Bhutan Prime Minister of "positive consideration" of Bhutan's request for enhancement of the currency swap limit under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework. As an interim measure, Modi offered an additional USD 100 million of currency swap under the Standby Swap Arrangement, the joint statement said.

Noting the commitment of the Bhutan Prime Minister to improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare for Bhutanese citizens, the joint statement said that an expert team from India visited Bhutan recently to offer technical sup-

port for planning the new multi-disciplinary super-specialty hospital in that country.

India also announced the increase in scholarships for Bhutanese students for studies at Nalanda University from 2 to 5.

Speaking to students at the university, Modi said, "I want to tell you all — there is no better time to be young than now! The world today offers more opportunities than ever before. You have the power and potential to do extra-ordinary things, which will impact generations to come. Find your real calling and pursue it with full passion."

PM on three-day visit to UAE, Bahrain from August 23

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will pay a three-day visit to the UAE and Bahrain beginning August 23 and hold extensive talks with top leaders of the two countries on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

The Prime Minister will first travel to the UAE where he would receive the 'Order of Zayed', the highest civil decoration of the country, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Sunday.

From UAE, Modi will leave for Bahrain on August 24 on a two-day visit, which will be the first ever prime ministerial visit from India to the Gulf nation, the min-

istry said.

In April, the UAE announced conferring the prestigious award on Modi for playing a "pivotal role" in giving a "big boost" to the bilateral strategic ties. The award in the name of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, acquires special significance as it was awarded to Modi in the year of the birth centenary of the leader of the Gulf nation.

"During his visit, the Prime Minister would be meeting the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to discuss bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest," the MEA said.

"The visit would further strengthen our friendly bilateral ties with the UAE," the MEA said.

In Bahrain, Modi will hold talks with his counterpart Prince Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa on entire spectrum of bilateral relations as well as on regional and international issues of mutual interest, the MEA said.

It said King of Bahrain Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa will be hosting a banquet dinner in honour of Modi. During the visit, the prime minister will also launch the renovation of Shreenathji (Shree Krishna) temple in Manama. "The presence of over 3,000 Indian-owned/joint Ventures in Bahrain indicates the intense economic engagement between the two countries. The visit will provide an opportunity to further cement our mutually beneficial bilateral ties with Bahrain," the MEA said.

Valley schools re-open today, Internet snapped again in Jammu

BASHAARAT MASOOD & ARUN SHARMA
SRINAGAR, JAMMU, AUGUST 18

TWO DAYS after the Jammu and Kashmir administration said restrictions would be lifted in phases, schools are set to re-open Monday as the communications blackout continued across most parts of the Valley on Sunday barring some areas. And in Jammu, mobile Internet services in five of ten districts were suspended again, 24 hours after being restored.

While fixed-line telephone connections in some areas of Srinagar and other parts of the Valley including tourist resorts were restored, major telephone exchanges in the region remain shut. In Jammu, the suspension of 2G mobile Internet sparked rumours across the region, leading to long queues at petrol pumps.

The state has remained under an unprecedented communications blackout since August 5, when the Centre moved to end the special status of the state and bifurcated J&K into two Union Territories.

In Srinagar, the Baghat and Gogibagh telephone exchanges, catering to the civil lines areas, were restored as was the Indira Nagar exchange that services the cantonment. Officials, however, said they have no directions to restore the Lalchowk exchange, the city's main exchange that has the most connections and services the business hub of Srinagar.

Landline connections under the Soura, Hariparbat, Karan Nagar, Zainakote and Bemina exchanges in the city continue to remain suspended. ISD facilities to the restored landlines have been withdrawn as has Internet connectivity. The government has also restored landlines in tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Sonamarg and the border areas of Uri.

In north Kashmir, wired telephone communication was not restored in Srinagar, Baramulla and Bandipore by Sunday evening and was still suspended in Kupwara.

On Sunday, J&K spokesman Rohit Kansal said all the landlines in the Valley would be restored as quickly as possible, while declining to divulge the number of connections restored. "The process of easing of restrictions including easing of communication restrictions will continue and as I mentioned yesterday, we will endeavour that landline communication is restored to its full functionality as quickly as possible, subject of course to physical limitations that

10-YR-OLD INJURED IN PAK SHELLING

Jammu: A 10-year-old girl was injured as Pakistan continued unprovoked mortar shelling and small arms fire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri and Poonch districts for the second day on Sunday.

Identifying the girl as Saida Kousar of Dabraj, sources said she was injured on Saturday night in Mankote area of Poonch district. She has been admitted to hospital.

BSNL is facing and any technical constraints that it faces," he said.

Asked if the main telephone exchanges in the Valley were functioning, he said: "For one, I will tell you there is no positive discrimination in favour of anybody. My own telephone got operational only five minutes ago."

"Over 190 primary schools will reopen tomorrow in Srinagar alone and after this, we look forward to other areas like taking up development-related activities."

Meanwhile, in Jammu, Divisional Commissioner Sanjeev Verma attributed the disconnection of mobile Internet service to technical issues, saying "there was too much load in respect to the flow of data and the slow 2G network was not able to cope with it".

On Saturday, the J&K administration had restored 2G Internet service across five districts including Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Reasi and Udhampur. It had also lifted prohibitory orders in Rajouri and Kishtwar districts during the day and ordered educational institutions re-opened.

While BSNL mobile networks were restored in Rajouri and Poonch districts, GPRS services remained suspended.

IGP Jammu zone Mukesh Singh asked people not to pay heed to "rumours being circulated". "There is also a rumour regarding a strike in Jammu due to which there are long queues at petrol pumps," he said, adding "I would like to inform all the citizens that all such rumours are false. No incident had taken place anywhere as is being circulated."

"The 2G network has temporarily been disconnected due to some technical reasons which are being rectified and efforts are on ensure connectivity as soon as possible," he said, reiterating that rumour mongers will be dealt with strictly.

Jaitley critical; Kejriwal, Rajnath among leaders to visit AIIMS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

SEVERAL UNION ministers, including Rajnath Singh, Smriti Irani and Jitendra Singh, and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal visited AIIMS here on Sunday to enquire about the health condition of former finance minister Arun Jaitley, who is on life support system.

Jaitley, 66, was admitted to the hospital on August 9 after he complained of breathlessness and restlessness.

AIIMS has not issued any bulletin on Jaitley's health condition since August 10, and several prominent leaders have been visiting the hospital since to know about his well-being.

Sources said on Sunday evening that Jaitley is on Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO).

They had earlier said a multi-disciplinary team of doctors is monitoring him.

Among others who visited the hospital on Sunday to check on Jaitley's condition are Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and his deputy Ashwini Kumar Choubey, BJP MPs Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Gautam Gambhir, and RSS Sarsangchalak Mohan Bhagwat. Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, Himachal Pradesh Governor Kalraj Mishra, RSS Joint General Secretary Dr Krishna Gopal and former Samajwadi Party leader Amar Singh also visited the facility.

Worry within RJD as Tejashwi stays away from action

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, AUGUST 18

THE MEETING of RJD's legislature party was cancelled on Saturday, reportedly because Leader of Opposition in Assembly Tejashwi Yadav was not going to attend it. This comes a day after former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi said on Friday that Tejashwi would attend the meeting on Saturday. On Friday, 66 of the party's 81 MLAs attended the meeting.

Tejashwi has been mostly missing from the political scene after the Lok Sabha results in which the RJD drew a blank. He attended the just-concluded Assembly proceedings only for a couple of days, but did not take



RJD leaders are concerned with Tejashwi's 'growing disinterest' in state politics

part in any debate. He also skipped the recent function of the RJD regarding its campaign to get new members.

He has, however, been active on Twitter. He recently criticised the state government for the deaths of children in Muzaffarpur

Continued absence a cause for concern

TEJASHWI'S CONTINUED absence from Bihar's political scene has caused a serious concern not just for RJD but also for its alliance partners. In Bihar politics, following the 2019 election in which NDA got 39 out of 40 seats in the state, there has been no opposition to Nitish Kumar. Tejashwi has been active only on social media. The Opposition would have expected him to take on the NDA more strongly on issues like AES deaths, floods and scrapping of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. His absence from the political scene is a cause for concern, especially when Assembly election is a little over a year away.

and Vaishali because of the Acute Encephalitis Syndrome and over its handling of the flood situation. A section of RJD leaders are

concerned with Tejashwi's "growing disinterest" in state politics. An RJD source said, "He wants to be in full control of the

Hooda's manifesto: 75% job quota for Haryana residents



At the Parivartan rally in Rohtak on Sunday. Express

Worry within RJD as Tejashwi stays away from action

party but he is not being allowed to do so. He has been upset at his elder brother Tej Pratap Yadav's intermittent acts of defiance. He is also unhappy with some senior leaders blaming him solely for the party's defeat. He wants his family to set things in order before he takes over reins of the party with full interest."

Tej Pratap, who has floated apolitical forum Lalu Rabri Morcha, has been constantly throwing a challenge to Tejashwi's leadership. "Though Tej Pratap might not have much support beyond the youth wing leaders of the party, his actions can embarrass the party," said a senior RJD leader.

An RJD leader said the rout in the Lok Sabha polls has dampened the morale of the party.

"Tejashwi is not being able to take senior leaders along and to inspire confidence in the workers at the grassroots. His current silence is harmful for the alliance too. Congress is already talking about going alone in the Assembly polls," said the leader.

While Rabri Devi allayed apprehensions of any split in the party during the meeting on Friday, senior RJD leader Raghuvansh Prasad Singh spoke about how the alliance with RLS, Vikasshil Insaan Party and Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) did not benefit the RJD.

Party spokesperson Mrityunjay Tewari said, "The party meeting on Saturday had to be cancelled because of unavoidable reasons. Not much should be read into it."

7 EXPRESS NETWORK



NORTH

Man set ablaze by three brothers, succumbs to injuries

Banda: A 28-year-old man, who was allegedly set on fire by three brothers over past enmity, succumbed to his injuries at a hospital here on Sunday, police said. Haseeb was set ablaze on Friday in Gularnaka area. He was taken to a hospital in Kanpur, where he died during treatment, Circle Officer Alok

Mishra said. Before his demise, Haseeb alleged that the three brothers — Kallu Pirihaa, Raja and Raju Tripathi — poured kerosene over him and set him on fire, the officer said. Mishra said Haseeb was acquitted six months ago by a court here in a two-year-old dispute with the accused. **PTI**



Officials retrieve the minivan which fell into a gorge near Thuraiyur. **PTI**

SOUTH

Three children among eight killed as van falls into well

Tiruchirappalli: Eight people including three children died when a mini-van went off the road and fell into a 70-foot dry well here on Sunday, police said. The occupants of the van, numbering about 22, were going for a festival when the driver lost control at Puthur near Thuraiyur as a

result of which the vehicle went off the road and plunged into the well, police said. Fourteen people were rescued and admitted to a hospital with multiple injuries. The deceased included three children and five in the age group of 20 to 30, police said. **PTI**

WEST

Kalyan BJP vice president held for raping minor girl

Mumbai: The Kalyan district BJP vice-president was arrested on Saturday for repeatedly raping a minor girl since 2015. The accused, Sandeep Mali (41), had been pursuing the girl, who is now 17-years-old, for the past four years, police said. However, she had rejected his advances and had told him to stay away from her. A police offi-

cial said that the rejection enraged Mali, who threatened the girl with a gun in 2015 and raped her. Mali is alleged to have continued to sexually assault the girl ever since. Earlier this week, the girl registered a complaint with the police, following which Mali was booked under POCSO and was arrested. **ENS**

EAST

RPF jawan opens fire at a railway porter's family, kills 3

Ramgarh: Three members of a family, including a pregnant woman were shot and two were injured when a Railway Protection Force (RPF) jawan allegedly opened fire on them here, police said on Sunday. Ramgarh SP Prabhakar said RPF jawan Pawan Kumar Singh on Saturday night fired at railway porter

Ashok Ram and his family at their house near Barkakana railway junction. Ram (55), his wife Lilawati Devi (52) and pregnant daughter Meena (27), died on the spot while another daughter Suman (25) and son Chintu (20) were injured, the SP said. **PTI**

Dalit minor girl beaten up for eloping with cousin, two held

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, AUGUST 18

TWO PANCHAYAT members of a village were arrested on the charge of thrashing up a minor Dalit girl in Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district after she eloped with her 20-year-old cousin. A video of a village elder slapping, kicking and punching the girl has gone viral and police has booked two panchayat members and arrested them. The incident took place on Thursday. A sub-inspector said the minor and her cousin recently eloped to Bellary in neighbouring Karnataka, but were brought back by the girl's parents. Her parents, police said, were against the relationship but were unable to convince the couple to end it and asked the panchayat to intervene. "The girl's parents told the panchayat to ask the youth to

leave the village so that they can get the girl married to another youth. When the couple refused to budge, two village elders verbally abused and slapped the girl. One of them also beat up the youth... No one complained to police. We have registered an FIR based on the video," said the sub-inspector. He added that the panchayat members were booked under several sections, including the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, and arrested. They were produced in court and remanded in judicial custody. The officer said following a complaint by the girl's parents, her cousin was booked in a case of kidnapping and under the provisions of POCSO Act. The girl, police said, does not want to live with her parents. She is likely to be put under the care of the Child Welfare Department and Integrated Child Development Services.

24 killed in Himachal, 3 in Punjab as heavy rain lashes north India

ANJU AGNIHOTRA CHABA & ANJALI MARAR
CHANDIGARH, PUNE, SHIMLA, AUGUST 18

AT LEAST 24 people were killed in Himachal Pradesh and three people died in Punjab in rain-related incidents on Sunday as the two states received rainfall over ten times more than normal, officials said.

Recording its wettest day this monsoon, Punjab received rainfall 1,300 per cent above normal on Sunday and Himachal Pradesh recorded 1,064 per cent surplus rain.

According to IMD, heavy rainfall lashed the two northern states due to a low pressure system along their borders.

"Heavy rainfall will continue till Monday evening over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi due to the strong interaction between the prevailing low pressure system and the incoming westerlies. However, the system is likely to weaken by forenoon on Monday and a gradual reduction in rainfall is expected over north India," an official at IMD, Pune, said.

In Himachal Pradesh, nine people died in Shimla, five in Solan, two each in Kullu, Sirmour, Solan and Chamba and one each in Una and Lahaul-Spiti districts. An official said the total loss to the state property amounted to 490 crore.

Officials said teams of the National Disaster Response Force have been called in Kangra's Nurpur and Solan's Nalagarh subdivisions.

In Punjab, three members of a family, including a nine-year old boy, died after the roof of their home collapsed during incessant rain at Khanna in Ludhiana district on Saturday.

The family was reportedly having dinner when lightning struck and the roof collapsed. Those killed have been identified as Surjit Singh (37), his wife Balwinder Kaur (35) and their son Gurpreet Singh (9). The couple's daughter Simranjeet Kaur (11) had a miraculous survival.

In Punjab, a medium flood alert has been issued in 250 villages of eight districts following the heavy rainfall. The situation is especially grim in districts along river Sutlej in which 240



A tree falls after heavy rainfall in Shimla. Himachal Pradesh recorded 1,064 per cent surplus rain on Sunday. **Pradeep Kumar**

EXPLAINED Why the heavy rain could be bad news

TWO DAYS of incessant rainfall, mainly over deficient areas of Uttarakhand, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana and Punjab, has at least normalised the season's rain over Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. The heavy rainfall over the desert state of Rajasthan and hilly terrains of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, which do not fall under the intense rainfall receiving category, can, however, lead to a catastrophe. Besides, the rainwater will be of little use given the high rate of run-off.

lakh cusecs water was released on Sunday from Ropar Head Works. The water level of three major dams in the state is increasing fast and Bhakra Dam is full to its capacity.

The Army has been requested to be on standby and orders have been issued to close schools in the affected areas of some districts.

The eight districts where an alert has been sounded include Ropar, Nawanshahr, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, Tarn Taran, Moga and Ferozpur.

Punjab, which was experiencing a rain deficit this monsoon, became a rain surplus state after Sunday's rainfall.

3 dead, 20 missing after heavy rain in Uttarkashi

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, AUGUST 18

HEAVY RAINFALL and cloudburst in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district on Sunday led to the death of at least three people, with several reported missing. While rescue teams were dispatched, they could not reach the affected areas till Sunday evening because of loss of connectivity due to the collapse of two bridges and because of debris on roads.

Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat has directed the Uttarkashi District Magistrate and Disaster Management officials to carry out rescue and evacuation operations in the affected areas.

The Secretary (Incharge) Disaster Management, S A Murugesan, said three bodies have been found in Makudi, Arakot and Sanail villages. Murugesan added that around 20 people were reported missing.

Senior officials of Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority are camping at a control room in Dehradun to monitor the situation and coordinate

in rescue operation.

Officials said rescue teams were dispatched from Chakrata and Badkot on Sunday morning but they faced difficulties in reaching affected areas due to heavy rain, debris on the road and loss of connectivity because two bridges collapsed in Tikochi village. Due to bad weather conditions and continuous rain in Uttarkashi, choppers too could not take off to drop rescue teams.

The state disaster management department has approached the Shimla district administration for rescue operations in Makudi village because it was still accessible from Himachal Pradesh.

The meteorological centre in Dehradun has predicted that heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to occur in Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Deharadun, Pauri and Nainital districts over the next 24 hours.

The district administrations of Uttarkashi, Dehradun and Nainital have ordered the closure of all educational institutions from Class 1 to 12 and anganwadi centres on Monday.

When it was unable to pay the debt, a forensic audit was done and the account was declared as "fraud" by the Central Bank of India on April 20, 2019, it has alleged.

Journalist, brother shot by neighbours over tiff on garbage

AMIT SHARMA & AMIL BHATNAGAR
MEERUT, NOIDA, AUGUST 18

A JOURNALIST with a Hindi daily and his younger brother were shot dead by three assailants in Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur on Sunday morning.

Police said the deceased, Ashish Kumar, who worked with the *Dainik Jagran*, had an argument with his neighbour Mahipal (48) over the disposing of garbage on Sunday. The altercation soon turned violent, with Mahipal and his sons Gaurav (28) and Suraj (24) forcing their way into Kumar's house, and shooting the journalist and his younger brother Ashutosh. According to Biresh Giri, SHO, Kotwali police station Ashish and Ashutosh were 26 and 20-years-old respectively.

Ashish is survived by his pregnant wife and his mother.

A statement issued by the state government said, "Taking cognizance of the incident, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed SSP Saharanpur to ensure strict action against the perpetrators. The families of the deceased will be given financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each."

Saharanpur District Magistrate Alok Kumar Pandey said, "The CM has also directed the Saharanpur police to immediately arrest the killers."

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Saharanpur District Magistrate Alok Kumar Pandey said, "The CM has also directed the Saharanpur police to immediately arrest the killers."

Saharanpur SSP Dinesh Kumar said, "While Ashish died on the spot, Ashutosh passed away during operation. We are close to making arrests." The SSP said three teams of the local police and the crime branch have been formed to arrest the ac-

used, who are natives of Jhijhana town in Shamli district. The police is also investigating whether the firearms used in the shooting were licensed. Soon after the double murder, police had to use mild force to disperse a mob of local residents which attempted to set the house of the accused on fire. The Saharanpur Kotwali police has taken two women of Mahipal's family into custody. "The FIR in this connection was lodged by Ashish's uncle against six persons, including two women of the family. The women are already in our custody while efforts on a large scale are being made to arrest the killers," Viret Pal Giri, the in-charge of the Kotwali police station, told *The Indian Express* over the phone. "So far there has been no evidence suggesting that the crime was done out of old enmity... Prima-facie it appears it was a spur-of-the-moment crime," said Vineet Bhatnagar, SP City Saharanpur. Samajwadi Party president and former chief minister Akhilesh Yadav expressed his condolences to the family of the deceased and demanded at least Rs 20 lakh compensation each for them. Meanwhile, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, citing a news report of the murder, tweeted in Hindi, "What will you call this arrangement where shootings are happening in broad daylight? People responsible for stopping crimes are too busy covering up and this is crime-free Uttar Pradesh."

Year after deluge, many in Idukki village have left, some wait for aid

SHAJU PHILIP
KONNATHADY, (KERALA), AUGUST 18

LAST WEEK, when heavy rain lashed her house on the slope of the hill at Konnathady village in Kerala's Idukki district, Thressiamma K stopped having dinner.

"The walls of the toilet can collapse anytime. When it rains heavily, I am afraid to use it at night. The only option is to limit eating so that I avoid going to toilet at night. If something happens at night, I would be buried alive," said the 66-year-old widow, who owns 15 cents of land.

During the 2018 deluge, a mass of the hill behind her house slipped, leaving cracks on her roof and damaging the toilet outside.

A year on, when parts of Kerala have again been ravaged by floods, Thressiamma is still waiting for the government aid for victims of the 2018 deluge. She is among 364 people from Konnathady panchayat who have been running from pillar to post for the aid.

As many as 681 houses in the panchayat were damaged in the landslides in August 2018. As per government directive, the damaged houses were geo-tagged for processing applications. Among them, 184 people have got compensation ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 4 lakh depending on the extent of damage. Seventy-three families in the panchayat, who lost their homes and farmland, were given a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each.

Panchayat president George Joseph said, "Out of 618 of applicants, only 168 got the initial relief of Rs 10,000 (meant for those



An abandoned house following last year's landslide in Idukki. **Shaju Philip**

CM'S DISTRESS RELIEF FUND AS ON AUG 18	
₹ 4,369.8 cr	₹ 730.05 cr
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	COMMITTED EXPENDITURE
₹ 2,276.3 cr	₹ 1,363.38 cr
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	BALANCE

who were in relief camps). While several applicants with completely damaged houses were left out of the list prepared by revenue department, some with minor loss made gains. Now, those aggrieved have moved an appeal with revenue department."

Panchayat member M Binoy said many who failed to get into the list are daily wage labourers who leave home in the morning and return late in the evening. "During field visits, officials may have missed such applicants. These workers are unwilling to travel to faraway government of-

ices as that would deprive them of the daily work. Appeals are being vetted. We have asked officials not to leave anyone out."

Principal Secretary (Revenue) and CEO of Rebuild Kerala Dr V Venu said, "January 31 had been set as the deadline for moving applications. However, we got appeals after that date and such pleas are being looked into. All genuine pleas would be considered... We are ready to look into missed cases, if any."

An agrarian area with hills and valleys, Konnathady was one of the worst-affected vil-

lages in Idukki last year. Eight people were killed in the panchayat. Many affected families then moved out and their damaged homes now lie abandoned. "Permits for new houses have been very rare after August 2018. With families migrating to safe valleys, population in the panchayat is also coming down," said a panchayat official.

At Panniarkutty, a part of Konnathady which was hit by a massive landslide last year, two dozen families vacated the village and several others keep away during the monsoon.

George P, a farmer, lives in a rented house at Oonukal in Ernakulam district, around 55 km away, during the monsoon. "I was not affected by the landslides. But my house is not in a safe zone. As a precaution, I have left my house at Konnathady. Once the rain subsides, we would return," said George.

But not everyone has managed to find a safe address for the monsoon. With Rs 10 lakh, the maximum compensation the government gives, many families can't find a house in a safe zone. Ravi V K is living in his house, which was damaged last year and has since been repaired. "I got Rs 4 lakh as compensation. But with that amount, we won't get a house at a safe location. Hence, we decided to stay back."

The farmers, too, were badly hit by the landslide. Out of the 5200 registered farmers in the panchayat, 2,500 have applied for relief with the State Farmers' Debt Relief Commission.

Rajasthan govt to create unit to monitor 'serious cases'

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, AUGUST 18



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot

RAJASTHAN Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Sunday said his government will constitute a Heinous Case Monitoring Unit to monitor "serious cases", right from their investigation till the trial process, to ensure that justice is done.

Gehlot said the unit will function under the supervision of the Additional Director General of Police (Crime), and will have an Inspector General of Police, a Deputy Inspector General of Police, two SPs and two legal officers. The unit will also have an additional superintendent of police or deputy superintendent of police in every police range or commissionerate.

"It will monitor the investigation of the case, and what is special is that the monitoring will continue even after the chargesheet is filed by the police. The cell will monitor serious cases like that of the Pehlu Khan case. Even after the chargesheet is filed, the duty of legal officers will be to

monitor the case in the court, the state of witnesses, whether any witnesses have been left out, FSL report, and whether identification parade has been done or not," Gehlot told reporters.

A senior police officer said that "serious cases" will include all cases and incidents which can result in the "erosion of the public's trust in the law and order system".

Speaking to reporters, the Chief Minister alleged that in the Pehlu Khan lynching case, in which all the accused were acquitted, the previous BJP government in the state "deliberately" left shortcomings to "save the accused".

"The Pehlu Khan case, regarding which a lot of discussion is going on... It was a case which had shaken the nation. The kind of carelessness that the previous government had done, it's unimaginable. They crossed all limits of carelessness. Because of this, the court acquitted the accused, giving them benefit of doubt," Gehlot said.

He added, "In the Pehlu Khan case, three investigating officers were changed. In such a big case, the investigating officer was changed multiple times. You can understand why this happened. This is why we have decided to constitute this (unit)."

The chief minister added that the special investigation team (SIT) constituted by the Rajasthan government will find out the shortcomings in the Pehlu Khan murder case probe and action will be taken against those responsible. In its verdict on Wednesday, the court acquitted all six accused in the Pehlu Khan case, giving them the benefit of doubt, but observed that the Rajasthan Police probe had "serious shortcomings".

Manual scavenging: Draft plan calls for machines, action against officials

SHALINI NAIR
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

ALL URBAN local bodies will have to adopt mechanised cleaning of sewers and septic tanks, according to a draft national plan for elimination of manual scavenging.

To enforce the move, the draft plan proposes the amendment of The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act for charges to be pressed directly against authorities of urban local bodies in case of sewer deaths. Sources said this authority could be either the Municipal Commissioner or District Magistrate or the sanitary inspector for the region.

Under the draft plan, every urban local body will be required to stock machines of all sizes that can be used for cleaning sewers under their jurisdiction or that can be hired by private households for

cleaning septic tanks since only 40 per cent of urban India is covered by sewage networks.

The action plan will be operationalised following approval from the Prime Minister's Office, said officials from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Officials said the National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation (NSKFDC) will soon extend loans directly to municipalities at four per cent interest for a period of 15 years so that they can invest in machines.

"There can't be prevention of hazardous cleaning and sewer deaths unless we push the mechanisation drive. Until now, the NSKFDC was loaning directly to people engaged as manual scavengers or their self-help groups so that they would be rehabilitated in alternative occupations. But it was found that it was beyond the capacity of the workers to take a loan up to Rs 20 lakh. Therefore, the money

will now be given as loans to urban local bodies for procuring machines," an official said.

It's for the first time that four ministries have come together to draft an action plan for elimination of manual scavenging through a mechanisation drive: Social Justice, Rural Development, Housing and Urban Affairs, and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation in the Jal Shakti Ministry.

In October 2017, *The Indian Express* had reported that despite the practice being outlawed in 1993, it could not be eliminated since it was always dealt in a silo by the Ministry of Social Justice instead of involving ministries dealing with sanitation, urban and rural development.

In the first six months of 2019, as per conservative estimates available with the National Commission for Safai Karamchari, 50 people have died cleaning sewers and septic tanks in urban India. The Social Justice

Ministry has now suggested that the law be amended so that sanitation inspectors could be held culpable for the deaths.

However, considering that in most cases sanitary inspectors have not even been appointed, senior officials from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs have recommended that the police should directly file an FIR against the Municipal Commissioner or the District Magistrate.

The authorities will be held legally responsible both in cases where the deaths have occurred owing to the urban local body contracting the cleaning to a private firm which hires a person to enter the sewer, or even in cases where private households hire such persons to get the septic tank cleaned.

"All this while human entry in sewers was banned as per law but no alternative was made available. We recently held a global technology challenge, which showed that there are

several options available from Super Sucker machines in the range of Rs 60 lakh to Rs 3 crore for cleaning the bigger sewer trunks, to smaller jetting, cutter or sucker machines, which cost only about Rs 6 lakh and can be used for cleaning the worst clogged sewers in narrow lanes," an official from the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said.

The official said mechanisation of sewer cleaning will initially be made mandatory in all cities with a population over one lakh people. However, the Urban Affairs Ministry has not yet committed to allocating any funds for the mechanisation in their budget or in their schemes such as Smart City Mission or Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). This is required for extending grants to municipalities, especially for funding higher-end machines since NSKFDC has limited funding and can extend loans of only between Rs 20 lakh and Rs 40 lakh.

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1.	CCP-II/2/2019-20	11kV Tri Vector Meter	02.09.2019 upto 17:00 hrs.	03.09.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
2.	CCP-II/9/2019-20	33kV Vacuum Circuit Breaker	02.09.2019 upto 17:00 hrs.	03.09.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
3.	CCP-II/10/2019-20	33kV Single Feeder Control Panel 33kV Double Feeder Control Panel 33kV Double Transformer Control Panel	02.09.2019 upto 17:00 hrs.	03.09.2019 at 16:00 hrs.

For further details, please visit our website www.uktenders.gov.in
No. : 423/EE/(cm)JUPCLA-2, Dt. 17.08.2019

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PRE-QUALIFICATION CUM NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
NIT NO. DCSE/CQD/QSC/GSS/T-14 of 2019-20 dt. 13.08.2019

Head Mechanical Division, DCSEM, DAE, V.S.Bhavan, Anushaktinagar, Mumbai-400094, on behalf of the President of India invites online item rate tender (in two bid) through e-tendering mode from Eligible Contractors for the work "Design, supply, installation, testing, commissioning and post commissioning operation & comprehensive maintenance of Grid Connected Roof Top Solar Photovoltaic system of 250kW capacity at various buildings in Anushaktinagar, Mumbai". Estimated cost Rs.225 lakhs, EMD Rs. 4,50,000/-, completion time 06 months for installation of solar PV system and post commissioning operation & comprehensive maintenance of system for 5 years and Cost of tender processing fee Rs.5,900/-. Detailed tender notice along with documents are available on website : www.tenderwizard.com/DAE. The processing fees shall be paid in the form of e-payment in favour of ITI Limited New Delhi. Tender documents for view / download from 19.08.2019 (11:00 hrs.) to 30.08.2019 (15:00 hrs.). Uploading pre-bid queries from 19.08.2019 (11:00 hrs.) to 03.09.2019 (17:00 hrs.). Closing of online submission of tenders up to 17:00 hrs on 16.09.2019. Receipt of hard copies towards EMD up to 15:00 hrs. on 17.09.2019. Opening of online tender (Technical bids) on 17.09.2019 at 15:30 hrs. Financial bids of qualified bidders shall be opened at a later date to be notified separately. Detailed NIT is also available on website www.dcsem.gov.in for view only. For further information, please contact on 022-25487416/7378 Fax: 022-25565362.

MP cataract camp: 3 patients who lost vision to be flown to Chennai

Bhopal: Three of the 11 patients who complained of vision loss after undergoing a cataract operation at a private hospital in Indore will be flown to Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai, on Monday.

A doctor and an attendant will accompany each patient to Chennai for further treatment at

the government's cost.

Out of the 14 patients who underwent cataract operation on August 8 as a part of a government programme, three were discharged the next day while the rest were asked to stay back when they complained of diminishing vision. **ENS**

Man held for killing teen daughter who resisted rape: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, AUGUST 18

A MAN has been arrested for allegedly murdering his 19-year-old daughter after she resisted his attempts to rape her, police said.

The incident has taken place at a village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

"The elder sister of the victim married a few years ago and lives in another state. Their mother had died earlier. The accused has confessed that he had raped his younger daughter earlier too and when she refused his advances on July 27 this year, he strangled her. He then chopped her body into two parts and disposed them of at different places about 7 km apart," said the SHO of the local police station.

The officer said that the accused had admitted to raping his daughter since 2015.

"The girl moved out of their home in 2017 and took a job in Gorakhpur city. She had come home in July for a few days when her father again attempted to rape her. When she resisted, he killed her. Later, his son-in-law asked him about his younger

daughter. After repeated enquiries from the son-in-law, the accused told him that he had killed his younger daughter because he doubted her character," said the SHO.

The son-in-law then told a relative, who told him to inform the police. "The SP's office in Gorakhpur got a call about the murder on August 16 from the relative. We went to the house of the accused, but he was not there. When he returned on August 17, we took him into custody. He confessed that he had killed his daughter and disposed of the body. We recovered one part of the body in a decomposed condition from a drain. The other half was found in a field around 7 km away. After killing her, he had taken the body parts in gunny bags to these spots on his two-wheeler," said the SHO.

The accused has been charged under IPC sections 302 (murder), 376 (rape) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender).

A Gorakhpur court on Sunday granted police custody of the accused for 14 days.

RSS chief pitches for conversation on reservation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THERE SHOULD be conversation in harmonious atmosphere between those in favour of reservation and those against it, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Sunday.

He said he had spoken on reservation earlier as well, but it created a lot of noise and the discussion diverted from the actual issue.

Those who favour reservation should speak keeping in mind the interests of those who are against it, and similarly those who oppose it should do the vice-versa, he said.

He said that discussion on reservation results in sharp actions and reactions every time whereas there is a need for harmony in the different sections of the society on this approach.

Bhagwat was speaking in the concluding session of Gyan Utsav, which was on the competitive exams. Earlier, the RSS chief had advocated for review of the reservation policy, drawing sharp reactions from many parties and caste groups.

Bhagwat said that the RSS, the BJP and the party-led government were three different entities and one cannot be held responsible for actions of another.

अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, नागपुर
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AIIMS Nagpur, established under PMSSY with objectives of improving regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/ reliable tertiary healthcare services and also to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country. The Institute has started functioning from session 2018-19. It is envisioned to develop into an institute with highest standards of teaching, training and research. In this regard, applications are invited by the Director, AIIMS, Nagpur from Indian nationals/persons registered as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder under Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 for following posts on Direct Recruitment basis

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		UR	OBC	SC	ST	Total	UR	OBC	SC	ST	Total	UR	OBC	SC	ST	Total	UR	OBC	SC	ST	EWS*		Total
1	Anaesthesia	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	6
2	General Medicine	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	7
3	General Surgery	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	5
4	Hospital Administration	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
5	Microbiology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
6	Nuclear Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
7	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	4
8	Ophthalmology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
9	Orthopaedics	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
10	Pathology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	
11	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
12	Pulmonary Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
13	Radiodiagnosis	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	4
14	Radiotherapy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
15	Transfusion Medicine and Blood Bank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Superspecialty Disciplines																							
1	Cardiology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	2
2	Endocrinology and Metabolism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
3	Gastroenterology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
4	Medical Oncology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
5	Neonatology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
6	Nephrology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
7	Neurology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total		4	2	1	0	7	5	1	0	6	7	0	1	0	8	15	8	3	0	3	29	50	

Note: Out of 50 posts, four percentage (4%) i.e 2 (two) posts have been reserved for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) - OPH category on horizontal reservation. The format of application and details of the age limit, essential qualification and experience, pay scales, etc., are available at www.aiimsnagpur.edu.in. The aspiring applicants satisfying the eligibility criteria in all respect must submit their application through e-mail to recruitment@aiimsnagpur.edu.in by 17.09.2019 AND by Speed/Registered post to the address - The Director, AIIMS Nagpur, AIIMS temporary campus, Government Medical College, Hanuman Nagar, Nagpur - 440003 by 02.10.2019.



BJP working president J P Nadda addresses a public meeting in Hyderabad on Sunday. PTI

TRS govt depriving people of central schemes: Nadda

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, AUGUST 18

BJP WORKING president J P Nadda on Sunday accused the TRS government in Telangana of depriving the people of central government schemes such as Ayushman Bharat.

Addressing a gathering at a public meeting in Hyderabad, Nadda accused the government of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao of promoting family rule, indulging in corruption and renegeing on promises made to the people of Telangana.

"KCR's Mission Kakatiya to clean and rejuvenate lakes and ponds and Mission Bhagiratha to provide drinking water have failed. They were missions for commission. The cost of Kaleshwaram irrigation project was deliberately escalated by the Telangana CM. The Telangana government is pouring money in various schemes and projects but there is a hole in the basket from where all the money disappears. The TRS promised to allocate lakhs of 2 bed-room houses but it has failed in that too. The TRS government is not allowing Narendra Modi-led central government to implement its schemes in Telangana," Nadda said.

Several leaders and workers from TDP, Congress and TRS joined the BJP in the presence of Nadda on Sunday. Accusing the TRS government of failing to deliver central government benefits to the people, Nadda said 26 lakh families were deprived of the Ayushman Bharat scheme. "The TRS government is not paying hospitals under the Arogyasri Scheme after they provided health services to lakhs of people free of cost thinking that the government will reimburse them... On the other hand, the state government refuses to implement the centrally-sponsored Ayushman Bharat scheme," Nadda said. "Due to these reasons, it is time to remove the TRS government."



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TELLING NUMBERS

How plastic pollutes, how much waste the states generate

IN HIS Independence Day speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for freeing India from "single-use plastic". The environmental harm caused by plastic has been the subject of international research and government reports over the years.

Worldwide, 75 per cent of all plastic produced is waste, and 87 per cent of this is leaked into the environment. A study by the University of Newcastle, Australia, and published by the World Wildlife Foundation this year concluded that an average person may be ingesting 5 grams of plastic every week. Over one-third of plastic waste ends up in nature, especially water, which is the largest source of plastic ingestion according to the report. India ranks number three in terms of plastic fibres found in a sample of tap water - 82.4 per cent of tap water sampled in India contained over four plastic fibres per 500 ml, the study found.

In India, the last Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) report that assessed adherence to the Plastic Waste Management Rules was published for

PLASTIC IN TAP WATER

Country	Tap water samples containing plastic fibres	Average plastic fibres /500 ml
Lebanon	98%	4.5
United States	94.4%	4.8
India	82.4%	4
Ecuador	79.2%	2.2
Indonesia	76.2%	1.9
Europe	72.2%	1.9

Source: University of Newcastle via World Wildlife Fund, 2019

2017-18. The Rules were amended in 2018. As per the 2017-18 report, only 14 states and UTs had submitted their annual reports to the CPCB. Of these 14, Uttar Pradesh generated 2.06 lakh TPA (tonnes per annum) plastic waste and had 16 unregistered manufacturing/recycling units. Gujarat followed with 2.6 lakh TPA of plastic waste generated and zero unregistered manufacturing/recycling units.

PLASTIC GENERATED IN INDIAN STATES

State	Plastic waste generation Tonnes per annum	Manufacturing/recycling units	
		Registered	Unregistered
UP	2.06 lakh	133	16
Gujarat	2.69 lakh	882	0
MP	0.61 lakh	71	20
Punjab	0.54 lakh	144	246
Nagaland	0.14 lakh	6	-
Odisha	0.12 lakh	20	-

Source: Central Pollution Control Board, 2017-18

THIS WORD MEANS

PARKER SOLAR PROBE



Artist's impression of the Parker Solar Probe approaching the sun. NASA

ON AUGUST 12, NASA's Parker Solar Probe completed a year in service. It is part of NASA's "Living With a Star" programme that explores different aspects of the Sun-Earth system. The probe seeks to gather information about the Sun's atmosphere and NASA says that it "will revolutionise our understanding of the Sun". It is also the closest a human-made object has ever gone to the Sun.

On August 16, the Parker Solar Probe turned on its four instrument suites. During the spacecraft's first two solar encounters, the instruments were turned on when Parker was about 0.25 AU from

the Sun and powered off again at the same distance on the outbound side of the orbit. For this third solar encounter, the mission team turned on the instruments when the spacecraft was around 0.45 AU from the Sun on the inbound side of its orbit and will turn them off when the spacecraft is about 0.5 AU from the Sun on the outbound side.

The mission's central aim is to trace how energy and heat move through the Sun's corona and to study the source of the solar wind's acceleration. The mission is likely to last for seven years during which it will complete 24 orbits.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

How states are split into seats

With J&K reorganised, all eyes are on how Election Commission will proceed with delimitation of constituencies. What aspects will it look into, and how often has delimitation been done earlier?

RITIKA CHOPRA

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

SINCE THE bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir state into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, delimitation of their electoral constituencies has been inevitable. While the government has not formally notified the Election Commission yet, the EC has held "internal discussions" on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, particularly its provisions on delimitation.

Why is delimitation needed?

Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and state Assembly seats to represent changes in population. In this process, the number of seats allocated to different states in Lok Sabha and the total number seats in a Legislative Assembly may also change. The main objective of delimitation is to provide equal representation to equal segments of a population. It also aims at a fair division of geographical areas so that one political party doesn't have an advantage over others in an election. Delimitation is carried out by an independent Delimitation Commission. The Constitution mandates that its orders are final and cannot be questioned before any court as it would hold up an election indefinitely.

How is delimitation carried out?

Under Article 82, the Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census. Once the Act is in force, the Union government sets up a Delimitation Commission made up of a retired Supreme Court judge, the Chief Election Commissioner and the respective State Election Commissioners. The Commission is supposed to determine the number and boundaries of constituencies in a way that the population of all seats, so far as practicable, is the same. The Commission is also tasked with identifying seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; these are where their population is relatively large. All this is done on the basis of the latest Census and, in case of difference of opinion among members of the Commission, the opinion of the majority prevails.

The draft proposals of the Delimitation Commission are published in the Gazette of India, official gazettes of the states concerned and at least two vernacular papers for public feedback. The Commission also holds



Then CEPT N Seshan with Election Commissioners G V G Krsignamurthy and MS Gill, along with Home Secretary K Padmanabhaiah, in 1996 at the Election Commission office where they announced polls for J&K. R K Dayal/Express Archive

public sittings. After hearing the public, it considers objections and suggestions, received in writing or orally during public sittings, and carries out changes, if any, in the draft proposal. The final order is published in the Gazette of India and the State Gazette and comes into force on a date specified by the President.

How often has delimitation been done in the past?

The first delimitation exercise in 1950-51 was carried out by the President (with the help of the Election Commission), as the Constitution at that time was silent on who should undertake the division of states into Lok Sabha seats. This delimitation was temporary as the Constitution mandated redrawing of boundaries after every Census. Hence, another delimitation was due after the 1951 Census. Pointing out that the first delimitation had left many political parties and individuals unhappy, the EC advised the government that all future exercises should be carried out by an independent commission. This suggestion was accepted and the Delimitation Commission Act was enacted in 1952. Delimitation Commissions have been set up four times - 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002 under the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002. There was no delimitation after the 1981 and 1991 Censuses.

Why was there no delimitation then?

by a majority of the total membership of the Assembly and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Assembly present and voting". Parliament can then pass a law to this effect.

States with LCs

Currently, six states have Legislative Councils (see box). Jammu and Kashmir had one, until the state was bifurcated into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.

Tamil Nadu's then DMK government had passed a law to set up a Council but the subsequent AIADMK government withdrew it after coming to power in 2010. Andhra Pradesh's Legislative Council, set up in 1958, was abolished in 1985, then reconstituted in 2007. The Odisha Assembly recently passed a resolution for a Legislative Council. Proposals to create Councils in Rajasthan and Assam are pending in Parliament; the PRS Legislative Research website lists the status of both Bill as pending.

Members

Under Article 171 of the Constitution, the Legislative Council of a state shall not have more than one-third of the number of MLAs of the state, and not less than 40 members. In Madhya Pradesh, which has 230 MLAs, the

The Constitution mandates that the number of Lok Sabha seats allotted to a state would be such that the ratio between that number and the population of the state is, as far as practicable, the same for all states. Although unintended, this provision implied that states that took little interest in population control could end up with a greater number of seats in Parliament. The southern states that promoted family planning faced the possibility of having their seats reduced. To allay these fears, the Constitution was amended during Indira Gandhi's Emergency rule in 1976 to suspend delimitation until 2001.

Despite the embargo, there were a few occasions that called for readjustment in the number of Parliament and Assembly seats allocated to a state. These include statehood attained by Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram in 1986, the creation of a Legislative Assembly for the National Capital Territory of Delhi, and creation of new states such as Uttarakhand.

Although the freeze on the number of seats in Lok Sabha and Assemblies should have been lifted after the 2001 Census, another amendment postponed this until 2026. This was justified on the ground that a uniform population growth rate would be achieved throughout the country by 2026. So, the last delimitation exercise - started in July 2002 and completed on May 31, 2008 - was based on the 2001 Census and only readjusted boundaries of existing Lok Sabha and Assembly seats and reworked the number

of reserved seats.

Why is delimitation for Jammu and Kashmir in the news now?

Delimitation of Jammu and Kashmir's Lok Sabha seats is governed by the Indian Constitution, but delimitation of its Assembly seats (until special status was abrogated recently) was governed separately by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution and Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act, 1957. As far as delimitation of Lok Sabha seats is concerned, the last Delimitation Commission of 2002 was not entrusted with this task. Hence, J&K parliamentary seats remain as delimited on the basis of the 1971 Census.

As for Assembly seats, although the delimitation provisions of the J&K Constitution and the J&K Representation of the People Act, 1957, are similar to those of the Indian Constitution and Delimitation Acts, they mandate a separate Delimitation Commission for J&K. In actual practice, the same central Delimitation Commission set up for other states was adopted by J&K in 1963 and 1973.

While the amendment of 1976 to the Indian Constitution suspended delimitation in the rest of the country till 2001, no corresponding amendment was made to the J&K Constitution. Hence, unlike the rest of the country, the Assembly seats of J&K were delimited based on the 1981 Census, which formed the basis of the state elections in 1996. There was no census in the state in 1991 and no Delimitation Commission was set up by the state government after the 2001 Census as the J&K Assembly passed a law putting a freeze on fresh delimitation until 2026. This freeze was upheld by the Supreme Court. The J&K Assembly has 87 seats - 46 in Kashmir, 37 in Jammu and 4 in Ladakh. Twenty-four seats are reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The freeze, some political parties argue, has created inequity for Jammu region.

This month, the Union government scrapped the state's special status and turned J&K into a Union Territory. Under this law, delimitation of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats in J&K UT will be as per the provisions of the Indian Constitution. The Act also states that in the next delimitation exercise, which is expected to kickstart soon, the number of Assembly seats will increase from 107 to 114. The increase in seats is expected to benefit Jammu region.

MP wants Legislative Council: what it entails

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE MADHYA PRADESH government has indicated that it plans to initiate steps towards creation of a Legislative Council (*The Indian Express*, August 17).

Why a second House

Just as Parliament has two Houses, so can the states, if they choose to. Article 71 of the Constitution provides for the option of a state to have a Legislative Council in addition to its Legislative Assembly. As in Rajya Sabha, members of a Legislative Council are not directly elected by voters.

Opinion in the Constituent Assembly was divided on the idea. Among the arguments in its favour, a second House can help check hasty actions by the directly elected House, and also enable non-elected individuals to contribute to the legislative process. The arguments against the idea: a Legislative Council can be used to delay legislation, and to park leaders who have not been able to win an election.

Under Article 169, a Legislative Council can be formed "if the Legislative Assembly of the State passes a resolution to that effect

STATES WITH TWO HOUSES

State	MLA seats*	MLC seats
Andhra	176	58
Bihar	243	58
Karnataka	225	75
Maharashtra	289	78
Telangana	119	40
UP	404	100

* Including nominated members

services in various fields.

LC vis-à-vis Rajya Sabha

The legislative power of the Councils is limited. Unlike Rajya Sabha which has substantial powers to shape non-financial legislation, Legislative Councils lack a constitutional mandate to do so; Assemblies can override suggestions/amendments made to a legislation by the Council. Again, unlike Rajya Sabha MPs, MLCs cannot vote in elections for the President and Vice President. The Vice President is the Rajya Sabha Chairperson; an MLC is the Council Chairperson.

What next in MP

Having promised a Legislative Council for Madhya Pradesh in its election manifesto, the ruling Congress is working on a resolution that will be presented in the next Assembly session. Rajendra Singh, chairman of the Congress manifesto committee in 2018, said the party has discussed the issue and is serious about constituting a second House.

A senior bureaucrat in the Parliamentary Affairs Department said the proposal is under consideration but it would be too early to give a timeline.

Monarchy to long-term CM to instability: how did Sikkim get here?

ESHAROY

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

LAST WEEK, Sikkim's longest serving Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling, became the sole elected Opposition representative in the Assembly after the remaining 12 Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) MLAs defected, with 10 joining the BJP and another two joining the ruling Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM). Political instability is new to this relatively young state, where Chamling served as Chief Minister for 25 years starting 1994. It began when the SKM voted out the SDF with a slim margin in April this year.

What happened in the Assembly elections?

It was actually the 2014 elections that had heralded the arrival of the SKM, formed the previous year by Chamling's former protégé P S Tamang, also known as P S Golay,

The SKM won 10 of the 32 Assembly seats with 40.8 per cent of the vote, while the SDF held on with 22 seats and 55 per cent.

This year, the SKM edged out the SDF by 17 seats to 15 but was marginally behind in vote shares, at 47.03 per cent to the SDF's 47.63 per cent. In terms of actual members, the SDF had 13 because two of them had won from two seats each.

It was the first time in the state that a government has been voted out. Sikkim has had a change in government twice earlier, but the incumbent government had already fallen before the new one was voted in. Some analysts look at the current situation as the birth of Sikkim as a true democracy. A kingdom until recently, Sikkim was seen as continuing with a "monarchic psychology" as long as Chamling was in the chair.

Why has there been political instability after the elections?

Behind in vote shares, the SKM won nar-

rowly in most seats, while the SDF's margins were generally much wider. As such, the SKM government has looked tentative. The SKM will look to consolidate in upcoming byelections to three seats, two of these held by the SDF and one by the SKM itself.

Golay himself is in a precarious position. He did not contest the elections, having been convicted of corruption by a Sikkim court based on charges brought by the previous SDF government. He has approached the Supreme Court to overturn the conviction, as well as the Election Commission to allow him to contest the bypolls. He served a year in jail and was released in August 2018.

How is the BJP placed?

On the face of it, the BJP's gains do not directly strengthen the SKM but appear to have weakened the SDF's hopes of toppling the government. The 10 defections, however, signal the BJP's arrival in the state where it had won only 0.7 per cent of the

vote share in 2014 and 1.6 per cent in 2019, after having contested 13 seats on both occasions. Both the SDF and the SKM are part of the NEDA nationally but contest separately from the BJP in the state.

In a state dominated by regional parties, the defection of 10 SDF MLAs has suddenly made BJP the main opposition. SDF leaders claim that the MLAs have switched parties for fear of persecution from the SKM. Sources said SDF leaders maintain cordial relations with the BJP, despite the defections.

How did the SKM gain ground?

During the SDF regime, Sikkim had done well on many social and economic indicators. According to state government data, its per capita income is Rs 2,33,311 as opposed to the national average of Rs 86,660; its life expectancy is 73.15 compared to the national average of 68.6; and its literacy rate for both men and women is above 90 per cent as compared to the national average of

74 per cent and 65 per cent respectively. According to NITI Aayog data, Sikkim's infant mortality rate is 16 per 1,000 live births (2016) compared to the national IMR of 34. Sikkim was also the first state to be declared open-defecation free.

The SKM campaigned by questioning these achievements and highlighting reports of corruption within the SDF government. Unemployment is seen as a major driver for change, especially with 60 per cent of voters being under the age of 40, and 16 per cent being first-time voters.

What was Sikkim's history before this new phase of political instability?

According to the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890, representatives of the British Crown and the Emperor of China mutually agreed that Sikkim would remain a protectorate of the British Government. Sikkim itself was not consulted for the agreement.

Under the Indo-Sikkim Treaty of 1950, Sikkim was to become a protectorate of the Indian Government while maintaining its autonomy. In 1952, the Sikkim Legislative Assembly was to consist of 17 members, five of whom were to be nominated by the Maharaja.

Violent protests in the early 1970s when agitators demanded a more democratic constitution for Sikkim, as well as more powers for the elected representatives, led to a breakdown of law and order in the princely state. A May 8, 1973 agreement among the Indian government, the Chogyal (Maharaja) and representatives of political parties in Sikkim signalled the princely state's first brush with democracy. In April 1975, the Sikkim Assembly abolished the institution of the Chogyal and declared Sikkim a constituent of India. The same month, the Indian government introduced the 36th Amendment to the Constitution making Sikkim a state of the country.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

WORLD AND VALLEY

On J&K, it may be a long diplomatic haul ahead for India at the United Nations

LAST WEEK, DELHI fended off a vigorous Chinese attempt at getting the United Nations Security Council to pronounce, after more than five decades, on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. But it is too early to celebrate. For, Pakistan's campaign to draw the international community into the Kashmir question has just begun. When the government surprised the nation and the world by revoking the special status of J&K and bifurcated the state into union territories, the internationalisation of the issues was central to Pakistan's furious response. China has been an eager accomplice. The resolute support from the US and France to the Indian position that the political rearrangement of J&K was an "internal matter" prevented a formal discussion and a potential statement or resolution at the UNSC. Russia, which had exercised its veto in favour of India during the Cold War years when Kashmir was on the UNSC agenda, insisted that the problems between India and Pakistan must be resolved bilaterally. Britain, apparently, tilted towards the Chinese view that the UNSC must issue a statement.

Although the weight of collective opinion at the UNSC was in India's favour, Delhi knows it has a prolonged diplomatic challenge at hand. Delhi can easily dismiss Islamabad's claim that the very fact that there were consultations on the Kashmir question at the UNSC is a political triumph for Pakistan. But India can't ignore Islamabad's declared intention to keep returning to the UNSC with China's support. How the UNSC might respond the next time will depend on the ground situation in Kashmir.

Any breakdown of law and order in the Kashmir Valley and Delhi's use of force against civilians will certainly weaken international support for India. Any serious escalation of military tensions with Pakistan on the LoC could be seen as a "threat to international peace and security" and provide the basis for the UNSC's political intervention. India then faces a three-fold attack from the Pakistan-China strategic axis. Pakistan is likely to unleash its proxies to trigger violence in the Valley. It may also raise the military temperature on the LoC. China has signalled its intent to bring its full weight to bear at the UNSC against India. Delhi may have no time to contemplate a fourth dimension — of Beijing's potential to open a second military front on its long and contested borders with India. After all, Beijing has accused Delhi of "challenging China's sovereign interests" by altering the internal political status quo in Kashmir. The accusation might have no basis in reality, but it underlines China's deepening political hostility towards India. If Delhi can't afford to underestimate the challenges — domestic, trans-border and international — arising from its Kashmir move, it also knows that failure on any front is not an option.

A GAME OF CHANCE

Monsoon's increasing unpredictability calls for greater efficiency in rainwater storage and use

IN JUNE, RAINFALL was 32.8 per cent deficient on an average across India and the prospect of a monsoon failure loomed large. And with the dry spell extending from September in many parts, the return of food inflation, it seemed, would present the re-elected Narendra Modi government with its first big challenge. But in July, the rains turned out 4.6 per cent more than the average. In this month, till August 17, they have been a whopping 34.9 per cent above normal. As a result, cumulative rainfall for the southwest monsoon season (June-September), which was almost one-third deficit till June-end, has now become 1.9 per cent surplus. Such a dramatic turnaround is, perhaps, unprecedented. There has been only one year in recent times — 2012 — when the monsoon ended up being normal despite a massive June deficit. The current revival has also helped substantially close the gap in kharif crop plantings: Till July 5, the total area sown by farmers was 26.7 per cent lower than last year's corresponding coverage. That has since narrowed to just 5.3 per cent, which should considerably assuage food inflation fears.

The relief, however, should not take away attention from the underlying problem — the monsoon's increasing unpredictability, with fewer rainy days and more extreme precipitation. Thus, Kerala, southern Karnataka and Gujarat, which were heavily deficient till July, have moved to the surplus zone within days. For the farmer, this is a nightmare. When the rains don't come on time, pour when they do, or take extended breaks, it disrupts the entire cropping cycle from the sowing, vegetative and reproductive growth stage right up to harvesting. Agriculture is a gamble in the best of times; but now it becomes a game of pure chance embodying risk as well as uncertainty. And blaming it all on climate change is hardly helpful.

The right approach would be to take monsoon vagaries as a given, and plan accordingly. So long as the overall rainfall in the season isn't showing wild variations — there's no proof of that yet — it should be possible to harvest this water from above to the maximum extent. India has some 107 major reservoirs with over 166 billion cubic meters' active storage capacity. A time-bound programme for lining of irrigation channels — or even better, replacing all open canals with pressurised HDPE/PVC piped distribution networks — will enable the water filled in these dams during the monsoon to be used for a longer period. The same water can be further conveyed to farmers' fields through drip/sprinkler irrigation. Harvesting of rainwater, whether in large reservoirs or farm ponds, and which can take place any time during the monsoon season, will give farmers greater flexibility in their cropping operations. A significant part of the country's agricultural production today is already happening in the non-monsoon rabi season. With efficient rainwater storage and use, the monsoon's timing and schedule should matter even less.

FREEZE FRAME

EP UNNY



Valley's new dawn

Article 370 was used to deny the people of J&K their rights. An era of development and inclusion beckons



RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD

ARTICLE 370 HAD to go for the benefit of Jammu and Kashmir's (J&K) common people. We need to applaud the courage of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the determination of Home Minister Amit Shah, who ensured that a 70-year-old problem became history in less than 70 days of their assuming office.

Article 370 was inserted in the Constitution as a temporary provision under unfair circumstances. More than 560 former princely states became part of India without any provisional arrangement like Article 370. People of all communities with great cultural diversities lived in these territories. Yet, the founding fathers of the Indian Constitution, who were leaders of great wisdom and foresight, did not accord any special provision for these princely states. The only inference one can draw is that, except J&K, all were handled by Sardar Patel and they all are today a proud part of India. J&K was handled by Jawaharlal Nehru, much to the embarrassment of Patel, who, as the deputy prime minister handling the ministry of home and princely states, ought to have handled it as well.

For more than 70 years, the problem of J&K has been lingering. Nearly 42,000 lives have been lost. Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave their homes at gun-point. The so-called special arrangement led to separatism. Sheikh Abdullah was imprisoned for 11 years by the Congress government at the Centre. Between 1990 and 1996, the Valley remained under curfew on an average 200 days in a year. In retrospect, Nehru's emotional attachment clouded an objective assessment about J&K.

Who benefited from Article 370? Obviously, the common people of J&K did not. The Shia community, Gujjars, Bakkarwals, Gaddis, other Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and people living in Ladakh and Kargil did not get any substantial benefit either.

There was a thinking in New Delhi that if a few families of J&K are handled well, then problems of the entire state will be taken care of. These few families perpetuated their power, indulged in rank corruption and whenever accountability was sought, they took shelter behind Article 370. How can any-

one justify that the Prevention of Corruption Act — which lays down elaborate legal provisions that insist on criminal accountability against authorities, both political and bureaucratic, for abuse of power and corruption — was not made applicable in the state? Why were laws like the Right to Education, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, the Right to Information Act and the law prohibiting manual scavenging not made applicable in that state? Article 370 was abused to deny the people of the state free and fair elections. People still remember one of the fairest elections held after a long time was when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the prime minister.

Most importantly, when many brave Kashmiri Muslims like army officer Ummer Fayaz, rifleman Aurangzeb and many others were killed by terrorists in the most gruesome manner, those speaking aggressively against Article 370 maintained a conspicuous silence.

We need to recall that the constituent assembly of the state of Jammu and Kashmir enacted the constitution of the state in 1956. Under Part II, Article 3, it was specifically provided, "the state of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India". Article 147, under Part XII, provided for the amendment of this constitution, where it was clearly stipulated that no Bill or Amendment inter alia seeking to make any change in the provision of Section 3 (J&K shall be the integral part of Union of India) shall be introduced or moved in either House of the state legislature. Once the constituent assembly of J&K enacted a constitution, which proudly declared the state to be an integral part of India that shall remain unalterable, then in many ways Article 370 lost its relevance.

Article 370 was deliberately kept as a temporary provision and the prime minister rightly observed that those supporting it never had the courage to make it permanent. It is significant that once the Constituent Assembly enacted the Constitution, it served its purpose and any further amendment as per Article 147 of the state constitution was given to the state legislative assembly. In this light, it was perfectly justified to declare by a presidential notification that the expression constituent assembly under Article 370 (3)

shall be read as state legislative assembly and since the state was under President's Rule, its power was constitutionally exercised by the Parliament under Article 356 (1) (b) of the Indian Constitution.

During the debate in the two Houses of Parliament, voices from all the regions of Jammu and Kashmir were heard. This fact also needs to be stressed that the BJP had received a resounding mandate from the people of India on its promise to remove Article 370. The arguments that like Article 370 other special provision dealing with welfare of Northeastern regions and tribal areas may also be removed is completely misplaced. Article 371 (a) to (j) are special provisions and not temporary provisions and will remain. After creation of new states, special provisions have been incorporated for the development of a particular region or for particular tribes. These, being special provisions, are permanent in nature.

There are many cases of young Muslim girls from the Valley getting married to people outside the state and losing all their rights. Recently, I met a young officer of the All India Service from Jammu and she was a Hindu, who told me that she lost all her rights in the state because she married a civil servant from outside her home state. With moist eyes, she expressed her gratitude towards PM Modi for abrogating Article 370.

With the developmental initiatives of the Government of India, BPOs are operating from places like Srinagar, Sopore, Budgam, Bhandarwah and Jammu; 3,158 Common Service Centres are functional in the state, working as a window to deliver digital services to citizens. Whenever I meet them, I see sparks in their eyes. Some of these young boys and girls told me that they should get more opportunities to make a better future for themselves.

Surely, this is a new dawn of development and inclusion for Jammu and Kashmir, which will give a voice to those who were deprived and marginalised. Obviously, the patrons of terrorism and separatism are unhappy but this is not an India where they will find a place.

The writer is Union minister for Law & Justice, Communications and Electronics & IT

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LET'S GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

My family bore the burden of exile. Coming generations of Kashmiris deserve better



AANCHAL MAGAZINE

IS 370 AN article of faith or just a number? A privileged identity or a misplaced entitlement. If I leave out the middle number, 30 remains. My age. The years in exile. The age of my mother when she carried me out as an infant from our homeland Kashmir into an unknown land.

As I held her hand in the corridors of a Delhi hospital, I pondered over how it would have been for her to not be able to inform her parents for five months about migrating to Delhi in 1990 with two young daughters and her husband, from our initial transit point of Jammu, after our expulsion from Kashmir. Five months feel all the more arduous, when I imagine not speaking to my parents for even a day.

No, we weren't provided state transport buses to move out of our homeland. And no, we didn't turn rich overnight. We fled to save our lives from terrorism and religious extremism. Saving lives and staying together as a family through the long period of rebuilding lives from scratch, my mother often says, has been the only virtue of our exile, given that probably many others weren't even this fortunate. She doesn't want to talk about our years of struggle, which she faced with grit, patience and determination.

Almost 30 years later, we were trying to connect with her childhood friend, Khalida, in Kashmir. She asked at the hospital if the officials managing the helplines there could possibly help her speak to her friend. I had



When I hear the official announcements, there's no mention of us. But there's certainly a mention of the Kashmiris living there. A promise of hope, change and transformation. A promise of getting rid of deceit, terror and power nexus. A promise to give our much beloved motherland, Kashmir, a chance of peace.

no answer.

In our first post-displacement visit in 2012, my mother somehow arranged her friend's contact details and we went to meet Khalida at her home after marriage in the outskirts of Srinagar. For the first few minutes, while hugging each other, they didn't utter a word. Her friend said, "Ba aesus sochaan agar aseye maelav zaanh, che gachak na mae nafrat karaen" (I often hoped that if we ever met again in life, you shouldn't have hatred against me), and my mother broke down. She replied, "Che kyazyi karaeye nafrat, yimav kor taeman vuche paanaey hyerum" (why will I hate you, those who were responsible, their actions will be judged by the Supreme Power).

The previous day, my mother had taken us to her former home in Habba Kadal, Srinagar. The place where she grew up with her grandmother, parents, brother and two sisters. Though the new occupants welcomed her, as she hesitatingly made her way upstairs to show us the study, they made it a point to tell her she could roam around "unaccompanied" and may feel free to "steal" small things as the bigger ones would be difficult to take away. I had a lump in my throat. I looked at my mother, she just smiled calmly. She asked if they had retained some of her books/documents/certificates. "We thought you won't return, so we threw it all away." Neighbours, who had turned encroachers.

Over the past two weeks, friends have

messaged to ask about my view on the abrogation of J&K's special status. Was I happy with the decision? In the almost 30 years of exile, it's the first time others have sought my view on Kashmir with such eagerness. And I want to tell them — it's not about us.

My maternal grandparents passed away yearning to return to our homeland. My parents struggled through their youth to raise us and now grapple with health issues, as they put us before themselves. I never got the chance to choose or ask questions, a childhood lost outside our homeland. When I hear the official announcements, there's no mention of us. But there's certainly a mention of the Kashmiris living there.

A promise of hope, change and transformation. A promise of getting rid of deceit, terror and the power nexus. A promise to give our much beloved motherland, Kashmir, a chance of peace. Will the promises hold? I don't know — the same life lesson that I have figured out while making my way through the uncertainties emanating from our displacement from Kashmir. But, what I do hope for is peace. In my birthplace. In my homeland. Kashmir, the place of saints, scholars and mystics.

Let's give peace a chance. The chance it deserves. I, as a Kashmiri, owe it to the next generation of Kashmiris.

aanchal.magazine@expressindia.com

AUGUST 19, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO



CHARAN GOV SHAKY TWO DAYS BEFORE the Lok Sabha is to meet, Charan Singh's capacity to win a vote of confidence remains in doubt. What caused a serious setback in the hopes for survival of the three-week-old coalition government was the consensus arrived at the meeting of the Congress (I) working committee against supporting the government. Though the Congress (I) working committee can be overruled by the party's parliamentary board slated to meet by Monday morning — or by Indira Gandhi — the chances of the party supporting the government are slim.

WORKERS' RALLY ON THE OPENING of Parliament, August 20,

the Delhi textile workers will hold a rally at the Boat Club "to show to the members of Parliament that they are alive and kicking and are willing to fight for their demands in spite of the hardships they have been suffering because of their 55-day-old strike." Representatives of the workers of the five mills in Delhi will present demands to members of Parliament after the rally.

CENTRE RULES SIKKIM SIKKIM HAS BEEN brought under President's rule for the first time since it became the 22nd state of India in 1975. According to a presidential proclamation, President's rule has been imposed under Article 356 of the Constitution. The Union cabinet considered

the state governor B B Lal's report and recommended that President's rule should be imposed.

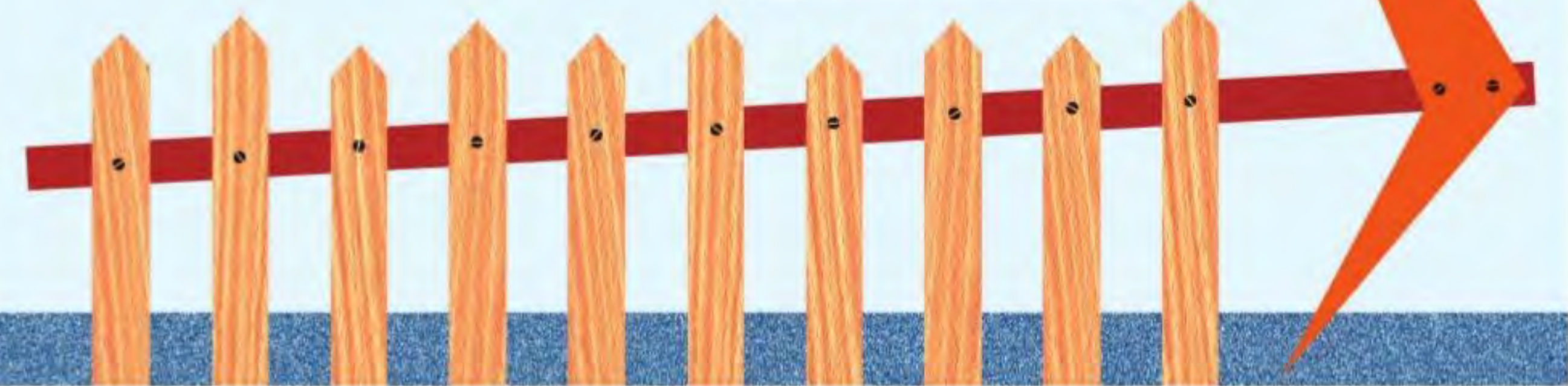
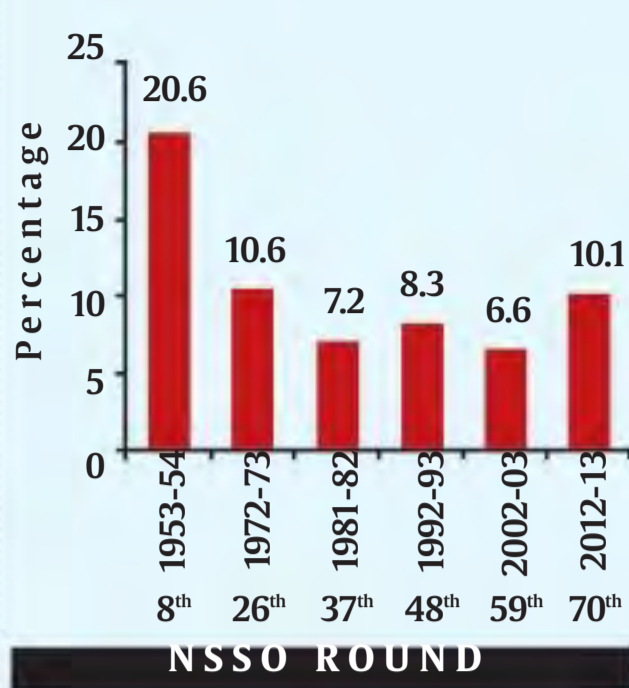
PAK N-BOMB PAKISTAN IS ALL set to explode what is called the "Islamic bomb" most probably in October this year in the wastes of the Balochistan desert, according to the Daily Telegraph. The newspaper's special correspondent in Islamabad has said that there is a growing view among diplomats in the Pakistan capital that the country's nuclear capability is the direct result of close co-operation over many years with China. Reports of nuclear know-how being surreptitiously acquired in Europe, according to the correspondent.

FIGURE 1: AVERAGE SIZE OF OPERATIONAL HOLDINGS AS PER DIFFERENT AGRICULTURE CENSUS



Source: Agriculture Census, 2015-16 and various issues of NSSO Reports

FIGURE 2: PROPORTION OF LEASED AREA



CR Sasikumar

Unlock the land markets

High powered committee for transformation of agriculture should reform restrictive tenancy laws, protect rights of landowners



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH
BY ASHOK GULATI AND RITIKA JUNEJA

ative that urgency is accorded to the liberalisation of land lease markets. One, the size of the average holding has been declining in India for long (see figure 1). This raises questions about the economic viability of such tracts, especially since they do not provide a respectable income to farmers. Two, restrictive tenancy laws have generated oral (informal) tenancy that is said to be much higher than formal tenancy in magnitude. This is adversely impacting land-use efficiency.

As per official records (NSSO, 2012-13), only about 10 per cent of agricultural land is under tenancy, down from 20 per cent in 1953-54 (see figure 2). However, experts believe that official estimates hugely under-report actual tenancy. It is generally believed, based on several micro-level surveys, that about a third of the agricultural land in India is under tenancy. It is oral tenants who are most insecure. They do not have legal sanction and are not recognised as farmers. This deprives them from availing institutional credit, crop insurance, government-sponsored social benefit schemes and relief support. The fear of eviction from the land also disincentivises them from making long-term investments in land improvement. This results in low capital formation and hurts farm productivity. Even the landowners fear losing their proprietary rights, if they lease out for longer periods. As a result, many of them prefer to keep their lands fallow. Rough estimates suggest that about 17 million hectares of cultivable land in the country is lying fallow.

In this context, it may be worth noting that China has lately revised its land lease laws, where farmers can lease out their land, even to corporate entities for cultivation for up to 30 years. Such a move can help attract long-term investments in high-value crops — those grown in orchards, for example.

One reason landowners fear leasing out their lands for long is the absence of tamper-proof land records with the revenue departments. So, one of the lowest hanging fruits is to digitise and geo-tag land records and link them with Aadhaar and the bank accounts of farmers. This will create a centralised,

transparent and easily assessable land records system. It can then help any class of farmers operating a piece of land to access bank credit and crop insurance. Some efforts are underway in this area, but the results are far from satisfactory. Only three states (not union territories) — Odisha, Sikkim and Tripura — have completed 100 per cent computerisation of land records. Many others have computerised 80 to 95 per cent of their land records. Liberalising land lease markets, with computerisation of land records and geo-tagging of farms, though challenging, can give a high pay-off with enhanced capital formation. Crop insurance could also be linked to this platform.

In this context, one may revisit Andhra Pradesh's Land Licensed Cultivators Act, which has provided suitable channels to deliver loans, subsidies, crop insurance and relief support. It does so by issuing eligibility cards to tenants, who raise crops with the explicit or implied permission of the owners. Kerala's Kudumbashree initiative is another innovation that is making strides in poverty eradication and women empowerment. Under the initiative, women are motivated to become members of joint liability groups (JLG). They then cultivate leased land with assured access to agricultural credit from NABARD and other banking institutions, increasing their returns from farming. Andhra Pradesh's and Kerala's innovative institutional experiences offer key lessons for policymakers to liberalise restrictive land leasing laws in the country, while fully protecting the land rights of the owners.

Reforms in land markets have been pending for a long time due to lack of political will. But in its second stint, the Modi government has the political mandate to carry out these reforms. It is an opportune time for the High Powered Committee of Chief Ministers to carry out fundamental structural reforms in the institutions which govern land markets. Can they do so? Only time will tell.

Reforms in land markets have been pending for a long time due to lack of political will. But in its second stint, the Modi government has the political mandate to carry out these reforms. It is an opportune time for the High Powered Committee of Chief Ministers to carry out fundamental structural reforms in the institutions which govern land markets. Can they do so? Only time will tell.

Gulati is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture and Juneja is a consultant at ICRIER

Where there is no free will

People's consent is missing in how J&K has been taken over by the 'rest of India'



RAJMOHAN GANDHI

TO INDIANS CELEBRATING the change in Jammu and Kashmir's status, I suggest that they reflect on the word "consent". All healthy human involvements seem to require the other person's consent.

While recently researching South Indian history from the 17th century to our times, I was struck by a comment of the French priest Abbe Dubois (1765-1848), who lived in Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil regions from 1792 to 1823. Dubois conceded that the people "cherish" and "respect" the administrative machinery the British had built after defeating Tipu in 1799. But, said Dubois, they "hate and despise their [new] rulers from the bottom of their hearts".

It was not for their skin colour that India's British rulers were hated. They were despised because they took the land by force, without consent.

Let us for a moment take leave of all our senses and imagine that the removal of Article 370 turns out to be a wondrous remedy, and that in five years it does for J&K what the finest efforts of governments thus far, whether PM Narendra Modi's or of previous PMs, had not achieved.

Let us assume that by 2024 the Valley becomes a model of harmony, prosperity and gender equality. In ease-of-doing-business, ease-of-residence, ease-of-movie-making and even, say, in employment opportunities, Kashmir is now better than Bengaluru, Pune or Jaipur!

Even if all this happens, a people whose consent was never taken will "hate and despise their rulers from the bottom of their hearts". For a hundred years, and longer.

Decades ago, after Nehru and his successors were unable to fulfil a pledge to obtain the Kashmiri people's consent to be part of India, a sense of betrayal entered the Valley's psyche. Now, a second betrayal stings that psyche. The BJP may have promised removal of Article 370 in successive manifestos to the Indian people, but it did say to Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in 2015 that it "would not touch Article 370".

Betrayals may be inevitable in our fallen world. Taking people for granted, however, and doing with them whatever we want without their consent, is going too far.

Given the chance to separate, Quebec in Canada and Scotland in the UK chose, in free voting, not to do so. Rightly or wrongly, New Delhi does not seem willing to offer such a chance to the Kashmir Valley.

But can you imagine the UK's English, Welsh and Irish telling their northern neighbours, without a previous word with any of them, that henceforth they — the Scots — have the privilege to belong to a "union ter-

ritory", that Scotland's special status and political institutions stand abolished?

Can you imagine all of Canada, from Vancouver to Toronto and the Atlantic islands, cheering a declaration, made without previous conversation with any Quebecois, that Quebec is now a "union territory"?

Some in China might indeed rejoice if, without discussion with Tibetans, the Tibet Autonomous Region is renamed the Proud Chinese Territory of Tibet. Would Tibetans celebrate?

We are told that many in Jammu and Ladakh are now celebrating, though statehood would have been preferred to a UT status. In our Northeast, however, where every region is jealous of its distinct culture, and where some states have their own versions of Article 370, people are now more anxious, suddenly, about their future.

Any message about Kashmir that India wishes to send to China or Pakistan would be stronger if Kashmiris endorse it. Conversely, images of an Indian government that acts without consent can only create nervousness or alienation in countries like Bangladesh and Nepal.

Dissenters should not expect Modi and Amit Shah to go back on their proclamation, but we can say this to them: "Ruling without consent is bad enough. Will you however make sure that the representatives, civilian and military, who govern in your name, truly serve the people of J, K & L?"

Kashmiris will never give up their resentment of who governs them. Still, remembering how numerous Indians responded to British administration, will you strive to make the people of Kashmir "cherish" and "respect" how you govern?"

Even if attempted, this won't be easy. Kashmir's long insurgency has made service in the Valley an unwelcome proposition. That insurgency has also made Kashmiris unpopular across India. Modi may claim that removing Article 370 will help the Kashmiri people. But much of the cheering for the removal comes from a feeling that the time has come to hurt the Kashmiris.

The rest of the cheering comes from an impression that Indians can now go to the Valley with a new equation in which humbler and quieter locals will more readily acknowledge the visitors' dominance.

If there is any road towards better relations between Kashmiris and India — or "the rest of India" as some would prefer to say — that road must contain a few Indians, official and private, who nurse a desire to win Kashmiri minds.

Then there are the peaks, waters and trees of Kashmir, whose consent no one thinks of seeking. If Chinese enthusiasm has dealt devastation to Tibet's ecosystem, the Vale of Kashmir and the peaks surrounding it will not be made purer by ease of access. To safeguard Kashmir's environment, a barrier much stronger than Article 370 was needed.

The writer is research professor at Centre for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IT'S NO CURE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Curing the system' (IE, August 15). Only 20 per cent of National Medical Council members will be elected. This could pave way for favouritism and corruption. The article stresses on the role of community health providers (CHPs) by mentioning WHO's data of skewed doctor-to-patient ratio but the new Act has vaguely defined CHPs. This could allow people with inadequate qualifications to practice medicine. A new examination system will ensure that doctors across the country will have a shared minimum level of skills through a common final year undergraduate medical exam. But giving too much weightage to the final exam can have adverse impact on the career of medical aspirants.

Daniyal Hussain, Sultanpur

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Curing the system' (IE, August 15). The shortage of doctors in rural areas can be solved if it is mandated that medical students will get degrees only after serving a stipulated amount of time in primary health centres.

PC Joshi, Lucknow

PATH IN KASHMIR

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A blunt reminder' (IE, August 15). Having committed historical blunders with respect to Kashmir, India needs to win over the minds of Kashmiris. For that, New Delhi need to wage an "information war" along with the "psychological war". The information war will counter Pakistani propaganda through social and elec-

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

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Mayur Yadav via e-mail

UNTRAINED TEACHERS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Over to the teacher' (IE, August 15). The trinity of English, Science and Mathematics is a nightmare for a large number of school students. The Odisha government's decision to double the teaching time for these subjects shows its sincerity. But are teachers of these subjects trained to create interest in their pupils? Sadly, not the case.

Samiul Hassan Quadri, Bikaner

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



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

THE SILENT VALLEY

AS IS to be expected, there are opinion articles and editorials galore across South Asian English-language newspapers regarding the "scrapping" of Article 370 and 35A by the Narendra Modi government in New Delhi vis-a-vis Jammu and Kashmir. Across the board, the Pakistan media has condemned the decision, and each newspaper's position is harsher than the next. Even the rest of the South Asian press has hardly welcomed the change in Jammu and Kashmir's status.

Dawn, arguably the most anti-establishment paper in Pakistan, and one which has had a fairly consistent line on human rights violations in that country as well as alleged instances by Indian forces in Kashmir, has articulated its position, which can be seen as at least partially representing the views of Pakistan's liberals, in multiple editorials.

On August 16, Dawn focussed on the internet shutdown in particular and the blocking of communications in general in the Valley. It cites a report by an international advocacy group — Access Now — which says that India is responsible for the largest number of internet shutdowns in the world over the past three years. The current shutdown in Kashmir is the "53rd this year". The purpose of such blocking of communications, according to Dawn, is: "One of the singular

characteristics of a country's drift towards autocracy is an increasing curtailment of citizens' access to sources of information and communication. When the flow of diverse opinions and ideas is restricted, state propaganda is allowed free rein."

"Despotic governments," it states, "have much to fear from the internet".

On August 17, Dawn launched a more frontal attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The editorial begins by saying that "in attempting to illegally annex" Kashmir and then "mocking its people with claims that it was for their own good, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has only ensured that the cycle of violence will intensify in the months and years to come". The editorial draws an unfavourable parallel with Palestine (where India is Israel and Kashmir is "occupied") before lamenting the "lukewarm response" of the global community to New Delhi's actions.

It maintains, even within its polemical rhetoric, a sense of realism to balance the moral outrage: "As indicated in these columns earlier, the demands of realpolitik and global economics have taken precedence over human rights, justice and fair play. Unless Pakistan and other parties that have a feel for democracy step up their efforts to engage robustly with the diplomatic community on the issue, Mr Modi's reckless

act is unlikely to be challenged."

KASHMIR AND TAMILS

Outside of Pakistan, the rest of South Asia does not seem as outraged by the situation in Kashmir. However, this is not to say that it is seen as a welcome development. In Sri Lanka, for example, the August 18 editorial in the Sunday Observer mentions Kashmir only in passing, as the thrust of the editorial is the announcement by Mahinda Rajapaksa, former president of Sri Lanka, that his brother Gotabaya would be his party's presidential candidate. Mahinda was the first Sri Lankan leader to have mentioned the Kashmir situation in an interview while trying to circumvent a question about a federal setup that is fair to Sri Lankan Tamils.

The editorial also references PM Modi, comparing Gotabaya's platform to the Indian leader's rather unfavourably: "Gotabaya's electoral platform bears striking resemblance to that of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He is also riding the wings of 'cultural nationalism' (read, Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism), which has lately assumed strident overtones of Islamophobia. He's a platinum-grade populist, too. Interestingly, when asked about the SLPP's stance on the Sri Lankan Tamil problem, Mahinda Rajapaksa has blithely drawn the analogy of the Modi gov-

ernment's revocation of the special status for J&K".

The editorial also, in passing, questions India's political choices and the current political climate in the country.

IRONY SPOTTED

The Kathmandu Post, while not quite as outraged as Dawn, is unequivocal in its condemnation of the abrogation of Kashmir's special status. After recalling how Article 370 was scrapped and the lockdown in the Valley, it questions New Delhi's justification in the face of unfavourable international reports — that Jammu and Kashmir is an "internal matter". "Not only is the move by the nationalist Narendra Modi government illegal, according to its own federal constitution, it is also ironic, given its manoeuvres in Nepal. In 2015, the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government had imposed an economic blockade on Nepal because India was unhappy with Nepal's new constitution, saying that it had failed to address the demands of marginalised communities, especially the Madhesis," the editorial says.

The editorial suggests that "Nepal, as chair of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, should also come out clearly and vociferously in favour of de-escalation".

12 THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

MAKING TRANSFERS OF TEACHERS IN GOVT SCHOOL TRANSPARENT

Taking the officer out of transfers, Haryana cleans up its schools

Online transfer system, which is now being extended to 14 departments, eliminated the deep set culture of 'sifarish' raj

SUKHBIR SIWACH
CHANDIGARH, AUGUST 18

IN 2016, the Manohar Lal Khattar-led BJP government in Haryana brought about a significant governance reform. Instead of transfers of government school teachers being done the usual way — that is, teachers thronging the premises of Haryana Civil Secretariat in Chandigarh — the government devised an online system to allocate postings. Many in the state government claim that this system has almost eliminated the corruption and 'sifarish' raj that has plagued the process of transferring teachers.

There are as many as 95,000 regular teachers and 15,000 guest teachers employed in the 14,000 government schools in Haryana; however, guest teachers are not eligible to take part in the transfer process.

The new system is expected to be showcased as a major achievement of the Khattar government in the upcoming elections for the state Assembly in October. In fact, the state Chief Minister has now decided to extend the scheme. "Buoyed by the success of the concept, the Haryana government has already decided to introduce the online transfer system in 14 other departments as well," says Rajiv Jain, the Media Advisor to the CM.

Before the online transfer system was introduced, teachers (or their relatives) used to land up at the Chandigarh situated residences of Ministers and MLAs to seek postings at their favourite places. This process used to take place right through the year. It used to keep the entire departmental machinery engaged in the process of transfers.

The decision to opt for online transfers was guided by the desire to adopt a system that was both efficient as well as transparent and fair. At the end of the first year, Chief Minister Khattar had said, "Transfer of about



Online transfers started by ML Khattar are being replicated in other states. Express

42,000 teachers was done with the click of the mouse. Out of these, 93 per cent teachers got the posting of their choice... Under previous governments, transfers had become an industry as they were done only through recommendations or (in lieu of) money. But the teachers transfer policy implemented by the present government has not only drawn appreciation from different states, but also they have expressed the desire to follow this policy in their states".

For instance, in 2017, showing keen interest in the online transfer policy, UP's BJP government had urged the Haryana officials to explain the concept. Not willing to be quoted, a senior IAS officer who was instrumental in the introduction of online transfer system, claims, "Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Assam, Rajasthan, and Punjab have taken the idea from Haryana's online transfer model. They have formulated or are in the process of doing so (after) making some changes in it as per local requirements".

Of course, not everyone is happy with online system of postings. Haryana Vidyalaya Adhyapak Sangh spokesperson Wazir Singh points out that there are many discrepancies in the online transfers policy. "Instead of the education department's information technology cell, the system is handled by a firm in Pune. In case of any grievance, it's difficult

to fix it. Further, despite the online system, many transfers have been executed manually, because of political reasons, which has disturbed the entire data as the system does not accept these changes," he says. He is also not happy with the initiation of transfer process in the middle of the academic session this year. "The policy appears concerned just about the teachers, and not the students, as it leaves the schools situated in far flung areas with very few teachers. Teachers, students and parents should be heard to improve the policy," says Singh.

Not satisfied with the policy, Congress MLA and former Education Minister Geeta Bhukkal says, "It's not as transparent as is being claimed since there is scope of favouritism in it. If a teacher is offering good teaching skills to students then he or she should not be asked to participate in the transfer process after five years. In our government, we were empowered to give relief to the teachers concerned in any emergency, including medical reasons".

The Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), led by former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, is also not impressed with the policy. "The teachers are very upset with this system but they can't speak against it because of service rules. The decreasing number of students in government schools shows that it has failed

EXPLAINED
E.
What is online transfer system for teachers

The transfer process is voluntary for teachers who have completed one year of regular service in a zone and mandatory for teachers who have completed five years of service. Teachers with 12 months or less left before retirement are exempted. The eligible teachers can opt for schools of a zone of their choice across 22 districts in the state. In the absence of a preference, teachers can be posted anywhere in the state.

HOW IT HAPPENED THIS YEAR

JULY 18: Govt sought online applications for transfers

JULY 18 TO 20: Interested teachers applied for transfers

JULY 21 TO 23: Department calculated vacancies

JULY 24 TO 28: Teachers filled up their preference

to improve the level of studies in the schools," says R S Chaudhry, Secretary General of the INLD and a retired IAS officer.

But even though many have pointed out loopholes in the online system some of them also admit its advantages. "At least now there is no corruption in transfers. Further, 'chits' (recommendation letters) from ministers and MLAs (members of legislative Assembly) are no longer required for this," says Wazir Singh.

'Rural service centres can fuel rural India's growth, bridge the digital divide'

DATA SHOW that between 2014 and 2019, that the total number of transactions at Common Service Centres (CSCs) have grown from 4.5 crore to 17.4 crore and, in terms of value, they have gone up from Rs 1,560 crore to well over Rs 28,000 crore. KARISHMA MEHROTRA caught up with DINESH TYAGI, the CEO of CSC initiative to understand what has led to the growth in CSCs and what lies ahead.



THE POLICY INTERVIEW
DINESH TYAGI
CEO of CSC initiative

Can you describe the basic structure of a CSC?

The CSCs were introduced to provide citizens access to services through a digital framework. Every CSC has a basic infrastructure, which is a computer, a webcam, a scanner, and a printer, and some facility for power and connectivity. In some places, the connectivity is through a landline, in others through the fibre, and some places still use data cards.

The connectivity is done by the entrepreneur themselves. BharatNet (world's largest rural broadband project) came a little later, and BharatNet access to CSCs is still going on. The village-level entrepreneur who runs a CSC has some basic qualifications — Class 10 pass. He should have the interest to run an enterprise, the capital to make the initial investment, and he should be a risk-taking person.

What is the underlying business model?

Entrepreneurs make their living by delivering services and charging a service fee either from the citizen or the government (in case it is providing a service). But someone pays him an incentive to deliver the service. Government services are only enablers; they alone cannot create a sustainable business model because of the frequency in which the citizens use them.

It was very necessary to do B to C (Business to Consumer), which is based on the local demand. B to C was added in order to create a sustainable business model.

What type of services do citizens avail?

After 2014, many central government services were added. In addition, there are state government services. For example, in Haryana almost anything a citizen needs can be initiated at a CSC, including paying government taxes. That means a citizen doesn't need to go to government offices at all and that is the objective of the entire framework. In the B to C frame, financial inclusion, banking, insurance, pension are the major drivers. Railway ticketing is done, passport application is done. Also, if a person in a village wants to buy some product from ITC, Godrej, Patanjali, or IFFCO, or even a computer or phone, they can use the common service centre.

What are the most recent changes?

We have tied up with HDFC bank to give some new products to rural India. There is a card, called the HDFC card, which can be given to any small and medium enterprise based on one-year bank statement. At the backend, the bank will calculate the credit limit and give him a credit card. You can benefit six crore small and medium business. They will be able to do more business and create more employment. This is going to re-define the way credit is extended to people across the country.

What are the focus areas in the future?

One is education. We want every citizen in the rural area should be able to access education facilities similar to what is available to citizens in urban areas. You can do a digital literacy program, a computer program, an MBA program, or even a law course sitting in a village through online courses. You can give prepare for various exams such as the IIT entrance exams. We are introducing new courses on artificial intelligence, blockchain, machine learning for a very nominal fee.

Second is making every CSC a banking, insurance and pension service provider. Today, about half of them are not covering these areas. Our effort is to use every access point to deliver banking services. And of course, we are doing telemedicine, homoeopathy, ayurvedic, allopathy. We are using emerging technology for diagnostic tests as well.

We have got a mandate for managing BharatNet for the last mile for 1,20,000 panchayats. Our focus is to streamline the entire BharatNet network. It is proven that 10 per cent enhancement in internet usage will increase about two per cent of GDP. There will be phenomenal growth potential for the rural economy if we can try to maintain the BharatNet system.

How amending four labour laws spurred Rajasthan's MSME sector

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, AUGUST 18

NARENDRA KUMAR Jain, president of Employers' Association of Rajasthan is a happy man, thanks to the labour reforms, initiated in 2014-15 under the then Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje. "There is industrial peace in the state," says Jain. Ishwar Chand Agarwal, Chairman of Genus Power Infrastructures Limited, agrees. "For the last 4-5 years, there has been no labour unrest (in Rajasthan)".

In 2014-15, the Raje-led Rajasthan government amended four labour laws: The Industrial Disputes Act,

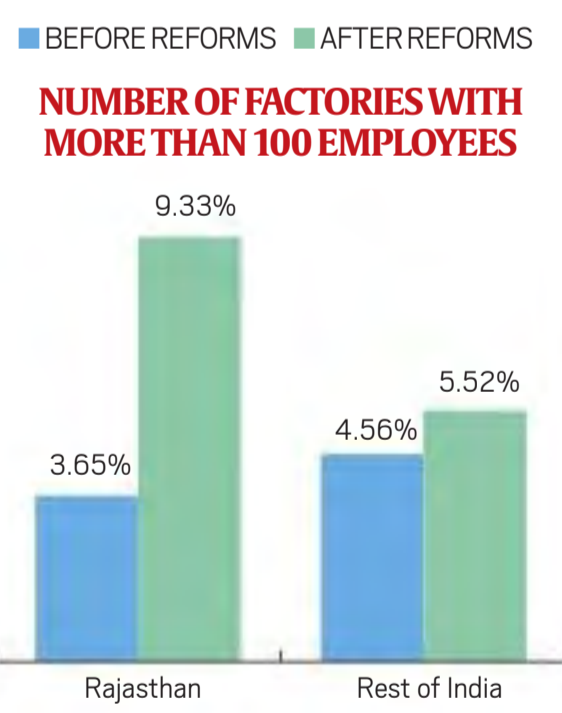
1947; The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970; The Factories Act, 1948; and The Apprentices Act (1961). Under the amended Industrial Disputes Act, employers could retrench up to 300 employees without permission of the government — this was capped at 100 employees earlier; a worker should raise an objection regarding discharge, dismissal, retrenchment or termination within three years while there was no time limit earlier; and that the trade union

can be formed only if it gets 30 per cent of the total workers as members, up from 15 per cent earlier.

Further, complaints against the employer about a violation of the Factories Act do not receive cognisance by a court without prior written permission from the state government. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 was made applicable only to companies that employed more than 50 workers, up from 20 workers earlier. And under The Apprentices Act, the stipend for apprentices was "no less than the minimum wage".

Not surprisingly, the latest Economic Survey of India praised Rajasthan, holding it up as a role model for the rest of the country. Comparing the change in Compound Annual Growth Rates (CAGR) two years before and two years after the law change, the Survey noted, "It can be clearly seen that, for all variables, CAGR post labour reforms in Rajasthan has increased significantly vis-à-vis the Rest of India". Moreover, the number of firms with 100 employees or more have increased (see box) at a significantly higher rate in Rajasthan than in the rest of India.

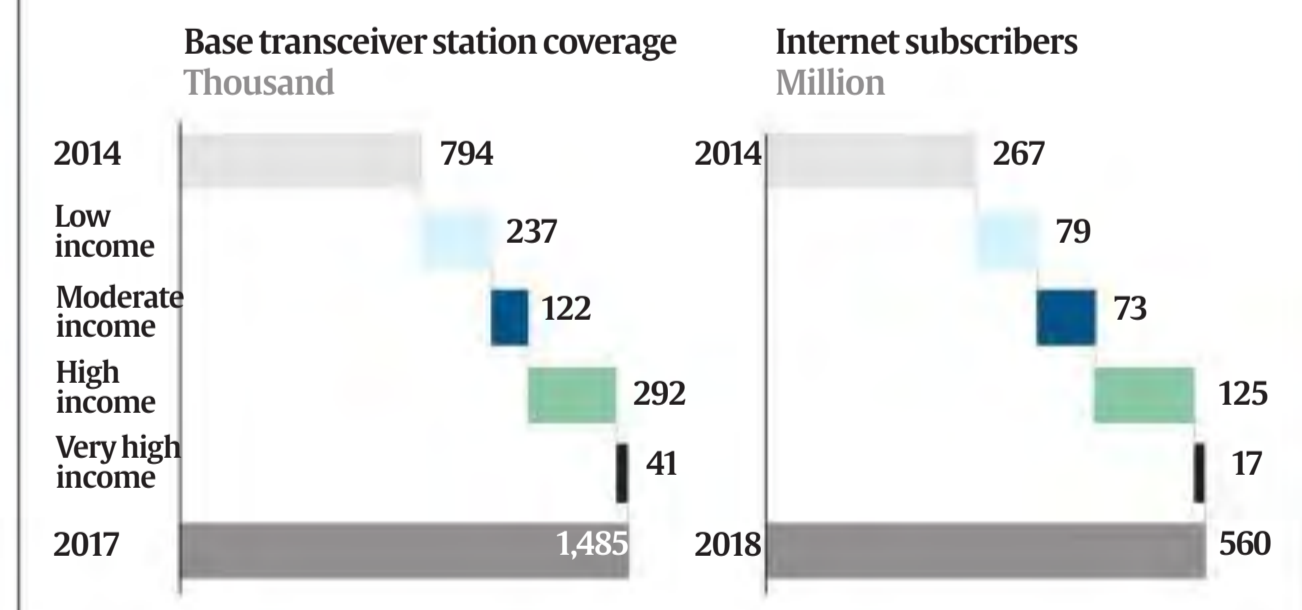
TURNAROUND IN RAJASTHAN'S MSME SECTOR (% CHANGE)



Source: Survey computations using ASI, 2011-17
Note: Averages are computed for Rajasthan and for the Rest of India separately

IN NUMBERS

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ONLINE USERS HAVE GROWN IN BOTH POORER AND RICHER INDIAN STATES



Source: McKinsey Global Institute report "Digital India"

MAHARASHTRA/ HEALTHCARE

In Nashik, colour-coded bedsheets are protecting newborns

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS
PUNE, AUGUST 18

IF IT'S Monday, the colour code for bedsheets at Nashik civil hospital's special newborn care unit (SNCU) is yellow, if it's Tuesday, the sheets are pink, and so on for each day of the week. This simple measure ensures that the bedsheets have been washed and sterilised by autoclave. Similarly, there are separate mops and buckets for each cubicle. A motivated staff also checks whether the surfaces of warmers have been cleaned.

Implementation of such infection control measures can be complex, but with simple practical steps, as well as dedication and training, Maharashtra's health department is moving ahead to reach its goal of bringing down neonatal mortality rate to single digits. According to the Sample Registration System (SRS) data in 2017, in Maharashtra, the Infant Mortality rate (IMR) has reduced to 19 per



Newborns being provided 'kangaroo' care (chest-to-chest with parents). SNCU

1,000 live births from 33 in 2008. The Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) declined from 24 per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 13 in SRS 2017, and the state comes a close third after Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Maharashtra's efforts are also in keeping with Every Newborn Action Plan launched

at the World Health Assembly in 2014 led by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF to reduce neonatal mortality. Dr Archana Patil, in charge of the state family planning bureau headquartered in Pune and Additional Director of Health, Maharashtra said that a strict watch on hygiene measures

REDUCING MORTALITY

Year	Neonates admitted in SNCUs	Mortality rate (%)
2013-14	40081	13.23
2014-15	47515	9.89
2015-16	49853	8.59
2016-17	50373	8.15
2017-18	54899	7.6
2018-19	54974	6.35
2019-20*	15671*	5.56*

* till June

has helped bring down the mortality rate of babies across the SNCUs in the state (see box). Mentoring visits by expert paediatricians, weekly death audits at each of the state's SNCUs have started showing results. For instance, the mortality rate at a single SNCU at Nashik civil hospital was as high as 15 per

cent when 55 extremely low birth weight infants died out of 346 admissions. Dr Dinesh Thakur, in charge of Nashik SNCU, said that they still had 250-300 neonates being admitted every month but the mortality rate is less than 8 per cent.

Just like the Nashik SNCU, there are a total of 37 SNCUs for sick neonates set up at 20 District/Civil Hospitals, 10 Women Hospitals and 7 Sub-Districts Hospitals in the state. Sick neonates are also referred from outside hospital. These are specialised newborn and sick child care units at district hospitals with specialised equipment. These units have a minimum of 12 to 16 beds with a staff of three medical officers, eight nurses, and four support staff to provide round the clock services for a newborn or child requiring special care.

Another 180 New Born Stabilisation Unit have also been set up even as the state plans to add another 18 SNCUs and 59 Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machines, which address sleep disorders.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Jack Letts, who is known as 'Jihadi Jack'

BRITAIN
'Jihadi Jack' loses his British dual nationality: Reports

London: A former Islamic State recruit referred to as 'Jihadi Jack' for his British links has been stripped of his UK nationality, according to UK media reports. Jack Letts, a 24-year-old from the town of Oxford, had travelled to Raqqa in Syria as a teenager in 2014 and fought for ISIS before leaving the terrorist group a few years ago. Letts, who is now being held in a Kurdish jail in northern Syria, has dual Canadian nationality through his father. Under international law, the UK Home Office can revoke British citizenship as long as the individual is not made stateless due to the decision. Letts was 18 when he left school in Oxfordshire to join ISIS.

YEMEN
Huthis appoint 'ambassador' in Tehran

Dubai: Yemen's Iran-linked Huthi rebels have appointed an "ambassador" in Tehran, a step condemned by the internationally recognised government as a breach of international laws. The Islamic republic made no announcement about the appointment of an ambassador for the Huthis, who control the Yemeni capital Sanaa and much of the north. The Huthi-run Al-Masirah TV said that a "presidential decree was issued appointing Ibrahim Mohammed Mohammed al-Dailami as an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary for the republic of Yemen to the Islamic Republic of Iran."

GAZA
Israeli troops kill 3 Palestinians

Gaza City: Gaza's Health Ministry said Israeli troops have killed three Palestinians and severely wounded a fourth near the heavily guarded perimeter fence. The Israeli military said Sunday that a helicopter and a tank fired at armed suspects near the fence overnight. After weeks of calm, Palestinian militants have attempted a number of raids in recent days. They fired rockets into Israel on two occasions over the weekend, without wounding anyone.

ROMANIA
Four dead in psychiatric hospital attack

Bucharest: Four people have died and nine were injured after being attacked by a patient in a psychiatric hospital, Romanian press reports said Sunday. They said a 38-year-old man who had admitted himself to the hospital in Sapoca, northeast of the capital Bucharest, entered a treatment room and attacked other patients with a transfusion stand. Three of the patients suffered head injuries and died at the scene while a fourth died later in hospital, the reports said. Among the nine injured in the attack, two were in a coma, they added.

Suicide blast at Kabul wedding kills 63; IS claims responsibility

ABDUL QADIR SEDIQI
KABUL, AUGUST 18

THE ISLAMIC State militant group claimed responsibility on Sunday for a suicide blast at a wedding reception in Afghanistan that killed 63 people, underlining the dangers the country faces even if the Taliban agrees a pact with the United States.

The Saturday night attack came as the Taliban and the United States try to negotiate an agreement on the withdrawal of US forces in exchange for a Taliban commitment on security and peace talks with Afghanistan's US-backed government.

Islamic State fighters, who first appeared in Afghanistan in 2014, are not involved in the talks. They are battling government and US-led international forces and the Taliban.

The US special envoy for reconciliation in Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, said the attack showed the need to accelerate efforts to reach a deal with the Taliban, to help defeat Islamic State.

The Sunni Muslim group, in a statement on the messaging website Telegram, claimed responsibility for the attack at a west Kabul wedding hall in a minority Shia neighbourhood, saying its bomber had been able to infiltrate the reception and detonate his explosives in the crowd of "infidels".

The Taliban had earlier denied responsibility for the blast and condemned it.

More than 180 people were wounded, with many women and children among the casual-

Report: Lankan presidential hopeful claims threat to his life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO, AUGUST 18

SRI LANKA'S presidential hopeful Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who played a key role defeating the LTTE to end the country's brutal civil war, has claimed that a terrorist group in the north of the country was planning to harm him during the election campaign, according to a media report.

Gotabaya, 70, the brother of former strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa, informed President Maithripala Sirisena that his intelligence officers have told him that there is an attempt to use a sniper rifle and a special type of gun imported from Malaysia for this attack.

He asked the President to investigate the matter and take appropriate action, *Sri Lanka Mirror* reported.

The former defence secretary told the media that according to information he has received, not only him but Douglas Devananda, a Sri Lankan Tamil politician, and Karuna Amman, a politician and a former rebel, are also at risk.

The report said that the President has ordered the Director of Police Terrorism Investigation to investigate the matter.

HARDLINE INTERIOR MINISTER SAYS HIS POLICIES ARE MEANT TO BE A DETERRENT

Italy's war on rescue ships keeps migrants stranded at sea

JASON HOROWITZ
ROME, AUGUST 18

IT HAS become a ritual under Italy's anti-migrant government. A rescue ship packed with African migrants is marooned for weeks in the Mediterranean while Matteo Salvini, Italy's hard-line interior minister, wins political points by refusing to let it dock.

But the latest standoff, between the Spanish aid ship *Open Arms*, carrying about 150 migrants, and Salvini shows the culmination of Italy's evolution from a country that anguished over the loss of migrant lives to one that has essentially declared war on the ships that rescue them.

The opening salvos by previ-

EXPLAINED

Fears over US deal with Taliban

A DEAL between the US and Taliban, which both sets of negotiators say is close to being agreed, would see US troops leaving Afghanistan in return for Taliban agreeing to negotiations with the Afghan government and a promise by the militants that Afghan soil will not be used by other groups to launch attacks on the West. However, the Afghan government and other observers have long feared the talks would lead to the sidelining of the country's elected representatives. The IS-claimed attack in Kabul also highlights that although there is a promise that Taliban won't allow groups to attack the West, the Afghan people may continue to suffer. The possible withdrawal of US troops also sparked fear that the IS and other such groups may become further emboldened to carry out more attacks on civilians.

ties, interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said on Sunday as grieving families thronged to Kabul's crowded cemeteries. **REUTERS**

At a funeral after the bomb blast in Kabul on Sunday. **Reuters**

ISLAMIC STATE EXPANDING ITS FOOTPRINT IN AFGHANISTAN

In the mountains of northeastern Afghanistan, the Islamic State group is expanding its footprint, recruiting new fighters and plotting more attacks.

A CALIPHATE 'PROVINCE'
THE ISLAMIC State affiliate appeared in Afghanistan shortly after the group's core fighters swept across Syria and Iraq in the summer of 2014, carving out a self-styled caliphate in around a third of both countries.

THE AFGHANISTAN affiliate refers to itself as the Khorasan Province, a name applied to parts of Afghanistan, Iran and central Asia in the Middle Ages.

THE IS affiliate initially

numbered just a few dozen fighters, mainly Pakistani Taliban driven from their bases across the border and disgruntled Afghan Taliban attracted to IS' more extreme ideology. Today it counts thousands of fighters from different parts of the world.

CONFLICT WITH TALIBAN
THE TALIBAN and IS are sharply divided over ideology and tactics, with the Taliban largely confining attacks to government targets and security forces. The Taliban and IS have

fought each other on a number of occasions, and the Taliban are still the larger and more imposing force.

'PRACTICE RUNS'
A US intelligence official based in Afghanistan told AP that a recent wave of attacks in the capital, Kabul, is "practice runs" for even bigger attacks in Europe and the US. "The IS core mandate is: You will conduct external attacks" in the US and Europe. "That is their goal. It's just a matter of time." **Source: AP**



10,000 HOMELESS AFTER FIRE RAZES DHAKA SLUM

Flames engulf a slum after a fire broke out in Dhaka. At least 10,000 people are homeless after a massive fire swept through a crowded slum in the Bangladesh capital and destroyed thousands of shanties, officials said Sunday. The fire broke out at in Dhaka's Mirpur neighbourhood late on Friday and razed around 2,000 mostly tin shacks. No-one was killed. **Reuters**

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT LEAKED

'No-deal Brexit will lead to food, drug shortages'

KATE HOLTON &
WILLIAM JAMES
LONDON, AUGUST 18

BRITAIN WILL face shortages of fuel, food and medicine if it leaves the European Union without a transition deal, according

to leaked official documents reported by the *Sunday Times*, but whose interpretation was contested by ministers.

Setting out a vision of jammed ports, public protests and widespread disruption, the *Times* said the forecasts compiled by the Cabinet Office set

out the most likely aftershocks of a no-deal Brexit rather than the worst case scenarios.

But Michael Gove, the minister in charge of coordinating no-deal preparations, challenged that, saying that the documents did set out a worst case scenario and that planning had been ac-

celerated in the last three weeks.

The *Times* said up to 85 per cent of lorries using the main channel crossings "may not be ready" for French customs, meaning disruption at ports would potentially last up to three months before the flow of traffic improves. **REUTERS**

Migrants aboard *Open Arms*, a rescue ship, near Lampedusa. **AP**

back into the anti-migrant well. *Open Arms*, and another ship called the *Ocean Viking*—carrying 350 asylum-seekers, including

apparently 103 minors — are floating campaign ads for his hard-line approach.

"Timidity? Appeals for a false

conception of 'humanity'? Open ports? Landings by the thousands? Not in my name!" Salvini, who has spent much of the last month campaigning on Italy's beaches, wrote on Twitter on Friday. "Italy, raises its head again!"

That afternoon, the operators of *Open Arms* invited doctors aboard, they said, to visit with the ship's 28 unaccompanied minors, and appealed for an emergency evacuation of everyone on board, saying that the physical and psychological health of the passengers had deteriorated to a critical level.

"Their security is at risk," the organisation wrote on Twitter.

Salvini argues that his hard-line policies have deterred migrants, and smugglers, from

The Iranian flag is hoisted on the tanker *Adrian Darya 1*. **Reuters**

Gibraltar rejects US pressure to hold Iranian oil tanker

ARITZ PARRA
MADRID, AUGUST 18

AUTHORITIES IN Gibraltar on Sunday rejected the United States' latest request not to release a seized Iranian super-tanker, clearing the way for the vessel to set sail after being detained last month for allegedly attempting to breach European Union sanctions on Syria.

The ship was expected to leave Sunday night, according to a statement on Twitter by Hamid Baedinejad, Iran's ambassador to Britain.

Shortly after the tanker's detention in early July near Gibraltar — a British overseas territory — Iran seized the British-flagged oil tanker *Stena Impero*, which remains held by the Islamic Republic. Analysts had said the Iranian ship's release by Gibraltar could see the *Stena Impero* go free.

Gibraltar's government said Sunday it was allowing the Iranian tanker's release because "the EU sanctions regime against Iran — which is applicable in Gibraltar — is much narrower than that applicable in the US."

In a last-ditch effort to stop the release, the US unsealed a warrant Friday to seize the vessel and its cargo of 2.1 million barrels of light

GRACE 1 CHANGES ITS NAME, FLAG

AN IRANIAN tanker caught in a stand-off between Tehran and the West has raised an Iranian flag and has had a new name painted on its side. Video footage and photographs showed the tanker flying the red, green and white flag of Iran and bearing the new name of *Adrian Darya-1* painted in white on its hull. Its previous name, *Grace 1*, had been painted over. The *Grace 1* had originally flown the Panamanian flag, but Panama's Maritime Authority said in July that the vessel had been de-listed. **REUTERS**

crude oil, citing violations of US sanctions as well as money laundering and terrorism statutes.

The unsealed court documents argued that Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps are the ship's true owners through a network of front companies.

Authorities in Gibraltar said Sunday that, unlike in the US, the Iran's Revolutionary Guard is not designated a terrorist organisation under EU, UK or Gibraltar law. **AP**

Defying authorities, rain, Hong Kong protesters turn out in large numbers

ANNE MARIE ROANTREE & CLARE JIM
HONG KONG, AUGUST 18

AT LEAST 100,000 anti-government protesters joined a mass rally in Hong Kong on Sunday, filling major thoroughfares in heavy rain in the eleventh week of what have been often violent demonstrations in the Asian financial hub.

Sunday's turnout showed that the movement still has broad-based support despite the ugly scenes witnessed during the past week when protesters occupied the Chinese-ruled city's airport, for which some activists apologised.

Protesters held aloft placards with slogans including "Free Hong Kong!" and "Democracy now!" and umbrellas to shield them from the rain.

Despite organisers not having permission to march, thousands joined crowd, which thronged the streets. Many protesters headed towards the city's financial centre, chanting for the city's Beijing-backed

Protesters march in Hong Kong on Sunday. **Reuters**

leader to step down.

"Fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong," umbrella-carrying protesters chanted.

One protester shouted at others who were jeering at police "Today is a peaceful march! Don't fall into the trap! The world is watching us," prompting the group to move on. **REUTERS**

Salvini told reporters that

Conte had asked him to let all the ship's passengers into Italy. Conte said he had asked for only the children to be let off; he then called Salvini "treacherous" and seized by an "obsession" with migrants.

That's just what Salvini was waiting for.

"With me the ports are and will remain CLOSED to the traffickers and their foreign collaborators," Salvini responded in a Facebook post, later adding that he was running against "those who work to reopen the faucet on illegal immigration."

Liberals argue that Salvini, who is responsible for enforcing Italy's law, has placed himself above it by rejecting court orders to accept the migrants. **NYT**

14 ECONOMY

MARKET WATCH

FPIs PULL OUT ₹8,319 CR IN AUG

New Delhi: Foreign investors pulled out Rs 8,319 crore on a net basis from capital markets in the first half of August, continuing their selling spree in the Indian market amid uncertainty over foreign portfolio investors (FPI) tax and global trade worries. **PTI**

SBI CHAIRMAN SAYS THERE IS NEED FOR STIMULUS IN THE ECONOMY

PSU banks kick off nationwide exercise to boost credit demand across sectors

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

WITH CREDIT demand remaining subdued, public sector undertaking (PSU) banks Sunday began a major initiative to identify and finalise ways and means to increase credit to various sectors of the economy, enhance use of technology to bring about innovation and enable big data analytics.

State Bank of India (SBI) conducted a discussion session including branches within the jurisdiction of all 524 regional offices to generate ideas and review the bank's performance aligned with national priorities. In Mumbai, at the bank's Regional Business Office, the discussion session was attended by Arijit Basu, MD (Corporate Client Group and IT), SBI, and other senior officials.

SBI chairman Rajnish Kumar said credit demand remains subdued and there is a need for stimulus in the economy. Though lack of credit demand exists in the economy, there is no supply-side constraint as the PSU banks are more or less well-capitalised, he further said. "Demand for credit

EXPLAINED
E Banks' delay in cutting rates remains a concern

THE MEETING comes at a time when credit demand remains subdued and banks have been facing the charge of not passing on the full extent of the easing of the policy rates.

The RBI had cut the repo rate by 75 basis points between February and June, but banks have reduced their interest rates on fresh rupee loans by 29 basis points.

in the economy is subdued. There is a need for stimulus in the economy," Kumar said in Kolkata after attending the multi-level consultation programme with branch managers of SBI in the region.

"There is no supply-side constraint. More or less, the public sector banks are well-capitalised and bank rates also moderated."

The Department of Financial Services initiated the multi-level consultation process in all PSU banks even as the government proposed measures to boost lending to revive the economy which is facing a slowdown.

"SBI collectively identified many implementable and innovative suggestions which can help to improve bank's performance and establish future roadmap," said another official. These suggestions were collated and sent to the regional/zonal level for further discussions at the state level bankers' committee, along with comparative performance assessment of the branches under each region, the public sector bank said.

SBI has decided to later take final consultation at the national level to compare both intra- and inter-bank performances and fi-

nalise suggestions about the way ahead for implementation across PSU banks. "The consultative process has resulted in a renewed sense of involvement and purposes down to the branch level and the bank is geared towards implementing the roadmap for the further, improve its performance and align itself to national priorities so that it may fulfill its mandate of partnering the Indian growth story," SBI said.

According to Indian Bank, which held the review meeting in Mumbai, the discussions ranged from area specific issues affecting the growth of business of branches, opportunities and growth potential available, requirements of customers, and improving digitalisation.

"Detailed discussions were held on bank lending to MSME sector including lending under Stand Up India, Mudra loans, PSB loans. Other areas like retail lending, digital transaction for both convenience and outreach were touched upon," the bank said.

Bank of India (BoI) said its branches were engaged in self-assessment, deliberated on the issues and evolved ideas on future

strategy. The idea is to make banking citizen-centric as well as more responsive to the needs and aspiration of senior citizens, farmers, small industrialists, entrepreneurs, youth, students and women, it said. AK Das, executive director, BoI said, "Several topical themes were discussed during the meet with a view to chart out specific roadmap for PSU banks."

Though the Reserve Bank of India had cut the repo rate by 75 basis points between February and June, banks have reduced their interest rates on fresh rupee loans by 29 basis points so far (February-June 2019).

"Our interactions with various stakeholders, including both public sector and private sector banks, indicate that steps are being taken by them on an ongoing basis to progressively lower their interest rates so that the benefits of the policy rate reductions are passed on to the economy. Accordingly, we expect higher transmission of monetary policy actions and stance by the banks in the weeks and months ahead," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had said while unveiling the monetary policy earlier this month.

INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRMAN, PM'S ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

'The key question is: are we on a trend economic growth rate of 6% or 7%'

THE INDIAN economy is slowing down. People are pruning their expenses even on non-discretionary items, let alone automobiles and homes. In an interview to *The Indian Express*, BIBEK DEBROY, chairman, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, says the government can increase efficiency of overall government expenditure (both states and the Centre), cut direct tax rates, and harmonise Goods and Services Tax rates, to spur growth. Also, he adds, it will be good not to expand the fisc or extend sectoral incentives as many are demanding now.



Express File Photo

Some economists have argued for counter cyclical policies. Would you agree with them — spending more during a slowdown?

If I just look at it from an academic point of view, I'd probably say, yes. But looking at the past, the moment you open the tap, there is no controlling it. I will widen the deficit for capex, but control revenue exp. Eventually, we will bear the cost later on.

There have been demands for sectoral incentives, the latest being for the automobile industry.

In my personal opinion, we should not have any sector-specific interventions. These will create distortions. Fiscal concessions to specific sectors will complicate the tax story even further.

In the last quarter of 2018-19, the economy clocked less than 6 per cent. Is the trend growth rate shifting down?

There are questions whether the slowdown is cyclical in nature or structural. All of this depends on the benchmark that we use — the real rate of GDP growth, given the GDP deflator (the RBI target of 4 per cent). The GDP growth rate last quarter of 2018-19 was at 5.8 per cent. In 2018-19, the growth rate was 6.8 per cent. The Survey makes the point that in the preceding five years, the average rate of growth was 7.5 per cent. This year, the Budget has a projection of 7 per cent. This is what determines different people's perception.

Are we on a trend of 7 per cent, was 5.8 per cent in the last quarter a blip? Or are we on a trend of 6 per cent? This, to my view, is the key question. Given the global uncertainty, or all that is happening in the external world, even the 6 per cent is not dismal. It's not enough, we need to grow faster. End of the month, we will have the first quarter figures of 2019-20. We will know whether it is a 6 per cent or 7 per cent trend.

We all know that reforms that are necessary. Irrespective of what the trend GDP growth rate is, it must be remembered that many of these require legislative changes. Many of these are factor markets, and in the domain of states. Obviously,

"... we should not have any sector-specific interventions. These will create distortions. Fiscal concessions to specific sectors will complicate the tax story even further"

BIBEK DEBROY
CHAIRMAN, PRIME MINISTER'S ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

these reforms are necessary. But the national government in Delhi has limited degree of freedom for pushing those reforms.

But given the slowdown, what best can the government do to get the most out of its expenditure?

Let's look at government expenditure — here, there are limits to public expenditure, because there are fiscal consolidation issues. The Union government is fiscally constrained, because of Fourteenth Finance Commission recommendations and has to spend on defence, railways. However, there is a package of central sector and centrally sponsored schemes (CSS). In central sector funding by the government. But there are too many Central sector and CSS. The Shivraj Chouhan Committee had ostensibly collapsed these into 28 schemes, and they come to an end in March 2020, since they are co-terminus with Fourteenth Finance Commission.

The centrally sponsored Schemes are outside the mandate of Fifteenth Finance Commission. Yes, you can rationalise these schemes, have a small set, which increase the efficiency of public expenditure.

Here, let me digress and point to the phenomenal success of the GST Council as a decision-making body. This was about indirect taxes.

Time has now come for a similar body on public expenditure to do exactly what the GST Council did for taxes. This body should decide about what should be public expenditure. Every state wants more money.

Taking an extreme point to illustrate my point, let us ask a question — whether health is important? Should there be a Union government scheme for health? But health is a state subject. So, if we think health is important and we want the Union government to spend on health, by the same token, the state

government should pay for defence. After all, I have got limitation in terms of resources available for public expenditure, I need to prioritise. That prioritisation cannot be done by the Union government alone, but also by states.

What about GST itself?

I think a lot can be done on GST also. Essentially, it has to be done by the GST Council. But to a large extent, the Union Finance Ministry can navigate what happens on GST. The issue is pretty simple: that we need to streamline and harmonise rates. As an economist, I would argue, there should be a single GST rate.

In practice, it is impossible. No country in the world has a single GST rate. From a pragmatic point of view, we must have three GST rates. For illustrative purposes, say 6 per cent, 12 per cent and 18 per cent. Everyone wants the 24 per cent to come down to 18 per cent, but no one wants the items under 0 per cent to come under 6 per cent.

And is there scope for a cut in direct tax rates?

The task force on Direct Taxes was supposed to submit its report by August 15. The direct tax rate can be reduced significantly. The only way to reform direct taxes is to eliminate exemptions for both personal and corporate taxes.

Land, labour, will take 4-5 years to yield payoffs. In rural India, enormous changes have been brought about by providing them electricity, LPG... now these yield productivity benefits that are difficult to quantify... in the long run.

However, if I am talking about what the Union government can do, is tax, expenditure, and monetisation of assets, particularly land assets of public sector enterprises. It's important from the point of view of privatisation. These too will take time to yield benefits. It will take a year to reap benefits.

BRIEFLY

IBC: Small borrowers may get waivers

New Delhi: The government plans to give debt waiver for "small distressed borrowers" under the insolvency law framework, according to a senior official. The proposed waiver would be offered as part of 'Fresh Start' provisions under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Corporate Affairs Secretary Injeti Srinivas said discussions have been held with the microfinance industry regarding criteria for the proposed waiver for small distressed borrowers from the economically weaker section (EWS).

Applications invited for top posts in 2 PSBs

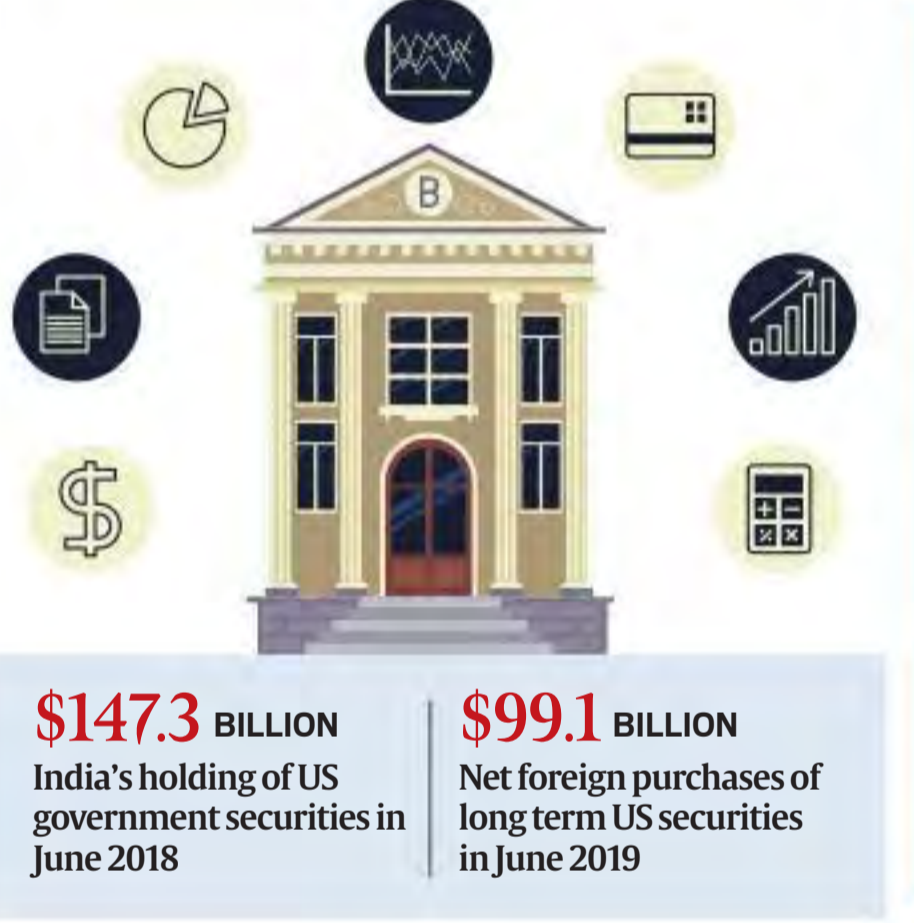
New Delhi: The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) has invited applications for the post of Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD and CEO) in two major public sector banks, Punjab National Bank and Bank of India. The post of MD and CEO in PNB will fall vacant after incumbent Sunil Mehta superannuates on September 30. The post in Bank of India is lying vacant since July 1 after Dinbandhu Mohapatra retired. The top post in another major state-run lender Bank of Baroda will fall vacant in October when the extended term of the bank's CEO and MD P S Jaikumar will end. **PTI**

India's holding of US govt securities at \$162.7 bn

India's exposure to the US government securities rose by nearly \$6 billion to \$162.7 billion at the end of June, the highest level in at least one year, as per latest data from the US Treasury Department

TOP HOLDERS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SECURITIES:

- Japan: \$1.122 trillion
- Mainland China: \$1.112 trillion
- UK: \$341.1 billion
- Brazil: \$311.7 billion
- Ireland: \$262.1 billion
- Switzerland: \$232.9 billion
- Luxembourg: \$231 billion
- Cayman Islands: \$226.6 billion
- Hong Kong: \$215.6 billion
- Belgium: \$203.6 billion
- Saudi Arabia: \$179.6 billion
- Taiwan: \$175.1 billion
- India: \$167.2 billion



- FACTORS THAT LED TO RISE IN INDIA'S EXPOSURE:**
- Global economy grappling with multiple headwinds
 - Trade war between US and China
 - Slowdown in some emerging markets
- INDIA'S EXPOSURE IN PREVIOUS MONTHS:**
- \$156.9 BILLION IN MAY
 - \$155.3 BILLION IN APRIL

Health Ministry suspends CDSCO official arrested by CBI over 'corruption' charge

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

THE HEALTH Ministry has suspended an official of India's apex drug regulatory body, following his arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) earlier this week on charges of corruption, it said in a statement on Sunday.

The regulatory body, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), has a "zero tolerance" policy towards corruption and is "committed to act stringently" against such acts, the Ministry said.

"As informed by CBI, Dr. Naresh Sharma, Dy. Drug Controller (I), CDSCO (Hq), New Delhi has been trapped and taken in custody by them on 16.08.2019 and legal investigation... has been initiated," it stated, adding the official has been suspended "with immediate effect".

According to his profile on a professional networking website, Sharma joined CDSCO in November 2006 after over five years in Dabur Research Foundation. Between 2000 and 2001, he was in a research and development role at Cadila Pharmaceuticals. He has also

worked in R&D roles at two other pharma companies — JK Drugs and Pharmaceuticals and Paam Pharma.

The specific details surrounding Sharma's arrest are unclear. CBI, in a release on August 16, had also said it arrested another CDSCO official — a Himachal Pradesh drug inspector — and four executives of an Amritsar or New Delhi-based pharma company in an Rs 1 lakh bribery case.

"It was alleged that transaction of bribe money would take place between the accused persons including Drug Inspector, CDSCO, Baddi, Solan (Himachal

Pradesh); Managing Director of Amritsar-based private persons and others," stated the release.

"It was further alleged that the public servant demanded a bribe of Rs. 1 lakh in lieu of closure of file related to the said private firm and favourable action as the samples of dobutamine injection manufactured/ processed by the said firm were collected by CDSCO for testing and the said samples got failed during testing," the release added.

The CBI said it "caught" the inspector accepting the bribe and that, later on, the firm's executives were also arrested.

White House says no recession in sight, pushes China trade talks

HOWARD SCHNEIDER
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 18

WHITE HOUSE White House officials pushed back on Sunday against concerns that economic growth may be faltering, saying they saw little risk of recession despite a volatile week on global bond markets, and insisting their trade war with China was doing no damage to the United States.

Trump administration Economic Adviser Larry Kudlow said trade deputies from the two countries would speak within 10 days and "if those deputies meetings pan out... we are planning to have China come to the USA" to advance negotiations over ending a trade battle that has emerged as a potential risk to global growth.

But even with the talks stalled for now and the threat of greater tariffs and other trade restrictions hanging over the world



Trump administration Economic Adviser Larry Kudlow said trade deputies from US and China would speak within 10 days. Reuters

economy, Kudlow said on *Fox News Sunday* the US remained "in pretty good shape." "There is no recession in sight," Kudlow said. "Consumers are working. Their wages are rising. They are spending and they are saving."

His comments follow a rocky week where concerns over a possible US recession began to drive

financial markets and seemed to put White House officials on edge about whether the economy would hold up through the 2020 presidential election campaign. Democrats on Sunday argued Trump's trade policies are now posing an acute, short-term risk.

US stock markets tanked last week on recession fears with all three major US indexes closing down about 3 per cent on Wednesday only to pair their losses by Friday due to expectations the European Central Bank might cut rates.

The Fed and 19 other central banks have already loosened monetary policy in what Fitch Ratings last week described as the largest shift since the 2009 recession. Markets are expecting even more cuts to come. For a brief time last week bond investors demanded higher interest rate on 2-year Treasury bonds than for 10-year Treasury bonds. **REUTERS**

COMPANIES, DEALERS LOOK TO CLEAR STOCK BEFORE BS-VI EMISSION NORMS KICK IN

Car sales hit rock bottom, discounts at all-time high

PRITISH RAJ
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 18

AUTO SALES are at their lowest levels in nearly two decades and dealers are saddled with huge inventory. To push sales in such an environment and clear the network, manufacturers are offering huge discounts on several models to drive home the message that if one plans to purchase a vehicle, now is the best time.

To be sure, if consumers are waiting to see whether the government cuts Goods and Services Tax (GST) on automobile products — as the industry is demanding — to fuel demand, the prices are not going to be much different than what one's getting by way of discounts.

Companies FE spoke to said in case of any GST cut, the reduction in prices will be passed onto

the consumers but the discounts will be curtailed, so net-net, the consumers won't benefit much if they buy now at discounts being offered. Yes, a reduction in GST would improve the realisations for the manufacturers which will not be the case in offering huge discounts.

The companies and dealers are in a way pushed against the wall currently. They need to exhaust the inventory, as six months from now BS-VI emission norms would kick in.

As a result, after March 31, 2020, manufacturers would not be able to sell the current BS-IV compliant vehicles, which would mean that the stocks, if left unsold, will become scrap.

Dealer checks shows that discounts on cars by Maruti Suzuki (MSI), Hyundai and Honda Cars have touched an all-time high currently.

For instance, MSI is offering an upfront cash discount of Rs 50,000 on its popular model Dzire. Taking into account other benefits such as exchange bonus, free insurance and accessories, the benefits go up to Rs 70,000.

The compact sedan, petrol variants of which comes with a starting price of Rs 5.9 lakh (ex-showroom), is now available at several dealerships with an ex-showroom price of Rs 5.30 lakh. Discounts on the diesel variants are higher by around Rs 20,000 compared to their petrol counterparts.

The diesel variant of Maruti's compact hatchback Swift, one of the highest selling model, is being sold at a discount of around Rs 43,000 with total benefits going up to Rs 68,000.

Swift is now available at a starting price of Rs 6.5 lakh (ex-showroom), which before dis-

count had a starting price of Rs 7 lakh. Other models such as Baleno and Vitara Brezza are also being sold at a discounts in the range of Rs 40,000-Rs 60,000.

Typically, a dealer operates on a margin of three-six per cent. By sacrificing part of their margins, dealers are offering discounts, in addition to that given by the original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), resulting in increase in the net discounted amount.

Hyundai is offering cash benefits of about Rs 60,000 in its hatchback i10 and compact sedan Xcent, in addition to other benefits of up to Rs 35,000. After the discount, the base trims of the vehicles are available at Rs 4.35 lakh and Rs 5.15 lakh (ex-showroom). The company is also offering highest discount of Rs 1.2 lakh on its executive sedan Elantra. **FE**

'No Production Days' at Hyundai unit

Chennai: Auto major Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) has come out with no production days this month at its Sriperumbudur facility near here, in view of the prevailing market conditions.

As per the announcement made on August 9 at the plant, Hyundai said, "due to prevailing market conditions, there will be no production in passenger cars, powertrain system and related support departments". As a result, there was no production on August 10 and 12 at the body shop, paint shop, assembly shop. **PTI**

SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN

Exit strategy

America and the Afghan Taliban appear closer to a deal



Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani (centre) with the US special envoy for peace in Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad (left), during a meeting in Kabul, on January 27. Reuters

AS HE concluded his eighth round of negotiations with the Taliban on August 12th, Zalmay Khalilzad, America's envoy for Afghan peace talks, did not quite say that a deal allowing the extraction of American troops was done. But he came close. After "productive" discussions in the Qatari capital of Doha, the two sides were down to "technical details", he said. It has taken a year of formal meetings to arrive at this point (and years of quiet chats before that). But it is too soon to celebrate. Those details will be devilish.

The talks involve a relatively straightforward bargain. America will start pulling its 14,000 troops out of Afghanistan. In return the Taliban will promise that Afghan territory will not become a staging ground for international terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and Islamic State. That would satisfy the main demand of Taliban insurgents, and address the problem that led America to invade 18 years ago. "I hope this is the last Eid where #Afghanistan is at war," Mr Khalilzad tweeted, referring to this week's Muslim festival.

But those negotiations were "the easy part", says Laurel Miller, a former State

Department official now with the International Crisis Group, a think-tank. Mr Khalilzad also wants the Taliban to agree to a ceasefire. And he expects the Taliban to talk to other Afghans about a political settlement and, by early September, agree on a loose "road-map" towards achieving one. That, the Americans hope, would obviate the need for presidential polls that are due to be held in Afghanistan on September 28th and that are likely to result in the usual bickering over alleged electoral fraud.

Mr Khalilzad insists that all these elements must be part of the package. But it is far from clear what America's red lines are. Many Afghans, particularly those in power today, fear that America is likely to make big concessions in its rush for the door. It may, for example, settle for a lull in violence rather than a formal ceasefire.

The *Washington Post* has reported that America will initially reduce its force in Afghanistan by between 5,000 and 6,000 troops. "A substantial withdrawal starting before the end of the summer is already in the works," says one source. "Part of the ur-

gency of getting the US-Taliban deal done is to maintain the pretence that the first stage of US withdrawal is a result of that agreement." If a deal is achieved, the remaining troops would probably be withdrawn gradually while intra-Afghan bargaining—over issues such as power-sharing and constitutional change—is still under way.

One problem is that the Taliban have refused to negotiate with other Afghans until America announces a timetable for a complete withdrawal. Even if America were to do so, it is unclear whether the Taliban would talk separately to the Afghan government, which it denounces as a puppet regime, or only as part of a group of Afghan political figures.

On July 7th and 8th such a group—includ-

ing government officials and opposition leaders, as well as members of civil society and journalists—met 17 Taliban members at an intra-Afghan conference in Doha organised by Germany and Qatar. The previous meeting to have included Afghan officials was seven years ago. Encouragingly, the delegation in July included 11 women, among them the deputy head of Afghanistan's national security council. All sides agreed to a vague formula of "Afghan all-inclusive negotiations", notes Thomas Ruttig of the Afghanistan Analysts Network, a research group. But they were attending only in their personal capacities.

That raises the question: who could officially represent the government? President Ashraf Ghani's legitimacy is disputed. It would

not be reinforced if he were to be re-elected on September 28th, since charges of vote-rigging are likely. During parliamentary elections last October, almost one-third of polling stations did not open, mostly for security reasons, and turnout was poor. Mr Khalilzad has suggested delaying the ballot; Mr Ghani refuses. On August 7th Amrullah Saleh, the president's running-mate, tweeted: "There is no compromise over elections. None."

America's itchiness to withdraw would put Afghan government negotiators at a disadvantage in any talks with the Taliban. In 2017 President Donald Trump said that announcing a date for pulling out troops would be "counterproductive". Now he has reportedly told advisers that he wants them all out by America's own presidential elections in November 2020.

Such a deadline diminishes America's incentive to hold the Taliban to its word or to resist its calls for a "complete Islamic system" in Afghanistan. The result of talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban "could be more of a power-grabbing rather than power-sharing arrangement," says Sameer Lalwani

of the Stimson Centre, a think-tank. That could lead to a full-blown civil war like the one that ravaged the country in the 1990s.

Mr Khalilzad is likely to need the support of regional powers. Pakistan has backed the Taliban from its earliest days and shelters its leaders. The country has played a vital role in pushing the group to negotiate. Some fear that India, by revoking the statehood of Jammu & Kashmir on August 6th, may have complicated matters. Pakistan has hinted that it might refuse to co-operate with the Afghan peace process unless America backs Pakistan's position on Kashmir.

It is unlikely to do so. Pakistan has every incentive to lubricate talks. A peace deal might ease Pakistan's strained relationship with America, and a return to power by the Taliban would be a blow to India, which has strong ties with Mr Ghani's government. Neighbours would worry about renewed instability that could spill over Afghanistan's borders. For Mr Trump, that would be someone else's problem.

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OBITUARY: TONI MORRISON

In her magnificence

The incomparable chronicler of the African-American experience was 88

SHE DID not look away. When Toni Morrison's clear imagining gaze met uncomfortable things, she faced them down. A poisoned dog jerking round the yard like a toy. Human placenta in a field. The transparent underskin of a bobcat gutted on a kitchen table. The greyish panties, still round her ankles, of an 11-year-old girl raped by her father as she washed the dishes.

Especially she did not look away from the images of slavery she had been slowly, painfully dragged towards by the time she wrote "Beloved", in 1987. A man hanged in a sycamore tree, known by his shirt, but with head and feet missing. A red ribbon, fished from the river, with a curl of wet woolly hair attached to it and, to that, its bit of scalp. A fugitive slave crunching the breastbone of a dove before its heart had stopped beating. The wildness that shot up in a man's eye when his lips were yanked back to take the bit. Sethe, her heroine in "Beloved", serenely continuing to hold on her baby's face after she had cut its throat to save it from a slave's life.

Because these scenes sometimes brushed against beauty—the sycamores tall and soughing, the dove eaten under flowering plum trees—and because her novels won prizes, notably the Nobel in 1993, critics tended to call them lyrical and poetic. Nothing made her madder. Lyricism meant

She gave lectures and advice when she was asked. Her post at Princeton required it from time to time. But writing fiction was her true freedom

that literary language was getting in the way. It had to be stripped down, freed up, opened up and teased to get the writerly-ness out. First drafts of her word-work, in number-two pencil on yellow legal pads, then went through as many as 13 revisions on the word-processor. Those 18 years as an editor at Random House had not been for nothing. She knew exactly what was needed to lead, sometimes throw, the reader into an alien world. It was not merely words but the silences between them, the unsaid things and the smoke they sent up, that gave her phrases their rhythm and their power.

Hers was a work to reclaim lost black voices. Slaves in wagons singing under their breath, ghosts and haints staring silently from tree stumps, ancestors whose names were hidden in children's chants. Or simply girls like herself raised to womanhood in the Midwest, beside a steel mill, in a small house obsessively painted and sluiced with Fels-

Naptha as though at any moment they might be forced to leave. Read as she might, there were no books about this world, in which someone like her took centre-stage. She determined to write one, whether or not it sold; this became "The Bluest Eye". Along with the voices she recovered black experience, but through culture, not the easy, lazy colour-fetish: through the sweet smell of Nu Nile Hair Oil, the sharp tang of mustard greens cooking, the inevitability of entering by back doors. The protagonist of "The Bluest Eye" longed to be like Shirley Temple, but in this book and those that followed her creator rejoiced in dark eyes, thick lips, flared noses. Who had instructed blacks in self-loathing? Who told them they were not beautiful? When she cleaned house for a richer woman as a girl, and paid her for cast-off clothes, she still felt proud. When she wrote, she felt magnificent.

Anger was not useful to dwell on. It was not creative. In interviews she suppressed it with steeliness, just as she guarded her words and herself from meddlesome intrusion. But she could explode at the craziness of racism, its distorting power, its pernicious notions of "purity", when the screaming red-mouthed baboon whites evoked lived under their own white skin. Disappointingly she found it even among blacks, with their talk of mocha, hazelnut, onyx, tar- and silt-black.



Author Toni Morrison after delivering a speech during the Rutgers University commencement ceremony, in New Jersey in 2011. She died on August 5th. AP

There was such compulsion in human beings to classify by type and clan, to suspect and hate the Other, to refuse to vault the mere blue air that separated them. If oppression was no longer by actual ownership or actual violence, then language could be used to do the job with some efficiency. Politicians, misogynists, lawyers all knew how.

Who could rescue language, ensure it stayed supple, strong and alive? That it was un-arrogant, and would keep reaching to-

wards the ineffable? Women could. Black women could. In her novels it was inevitably mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters who kept families and communities together with that mesh of loving bossiness: pull up your socks, comb your head, do your chores, hush your mouth. (She'd done the same, raising two sons, fitting her writing into chinks in the endless round of work and domestication.) In kitchens across the land black women stitched grey cotton, or poured soda

into the crease of a palm to make biscuits. They brought order out of chaos, as her writing did. Women told the stories, superstitious, chill-inducing, full of myth and colour, that preserved links with dead generations. They made Memory sit down at the table with them. She had dismissed those tales for years before finding, especially in "Song of Solomon", deep grist for the worlds she had to recreate. She learned to watch for shadowy figures by the water at her Hudson river place and to listen for their whispers.

In particular she felt a reverence for old women, sometimes half-crazed, who nonetheless seemed to have a lock on wisdom. Her own great-grandmother, for one, for whom all the males in the family stood up without urging. Or Baby Suggs in "Beloved", who preached to her people in the woods that if they, the whites yonder, "do not love your neck unnoosed and straight... You got to love it... put a hand on it, grace it, stroke it and hold it up." Or the old woman she evoked in her lecture when she received the Nobel, who reminded her young interrogators that the future of language, a bird fluttering between life and death, was in their hands.

She gave lectures and advice when she was asked. Her post at Princeton required it from time to time. But writing fiction was her true freedom. She did it in the hours when no one had a claim on her. She owned it, and the characters were hers to control. If she wanted the hero of "Song of Solomon" to lift his beautiful black ass up in the sky and fly, he would. Shut up, she would tell him. I'm doing this. Steadily, morning by morning, she would get up in the dark and make a mug of coffee, drinking it as the light gathered. When it came, full-bore, enabling, she did not look away.

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CROSSWORD 3887



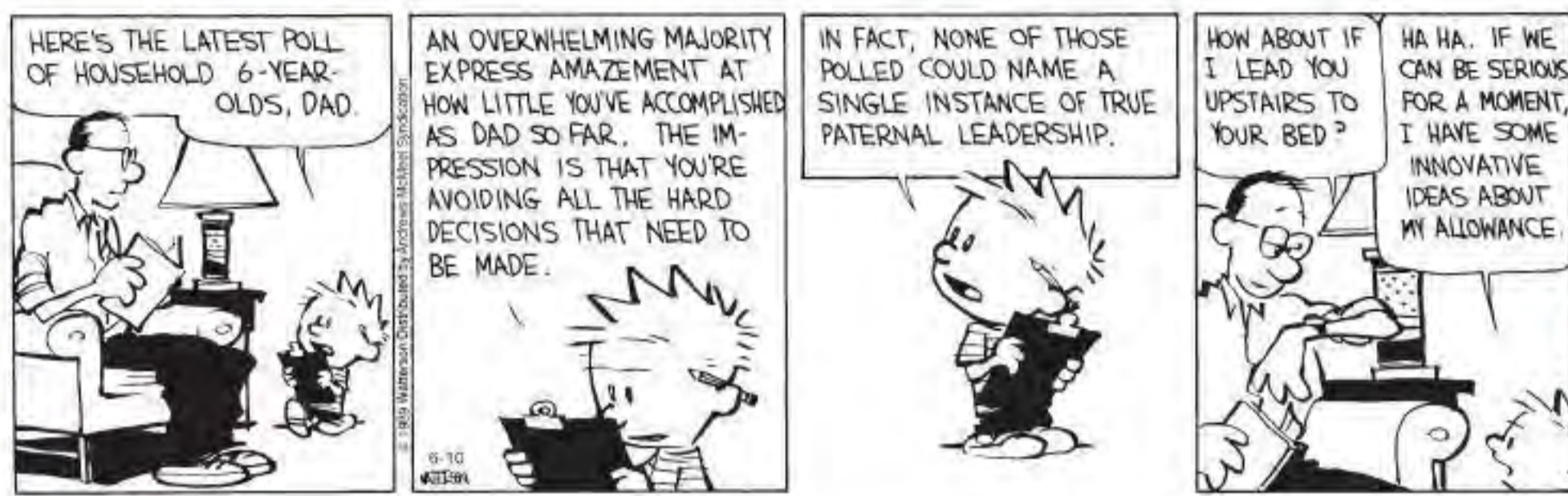
- ACROSS**
- 1 He leaves his country to be protected by another (7)
 - 5 It comes straight from the horse's mouth (5)
 - 8 Fixed rule deciding priority in a queue? (8,5)
 - 9 The inclusion of two similar points produces a titter (2,3)
 - 10 Expert required if skull is damaged? (7)
 - 11 Wrongly push in? That's correct (6)
 - 12 Presumably he had a good reason for being late (6)
 - 15 Drain a pipe (7)
 - 17 Just correct (5)
 - 19 Be a critical MP in a way? Can't be done! (13)
 - 20 Freely traverse the mountains (5)
 - 21 Sign of fever, perhaps, and rash (7)
- DOWN**
- 1 Transplanted trees (5)
 - 2 It meant no discharge for the old gunner (5,2,3,3)
 - 3 She's worshipped by a man in the gallery (7)
 - 4 Resent having to change one's name (6)
 - 5 No, I am wrong, it's a girl (5)
 - 6 Be fit and agile, perhaps, and tireless (13)
 - 7 He takes obstacles in his stride (7)
 - 11 The first head of government (7)
 - 13 Fruit reallocated to Capri (7)
 - 14 Make an effort to reduce the rent? (6)
 - 16 Practice gives us time (5)
 - 18 We and Ted designed the material (5)

Solutions Crossword 3886: Across: 1 Score, 8 Scout Law, 9 Salvo, 10 Cash down, 11 Spain, 12 Neb, 16 Collie, 17 Arthur, 18 Eta, 23 Scale, 24 Marchers, 25 Siege, 26 Suppress, 27 Agate. Down: 2 Champion, 3 Reville, 4 Scrape, 5 Bushy, 6 Sloop, 7 Swine, 12 Nea, 13 Baa, 14 Stocking, 15 Sunlight, 19 Thrush, 20 Smash, 21 Props, 22 Shore.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

Always ___ when ___. It is cheap medicine - Lord Byron (5,_,3,3)

RTAAO **DDRCUY**

FKLNU **FOTUGH**

SOLUTION: AOKTA, LUTUK, CRUDY, FOUCHT. Answer: Always laugh when you can. It is cheap medicine - Lord Byron.

SUDOKU 3943

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



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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 3942



Classifieds

PERSONAL

- I, Saima W/O, Mohd Sameem Alam R/o 433-A Gali No. 6, New Mustafabad, Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Saima Alam for all purposes.** 0040508480-1
- I, Rakesh Patwa S/O, Madan Lal Patwa R/o 216, Tf, Vivekanand Puri, Sarai Rohilla, Delhi-110007, have changed my name to Rakesh Kumar Patwa for all purposes.** 0040508469-1
- I, Monika Jaimini w/o Kuldeep Jaimini, permanent resident of 6/579, Kunihar Gate, Near P.N.B Bank, Anil Nagar, Sonapat, PIN-131001, Haryana, India, have changed my name to Monika Grewal for all future purposes.** 0040508384-1
- I, Madhu spouse of Pawan Kumar, resident of A-33, Gali No. 5 Aya Nagar Delhi-110047, have changed my name from Madhu to Madhu Singh vide affidavit dated 17.08.2019 before Delhi high court.** 0040508435-1
- I, Jai Prakash S/o Sukh Dev Sharma R/o H.No.124, Gali.No.13, Balbir nagar (Ext.), Shahdara Delhi-110032, have changed my name to Jai Prakash Sharma permanently.** 0040508409-8
- I, J.C.768911F Sub Maj Ravinder Singh, Serving at 7033 EME BN, inform that in my Service Record my son's name is wrongly mentioned as Abhishek. His correct name is Abhishek Suhag which may be amended accordingly.** 0040508432-1

PROPERTY FOR RENT

Urgently Required ON RENT BIG HALL with ONE/TWO ROOM KITCHEN close to Metro Station, Places preferred Dilshad Garden, Rohini, Mayur Vihar, Janakpuri, Dwarika, Preferable Ground/First Floor, Contact: 9820712460/ 9819647998 0040508216-2

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अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, नागपुर

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, NAGPUR
AIIMS-NGP/Admn./RECT/Deputation/02/2019 Dated: 16/08/2019
Applications are invited in the prescribed proforma from suitable candidates for filling up following Group 'A' Posts on **DEPUTATION BASIS** in All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Nagpur. The essential qualification experiences etc. required for applying for these posts are as under:-

S.No.	Name of Post	Level	No. of Post
1.	Accounts Officer	Pay- Band 3 Rs. 15600-39100 with Grade pay 5400 (level 10 as per 7th CPC)	1

Essential Eligibility Criteria:- 1. Officers under the Central Government or Central Statutory Autonomous bodies holding analogous posts on regular basis and handling Accounts and Finance matters or holding posts Accounts/Audit Officer or equivalent in the pay scale of Rs. 2375-3500/Rs. 2200-4000-2. Assistant Accounts Officers in the scale of Rs. 2000-3200 with 7 years of regular service in the grade (including the service in the grade of Junior Accounts Officer/SAS accountants/Accountant in the scale of Rs. 1540-2900).

S.No.	Name of Post	Level	No. of Post
1.	Assistant Controller of Examination	Pay- Band 3 Rs. 15600-39100 with Grade pay 6600 (level 11 as per 7th CPC)	1

Essential Eligibility Criteria:- Officers of AIIMS, holding analogous posts or having 5-8 years of regular service in the posts carrying pay scale of Rs. 2200-4000/2000-3500 respectively and possessing the following:
Essential 1: Degree of a recognized University or equivalent. 2. Track record of absolute integrity and proved ability to maintain strict confidentiality of official matters. **Desirable** Experience in organizing examinations/ competitive tests. In the event of a suitable officer not being available from among the Institute's employees, selection shall be made from the officers of Central Government including Delhi Administration or Central Statutory/Autonomous bodies holding posts and having qualifications and experience and ability as specified above. (Period of deputation in all cases shall not ordinarily exceed 3 years)

The format of application, eligibility criteria and other details are available on the www.aiimsnagpur.edu.in. Application complete in all respect should reach AIIMS Nagpur GMC temporary campus within 45 days from the date of publication of advertisement in Employment News.

Director, AIIMS, Nagpur

Notice Inviting Tender

Punjab State Grains Procurement Corporation Limited (PUNGRAIN)

Anaaj Bhawan Building, Sector 39-C, Chandigarh-160036

Online bids under two bid system i.e. Technical Bid and Financial Bid, are invited from interested eligible bidders for cluster-wise engagement of service provider(s) for carrying out the operations of Preservation, Maintenance and Security (PMS) of food grains stored in Private Entrepreneur Guarantee (PEG) Godowns in the State of Punjab as specified in Annexure-I of the tender document, as per schedule given below:-

Submission of online bids	19.08.2019 at 11.00 AM to 05.09.2019 at 05.00 PM
Opening of technical bids	06.09.2019 at 10.00 AM

The technical bids will be opened in the Committee Room, Anaaj Bhawan, Sector 39-C, Chandigarh in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, who may wish to be present. The date and time of opening of financial bids will be notified online to technically eligible bidders.

The tender form along with detailed notice inviting tender (nIT) and terms & conditions can be downloaded from e-tendering portal of Government of Punjab i.e. <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. The bids can be submitted on payment of non-refundable tender fee of Rs. 25,000/- (Twenty Five Thousand only) per tender form.

PUNGRAIN reserves the right to reject or modify the tender enquiry at any stage without assigning any reason and also reserves the right to reject any or all the bids in whole or part, prior to signing of the contract, without assigning any reasons, PUNGRAIN will not be liable for any costs and consequences incurred by such intending entrepreneur.

Note: The tenders will be accepted through e-tendering website only. Any further communication will be done through e-tendering website in the form of addendum/ corrigendum only.

Managing Director PUNGRAIN

RASHTRIYA CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS LIMITED

(A Government of India Undertaking)
Administrative Building, Chembur, Mumbai 400 074, Maharashtra, INDIA
Phone: 00 91 22 2552 2479 / 2552 2242 / 2552 2325 Fax: 00 91 22 2552 2320
e-mail: rszonak@rcfltd.com CIN : L24110MH1978G020185

GLOBAL PRE-QUALIFICATION OF VENDORS

PRODUCT	ROCK PHOSPHATE
REFERENCE NO:	DC/MR/PQN/ROCK : 21248

Sealed applications are invited from manufacturers/traders for pre-qualification of vendors for supply of Rock Phosphate.

Closing Date & Time : 18/09/2019 upto 1700 Hrs. IST
The complete details for pre-qualification are available on RCF website www.rcfltd.com in Trombay Tenders.

Dy. General Manager (Commercial)

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT TRUST

(TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT)
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 27001:2013, ISO 45001:2018 CERTIFIED

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

JNPT has developed a Centralized Parking Plaza (CPP) spread over an area of 45 Ha, having a capacity of handling about 2000 Tractor Trailers per day. The Centralized Parking Plaza consists of Parking and related facilities and amenities for the truckers, commercial components for revenue generation along with offices for Customs, Administration and Operators.

Expression of Interest is hereby invited from reputed national and international companies/firms registered within India, to operate and maintain the Centralized Parking Plaza on a long lease period. For more information on the EOJ please visit the Website <http://jnport.gov.in/tenders>

The Last date of submission of Expression of Interest shall be **28th August 2019**.

Sd/- Chief Manager (Traffic)

Mail ID: cmt@jnport.gov.in
Contact No. 022 27244191 / 82 022 67814191 / 82

UJVN Limited

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808 & Fax- 0135- 2763508
CIN No. 40101UR2001SGC025866

Short-Term Tender Notice

Office of the Executive Engineer (Gen.), Chilla Power House invites sealed short term tenders from interested bidders for following works.

Tender No. 07/EE(Gen.)/CHILLA/TN/2019-20 : Refilling of fire extinguishers of Chilla Power House.

Tender No. 08/EE(Gen.)/CHILLA/TN/2019-20 : Re-insulation & repair of Rotor pole coil for 36 MW.11KV Generator of Chilla Power House.

Tender No.09/EE(Gen.)/CHILLA/TN/2019-20: Removal of Sledge with the help of dredger machine from intake of Chilla Power House.

Estimated Value of Work (GST Extra) : ₹2.47 Lacs, ₹7.48 Lacs, ₹ 8.19 Lacs respectively.

Tender Fee (Including GST) : ₹ 295/-, ₹ 590/-, ₹ 590/-, respectively.

Earnest Money : ₹ 9900/-, ₹ 22440/-, ₹ 24570/- respectively.

Availability of tenders on website : w.e.f. Aug. 19, 2019

Last Date/Time for downloading of tender : Aug. 26, 2019 Upto 14:00Hrs of tender

Last date/time for submission of tender : Aug. 26, 2019 Upto 15:00Hrs. of tender

Date & Time for opening of tender : Aug. 27, 2019 At 11:00 Hrs.

For full & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents of the above works can be downloaded from the Nigam's web site "www.ujvn.com".

Executive Engineer (Gen.) Chilla Power House

पत्र सं. 440 - 17/08/2019
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Mercury, planet of communication, is about to take a hand in your finances. The moment is fast coming when you should lay firm plans for your future prosperity, so it's time to get the facts and figures straight. Keep secret fears in perspective and seek reassurance as and when you need it.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

There seems to be some sort of muddle, possibly triggered by the Moon's uncertain relationship to other significant planets. You may either postpone important engagements or, alternatively, approach them with considerably more determination than usual.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

In spite of your open and chatty reputation you are about to enter a more secretive phase, one when peace, quiet and seclusion will be of increasing importance to your general well-being. But, just for now, you still need to indulge your creative or pleasurable instincts.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You've got a long memory - a very long one indeed! In many ways you are still dealing with the legacy of the distant past. Yet, although it's inevitable that you should feel nostalgia for what has been, you would be advised to get on with planning the future.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

There seems to be a great deal going on which is difficult, if not downright impossible, to explain. You may have to accept the fact that it might be another few days before a number of questions can be answered. Still, you've got the time, so be patient.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

You should now be back on form and determined to alter the pattern of your life. Lunar aspects may be raising stress levels but they also offer you the opportunity to form new relationships and emphasise the neglected social dimension. Besides which, there are many steps you can take to reduce tension.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Current challenging planetary aspects may put your nose out of joint but, then, you're such a perfectionist that it doesn't take much to disturb your equilibrium. The Sun's passage through a challenging region of your chart demonstrates the simple truth that the answer may lie in someone else's hands.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

You're heading for a pleasant romantic phase. Relations with children and younger family members are set to improve and cultural pursuits are likely to take up more of your time. However, you're still unwilling to show your feelings, and your secrecy could be the cause of occasional misunderstandings.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)

You should keep your options open this week and do everything you can to bring underlying tensions into the fresh air. As a matter of interest, it does seem essential that you make it a priority to deal with financial issues: there's an outside chance that you could be over-charged.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

The odds may be stacked against you today. Yet do not despair - all is not lost. It may be time for one of those clever tactical retreats that results in your position being stronger than ever. Perhaps it's also the right moment to call somebody's bluff.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Even if you're an ambitious professional Aquarian, family and domestic affairs will assume a high priority. At work you'll find other people looking to you for security, irritating as it may be to feel that you're being depended upon by people who should know better.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

There is not long to go before emotional secrets are brought into the open. It will be a great relief all round when what was once unspoken can be discussed in an atmosphere of happiness and harmony. Until then, make sure that your position is as secure as possible.

SBI

Security Operations Centre, Information Security Department, State Bank Global IT Centre, Sector 11, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai - 400 614.

Request for Proposal (RFP) for setting up Next Gen Global Cyber Security Operations Centre (GCSC)

State Bank of India has issued RFP for setting up captive Next Gen Global Cyber Security Operations Centre (GCSC). For details, please see "Procurement News" on Bank's website <https://bank.sbi>

Place: Navi Mumbai Date: 19/08/2019 Sd/- Dy. General Manager (SOC)

SBI

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR PROCUREMENT, INSTALLATION, COMMISSIONING AND MAINTENANCE OF SWAYAM KIOSKS, i.e., BARCODE BASED PASSBOOK PRINTING KIOSKS FOR STATE BANK OF INDIA

State Bank of India invites bids for Procurement, Installation, Commissioning and Maintenance of Swayam Kiosks, i.e., Barcode-Based Passbook Printing Kiosks.

The RFP Document may be downloaded from Bank's website www.sbi.co.in or <https://etender.sbi/sbi/>. Address for correspondence is Dy. General Manager (ECR), State Bank of India, Anytime Channels Dept, 9th Floor, Air India Building, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

Interested vendors may submit their bids online at <https://etender.sbi/sbi/> before 03.00 p.m. on 16th Sept., 2019.

Place: Mumbai Date: 19-08-2019 Dy. General Manager (ECR)

NMDC Limited

(A Government of India Enterprise)
"Khanj Bhawan", 10-3/11/A, Castele Hills, Masala Tank, Hyderabad-500 028
CIN : L13100TG1958G001674

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR SELLING LIMESTONE

NMDC Limited, a Navratna Public Sector Company under the Ministry of Steel, Govt. of India, intends to develop a limestone mine at the rate of 5 MTPA of lime stone ore at Arki in Solan District of Himachal Pradesh. Out of 5 MTPA of production, Lump (3.7MTPA) and Fines (1.3 MTPA) of limestone ore will be available for sale.

NMDC invites Expression of Interest from the interested parties along with their offer indicating their requirement of limestone (quantity and quality) per annum in Rs Per Ton exclusive of applicable taxes. A brief of the project and detail product specifications can be viewed and/or downloaded from NMDC's website <http://www.nmdc.co.in> and Central Procurement portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.in> from 19.08.2019 to 19.09.2019.

For accessing the document from NMDC tender website, the party has to register as 'New User'. For reference: <http://www.nmdc.co.in/nmcdtender/default.aspx>. For accessing the document from Central Procurement portal www.eprocure.gov.in, the parties have to click on "Active Tenders". For further clarifications contact: email: rpho@nmdc.co.in Phone: 9449589481, 9490491725 ED (RP & Safety)

THE H.P. STATE COOPERATIVE WOOL PROCUREMENT AND MARKETING FEDERATION LTD.

BLOCK NO. 23, SDA COMPLEX, KASUMPTI, SHIMLA-171009
Phone: 0177-2622837, Fax: 0177-2620981
Email: gmwoolfed-hp@nic.in Website: <https://himachal.nic.in/woolfed>

E-TENDER NOTICE

SUPPLY OF PREGNANCY RATION (TYPE-II) CATTLE FEED FOR CATTLE
E-tenders under two bid system are invited for the supply of approximately 48000 Qtls. Pregnancy Ration (Type-II) Cattle Feed for cattle on FOR basis anywhere in Himachal Pradesh. The tender document containing the technical specifications, terms and conditions and tender form can be down loaded from the official portal <https://hptenders.gov.in> from 19.08.2019 (effective 3.00 PM) to 12.09.2019 (up till 11.00 AM). The cost of the tender document is ₹5,000/-.

The last date of uploading / submission of bids on-line is 12.09.2019 (12.00 Noon). The bids received will be opened at the above address on 13.09.2019 at 12 Noon in the presence of bidders who opt to be present. All the future notifications/corrigendum's/memorandums etc in connection with this tender, if any, will be published only on the official portal <https://hptenders.gov.in> and will not be conveyed individually or published in newspapers etc. In case the date/s fixed for the opening of bids is declared a holiday, the bids shall be opened on next working day at the same time and venue.

The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the offers and/or cancel this tender without assigning any reason/s. **Managing Director**

17 TALK ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD



TRADE OFF

An adult animated series will imagine Elvis Presley trading his white jumpsuit for a jet pack as he is inducted into a secret government spy program. The action-comedy, *Agent King*, to be released on Netflix, has Priscilla Presley and John Eddie as co-creators.

ON THE LOOSE



LEHER KALA

Indecent Proposal

What Kashmiri women want is options other than marriage

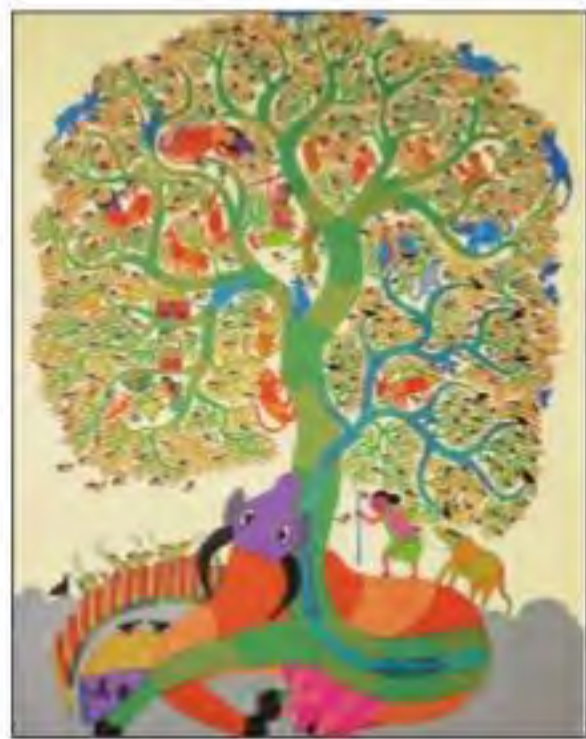
WHILE A large numbers of Kashmiris continue to suffer the inconvenience of a communications blackout amid an uneasy calm, some leaders have interpreted the historic move of the scrapping of Article 370 with what can only be described as an (alarming) unique perspective. BJP MLA Vikram Singh Saini from Khatauli in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, welcomed the centre's decision by saying at a rally, "Aur jo Muslim karyakarta hai yahaan par, unko khushi manani chahiye... shaadi wahan karo na, Kashmiri gori ladki se." (The Muslim here should be happy because he can now marry a fair Kashmiri girl.) Haryana Chief Minister ML Khattar also referred to Kashmiri women obliquely at an event when he referred to the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' initiative to counter the dismal sex ratio in his state. Talking of how they had to import girls from Bihar as brides, Khattar said, "Now that Kashmir has been opened, we can bring girls from there. Jokes aside, if ratio is fine, then there will be balance in society."

Of course it is every Kashmiri girl's dream, after a childhood spent in the shadow of militancy, to make the dusty hamlets in UP and Haryana their home as adults. Mr Khattar's idea of a joke is problematic because contrary to popular rhetoric, there was no law preventing girls from JK from marrying outside their state. No offence to the men from UP and Haryana, but if those marriages weren't taking place all these years, one must account for the possibility that the fair maidens of Kashmir aren't exactly ecstatic about their future prospects in these states. Saini may think it's a step up for the women of JK to trade in the turmoil of insurgency for an atmosphere rife with casteist chauvinism. His statement of casual misogyny echoes the shaky historical practice down the ages, that women must fall in line with the choices made by men for them. Considering how much has happened in the nation in the last two weeks, it is frustrating that the conversation on Kashmir by elected leaders would back to one held in every Indian household at some point: marriage.

It is a truth universally acknowledged (in India) that if you have reached adulthood and are not married, you have failed or have some disability, and must forever be okay with any random person questioning your lack of motivation towards the hallowed institution. This obsession with matrimony is countrywide, perhaps because over centuries, conquering armies from Alexander's time carried away women, contributing to the notion that they are a commodity that comes with new territory. In ancient India, the policy of matrimonial alliances was an accepted one. Both small and big kingdoms expanded their base via marriage, using women in the family to achieve their political objectives. It's no wonder then marriage in India is a state matter — it shows in our laws. You can marry at 18, before you can legally procure a drink at a bar at 25.

In the hilarious book *Are You Experienced?* released sometime in the '90s, writer William Sutcliffe noted this peculiar phenomenon. About a British teenager travelling across India in his gap year and discovering that its subcontinental reality is a little more complex than either 'India, land of spirituality' or 'land of the happy poor', he had a hard time understanding why there was just one question everybody asked him — from a co-passenger on a train to the youth hostel owners he encountered — are you married? Earlier this year, Google India took a rare dig at its India users when they launched their version of Siri, Google Assistant. GA, active in English and Hindi, was inundated with 4.5 lakh marriage proposals from India. Utterly perplexed, they asked seriously on their Twitter handle: "We really really want to know why you ask Google Assistant to marry you." There is no correct answer to this question other than — it's just what Indians do.

hukayfilms@gmail.com

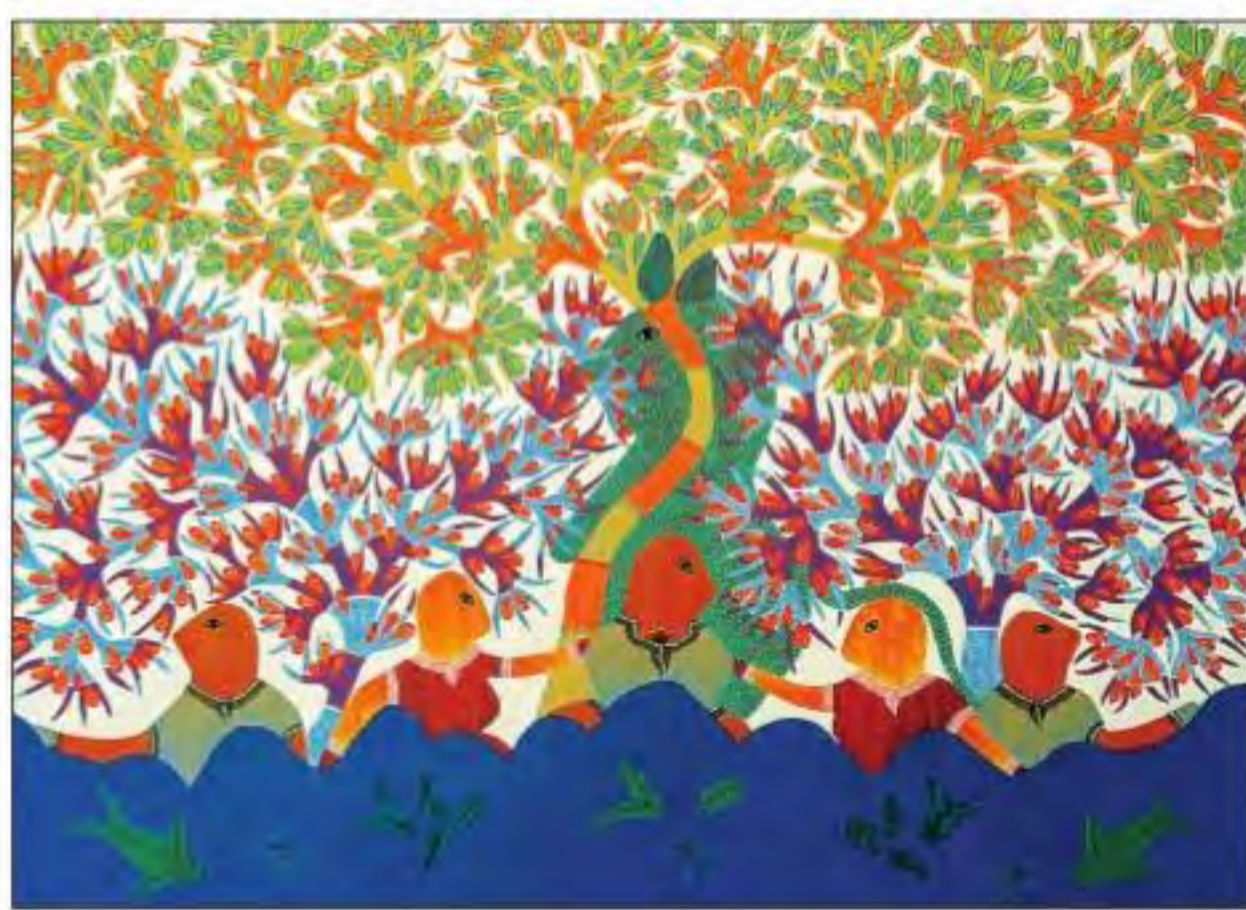


DURGA BAI VYAM

AS A CHILD, Durga Bai would often accompany her mother in making *dignas* on the floor and colourful patterns on mud walls. "We would do new ones every few weeks to decorate our homes," says the artist. Her foray into canvas and paper happened much later, after marrying Subhash Vyam in 1986. She moved to Bhopal, where she began working with her cousin Jangarh Singh Shyam. In the exhibition, we see Durga, 40, painting stories from the animal kingdom. If the series *Elephant Family* has the mammal as the protagonist, in *Fireflies and Cow*, we see how a firefly helps an old lady become friends with those who inhabit the jungle.

Every Picture Tells a Story

An exhibition presents mythical tales through the works of six artists who straddle the traditional and the modern, writes Vandana Kalra



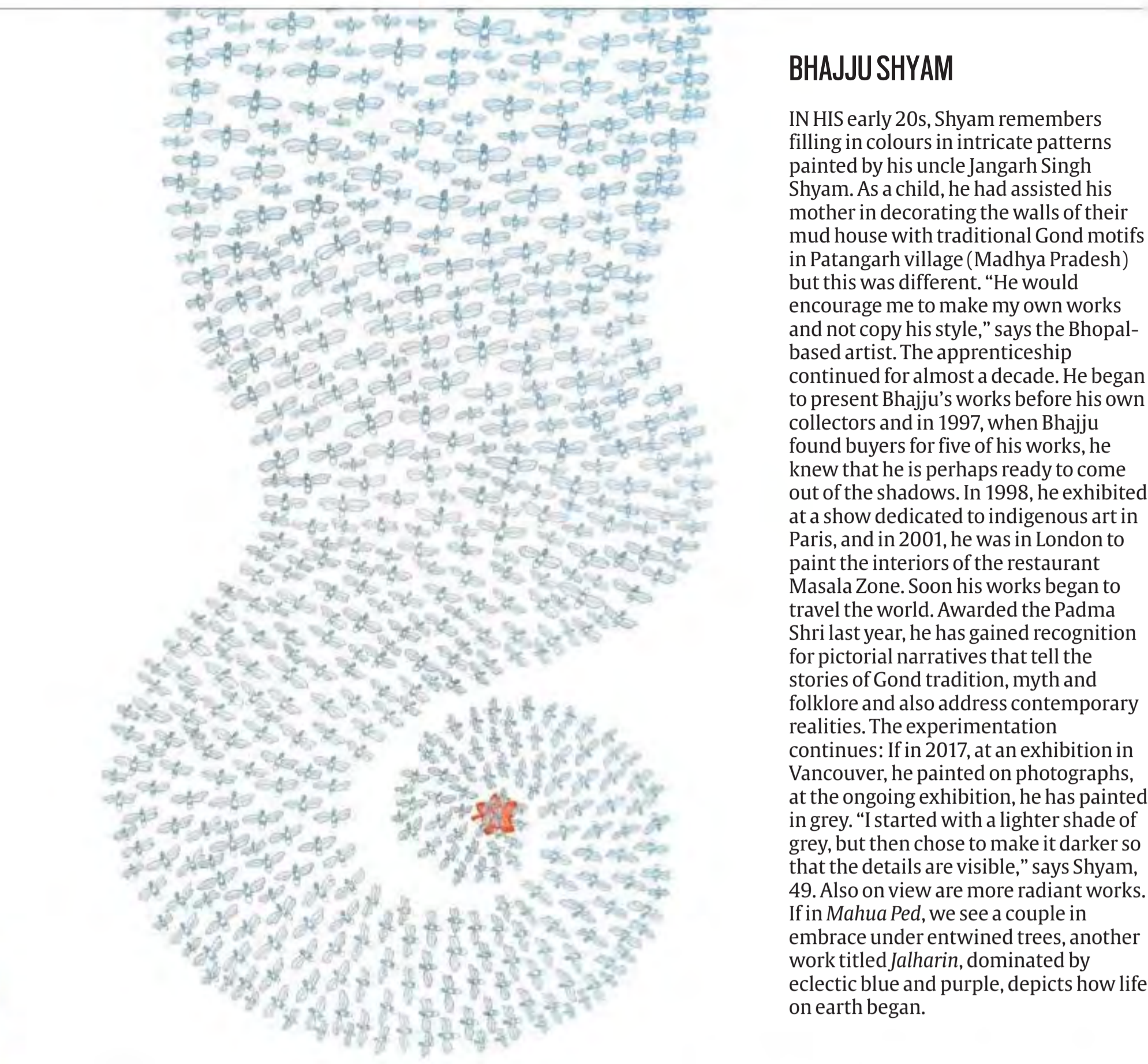
RAM SINGH URVETI

URVETI RECALLS how when he first painted on canvas, on Jangarh Singh Shyam's impetus in the early '90s, the colours spread in all directions as the artist had no previous experience in the medium. To calm him, Shyam's mother said, "The way the colours have spread over this canvas, your work will also spread all over the world." Years later, his works have travelled across the world, from Japan to France, Russia to Brazil. "Orally passed on from one generation to another, our folktales are not written anywhere and by painting them we want to share them with the world," says Urveti, 49. Best known for his amoebic forms and the small arrow heads that fill his figures at this exhibition, he has, among others, the acrylic titled *Bada Dev*, with the main deity of the Pradhan Gond community invoked by the Saja tree that surrounds it in a circular maze. In *Dudh, Dahi aur Mahi ka Ped* (pictured), he tells the story of a king who planted three trees of the same name and resolved that only someone who could identify them can marry his daughter.



SUBHASH VYAM

GROWING UP in Sonpuri village near Patangarh, Vyam recalls being intrigued by aquatic life as a child. Soon he began to experiment with wood, but the lack of buyers led him to discontinue the craft and adopt the medium of paper. However, at the last edition of the Kochi Muziris Biennale (2018-2019), he, along with Durga Bai Vyam, painted a narrative on marine plywood. "Our traditional stories always has nature as a protagonist," says Vyam, 49. The exhibition sees his works based on Gond folk tales, including *Kajal Machli-Gond Story* that speaks of a fish that took birth as a girl and married her lover.



ABHISHEK SINGH

ILLUSTRATOR FOR the comic book series *Ramayana 3392 A.D.* and *India Authentic*, and writer and illustrator for the graphic novel *Krishna — A Journey Within*, Singh's works are often fantastical tales where mythology is reinterpreted, and where he comments on the possible future. "He has a very strong background in Indian mythology and graphic art, which is evident in his work," says Anubhav Nath, director of Ojas Art gallery. While his book *Namaha — Stories From The Land Of Gods And Goddesses* releases next month, the exhibition presents diverse works of the NID graduate — from a colourful acrylic depicting Gangavataran, a Hindu festival celebrating the descent of Ganga on



earth, to the 2018 monochrome *Vrikshadootam* (pictured) that was painted live at Ojas last year.

MAYANK SHYAM

SON OF Jangarh Singh Shyam, Mayank's works bridge the traditional and the modern. The artist is known to depict contemporary issues and urban landscapes in compositions that also often feature geometric forms. In the exhibition, he depicts numerous modes of modern transportation, from a train chugging to an airplane in a cloudy sky. "My father wanted me to paint my own thoughts. I depict our traditional tales but also try to address present-day concerns through them," says 32-year-old Mayank.

He also turns to more traditional narratives in some of his works. If the acrylic *Jeevan Ki Aas* has mermaids revelling in the rains, in the work *Devroopi Vriskha* he paints an ancient ritual where those who went to the forest to cut wood for cooking would pray to the trees to give them good wood and save them from wild animals.

The exhibition at Ojas Art, Mehrauli, is till September 1

Shared Heritage, New Stories

Bhutan's literary festival, Mountain Echoes, turns 10

TANUSHREE GHOSH

WHILE PRIME MINISTER Modi inaugurated the Mangdechhu hydelpower project in Bhutan as part of his "neighbourhood first" policy this weekend, in another part of the country — in Paro — a pop-up was held as a curtain-raiser to the 10th Mountain Echoes festival of literature, art and culture to be held in Thimphu from August 23-25.

The day-long Paro pop-up that featured food, drinks and modern music is a new addition. "Every year, we try and do something different," says Mita Kapur, founder of Jaipur-based literary consultancy, Siyahi, which in association with the India-Bhutan Foundation, organises the festival. When it started, the festival — named after festival adviser and award-winning writer Namita Gokhale's 1998 eponymous book — had one venue and 150-200 people attending it. It has now spread across six venues. The big challenge was to "get the reticent Bhutanese people to speak up on stage".

According to Gokhale, it's a people-to-people initiative and focuses on books, ideas, music and poetry. "We do, of course, discuss our changing world, try to understand it, and celebrate the deep and lasting friendship between India and Bhutan," says Gokhale, the success of whose other co-curation — Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) — birthed the idea for the festival. She adds that people in Bhutan, a place that is not yet on the world literary map, have a deep intellectual curiosity. "It is very much a Bhutanese festival this year, but also has a stellar line-up of Indian and inter-



A cultural programme from the ninth edition of Mountain Echoes

national writers," she says.

Eighty writers, cultural and spiritual icons will deliberate on "Many Lives: Many Stories" — with tales of a traveller, a spiritual leader, a celebrated river, a civilisation, a venerated mountain, the life of a jungle, of a migratory bird and tracking the Bhutanese national animal Taikin, among others. The Indian cache includes photographer-poet Aamir Wani, whose work is inspired by Agha Shahid Ali, poet Arundhati Subramaniam, authors

Malavika Singh, Swapna Liddle, Makarand Paranjape, among others. Wani, Neelesh Misra and Jason Quinn will hold workshops on storytelling through visuals, words and art, respectively. There'll be poetry set to live music, artists creating live art on stage and Bhutanese contemporary stars: first body builder to fashion blogger. The Royal Academy will present a contemporary dance, 'Dancing for Books', and renowned Kheng Sonam Dorji will play traditional Bhutanese music. Some sessions will be held in Dzongkha, Bhutan's national language. The Royal patron Her Majesty Arshi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuk herself writes non-fiction and Mountain Echoes, says Kapur, has nurtured a book culture, with an increase in the number of bookstores, cafes, reading groups and book-release events in Thimphu.

However, most Bhutanese writing is self-published. While the publishing industry is in its nascent stages and (corporate) efforts are being made, several publishing houses are now visible. According to Gokhale, self-publishing has yielded some wonderful experiments. There is Chador Wangmo's poetry, classics like Karma Phuntsho's *The History of Bhutan* and Kunzang Choden, whose books have been translated into European languages. "Kelly Dorji's book is being published by Penguin," says Gokhale.

Also present at the festival will be Bollywood actor Richa Chadha and director Abhishek Chaubey.

For festival schedule, visit www.mountainechoes.org

How does religion shape a society? How does a society shape its religion? These are the questions I was exploring in my recent book *Living with the Gods* and these are some of the topics that we shall be debating at Mountain Echoes. Could there be any better place for such conversations. Everybody reads Shakespeare: we shall also be talking about why Shakespeare's plays speak to everybody — everywhere"

NEIL MACGREGOR
FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, AND THE BRITISH MUSEUM

One of my sessions is about the history of the Indian Ocean. There, I will be surrounded by the world's highest mountains, speaking about the narrative of our civilisation as seen from sea level"

SANJEEV SANYAL
AUTHOR AND PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC ADVISOR TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

WEEK AHEAD



Life on Stage

RECOGNISED AS one of the oldest theatre festivals in Delhi, the Old World Theatre Festival is ongoing at India Habitat Centre this week. Watch *Gudamba* written by screenwriter Javed Siddiqi and directed by Salim Arif, on August 19. It is a heart-warming monologue, by acclaimed actor Lubna Salim (pictured), who plays an ambitious young girl Amina who gets married thinking that the man of her dreams is God's answer to her prayers, only to get caught up in the complicated politics at her in-laws' joint family set up. Other plays include *Faqeer Nimaana*, *Those Left Behind Things* among others. For more information: www.oldworldculture.com

Theatre of Gods

Cultural impresario Shobha Deepak Singh's production, *Krishna*, looks at the multi-faceted life of Krishna. While the first half of the production *Krishna* is devoted to the popular episodes of *maakhan chori* and *Kaliya raas*, the story of Yadava gets linked with the story of Krishna Vasudeva, whose end is sought by his uncle Kans. From August 19 to 24, at Kamani Auditorium. Tickets on bookmyshow



SHAHZAD SUSPENDED

Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Shahzad has been suspended from all forms of cricket for a period of 12 months for violating Afghanistan Cricket Board's disciplinary rules.

Waiting for the deluge... of runs

He has not had the coming-of-age knock in whites yet, but the Caribbean is a chance for Rohit to turn the corner



SANDIP G
ST JOHN'S, AUGUST 18

AS A sudden burst of drizzle spluttered across the Coolidge Ground, pounding the asbestos-roofed stands, and the players scampered for shade, Rohit Sharma dragged himself out of the congested dressing room and plunged onto the grass near the boundary ropes, feeling the beady drops on his face.

Some of his colleagues bantered: "Mumbai ki baarish ki yaad aati hai kya?" Some of the motley Caribbean spectators barracked: "Our men will make you smell the ball." But Rohit remained shut in his world, kissed the rain and rolled a couple of rolls on the ground, much endearingly for the spectators.

He wasn't playing to the gallery, Rohit was just being Rohit. This streak, however, can often be misconstrued for triviality, a word his critics spew whenever he plays a loose stroke to get out, as he did to terminate his otherwise splendid knock of 68. He was looking utterly untroubled before trying to whip a delivery pitched slightly outside the off-stump.

Until then, there was no stroke that betrayed a semblance of impudence or imprudence. He was flowing as quietly and smoothly as the traffic in this island, looking to play as straight as he could, as close to the body as he could, as late as he could, shelving all the frills in his game, leaving the balls judiciously outside the off-stump, and even cutting out some of his percentage strokes like the front-foot pull and the slap through point. A brace of straight drives was so straight that it was blocked by the middle-stumps at the non-striker's end. It's a shot he plays with such sweet timing, such power and grace, that it makes grown men sigh. Rohit was restrained, but didn't make it look like labour. Of all the Indian batsmen, he and Cheteshwar Pujara batted with the utmost clarity and purpose.

That's before he committed to that stroke that invited his demise. But the indiscretion of the stroke was more of a visual effect. The shot was always on. The ball wasn't doing anything alarming, the bounce was even and the bowler wasn't quick. Rohit's swing was fluid, maybe the bat flipped a little at the point of impact, and it took a sterling piece of athleticism by the fielder, who ran from straightish long-on to almost deep mid-wicket to complete the catch.

More often than not, it would have banged onto the roof of the dressing room. No one would have pointed an accusatory finger had it been Pujara who had played the same stroke at the same score. Or even Virat Kohli.

But then, men like Rohit are often accused of gloriously living and ingloriously dying by the same sword. Seldom do people fathom it as an occupational hazard. Yes, there were times in his career he has played rash strokes, but perceiving every stroke as rash is harsh on him. So rather than agonising over the silly strokes he sometimes gets out to - in fact his Test career thus far can be



On the South Africa and Australia tours, Rohit Sharma looked close to a definitive, spot-sealing score in Tests. AP File

summed up through a variety of such outrageous strokes - it's an opportune time to dwell on those 68 glorious runs, which had the otherwise restless and boisterous crowd entranced, and the relevance of an in-form Rohit. Not merely for the aesthetic value he brings into a match - if any, it should be a secondary concern - but his ability of winning Test matches, home and abroad, a reason he's been persisted with despite the usual flatter-to-deceive trope that hangs around his neck.

A different tangent

One could argue why someone like Karun Nair, despite a triple century, was dumped like a dry leaf. Undoubtedly, he was unlucky, but Rohit, in sync, operates on a different tangent altogether. It's the allowance of supreme talent that he's getting, and the discernible eyes of judges of the game are swayed as much by the big scores as the intangibles such as composure and suitability, besides their gut feeling when they see a batsman. In this regard, he's a notch or two above the trailing pack.

In fairness, Rohit hasn't always looked out of place in the five-day game, barring in England, where the extravagantly swinging Duke ball and its masterful purveyors can be his nemesis, as it was VVS Laxman's. Against all other patterns and arcs a cricket ball can whip up, he's skilled to exercise, be it pace, bounce or spin.

A parallel with Laxman can be as illustrative as it could be instructive. Until that knock in Sydney 1999, Laxman was blamed and dumped out of the side for his profli-

A STUDY IN CONTRAST			
ROHIT'S LAST TEN INNINGS			
TESTS		ODIs	
299		554	
RUNS		RUNS	
■ Avg 37.3		■ Avg 55.4	
50s	100s	50s	100s
3	0	1	4
■ Top score: 65		■ Top score: 140	

gate stroke-play. And that breakthrough, career-altering 167 was his 31st innings. At the same juncture - that's 27 Tests - Laxman had a slightly inferior average of 36, compared to Rohit's 39, though by this time he had scripted the piece de resistance of Indian cricket, the 281 in Kolkata. So likewise, a man long anointed as Laxman's heir should ideally get a similar amount of opportunities.

Ambition, adequateness

In the past couple of years, Rohit had demonstrated not only his ambition to blaze in the whites but also adequateness. In South Africa, there were patches when he had looked supreme. Like the 47 he scored in the second innings on a difficult Cape Town track. In Australia, there were phases when he had looked divine. Like the counter-punching 37 in Adelaide after the

early setbacks. On both instances, he could have gone on and conquered the summit. But didn't. On both instances, he floundered attempting his percentage strokes. A pull off Kagiso Rabada in Cape Town and a slog-sweep off Nathan Lyon.

But then, who could begrudge Rohit playing those shots. As many as one-third of his runs in the recent World Cup came through pulls. As for slog-sweeps, he's perhaps the best Indian executor of them. No doubt though, that more discretion should have gone behind those strokes, like weaving in the match-circumstance and the bowlers.

Nonetheless, based on the evidence of those little uncut gems, Rohit is not far away from that definitive, spot-sealing big score. Thus, he's at the same juncture in his pre-opening ODI days. It's all well-storied how it all changed when he strung together a few big scores, rapidly transforming into an ODI batting phenomenon. Moreover, there wouldn't be a better time to reprise the same in red-ball cricket, what with a sensational World Cup just behind him. With his Mumbai colleague Ajinkya Rahane in the middle of a slump so that he could nudge him out of the line-up.

Hence, though the series might not be a definitive test of mettle, a fresh start, and a string of good scores could set the wheels of Rohit's Test-match redemption rolling. Beckoning him is also a long home season, which should further present him the opportunity to nail down the spot, and then bask in the rain of runs, like the summer shower that pattered on the Coolidge roofs.

On a lazy Sunday in Antigua, Indian pacers go to work

SANDIP G
ST JOHN'S, AUGUST 18

ALL DAYS are lazy in Antigua. Sundays are lazier. Morning mass. Family breakfast in stalls outside homes. Fishing, beach, lunch, rum, nap. Wake up. Repeat. Life in these shores are idyllic. A few turned up at the Coolidge ground, where fishing apart, they could indulge in the day-long laziness, slip into a nostalgic trip, when they bossed the cricketing world. Why most of them are here—and most of them are winded-up middle-aged or older men, scant young faces—to acquaint with their younger selves, bragging and squabbling, some of which nearly ending up in brawls.

But a shoddy batting performance pushed them firmly back into reality. In the fourth over, Ishant Sharma—they're aghast he has cut his hair—took out their first batsman, Jeremy Solanzo, who was woefully reminded of his shortcoming at this level, nicking Sharma to KL at slips. Whether bowling or fielding, Sharma was at his vocal best, shrieking, screaming, shouting at his fellow bowlers or fielders whenever they erred. Irony was that when his own chance came to run a batsman out, he slipped. A peel of boos rang around the stadium.

But his first-spell was incisive, betraying nothing of a lengthy lay-off, but bowling at full pelt, working up a fine rhythm, and making the ball leap off from back-of-length. Soon after he had Brandon King nicked off to the keeper, the ball straightening after pitching. He then had both Darren Bravo and Kavem Hodge grope the thin air several times. While all of them, barring Darren Bravo, is not even quite A stuff—averaging from mid-20s to early 30s—Sharma was inscrutable, and bowling with the same intensity as he would during a Test match. Later, soon after lunch, he returned and took out the half-centurion Hodge with a vicious nip-backer, that swung back late.

Strangely, though, his new-ball accomplice Jasprit Bumrah was erratic. Maybe, it was one of those rarest of rare off-days. Maybe, he didn't want to expose his hand so early. Maybe, he was intentionally bowling well within himself. Maybe, he was rusty after a frenetic last six months. Maybe, he wasn't fully tuned-in. Whatever be, he wasn't the impetrate force he has been across the

formats this year. When he strove for fuller lengths, he was too full. When he tried to compensate by shortening his length, he became too short, feeding more freebies to the Caribbean batsmen than he had in the entire World Cup. The yorker, bouncer, slower balls nothing worked as efficiently as it often does. The spell of 7-0-30-0 fully reflected his listlessness, which India would hope would be an aberration.

It wasn't long before he paved way for Navdeep Saini, who continued to impress after his T20I incursions. How he didn't purchase a wicket was a mystery, as he beat both batsmen's both edges several times, hurried them with his skid, rapped them on the pads, struck them on their arms, but a wicket still eluded. He had the off-colour Bravo in strife several times, but by the skin of his teeth and oodles of fortune, he survived.

Umesh delivers

But not for too long, as Umesh Yadav nailed him with a typical away-goer to the left-hander, landing outside off-stump and going with the angle. Bravo had a nibble, unsure whether to play or leave it. The dilemma manifested in the form of an edge that flew to Rahul. It's an old failing of Bravo, but one good enough to shove him into the fringes of the national side. Yadav celebrated as wildly as he would have in a Test match, which was understandable, since he has had little of international action since the last December in Australia, and of all the Indian bowlers he had the bigger stakes, to press for his inclusion in the side.

An inspired Yadav ticked most boxes. Pace, he always, ratchets up. Away movement to the left-hander, he often purchases. But accuracy, discipline and Yadav had been historically uncomfortable bedfellows. On Sunday he demonstrated both in ample volumes, transforming him to a hostile force. He though would need more of these if he were to win back the Test stripes, now that his stocks have fallen behind Bumrah, Mohammad Shami, Ishant Sharma and Bhuvneshwar Kumar. It though wasn't anything but a lazy Sunday for him.

BRIEF SCORES: West Indies innings at 52 overs on Day 2: 154/8 (Kavem Hodge 51; Ishant Sharma 3/21, Umesh Yadav 3/19) vs India 1st Innings: 297/5 from 88.5 overs declared (Pujara 100 retired, Rohit Sharma 68, Rishabh Pant 33, Hanuma Vihari 37 not out; Jonathan Carter 3/39).



While Ishant Sharma, Navdeep Saini and Umesh Yadav impressed in the warm-up game against West Indies 'A', Jasprit Bumrah had a rare off day. Sandip G

Karunaratne leads by example in Lanka's win

REUTERS
GALLE, AUGUST 18

SKIPPER DIMUTH Karunaratne led by example, hitting a sparkling 122 to help secure Sri Lanka's six-wicket victory over New Zealand in the opening test at Galle on Sunday.

Chasing 268 to go 1-0 up in the two-test series, Karunaratne's 161-run opening stand with Lahiru Thirimanne (64) set the tone for a successful chase at the Galle International Stadium. The New Zealand spinners claimed two wickets in successive overs to try to prevent it from being a cakewalk but Karunaratne's ninth test century effectively killed off the contest. Karunaratne stroked six fours and hit one six before the right-hander perished when he was caught behind chasing a wide Tim Southee delivery. The second and final test in Colombo begins on Thursday.

"It's not easy chasing in the fourth innings. We needed a good partnership, and that's what Thirimanne and I discussed," Karunaratne, the man-of-the-match, said. "On the fifth day, we started well and wanted to keep at it. Once you're set, you have to make a big one. We are thinking of keeping the basics right for the next test too."

Resuming the final day on 133 for no loss, the opening pair continued their good work until Will Somerville trapped Thirimanne lbw on review after the initial appeal was rejected. Kusal Mendis (10) looked in a hurry to seal the match as he hit Somerville for a six and a four before his attempted sweep off Ajaz Patel found Jeet Raval at mid-wicket. Karunaratne brought up his 100 with his fifth boundary, raising his hands aloft to celebrate the mark.



Dimuth Karunaratne's tally of 2,115 runs is the highest among Test openers since the start of 2017. AP

Kusal Perera made a quick 23 including five fours and Angelo Mathews (28 not out) hit the winning run as Sri Lanka romped home in an extended morning session and clinched 60 points in the newly created test championship.

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson felt 268 would have been a daunting target had the Galle pitch behaved traditionally.

"I think we'd have definitely taken 268 sort of under the understanding that the surface would wear and tear considerably which we have seen in the past which certainly wasn't the case," he said. "It probably just slowed down throughout the test match but it was a good surface and I guess a number of learnings for us to take away from this game." **BRIEF SCORES:** New Zealand 249 & 285 lost to Sri Lanka 267 & 268/4 (Karunaratne 122, Thirimanne 64) by six wickets

Australia lose concussed Smith, draw Test

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON, AUGUST 18

AUSTRALIA DEFIED the absence of star batsman Steve Smith because of a concussion and more devastating spells of pace bowling by Jofra Archer to hold out for a draw in the second Ashes test against England on Sunday.

Set an improbable victory target of 267 off 48 overs at Lord's, the Australians quickly slumped to 47-3 but a fourth-wicket stand of 85 between Marnus Labuschagne (59) and Travis Head (42 not out) helped push them to safety. Australia lost three more wickets in a five-over stretch to keep the match alive as the light faded, but managed to survive to 154-6 at the end. Australia retained a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

Labuschagne had an interesting day. He only found out he'd be playing as test cricket's first-ever concussion substitute when Smith was withdrawn from the team early Sunday after waking up with a headache and feeling groggy after being hit in the neck by an Archer bumper on Saturday.

Labuschagne came to the middle with Australia struggling on 19-2 after 5.3 overs and, off the second ball he faced, was hit on the grille of his helmet by another vicious delivery from Archer. The batsman dropped to the ground, was checked out by medical staff and required a new helmet.

In a blistering spell by Archer, balls flew past Labuschagne but he survived and looked more comfortable in the final session as England's hopes began to dwindle at the home of cricket. He finally departed, somewhat controversially, when England captain Joe Root was adjudged to have got his fingers under a diving catch at midwicket from Labuschagne's sweep.

It was Labuschagne's second half-century



'LIKE-FOR-LIKE SUBSTITUTE': Steve Smith's replacement Marnus Labuschagne, Test cricket's first concussion substitute, was hit on the grille by England pacer Jofra Archer enroute to a gritty 59. Reuters

in his sixth test and he could stay in the team for the third test starting Thursday on Headingley, with Smith's availability in doubt.

With Australia currently holding the Ashes urn, the English need to win two of the final three tests to take it off its fierce rivals.

Archer's performance at Lord's on his test debut will give England real hope, though. He was a permanent menace, taking 2-59 off 29 overs in the first innings and then 3-32 off 15 overs in the second.

A day after flooring Smith with a vicious 92

mph delivery, the Barbados-born quick removed David Warner for 5 - his fourth straight single-figure score this series - and then Usman Khawaja for 2 to catches behind the wicket. Bancroft (16) was trapped lbw by spinner Jack Leach early in the final session but England could only make further inroads when it was too late. After Labuschagne's departure, Leach removed Matthew Wade for 1 before Joe Denly produced a sensational one-handed catch at midwicket off Archer to take out Australia captain Tim Paine for 4.

Head, who was dropped on 22 by Jason Roy at second slip, persevered and Archer had to be withdrawn from the attack late on because of the poor light. He put his hat back on, and Australia's players could breathe a sigh of relief. Earlier, Ben Stokes brought up his seventh test century before England declared its second innings on 258-5 - the same total the team was all out for in its first innings.

Stokes was unbeaten on 115 after hitting 11 fours and three sixes at the ground where he helped win the Cricket World Cup for England barely a month ago. Jonny Bairstow was not out on 30. England resumed Sunday on 96-4 in its second innings and added 162 runs before declaring midway through the second session.

'Right decision'

The Australia spokesman defended the decision to let Smith resume batting by saying: "It is not uncommon for players to pass their tests and feel well on the day of an injury and then display symptoms 24-48 hours later."

Smith had no qualms about being withdrawn from the match, saying: "I think the right decision has been made."

Significantly, Smith was wearing a helmet without the additional stern guard neck protection introduced following the death of Phillip Hughes after his former Australia teammate was hit by a bouncer in a 2014 domestic Sheffield Shield match in Sydney.

"I, along with a few of the other players in the team, find it a little bit uncomfortable, I feel a bit claustrophobic and a bit uncomfortable," said Smith. "But it's something I need to have a look at and try in the nets to get comfortable with it," he added.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 250 & 154/6 (Labuschagne 59, Head 42 not out; Archer 3/32, Leach 3/37) drew with England 258 & 258/5d (Stokes 115 not out; Cummins 3/35)

Qureshi takes a swipe at India's 'lame excuses' on Davis Cup tie

SHAHID JUDGE
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

ON THE eve of the All India Tennis Association's (AITA) meeting with the International Tennis Federation (ITF), Pakistan's Davis Cup spearhead Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi has slammed the Indians for making "lame excuses" to avoid travelling to Islamabad for the Asia/Oceania Group I tie next month.

It's been a tumultuous fortnight for both countries since the Indian government stripped Jammu and Kashmir off its 'special status.' With the neighbours downgrading diplomatic ties, the Indian federation and its players have been at loggerheads with the ITF over playing the tie in Pakistan. The AITA had requested the ITF for either a neutral venue or

a postponement of the tie, only for the world body to shoot down both requests.

The meeting on Monday is to discuss security arrangements for the Indian team in Pakistan for the September 14-15 tie, and for another push by India at moving the tie to a neutral venue.

"Our sports and our people have had to suffer for the last decade or so when ITF had banned Davis Cup matches to be hosted by Pakistan," Qureshi told Pakistani newspaper The Nation. "Now when the ITF security team has visited Pakistan and has shown satisfaction with the arrangements made by Pakistan government and the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) has assured that Indian delegation will get red box security, why are they making lame excuses?"

"If the Indian team doesn't want to come

Now when the ITF security team has visited Pakistan and has shown satisfaction with the arrangements made by Pakistan government and the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) has assured that Indian delegation will get red box security, why are they making lame excuses?"

AISAM-UL-HAQ QURESHI
PAKISTAN DAVIS CUP TEAM MEMBER

to play in Pakistan, the ITF must simply apply its rules. The world has to realise the sacrifices people of Pakistan, armed forces of Pakistan and sportsmen of Pakistan have to make for war, which was always imposed on us. We are

a sports-loving and highly peaceful nation and want to play sports and don't believe in bringing politics into sports and expect the same from others... I haven't contacted (Rohan Bopanna and other Indian tennis friends yet, but if I have to talk to them, for the sake of tennis and country, I am ready to play my role. But I once again remind ITF and India that Pakistan should not be punished for others' deeds."

From 2005 to 2017, the ITF had banned Davis Cup ties from being hosted in Pakistan due to safety concerns. Once the ban was lifted, Hong Kong refused to travel to Islamabad for a tie and was consequently relegated to a lower Group and slapped with a fine by the world body. Earlier this month, AITA had selected a full-strength Indian team that included 39-year-old Qureshi's former doubles partner Bopanna, with whom he had reached the

men's doubles final at the 2010 US Open. In singles, India has the services of top 100 player Prajnesh Gunneswaran (91), Ramkumar Ramanathan (180) and Saketh Myneni (250), and Asian Games men's doubles gold medalist Divij Sharan (47) will partner Bopanna (39) for the doubles match.

Meanwhile, Pakistan will have to rely on two 39-year-olds, Qureshi (ranked 54 in doubles) and the unranked Aqeel Khan.

"As far as depth in the Pakistan Davis Cup team is concerned, we don't have any cover for me or Aqeel. But like I said, even if I have to go through the pain barrier, I will do that and help Pakistan win the Davis Cup tie against India. My message for India and ITF is very clear. Come to Pakistan and feel the difference, and don't bow down to unwanted pressure. I know the Indian team and their federation is facing

huge pressure but they must fulfill their international obligations," Qureshi added.

"India has a far better and balanced side than Pakistan and, on paper, are more than 100 per cent sure to win the tie. But we are never afraid of playing any given opponent. It would be a great occasion and a message to the international community that Pakistan and India are playing Davis Cup. They will never forget the hospitality and love given by the people of Pakistan and will feel like home and it will be good for the tennis and people of both countries as well."

Meanwhile, the Indian players have been jittery about going to Pakistan, having twice written to AITA making their stand clear. An with relations between the two countries remaining sour, tennis is the last thing on the Indian players' minds.

Can't contact players, JKCA pulls out of Vizzy Trophy

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, AUGUST 18

THE JAMMU & KASHMIR Cricket Association (JKCA) will not be sending a team to participate in the Vizzy Trophy in Visakhapatnam as they have not received any response from governor Satya Pal Malik on the security arrangements for the team to travel. The association is also struggling to get in touch with its own players, including captain Parvez Rasool.

JKCA CEO SAH Bukhari confirmed this development but added that he was unaware of any letter being sent by JKCA administrator CK Prasad to the governor.

"It's unlikely we will be going to play Vizzy Trophy. The situation is improving, but the biggest obstacle has been communication with our players. We have cell-phone numbers of all our players in our association office, but they have not given any landline numbers. In today's time, people don't use landline and rely on cell-phone. We have managed to speak to a few players but couldn't speak to those who are in the Valley as their mobile phones aren't working. Also, we don't know where Parvez Rasool is," Bukhari told *The Indian Express*.

Rasool not reachable

Asked whether the association tried to find the whereabouts of its players or send someone to check, Bukhari said: "No, we didn't because if we sent our car to search for our players, we don't know what is happening in their villages. We don't want to take that risk. As this is just a local tournament and not a BCCI tournament, we thought it's better not play this season."

Kashmir has remained shut for the past few weeks but authorities have contemplated relaxing restrictions for the first time since the Centre abrogated provisions of Article 370. Many state associations play the Vizzy Trophy, organised by the Andhra Cricket Association to give match practice and find new players.

It is learnt that Andhra waited till August 17 for JKCA's participation but decided to move on once the association couldn't find its players. A few days ago, Prasad had written to the J&K governor seeking help for the state team.

"As planned, the team was to leave the state on August 20, 2019. We are finding it difficult to arrange for movement of the players. May I have the permission to request your Excellency to help us to send the JKCA Cricket team for participation in the aforesaid Trophy," Prasad had written in his email. Due to the curfew, JKCA's preparation camp also took a hit. The team was supposed to play 10 practice games before selecting a team for their season-opening away tournament in Vizag, but JKCA could only play four as the government decided to call off the Amarnath Yatra and all pilgrims were asked to leave the state.

JKCA's player-cum-mentor Irfan Pathan, who returned from the Valley a few weeks ago, had said a lot of hard work had gone into preparing the team this past one month. Since the curfew was imposed in the Valley, cricket has completely been halted. However, it seems that until the situation returns to normal, cricket will have to wait.

Hour of reckoning in clockwork country

Sindhu and Srikanth will have to recover from indifferent form to make a charge at the World Championship

SHIVANI NAIK
AUGUST 18

PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth will have to ignore their history of slipping on thin ice as they start their Badminton World Championship campaigns in Basel, Switzerland in the next two days. Though, conditions favour the top two Indian contenders, Sindhu needs to be stone cold when faced with the final hurdle and Srikanth can't afford to freeze at the first sign of life getting a little difficult in the draw.

Srikanth, at 26, is yet to medal at the Worlds which is a travesty. The conqueror of Lin Dan in China five years ago and the dominant player of the 2017 season with four titles has never got going at the Worlds. He got himself into a paralysing stupor in the 2017 quarterfinals when the slow shuttle stupefied him to such an extent that it took him a game and half to wake up and start countering. Thankfully, Son Wan Ho is out injured this time.

But you don't need to be cornered in a circular room - the round maze of retrieving at lullaby pace woven by the Korean Son two years ago is just one of the challenges that trip up Srikanth. Last year, he lost to Daren Liew in the Round of 16.

Save for his debut Worlds where he was swatted away by Chen Long in 2014, Srikanth has done no justice to his form or finery in rankings, and found fickle ways to disappear out the exit doors.

This time, like last year he starts against Vietnamese Nhat Nguyen and the Indian, ranked 8th, will need to bolster his nerves, thicken the skin and make the most of absences of Viktor Axelsen and Shi Yuqi. It shouldn't be preposterous to say that Taiwanese second seed Chou Tien Chen will be his first real hurdle, in the quarters. But so uncertain tends to be Srikanth's stride at the World Championships that even Thai Kantaphon Wangcharoen, seeded 12 and potentially his last 16 opponent, can come across as a puzzle.

At best, the next week is six matches with Chou (beating him fetches a bronze), Chen Long/Anders Antonsen and Kento Momota thrown at him. This will need the top-ranked Indian to be impervious to his usual errors, bad starts and lack of urgency. Nothing this season points to Srikanth being poised for something extraordinary.

But with a year to go for the Olympics, Srikanth would do well to show some solidity and fight, even if there's no real desperation to win a Worlds medal, only the requirement to stay fit. He's dawdled on the circuit, shaken his head in dismay at losses and frittered away chances at All England this year. His beautiful game, which has many stand-alone fans irrespective of its success, needs a thick-skinned resolve that's missing for longer than even Srikanth would imagine.

There's no dearth of resolve in Sindhu. If anything, she has lugged her kitbag around longer than most on the circuit even after ticking the box of the World Tour finals title in 2018.

When she skipped Thailand, it was almost a relief because from the Premier Badminton League to India's senior nationals to east Asian criss-crossings with a jaunt to Australia, Sindhu has played the probability - more appearances, greater the chances of a title. But she looked mentally fatigued going out in Round 1 at All England and in her two losses to Akane Yamaguchi.

Her last two big finals - 2018 Worlds and Asiad within a month of each other, had been



PV Sindhu has had a tiring tournament schedule, but has yet to win a tournament this year. Reuters

straight-game defeats, though as is her wont she raised her levels at the tour finals. This year wasn't meant to pose tough questions - with the priority being to chisel the game and stay injury-free - and Sindhu showed some mature play and even addition of strokes to her armoury reaching the Indonesia finals.

The 24-year-old would do well to remember Rio-to-Tokyo is the silver she needs to upgrade, not the ones at Glasgow and Nanjing, and pace herself suitably. But she'll be tempted with the short-term opportunity.

Carolina Marin is rehabbing her healing ACL. Nozomi Okuhara seems to have peaked way back in 2016-17 and ceded the contender's badge firmly to the blazing Yamaguchi.

Reality, however, of the 2020 Everest starts to sink in when one looks north to the Chinese. They missed the podium at Rio and He Bingjiao and the cerebral Chen Yufei, with four titles this year, are going to come hard at the rest of the world. Cai Yan Yan and Yue Han are also closing in.

Sindhu might have Linda Zetchiri and Beiweng Zhang before she even gets a sniff of the Chinese.

Yamaguchi sits in the top half of the draw, but crouching quietly in Sindhu's quarter is the woman who's itching for revenge since Sindhu blitzed her at Rio - Tai Tzu-Ying. The Chinese Taipei, who has similarly never won a Worlds title (in fact no one in this draw except Thai Ratchanok has), will be a real thorn in Sindhu's flesh coming up in the quarterfinals. You'd think Tai Tzu had her revenge at the Asian Games final, but no amount of poor form will stop her from hitting top gear when she meets Sindhu.

Still, the Indian has tinged her game with some creative strokes and is hardly solely reliant on her power-play alone. Like they say about the Indian rhinoceros bred famously in Basel's Zoo, the bulging horn might look its weapon of choice, but when rhinos hunt, it's their subtle incisors that go about slitting and harming enemies. The big power and prolonged stamina will need the additional teeth of Sindhu's stroke-making.

Who the Indians are up against

SAINA NEHWAL

Sabrina Jaquet is the local favourite, but she's the harbinger of medals in Saina's career. The 28-year-old Indian played Jaquet in her openers at the 2012 Olympics as well as the 2017 World Championships and went on to pick a bronze both times. Should the Swiss miss win her opener against Soraya de Visch Eijbergen, then Saina with a bye on her first could open against Jaquet again. Saina's barely hung onto her Top 10 rankings this year and though she won a minor title earlier in the year, she's not been at her fittest to play out the whole season. She has upcoming Mia Blichfeldt in her path and Chen Yufei potentially in quarters.

HS PRANNOY

The big backhand beast is angry about missing out on the Arjuna Award, but he'll need to be thick-skinned like the Indian rhinoceros commonly bred in the Basel Zoo, 10 minutes away from the venue. Prannoy was Top 10 last season and had a bronze at the Asian Badminton Championships, but has since slipped dealing with health issues and some disastrous losses to rank outsiders. Still, no sight like watching the angry young man, not lose his cool at all, put his head down and get going at slicing massive reputations. A certain Lin Dan is dangling in his imperious pathway. However, far too often, Prannoy's career - spectacular to watch but exasperating to follow - has crystallised into giant-kills without going deep into the draw. While he starts against Finnish Eetu Heino,

SHIVANI NAIK

he'll hope the finish is not imminent against Lin Dan, seeded 11 or Kento Momota, seeded 1. This is his opportunity to kill giants, go deep and slay some demons at home.

B SAI PRANEETH

Sai Praneeth has a Super Series title from two years ago and also an Arjuna Award now. His ability to focus on the bird's eye constantly though is always in doubt. He plays like a dream when winning, but can lose matches that can make you pull your hair out. Should he negotiate early rounds, there's Indonesian Anthony Ginting in Round 3. These are two of the most buzzing players to watch -- always trying something. Something new this time for Sai could be playing steady and looking to last longer than his previous World Championships. He entertains even when he's not trying.

SAMEER VERMA

The best performer of 2018 - he made the semifinals of World tour finals - has struggled with injury this year. One of the most hardworking shuttlers with his counterpunch style and creative defence, Verma can lull opponents into under-estimating him. But it's the clockwork Chou Tien Chen early in third round he could be up against. Should he clear that, he could meet Srikanth in what will be a highly desirable quarterfinal for Indians. His Worlds outings have been aborted by nerves, but Verma can be trusted to give his all and grab at every chance he gets.

Aditi-Tanisha aim to replicate junior success on the senior circuit

NITIN SHARMA
PANCHKULA, AUGUST 18

WHEN HER doubles partner 16-year-old Aditi Bhatt beat top seed Unnati Bisht in the U-19 singles final in three games, Tanisha Crasto was cheering her from the sidelines. An hour ago, Crasto had partnered with Ishaan Bhatnagar to claim the mixed doubles U-19 title.

The Goa shuttler knew that she and Aditi had to take the court again to face Khushi Gupta and Drihti Yatheesh in the girls' U-19 doubles final. With both the players featuring in three-game finals in the lead-up, they had to use all their mental toughness to carve out a 17-21, 21-19, 21-17 win to clinch the Rachel Goenka Trophy at the 28th Yonex Sunrise Smt. Krishna Khaithan Memorial All India Junior Ranking Prize Money Badminton Tournament.

It was the duo's third All India U-19 ranking title after ones in Chandigarh last year and Chennai this year. Bhatt's singles title was her

first All India U-19 ranking title.

"To win my first U-19 All India Ranking title is a special feeling and such performances in singles help me in doubles. Both of us played three-game matches before the doubles final and we knew that we had to come up with something special to win this title. We had to win this tournament to keep our hopes of making to World Junior Championships team alive. Hopefully we can continue our form at the All India U-19 Ranking tournament at Bengaluru," shared Bhatt, who was also awarded with N Haridass Trophy for the best player of the tournament (Girls).

It was competing against each other that brought Bhatt and Crasto together. While Bhatt used to play with Sneha Rajwar and Crasto with Lydia Barretto, it was in 2017 that they first met when Bhatt defeated Crasto in the girls U-15 singles' first round and Bhatt/Rajwar beat Crasto/Barretto in the sub-junior nationals at Tenali. Both decided to play together and reached the semifinals of the All India U-17 Ranking tourney in Tirupur in 2018.

While Bhatt won two U-17 titles in 2018 apart from the bronze at the Asian U-17 Championships in Myanmar, the pair also took the All India U-19 Ranking doubles title in Chandigarh before winning the junior U-19 national title in Lucknow.

"I remember the match I lost to Aditi in singles apart from losing in doubles. We had observed each other's games in doubles and knew that we can click as a team. While we did not get time to train together, we played in doubles and reaching the final in Tirupur made us believe that we can win as a pair. Winning the national title in Lucknow was a special moment for us and we know that we have to start winning at the senior level too after winning U-19 titles," says Crasto.

The Goa player shifted base to India from Dubai in May this year and now trains at the Gopichand Academy in Hyderabad while Bhatt trains at the Prakash Padukone Academy in Bengaluru. But they discuss tactics every day.

"We only train together when we are com-

peting in tournaments and rarely practise for doubles when we are training in Bengaluru and Hyderabad respectively. But somehow we click as a doubles pair and that's the most important thing for us," adds Bhatt.

Before this week's tournament, the pair had won the girls' doubles title at the Bulgarian Junior International Championships where they scored a 21-15, 18-21, 21-18 win over top seeds Bengisu Ercetin and Zehra Erdim of Turkey in the final.

Two-time national champion and coach Sayali Gokhale believes that the pair has got the right game to excel in the future. "Both of them don't train together. But they have been winning titles consistently since last year. I think Tanisha has got a stronger sense of playing doubles as she can control the rallies well from the net while Aditi is steadier and takes control of the overall game. They complement each other well. It helps to some extent that Aditi is also winning in singles and is able to run around the court more. If they train together, they might get better," shares Gokhale.



Aditi Bhatt (left) and Tanisha Crasto with the Rachel Goenka Trophy for the girls' U-19 doubles winners in the 28th Smt. Krishna Khaithan Memorial All India Junior Ranking Prize Money Badminton Tournament. Jasbir Malhi

VAR denies City in latest edition of Spurs rivalry

Medvedev dumps Djokovic out of Cincinnati

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, AUGUST 18

FOUR MONTHS later, Manchester City was denied another crucial late goal against Tottenham by an intervention from the video assistant referee.

Gabriel Jesus thought he scored the winner in the second minute of injury time in a wild English Premier League match at Etihad Stadium on Saturday when he curled home a finish after the ball landed at his feet following a corner. The Brazil striker waved and danced in front of City's jubilant fans, unaware the on-field referee had been told the goal was under review.

VAR - new to the league this season - ruled the ball reached Jesus off the arm of Aymeric Laporte as the City defender stretched to head it. Newly implemented rules say a foul should be awarded if a goal is scored from an accidental handball. The goal was disallowed, much to the anger of Jesus and City's frustrated fans, and the match finished 2-2. The final whistle was greeted with loud boos inside the stadium as the English champions dropped points in the second match of their title defence.

Chelsea held by Leicester

London: Chelsea manager Frank Lampard had to settle for a 1-1 draw against Leicester City in his first home match in charge on Sunday as a second-half header by Wilfred Ndidi cancelled out Mason Mount's early goal on his home debut.

Chelsea raced into a quick lead when the 20-year-old Mount, one of a crop of young players given their chance by Lampard, stole the ball from a dallying Ndidi and left Kasper Schmeichel with no chance with his shot in the seventh minute. The goal capped an opening onslaught by the new-look Blues who were roared on by the home fans excited at the return of Chelsea's all-time top scorer Lampard as manager.

But Leicester grew into the game and equalised in the 67th minute when Ndidi atoned for his first-half error by heading home a James Maddison corner. Maddison, Jamie Vardy and Youri Tielemans spurned chances to win it for Leicester late on.

Cincinnati: World number one Novak Djokovic wilted under pressure from Daniil Medvedev, falling 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 to the ninth-seeded Russian in the Cincinnati Masters semi-finals.

Medvedev's upset win on Saturday sent him into a title showdown with another unexpected finalist, 16th-seeded Belgian David Goffin, who defeated France's Richard Gasquet

6-3, 6-4 to reach his first ATP Masters 1000 final.

A fuming Djokovic, who looked to have control of the contest in the early going, was caught out when Medvedev

stepped things up in the second set. "I don't know how I turned it around, I was so tired after the first set and I thought I might not be able to keep up the intensity," said Medvedev, who has

competed in 15 hardcourt matches since July 30. "But I had a momentum change in the second set and the crowd gave me energy," added the Russian, who will be playing his second

Masters series final in eight days, after falling to Rafael Nadal in Montreal last Sunday.

"Novak had been destroying me on second serve, so I just went for it," Medvedev said. AP



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