



A new play brings to focus life of actor, producer, studio boss Devika Rani, who walked a path that few women in Indian cinema have managed to



IDEA EXCHANGE PAGE 11

'COURTS CUSTODIANS OF STATUTE. BUT ARE DELAYING ISSUES, J&K OR CHIDAMBARAM'

ANAND SHARMA, Deputy leader of Congress in Rajya Sabha

BIG PICTURE PAGES 12-13

The Deadline

From district with highest exclusion, to one with lowest, telling stories of the wait for NRC ahead of August 31



Firefighter goes down fighting

Arun Jaitley took BJP to drawing rooms long before its electoral juggernaut did

RAVISH TIWARI & LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

PLUGGED IN to the last on what was happening in the country, Arun Jaitley wrote in a blog on August 6, after the Modi government had cleared revocation of the special status to Jammu & Kashmir. "The Congress Party, as a 'headless chicken', is further consolidating its alienation from the people of India. The New India has changed. Only the Congress does not realise this."

It was to be among his last blogs, with the former finance minister, who had been battling multiple health issues for some time, rushed to AIIMS on August 9. He passed away just after noon on Saturday, and is survived by his wife and two children.

The body of Jaitley, 66, will be taken to the BJP headquarters on Sunday morning for leaders to pay their last respects. The cremation will be held in Delhi in the afternoon.

While the former student leader had been a staunch Congress critic throughout his political career, Jaitley was also



the one the BJP tapped for reaching out to other parties. A skillful strategist, an eloquent orator, a delightful raconteur, and a trained lawyer, he was the prime troubleshooter for his party — who took the BJP to drawing rooms across the country long before its electoral juggernaut did. With the advent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this made him the prime bridge between his BJP and Lutyens Delhi.

In a blow for the party, Jaitley's loss comes close on the heels of the death of Sushma

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



ARUN JAITLEY • 1952-2019

"Jaitley loved India, his party, being among people. It is upsetting to lose a person one has known since youth."

Prime Minister **NARENDRA MODI**

"He had a long innings as a public figure, parliamentarian and minister. His contribution will be remembered."

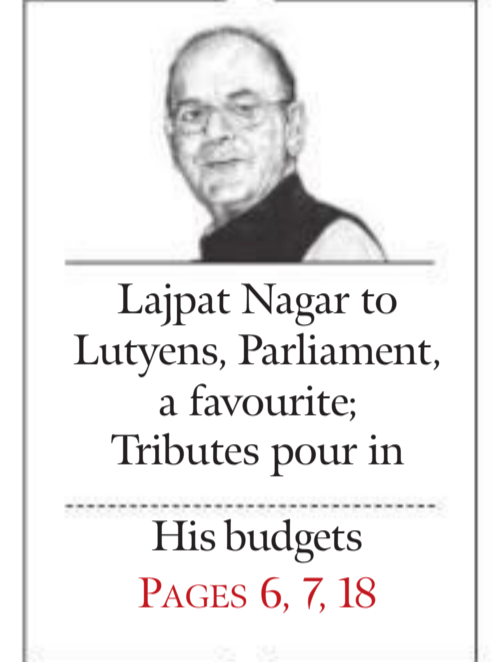
Congress president **SONIA GANDHI**

A man of open heart and mind, Jaitley had friends across divide

COOMI KAPOOR
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

IN MY last interaction with Arun Jaitley less than a month ago, he made a stray comment which could well serve as his epitaph. He said he made it a point to help whenever he was in a position to do so and he had been amply rewarded by the goodwill he enjoyed — he was speaking in the context of an opposition leader who found himself friendless in his recent legal difficulties.

Jaitley, 66, was a man who touched the lives of most with whom he interacted. At the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, as news of his death spread, people from all walks of life — from ministers and tycoons to party workers, lawyers to family friends — wept openly as they crowded the corridors of the hospital to pay their last respects, with security at a minimum. The moist eyes and ashen



Lajpat Nagar to Lutyens, Parliament, a favourite; Tributes pour in

His budgets
PAGES 6, 7, 18

faces in the spheres in which he once held sway — the courts, Parliament, the cricket fraternity, the media, the Lodhi Gardens, the world of commerce, the corridors of power, BJP offices — reflect the universal affection in which he was held. A lawyer who has fought many legal battles against Jaitley's government

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

J&K likely to be on table as Modi talks to world leaders in France



EXPRESS AT G-7

SHUBHAJIT ROY
BIARRITZ, AUGUST 24

AMIDST RENEWED focus on J&K and the lockdown in the Valley, Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives in Biarritz, an elegant seaside town on southwest France's Basque coast, on Sunday afternoon for his first G-7 summit. While Modi is coming prepared to speak at two sessions — one on climate change and the other on digital issues — it is likely that he will hold discussions with major world leaders on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

Modi is likely to meet US President Donald Trump, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres in this town where the wealthy French have their holiday homes.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

He piloted two epic reforms: GST and bankruptcy code

SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

FORMER FINANCE Minister Arun Jaitley has left a lasting imprint on the economy as the structural reforms taken under his watch will have a wide-ranging impact in the years to come. Apart from a series of measures to enhance productivity of the Indian corporate sector, he was instrumental in the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), an indirect tax reform aimed at promoting seamless trade across the country.

Building a political consensus for the GST at the national

level, and navigating the sensitivities of a federal polity by getting all states on board through the GST Council is a legacy that Jaitley leaves behind. Several critical decisions, including legislative drafting, rules drafting, notifications, fixing initial rates and rationalising these under the GST, were taken under his chairmanship of the GST Council, without voting.

"The political noise outside is inconsistent with the harmony inside the Council," Jaitley had written in one of his Facebook posts titled 'Eighteen months of GST' in December 2018.

He also served in a variety of ministerial posts in the BJP-led

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) between 1999 and 2004, including as Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, and Minister of Commerce and Industry. After the NDA lost power in the 2004 elections, Jaitley was appointed as the BJP's general secretary.

In 2003, he was appointed Minister of Commerce & Industry and Law & Justice. As Commerce Minister, Jaitley unveiled the export-import (EXIM) policy, emphasising the importance of services exports and the need for speedier implementation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and identifying these as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

Why he was the PM's go-to man

ARUN JAITLEY leaves behind a void difficult to fill in the BJP. He was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's go-to man and a key strategist on economic policy and legal issues. He was also the government's chief spokesperson given his sharp articulation, with the ability to present a cogent argument on the right-of-centre policies of the BJP government.

IAS officer quits citing Kashmir, says 'want freedom of expression back'

SANDHYA K P
KOCHI, AUGUST 24

"I WANT my freedom of expression back. I want to live like me, even if it is for a day," Kannan Gopinathan, a 2012-batch IAS officer from Kerala, who submitted his resignation to the Dadra & Nagar Haveli (DNH) administration on Wednesday in protest



OPPN LEADERS TURNED BACK; PRESS COUNCIL SUPPORTS CURBS PAGE 8

against the clampdown in Jammu & Kashmir, told ieMalayalam.com.

The AGMUT-cadre IAS officer, who held the post of secretary of key departments such as power and non-conventional energy sources in the DNH administration, sent his resignation to the Union Home Secretary on August 21.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Hospital revived in Maoist hotbed
NxtGen Infinite Datacenter presents
The Indian EXPRESS EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE AWARDS
PAGE 8

Punjab policemen turn coaches to help children stay away from drugs

RAAKHI JAGGA
MUKTSAR, AUGUST 24

IN JULY last year, senior constable Satinder Singh was called to the office of the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Muktsar district and told to go to Malaut and Rupana villages, around 50 km from the town, and teach volleyball to children. Singh says he was pleasantly surprised at the assignment, but worried. Though a national volleyball player who had joined the Punjab Police nine years ago

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in the sports quota, Singh's volleyball skills had gone rusty after years of routine policing duties at Muktsar's police lines. But all he needed was to take his position behind the volleyball nets

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Head Constable Jagsir Puri, of Gidderbaha Police Station in Muktsar, is now a basketball coach. Gurmeet Singh

SHRADHANJALI

Sh. Arun Jaitley Ji
28.12.1952 - 24.8.2019

We pay our respectful homage to Shri Arun Jaitley, a great Statesmen and one of the tallest leaders of BJP, an eminent jurist, strategist and an architect of India's Economy.

Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies
on behalf of its Faculty, Students and Staff

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EXPRESS TECHNOLOGY FB tries to downplay it knew about Cambridge Analytica



'WANT MY FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION BACK': IAS OFFICER QUILTS FROM SERVICE Kannan Gopinathan, a 2012-batch IAS officer hailing from Kerala submitted his resignation to the Dadra and Nagar Haveli administration Wednesday. Kannan held the post of secretary of key departments like power and non-conventional energy sources in the administration.

VIDEO OF THE DAY



ARUN JAITLEY DIES AGED 66

BJP's super strategist and PM Modi's chief trouble-shooter

FULL COVERAGE



ARUN JAITLEY DIES

He was admitted to AIIMS on August 9 after he complained of palpitations

EXPRESS AUDIO

Facts about the 'first Indian ever to win motorsport world title': Aishwarya Pissay

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY In this episode of Express Sports' Game time, hosts Daksh and Gaurav, talks about this week's biggest sports stories

FROM PAGE ONE

Ready to help

told me at the hospital today, "He was the last good man in politics."

He was one of the most generous men I knew, ever ready to extend a helping hand. Many of the people he mentored are today in key positions in government, several ministers in Modi's cabinet are his protégés.

Jaitley was among the first to appreciate the talent of Narendra Modi when he was a faceless party general secretary in Delhi in the 1990s. In 2010, when Amit Shah was briefly exiled from Gujarat, one often found Shah sitting in a corner of Jaitley's office in Parliament.

He may have been a member of a party that's considered by its detractors as closed-minded, but he himself remained a liberal humanist, always ready to listen to views which differed from his own. Once when I commented that he was looking very grim in a newspaper photograph in which he had an elaborate saffron headgear, he admitted candidly that he felt uncomfortable with such trappings.

He had many close friends across the political divide. Pranab Mukherjee, as the UPA's finance minister, confessed at an Idea Exchange programme of The Indian Express that the man he most admired from the Opposition ranks was Jaitley.

After the election of the Janata government in 1977, Jaitley completed his law degree and established himself as a promising lawyer. The Indian Express founder Ramnath Goenka, struck by his acumen, appointed him as the newspaper's legal adviser.

It was VPSingh who, as Prime Minister, gave Jaitley his first big break in the profession by appointing him Additional Solicitor General in 1989 at the young age of 36. Jaitley played an active role in the Bofors investigations.

other such witticisms. Such was the goodwill he enjoyed in the legal fraternity that when he campaigned for the Amritsar seat in 2014, scores of Delhi's top lawyers took time off from their high-paying billable hours to stamp the streets of the city for him.

During Modi's first government in 2014, Jaitley was the PM's trusted point person with the Opposition and the media. He was also a sounding board for many government appointments since Modi was new to the Capital's corridors of power. It was indicative of the faith Modi reposed in Jaitley, as perhaps also evidence of a lack of experience in the Cabinet, that in the initial months, Jaitley was put in charge of the heavy portfolios of Finance, Commerce and Defence and also asked to look after the Information and Broadcasting ministry temporarily.

My first introduction to Jaitley was back in 1973 during Indira Gandhi's regime when I was a cub reporter and covered the victory of the handsome, articulate student leader from the ABVP, who had defeated the NSUI candidate, Pankaj Vohra, now a senior journalist, in the Delhi University Students Union election. In those days, Congress organisations dominated every sphere, so the victory was a major breakthrough. And unlike many student-politicians, his academic record at the prestigious Shri Ram College of Commerce was equally impressive.

As a student leader, Jaitley played an active role in the JP movement. When Emergency was declared on June 26, 1975, there was a warrant out for his arrest. He escaped police by jumping over the rear wall of his house. Nevertheless by midday, he organised a student rally in Delhi University against Indira Gandhi. He spent the next 19 months in jail, but never let imprisonment bring his spirits down. As he once observed to me, "You could create your own world inside the prison. If you were young and thinking of fighting the Emergency, you did not get demoralised."

In jail, he continued with his legal studies, got a first class in his second-year law, and made friends with people from various Opposition parties. He also met my husband Viendra Kapoor, a fellow MISA detainee, and they remained lifelong friends.

After the election of the Janata government in 1977, Jaitley completed his law degree and established himself as a promising lawyer. The Indian Express founder Ramnath Goenka, struck by his acumen, appointed him as the newspaper's legal adviser. By 1980, the newspaper was fighting the Indira Gandhi government on several fronts.

When Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister in 2014, it was but natural that Jaitley would become a key figure in his government since he was one of the few party seniors who backed Modi all the way from the beginning. As Finance Minister, he was responsible for ushering in GST, considered the most important economic reform since liberalisation.

Firefighter goes down fighting

Swaraj, another veteran BJP Delhi hand.

Abroad on an official trip, Modi reached out to Jaitley's family. In a tweet, he wrote, "My friend Arun Jaitley loved India, loved his party and loved being among people. It is upsetting and unbelievable that a person I have known since our youth is no longer in our midst."

Both Sonia and Rahul Gandhi visited Jaitley's home to offer their condolences, while senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said, "Arun Jaitley was every non-BJP person's favourite BJP-ite."

Soon after the nightmare of the 1984 Lok Sabha elections, reducing the BJP to two seats, party president Atal Bihari Vajpayee had mentioned Jaitley as one of the potential future leaders of the party along with Pramod Mahajan.

It was in the interim, when the BJP re-created itself, that Jaitley proved his worth for the party. One of its most vocal voices, he cogently articulated the party's political thought, proving a tough match for the intellectual and opinion-making classes of Delhi that were at the time dominated by supporters of Nehruvian socialism and Left secularism.

One example of his political mastery was how he successful projected the BJP's disruptions of Parliament during the UPA time in 2012 as "a legitimate instrument for Opposition".

While other Delhi BJP stalwarts like Madan Lal Khurana and VK Malhotra never made it beyond state politics, Jaitley rose slowly and steadily, though he had to wait longer than Swaraj (who became a minister in the 13-day Vajpayee government in 1996).

Not belonging to a political family himself, Jaitley took to politics early, becoming the president of the Delhi University Students' Union in 1974. He went on to become one of the front-ranking youth leaders of the movement against corruption launched by Jai Prakash Narayan, later leading to dislodging of Indira Gandhi as prime minister.

As a practising lawyer in Delhi in the late '80s, Jaitley He fought his health issues with fortitude and courage and never let the world know of the many medical setbacks he faced. Almost till the end, he never gave up hope and continued to fight the infections. His death leaves a vacuum in current politics which will be difficult to fill.

While other Delhi BJP stalwarts like Madan Lal Khurana and VK Malhotra never made it beyond state politics, Jaitley rose slowly and steadily, though he had to wait longer than Swaraj (who became a minister in the 13-day Vajpayee government in 1996).

While he was made a minister when Vajpayee again became PM in 1999, Jaitley got a berth in the Rajya Sabha only in 2000, when senior leader L K Advani put his weight behind him.

He never looked back after that, with his friendship with Modi starting from the time that he was Gujarat chief minister holding him in good stead. Jaitley stood by Modi after the 2002 riots, when he came under pressure from a section of the BJP close to Vajpayee.

During this period, Jaitley also helped steer the BJP to a win in the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh (2003) and led it to considerable gains in Karnataka (2004).

While demonetisation was a challenging policy disruption under his watch, which pulled down economic growth and attracted widespread criticism, his Budget proposals over the last five years unveiled measures aimed at attracting foreign investment, lowering corporate tax rate for MSMEs.

Timely capital infusion in public sector banks and merger of weak banks with the strong ones ensured that state-owned banks did not go belly up. The government also provided record capital infusion of more than Rs 2.1 lakh crore; much of it through an innovative route of recapitalisation bonds which enabled equity injection without disturbing fiscal deficit targets.

The IBC law has so far yielded a recovery rate of 43 per cent for the banks, much higher than in the earlier regimes. From December 1, 2016, when provisions of CIRP (Corporate

Insolvency Resolution Process) kicked in, till March 31, 2019, the IBC yielded successful resolution plans in 93 cases, wherein financial creditors could recover Rs 74,497 crore out of admitted claims of Rs 1,73,359 crore - a recovery rate of 43 per cent for the financial creditors.

While demonetisation was a challenging policy disruption under his watch, which pulled down economic growth and attracted widespread criticism, his Budget proposals over the last five years unveiled measures aimed at attracting foreign investment, lowering corporate tax rate for MSMEs, introducing an ambitious National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) and promising a minimum 50 per cent return over production cost to farmers.

A breakdown in relations with the Reserve Bank of India over the issue of the central bank's surplus reserves and many other issues was another blip during his tenure. Two RBI Governors, Raghuram Rajan and Urjit Patel, quit during his tenure.

Starting with the Union Budget 2014-15, Jaitley significantly eased foreign direct investment norms for defence, insurance, housing and manufacturing sectors, while Budget 2017-18 announced abolition of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, the

body that cleared FDI plans up to Rs 5,000 crore. In Budget 2015-16, he announced creation of a Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank, with a corpus of Rs 20,000 crore, and credit guarantee corpus of Rs 3,000 crore to refinance micro-finance institutions through the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.

The showpiece of the 2018-19 Budget was an ambitious National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) for over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families, an estimated 50 crore individual beneficiaries, with coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year. Among the steps to cleanse political funding, the government brought down anonymous or unnamed cash donations by individuals to political parties from Rs 20,000 to Rs 2,000.

While the predecessor Manmohan Singh has attended the G-8 summit five times between 2005 and 2009, this will be Modi's first visit - at the invitation of French President Emmanuel Macron - to this gathering of major western economies of the

world which was reduced from G-8 to G-7 with the expulsion of Russia two years ago. There is talk of bringing Russia back and make it G-8 again.

US President Trump landed here on Saturday afternoon for the summit and the American officials have made it clear that Kashmir will be on the table when Modi meets him.

"The United States is watching the situation in Kashmir very closely. We're continuing to call for calm and restraint, including on rhetoric. But we note the broader implications of the developments in Jammu and Kashmir, and the potential for increased stability in the region. So the President is very focused on this situation, these issues. And he has indicated that he is ready to assist if both sides are interested in helping to reduce their tensions," a senior US administration official said.

"Trump would want to hear from Prime Minister Modi on how he plans to reduce regional tensions and uphold respect for human rights for Kashmir, as part of India's role as the world's largest democracy," a senior US administration official said, ahead of the G-7 summit.

As Finance Minister, Jaitley will be remembered for having enacted GST and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code reforms and for promoting insurance-based social security instruments. As a critic of Nehruvian socialism, Jaitley pursued a right-of-centre economic approach.

His ailments kept him away from office several times, still Jaitley was a vital cog in the 2019 BJP Lok Sabha election machinery that brought Modi back to power with enhanced majority. However, this time, he bowed out, telling the PM to excuse him from ministerial responsibilities given his health.

Still, before government formation, among those whom Modi consulted was Jaitley, driving down personally to his residence.

Though a major surfing destination with long sandy beaches and surf schools, this French seaside resort town is now under lockdown by security forces ahead of the summit. More than 13,000 police are out on the streets and a special magistrate court has been set up to try any one committing offences, and the streets are closed and barricaded.

The historic centre of the Basque town was emptied of tourists on Friday before the arrival of leaders, surfers were ordered out of the water on the central beach, the Grande Plage, and sent further round the coast. Sailing vessels were moved on and kept away. The train station and airport have been closed over the weekend, creating a no-go zone. There are road checks at the Spanish border and police have been stationed around town and on top of buildings.

Punjab police

for him to get back into the sport. Today, he trains around a hundred children in volleyball, cricket and football in the two villages. Satinder is one of seven policemen from the district who have been roped in by Muktsar SSP Manjeet Singh Dhesi to work as sports coaches in villages, part of an idea to distance children from drugs and channel their energies better.

The policemen coach children between the ages of 10 and 18, with both morning and evening classes for volleyball, kabaddi, basketball, football, athletics and cricket. Since the free coaching programme was launched in July last year, over 700 children have been trained by the seven coaches, of whom nearly 10 children have played till the national level while many have gone on to play for the state. SSP Dhesi says the policemen-coaches are called only for emergency duties, "otherwise they are supposed to spend their time on the ground".

Dhesi, himself an international shotput player many years ago, says, "When I joined Muktsar in July last year, I shortlisted personnel with a sports background. While the sports department provided kits and other material to the children, we raised money through voluntary contributions too. Police personnel pitched in too. The idea was to catch these children young. Moreover, at least this way they will have a goal in life rather than wasting their time after school hours. The idea has been working well and many children have been bringing laurels to the state."

Last week, Satinder accompanied Muktsar's volleyball team to Ludhiana for the Punjab U-14 Games. After a loss in semi-finals, the team finished at fourth position. "Of the 12 players from Muktsar, nine are my students. Two of my players, Ajaypreet Singh and Rashmeen Singh, had also played the U-14 volleyball nationals last year," says Satinder.

Every day, Satinder trains nearly 50 students of the Government Senior Secondary school at the Malaut village ground. He also trains children in football and cricket at Rupana village, 30 km away.

"My colleagues and I pitched in with Rs 5,100 each and got floodlights installed at the Malaut's ground. So now I finish coaching at Rupana early and train students at Malaut till late evening. This ground is in front of the DSP's office and hence it is safe for the children to train even if I am away in Rupana village," he says.

Jagvir Singh Puri, Head Constable at the Gidderbaha police station in Muktsar district, is now a basketball coach and, like Satinder, had accompanied the Muktsar basketball team to Ludhiana for the U-14 Games. His team stood second in the state. "I coach children at the Ganga Ram Stadium in Gidderbaha. I coach a team of girls too. Over 100 students come to me for training in the morning and evening," says Puri, adding, "we are focusing on young children since we must make sure they don't fall prey to drugs or waste their time as they enter their teenage years. Two of my students have played till the nationals".

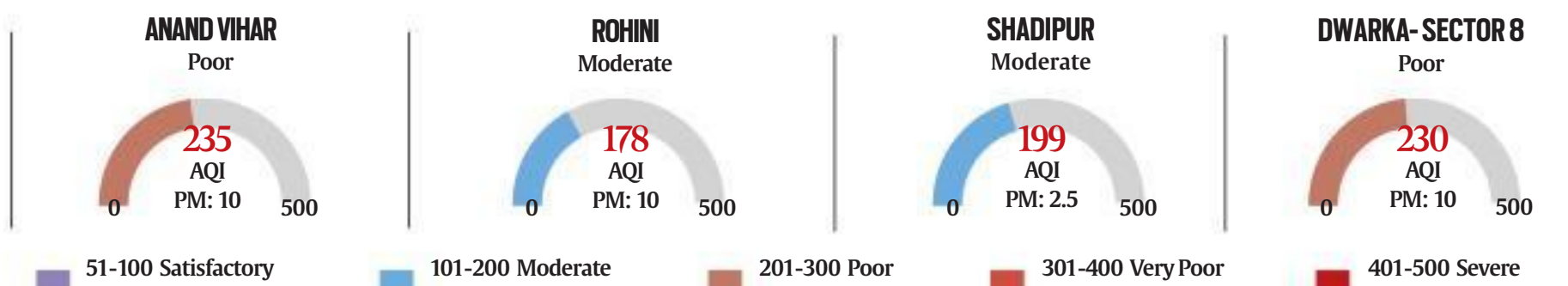
Besides Satinder and Puri, the other policemen who are part of the Muktsar coaching team are Gurmukh Singh, who trains students in basketball in Malaut city; Constable Swarnjeet Singh, athletics coach in Kakhan Wali and Sheranwali villages; ASI Harbaksh Singh, who trains students in athletics in Gursar Joda and Shamkhara villages; Hawaldar Amarjeet Singh, a kabaddi coach in Baddian and Bhaliana villages; and Constable Jagjit Singh, a volleyball coach in Jhoran Enna Khara village.

Back at Malaut village, Ajaypreet, a national-level volleyball player who trains with Satinder, says, "After spending 2-3 hours on the ground, all I have energy for is to go home, eat dinner and sleep."

His father Kuldeep Singh, a marginal farmer, says, "The problem of drugs is huge in Punjab and I have been worried for my son. Now I don't fear that he will fall into bad company. Ajaypreet used to be distracted, but he is now focused on his game and studies." Ajaypreet cleared his Class 12 this year with over 75% marks.



0-50 Good



BRIEFLY

IIT-Delhi to set up centre to clean drains

New Delhi: IIT-Delhi has partnered with a Denmark-based company to set up a Centre of Excellence on waste-to-wealth, under the aegis of the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor, Government of India. The centre will work to remove debris from drains and other water bodies in the capital, and generate resources from it.

12-yr-old dies of snake bite

New Delhi: A 12-year-old boy died after being bitten by a snake at his home in Shahdara's Geeta Colony Friday night, police said. The boy was rushed to a hospital, where he died during treatment.

Man held for kidnapping minor girls

New Delhi: A 38-year-old man was arrested from Noida Friday for allegedly kidnapping three minor girls from South East Delhi, said police. Police said the accused kept the girls at a rented flat in Ghaziabad, and added that the girls have been reunited with their families.

2 held for killing man

New Delhi: Two men were arrested for allegedly killing a man and dumping his body in East Delhi's Ghazipur. **ENS**

TAKEN DOWN BY ABVP

Savarkar, Bose, Bhagat Singh busts removed from North Campus

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

DAYS AFTER busts of V D Savarkar, Bhagat Singh and Subhas Chandra Bose were installed outside Delhi University's Arts Faculty, they were removed by ABVP-led DU Students' Union (DUSU) late Friday night. The DUSU had, by its own admission, installed the busts late Tuesday night.

The DU administration had earlier said they had been assured by the student outfit that the busts would be taken down, since they were installed without prior permission. Following the installation of the busts, ABVP had distanced itself from DUSU president Shakti Singh.

However, the ABVP said it has been "assured by the University of Delhi that the reinstallation of these busts will be done through required procedure after DUSU polls", which are scheduled for September 12.

ABVP state secretary Sidharth Yadav said, "It is very unfortunate that the DU administration has turned a deaf ear to DUSU's demand for installation of busts of freedom fighters for a very long time. The university should restore these idols, as per their assurances at the earliest."

Calling the move the "murder of the students' union", DUSU chief Singh said, "This move is an insult to the martyrs and I strongly condemn it. The DU administration is hell bent on murdering the students' union, like in other universities. In the coming days, I, along with



DU administration had said that the busts were installed without prior permission

a huge number of students, will protest against the DU administration. I wanted to resolve this issue through dialogue, but they have lost that opportunity now."

Meanwhile, the NSUI, which had protested the installation of Savarkar's bust along with Left organisations AISA, SFI and AAP's CYSS, welcomed the move. NSUI had Wednesday allegedly blackened Savarkar's bust and put a garland of shoes around it.

NSUI state president Akshay Lakra, who had led the protest, said, "ABVP has failed to make V D Savarkar a 'veer' (hero). NSUI never wanted to create any hooliganism or nuisance in the campus, but we won't tolerate infiltration of any type of fake nationalism. We will continue to raise sensible issues for DU students. We are confident that we will secure the upcoming DUSU polls with a record mandate."

AICC in-charge of NSUI Ruchi Gupta said, "The principled opposition by the NSUI and the nat-

ural outrage by students and general public alike has compelled the removal of the statue. We hope this will serve as a reminder to the ABVP that students will not be misled by their false propaganda."

The ABVP had filed a police complaint against NSUI for allegedly blackening Savarkar's bust, demanding "stringent legal action".

Yadav said, "Student organisations associated with the Left ideology, CYSS and NSUI, have stooped very low and have given a major blow to the culture of debate and discussion prevalent in the university. ABVP strongly believes the Left, AAP and the student organisations affiliated to Congress should stop insulting freedom fighters to meet their trivial political interests."

DU Proctor Neeta Sehgal did not respond to repeated calls and texts. She had earlier told *The Sunday Express* that the ABVP office-bearers had assured her the bust would be taken down.

A day after deadline, long queues, confused drivers at RFID toll booths

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A DAY after the deadline to fix radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags on commercial vehicles expired, long queues and lack of awareness among drivers were witnessed in at three least toll booths in the capital Saturday.

While officials said more than 5,700 commercial vehicles paid the penalty Saturday, several operators at toll booths on the Bardapur-Faridabad flyway, Delhi-Noida-Delhi flyway and Ghazipur (old), which were visited by *The Sunday Express*, said they refrained from fining drivers of vehicles that were yet to get RFID tags, as they feared violence.

"Some drivers don't even listen. They abuse us when we inform them about the new system. Few even threatened us with guns when we stopped them," said a toll staff at DND flyway.

The South Corporation had announced that vehicles entering the capital after midnight



Registration points set up near toll booths saw long queues, Saturday. Gajendra Yadav

Friday would have to pay double the amount of municipal toll and environment compensation charge (ECC).

The RFID system has come into force at 13 border points in the capital from where around 85% of traffic enters Delhi. The toll would be deducted automatically when a vehicle having the tag on its windscreen passes through the toll.

Meanwhile, long queues

were also seen at RFID registration points set up near toll booths, with some drivers waiting for hours to get the tags. "Toll staff had been informing us since July about the new system but we didn't think much of it as we already had an MCD pass. We realised today that we would have to pay double tax if we don't get the tags," said Satbir, a cab driver.

Bablu, a commercial vehicle driver, said, "I knew about the

system for some time but I kept delaying it. Now I am having to stand here in the queue and incur losses. But it's better than paying a hefty fine."

While many drivers complained of having to wait in the queues, some praised the RFID system. "Time is crucial for us and with the introduction of this system, we will be able to pass through the tolls without having to halt and interact with the staff," said Himanshu, a taxi driver.

In order to reduce the queues, authorities have decided to create a document collection point at booths where drivers can submit their details, pay the tag's price of Rs 236 and collect it within seven days. An online document submission system has also been introduced. As of 5.30pm Saturday, around 1.83 lakh RFID tags had been sold, an increase of 35,000 since Friday.

Officials said the switch to RFID will help cut down on emissions by reducing traffic jams and having better management over collection of ECC.

From team of AIIMS, IIT-Delhi, special stethoscope to help students and teachers

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A GROUP of MBBS students from AIIMS, in collaboration with IIT-Delhi, has developed a unique broadcasting stethoscope to help students learn the auscultation technique — listening to sounds from the heart, lungs and other organs for diagnosis — and assist faculty in mass teaching.

"While teaching, the patient faces discomfort if students use the stethoscope one by one, to understand the variation in sounds. But with the broadcast

stethoscope, we can teach 10-15 students at once, allowing them space to discuss the interpretation of the sounds. This is an innovative approach which makes it easier for patients and students to study auscultation. It is surprising that no one thought of it earlier," said Dr Vineet Ahuja, associate dean, research, AIIMS.

The device, which can be attached to a normal stethoscope, is in the testing phase and will soon be available in the market for less than Rs 10,000.

Talking about the need for such an innovation, Tamoghna Ghosh, one of the AIIMS students

behind the innovation, said, "In a cardiology class, only one student can listen to the heartbeat at a time using the normal stethoscope... It takes time. This device will change it."

Dr Rajeev Kumar, associate dean, academics, AIIMS, said, "Whenever the doctor wishes to transmit the sound, he/she can attach the device to his stethoscope..." Students from AIIMS spent four weeks at IIT-Delhi as part of an exchange programme, working with engineering students and teachers, to develop the device. In a first, AIIMS has initiated an exchange programme

with three other universities — Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, Delhi (IGIB); University College, London and University of Cologne, Germany.

Officials said this was the first time that a structured programme has been started by the institute. "Students have been sent to five different places for innovation and training programmes. A curriculum was drawn up for the purpose," said Kumar.

"This will continue in the coming year too. For the first time in an exchange programme, our students came up with this innovation," he added.

Good Wishes of GANESH UTSAV to Residents of Delhi

Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, Delhi

"Let us all together save our life-giving Yamuna river from being polluted and immerse idols only at the places prescribed by Delhi Government instead of Yamuna."

- Important instructions -

- Avoid using thermocol and plastic decorations.
- Do not use idols made of POP and chemical colors, instead use only made of natural clay and food colors.
- Before immersion of idols, must remove the pooja material and collect it at the specified place.

Do not immerse in the River Yamuna.
Immerse idols at the places prescribed by Delhi Government. Click to view list of prescribed locations:
<http://environment.delhigovt.nic.in> | <http://dpcc.delhigovt.nic.in> | <http://revenue.delhi.gov.in>

ATTENTION

As per the directions of Hon'ble NGT, Rs 5000/- as Environment compensation be levied on violators

Violators can also be punished under section 15 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 which include imprisonment upto five years and / or fine which may be extended to Rs One Lac or with Both

दिल्ली सरकार
Department of Revenue and Department of Environment
Government of NCT of Delhi

DELHI POLICE
SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

Let's take the Pledge

Not to Use Metallic Powder Coated Thread

It is a Safety Hazard & a Punishable Offence

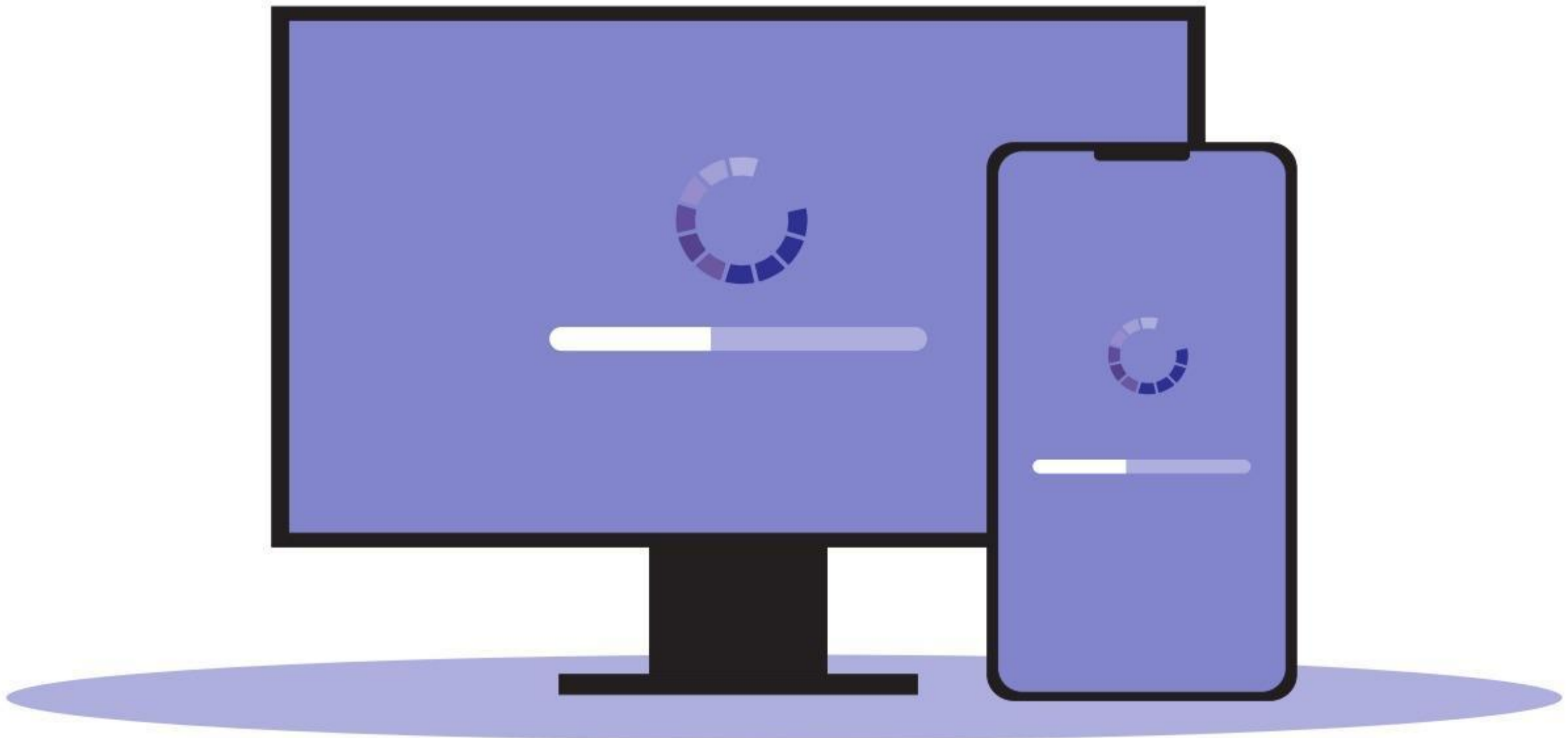
- Never fly kites near power lines, in the path of traffic, aircrafts or near highways.
- Never use wire, metallic thread or wire strings. You may be electrocuted.
- Never attempt yourself to remove your kite from a power line.
- Metallic Manjhas can slit the throat or cause injury to passers-by and birds.

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.amulyapatnaik@delhipolice.gov.in
Write to: CP, Delhi at P.O. Box. No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 100 TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS OF DELHI

All online services of Delhi Jal Board
will remain closed between August 23 to August 30
for enhancing the efficiency of Water Billing System



- For improving the efficiency of Revenue Management System (RMS), DJB is moving to an Upgraded System.
- Due to this migration activity all online services like online viewing and payment of water bills/ applying for new connection/ cash counter etc will not be available from 23-08-2019 to 30-08-2019
- Bill Payment due dates during this period will automatically stand extended upto 09-09-2019 without Late Payment Surcharge.
- Offline activities in Zonal Revenue Offices will continue during this period. Consumers can make payment of water bills at the kiosks available at Zonal Revenue Offices.
- For more information please contact 1916 (toll free)

**INCONVENIENCE CAUSED DUE TO THIS IMPORTANT
RMS UPGRADATION WORK IS REGRETTEED**

On way back home with son, man shot dead

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A 38-YEAR-OLD man, who was returning home with his six-year-old son on a scooter, was allegedly shot dead by two bike-borne men in South East Delhi Friday night, said police.

Police said the victim, Fajlu Qureshi, was the victim in the head while his son sustained injuries to his limbs after their scooter crashed following the shooting. Police is yet to identify the accused, but they suspect personal enmity to be the reason behind the attack.

According to police, passersby came to their aid after hearing the boy crying at the spot. "We received a call around 11:15 pm about the incident. We rushed to the spot and found a man lying in a pool of blood...he was shot in the head. The accused fled on their bike after the shooting. The victims were taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre where Qureshi, who worked as a tomato supplier in the Sabzi Mandi, was declared dead by the doctors and his son was treated," said Chinmoy Biswal, DCP (South East).

The child is stable and is with his grandparents, said police.

FIFTH ACCUSED ABSCONDING: POLICE 4 journalists held for 'blackmailing cops'

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NOIDA, AUGUST 24

FOUR JOURNALISTS were arrested by Gautam Budh Nagar police Saturday for allegedly publishing false news to blackmail police officers. According to police, the accused — Sushil Pandit, Chandan Rai, Nitish Pandey and Udit Goyal — allegedly posted unverified content about police officers posted in Gautam Budh Nagar on multiple social media platforms for alleged vested interests. Police said the fifth accused, Raman Thakur, is absconding, and added that they have declared a reward of Rs 25,000 for his arrest.

According to police, Pandit, Goyal and Thakur had earlier been arrested in January along with the SHO of Sector 20 police station for alleged extortion and blackmail, and were out on bail. "The four men have been arrested and none of them is an accredited journalist. They were running a gang to blackmail high-ranking officers, particularly police officers, through web portals and social media. They would publish fake content

about them on social media and blackmail them," said Vaibhav Krishna, SSP, Gautam Budh Nagar.

According to police, the accused operated out of Noida, Ghaziabad and Lucknow. The portals where they published the alleged content included sansaniindia.com, policemedi- news.com and policenewsup.com.

According to police, Pandit, the mastermind of the alleged gang, published an online paper called "Paini Khabar" on sansaniindia.com, registered under the name "Team 50 Network". On Wednesday, the portal ran a piece alleging that the Gautam Budh Nagar SSP was favouring officers of a particular caste in regard to postings, said police.

In another piece published on August 4 on sansaniindia.com, the group alleged that the Noida administration was complicit in a Rs 60-crore mining scam, police said. "The accused would also run photos of the officials without prior permission in the name of free speech," a police officer said.

"In one piece it was suggested that I favoured an SHO

because I shared a good equation with a political leader. They also published wrong news about the present SSP Lucknow, the commandant 49 PAC, CO Sahibabad and many others. It is all baseless," said SSP Krishna. Police said they will submit 10 such alleged pieces published in the last six months as evidence.

According to police, police-medianews.com, allegedly being run by accused Pandey, has almost 14,000 followers on Twitter, including senior policemen and official handles of various police districts in the state.

While being taken into custody, Rai claimed: "We can present facts to back our articles. This seems like an attempt to silence the media. If they ask for any other evidence to support our claims, we will provide that as well. We will fight against it."

The district magistrate, Gautam Budh Nagar, has announced that the Goonda Act will be imposed against the accused. An FIR against the accused has been filed at Beta 2 police station under the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, 1986.

Four-year-old dead after manjha slits her throat

SOMYALAKHANI
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A FOUR-YEAR-OLD girl died after her throat was slit by Chinese manjha, while she was on her way to a temple with her family on a two-wheeler in North East Delhi's Khajuri Khas Saturday. Police identified the victim as Ishika Kumar Sharma and said the incident took place around 6 pm.

"She was declared dead on arrival at the hospital... her father was driving a two-wheeler and his two daughters and wife were with him when she was injured by manjha," said DCP (North East) Atul Kumar Thakur. A case under section 304A (death due to negligence) of the IPC has been registered at Khajuri Khas police station.

"My two daughters, wife and I were going to a temple near ISBT from our house in Sonia Vihar to celebrate Janmashtami. Ishika, who was in front of me, suddenly screamed. After I applied brakes, I saw cuts on her neck and blood oozing out. I didn't understand what had happened... then I saw that a manjha had got stuck in her neck," said Ishika's father Girish Kumar Sharma.



She was on a two-wheeler with her family, said police

Sharma said he covered his daughter's neck with cloth and rushed her to a hospital, where she was declared dead on arrival. "Both my daughters were excited about doing darshan at the temple... the children wore new clothes. I can't believe that this has happened," he said.

As per an SC directive, there is a nationwide ban on the procurement, sale and use of the Chinese manjha. On August 15, 28-year-old civil engineer Manav Sharma died after a Chinese manjha allegedly slit his throat while he riding a two-wheeler in Paschim Vihar. He was on his way to celebrate Rakhi with his family when the incident took place.

On July 11, a 33-year-old man and his three-year-old niece fell off the Badarpur flyover when the Chinese manjha allegedly got stuck in the man's neck. The child, Dipti, died during treatment a day later.

7,277 POCSO cases pending in 19 Delhi courts

ANANDMOHAN J & PRITAMPAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

ON JULY 25, the Supreme Court had issued directions to set up special courts in each district in the country which had over 100 pending cases of child abuse and sexual assault. This remains a challenge in the capital, where 7,277 cases filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act are awaiting trial before 19 special courts, each presided over by a judge — or an average of 383 per court — documents accessed by The Sunday Express show.

According to a source, the information, placed before Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi in July, sheds light on the number of POCSO cases pending in the capital from March 2013, when POCSO courts were set up, until June 30, 2019. The SC had directed that the required number of special courts be set up within 60 days under a centrally funded scheme that would take care of payment to presiding officers, staff, and support persons for a child-friendly infrastructure.

For the capital's 19 courts, however, the road ahead remains uphill. Consider this:

■ Delhi Police has registered 11,669 cases under the POCSO Act since March 2013, of which 4,392 cases have been disposed till June this year. While the disposal rate increased from 11% in 2013 to 17% in 2014, it dipped in the following years, to a low of 12% in 2017.

■ A large number of cases — 3,455 — under trial in Delhi's special courts are stuck at the prosecution evidence stage.

■ Delhi, however, fares better than neighbouring UP which has 44,376 cases pending till June 2019 at its 75 special courts. Maharashtra has 19,968 cases pending in 36 special courts and Madhya Pradesh has 9,878 cases pending trial in 51 special courts.

■ Model guidelines under the POCSO Act state that compensation should be paid to the victim at an interim stage during pendency of trial. As per data, for 1,379 FIRs registered in 2017, only 298 victims were compensated.

Judicial experts, public prosecutors at special courts and court staff suggest the heavy backlog is due to a delay in forensic reports, witnesses turning hostile and not

attending court hearings, lack of facilities where vulnerable witnesses can depose, delay in police probe, and, sometimes, non-availability of public prosecutors.

A public prosecutor attached with a special court in Tis Hazari explained: "We have the maximum number of cases with NUm cases are disposed quicker than old cases because we have streamlined submission of documents so victims are not brought to court unnecessarily. But there are many rescued from brothels, or cases of minor domestic helps, who have not come for court hearings. It is hard to trace them."

Emphasising on the need for structural changes, Swagata Raha, a consultant with Enfold Proactive Health Trust, Bengaluru, said, "Special courts are not exclusively dealing with these cases; although the law says prosecutors need to be exclusive (to such cases), they aren't. You have a regular sessions court being labelled a special court, which deals with these matters alongside regular matters." "Many POCSO cases depend on forensic reports, especially cases dealing with penetrative sexual assault or pregnancy. You can't list the matters until the report comes," Raha said.

An investigating officer in a case involving the rape of a five-year-old girl elaborated on how delay in reports poses a challenge: "It took me over six months to get the FSL report. This is faster... earlier, I have waited for over a year." Advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal, who has dealt with several POCSO cases, said there was a delay of three or more years to get the FSL report in some cases.

But FSL director Deepa Verma told The Sunday Express that while a special POCSO unit has been set up, recruitment and procurement of equipment is taking time: "Biological reports take time; we are expediting that. We are now sending out POCSO case reports in one month."

Senior advocate H S Phoolka, who has been pressing since 2016 for time-bound trials and disposal of such cases, said that as per the latest DCPCR report, victims in a majority of cases come from families with income less than Rs 20,000. "When they are not compensated on time and their health and education needs are not addressed, they lose faith and... have no option but to settle the matter and turn hostile," he said.

Taekwondo gold medallist arrested for vehicle theft

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A TWO-TIME national gold medallist in taekwondo was arrested from the Vikaspuri market area for his alleged involvement in five cases of vehicle theft and mobile snatching in the city.

Police said the accused, Suraj (26), alias Fighter, who was arrested Wednesday, allegedly turned to a life of crime "to support a lavish lifestyle".

Officers have recovered a country-made pistol, a stolen motorcycle and two high-end mobile phones from his possession.

According to police, Suraj is a history-sheeter with more than 30 criminal cases registered against him, including a number of phone snatching inci-

Police said the accused has over 30 cases registered against him, and added that he turned to crime to support a lavish lifestyle

dents in Vikaspuri.

He was one of the top 50 contestants in a reality TV singing show previously, said an officer.

"He was spotted on a bike and was signaled to stop but instead, he sped and tried to flee. He was apprehended after a short chase," said Monika Bhardwaj, DCP (West).

Suraj was traced after police nabbed one of his accomplices, Rahul, while investigating cases

of mobile snatching from the last two months, officers said.

Police said Suraj had recently been released from Tihar jail and had allegedly started snatching mobile phones again. He was previously arrested in 2014 by officers from Janakpuri police station and 49 mobile phones were recovered from him.

"He had a lavish lifestyle with no permanent means of income and no desire to work. He had to find a way to sustain the life he was living so he resorted to this. He is also well educated and graduated from Sri Aurobindo College of Delhi University," said an officer of Vikaspuri police station.

Police said he has allegedly admitted his involvement in numerous other snatching incidents, which are being verified.



JUSTICE ON WHEELS

Chief Justice of Delhi High Court DN Patel takes part in a cycle rally in the capital Saturday.

Praveen Khanna

Writing on wall of Mandi House Metro station: Partition stories

SOMYALAKHANI
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

■ "My father was posted in Algon Kahlon when Partition was announced... he sent knives for my sisters and me."

■ "A neighbour of ours killed his daughter because he feared she would be killed or raped on their way to the border. The air was full of fear."

■ "In the midst of chaos at the platform, a fellow passenger got violent and my father intervened, pacifying the situation."

The walls of the Mandi House

Metro station are full of stories of the women of Partition — from Gopi Bhatia, who migrated from Bombay from Pakistan's Sindh, to Hamida Bano Begum, who left Ferozepur in India for Jhang in Pakistan. On Friday, Delhi and California-based non-profit oral history organisation '1947 Partition Archives' set up two exhibits at the Mandi House Metro station — "Women during Partition" and "My heart belongs in Delhi". The exhibit is on display till September-end.

Commuters linger as they read the memories of Partition of these women, written in Hindi



The exhibits will be on display till September end

and English, under their big black-and-white photos.

The exhibit at Mandi House

Metro station has been designed by architect Aurgoh Jyoti. "This is the first time we have exhibited this at a transport hub, and there is huge symbolism in showcasing this work at a Metro station as millions of people relied on trains to cross the border in 1947. Many lives were lost on the trains. We also wanted to exhibit at the New Delhi Railway Station, but they don't have the provision," said founder of '1947 Partition Archives' Guneeta Singh Bhalla.

It was in 2009 that Bhalla, who grew up in the US, began documenting the oral history of Partition with a visit to Punjab.

"Till now, the Archive has recorded 8,000 stories from 12 countries in 36 languages. In 2017, 'Women during Partition' was curated and a portion of it is exhibited at the Metro station," said Bhalla. The "Women during Partition" exhibit has been curated by author Aanchal Malhotra and researcher Ritika Popli.

Next to the women's testimonies are memories of Delhi, as a part of the "My Heart Belongs in Delhi" exhibit. Yasmin Aftab, who migrated from Delhi to Lahore, told the Archive about growing up in "elite suburb Karol Bagh",

and "secret visits to the hospital when her younger sister was born during Partition."

Usha Chhabra, in the exhibit, recalled living with an aunt in Gole Market after migrating from Rawalpindi in Pakistan, while Abdus Salam told the Archives about a bookstore his father ran near Jama Masjid in Delhi in 1937.

Bhalla said, "People have given us positive feedback about stories from India and Pakistan."

The exhibit has been curated by researchers Erin Riggs and Ritika Popli, and art curator Arshiya Lokhandwala.

At IIC, a discussion on ailing healthcare system

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

COMING TOGETHER to deliberate upon various aspects of the health sector, ranging from shortage of doctors to monitoring the private sector, medical experts talked about crucial gaps in delivering healthcare services in a discussion held in India International Center (IIC).

The discussion, titled, "Crucial Gaps in Delivering Health Care: What's Done What's Ignored?" saw them suggest ways to meet demands related to informal health workforce and unqualified practitioners.

Shailaja Chandra, former Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and former Chief Secretary, Delhi, said, "In India, life expectancy has gone up. We've also reached European level of fertility, barring some states, which will reach the ideal rate in coming years. Communicable diseases are down to 30%. We should be glad the Ayushman Bharat scheme gives a sense of security to 30 crore people, but there is still a snag, as it only looks



Medical experts talked about gaps in delivering healthcare services

after hospitalised patients."

"India will be unable to scale up to the ambition... if we don't have adequate human resources. We've failed to develop policies on the requirement of doctors vis-a-vis the disease burden. There is a need to produce doctors to a certain type of disease burden...," said K Sujatha Rao, former Health Secretary, Government of India.

Prof K Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), said: "To ensure more accountability in the system, we need a regulator. We must distinguish between professional and industrial issues."

EXPRESS Careers

मोतीलाल नेहरू राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान इलाहाबाद
इलाहाबाद-211004 (भारत)
Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology Allahabad
Allahabad-211004 (India)

Advertisement No. 05/2019, dated August 23, 2019
Recruitment for Non-Teaching Positions

Online applications are invited from suitable Indian Nationals for Non-Faculty positions in staff cadre on direct recruitment/ deputation/ contract basis, in various departments/ sections of the Institute. For details regarding the Online Application, educational qualifications, experience, other requirements and terms & conditions for these positions, please visit the Institute website <http://www.mnnit.ac.in> Date of availability of detailed advertisement on the Institute website and opening of Online submission of application: 01.09.2019. Closing of Online submission of application: 30.09.2019 upto 5.30 P.M.

REGISTRAR

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRIES
UDYOG SADAN, PLOT NO.419,
PATPARGANJ, DELHI-110 092
(HANDLOOM & TEXTILE SECTION)

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT

- Applications are invited from the registered Primary Weavers' Handloom Cooperative Societies of Delhi for obtaining financial assistance under Plan Scheme Loan-cum-Grant for modernization and renovation of the existing looms and pre-loom equipments for the year 2019-20.
- All such handloom cooperative agencies of Delhi interested in availing assistance under the said scheme from Govt. of Delhi are required to fulfill certain criteria before applying. The handloom cooperative society has to fulfill the eligibility criteria pertaining to household industries as per MPD-2021 to become eligible under the Scheme. The eligibility criteria along with terms and conditions and application forms can be obtained free of cost from Handloom & Handicraft Section of the above office on any working day from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. or can be downloaded from website <http://www.industries.delhigovt.nic.in>. Application forms, duly filled in all respects, should be submitted at the above office latest by 30.09.2019 up to 6.00 p.m. Societies which have been provided with loan and grant during the year 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 under the scheme will not be considered for financial assistance in the current financial year 2019-20.

Sd/-

SECTION OFFICER (HANDLOOM/HANDICRAFT)
GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI

DIP/Shabdarth/0403/19-20

GOVT. OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRIES
UDYOG SADAN, PLOT NO.419, PATPARGANJ INDUSTRIAL AREA,
DELHI-110 092
(Handloom & Textiles Section)

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT

Applications in the prescribed Application Forms are invited from existing and functioning primary handloom weavers cooperative societies and apex handloom cooperative federations of Delhi duly registered with RCS Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, and having audit completed for the years 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 authenticated by RCS Department for availing financial assistance as Marketing Incentive (MI) Component under the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) for the year 2019-20. For the purpose of Marketing Incentive Claim, Handloom Mark has been made compulsory i.e., the society selling its products should necessarily use 'Handloom Mark'. The MI would be given on the sale of handloom products using Handloom Mark only. The societies should have purchased the yarn from NHDC. For buying yarn from open market, the societies will need N.O.C. from NHDC. A handloom cooperative agency has to fulfill the eligibility criteria pertaining to household industries as per MPD-2021 to become eligible under the scheme. The prescribed Application Form and Criteria are available at website www.industries.delhigovt.nic.in. Applications fulfilling above CRITERIA WILL ONLY BE ENTERTAINED and other applications will become ineligible. The last date of submission of application forms, complete in all respects, at the above office address is 30th September, 2019 up to 6.00 p.m.

Sd/-

SECTION OFFICER (HANDLOOM/HANDICRAFT)
GOVT. OF N.C.T. DELHI

DIP/Shabdarth/0402/19-20

BJP leaders mourn mentor, guide and friend

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

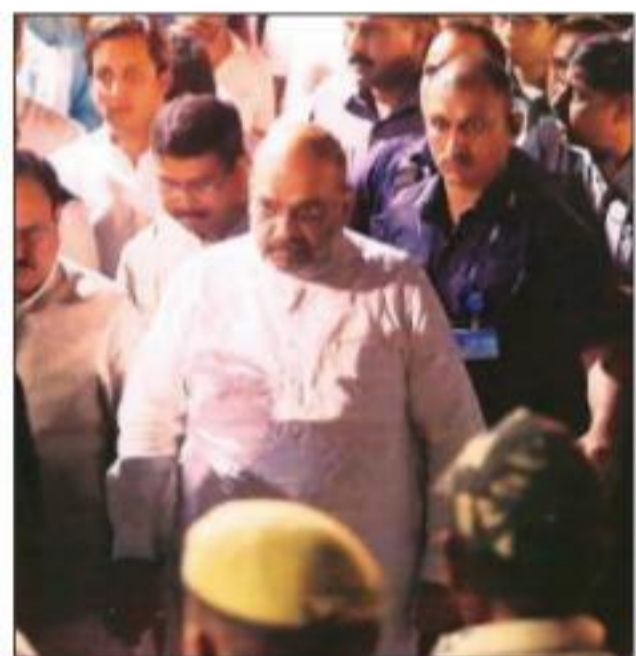
BJP ON Saturday mourned the death of Arun Jaitley, remembering him as an "integral member of the family" for his guidance, his fiery speeches and affable nature.

"With the demise of Arun Jaitley Ji, I have lost a valued friend, whom I have had the honour of knowing for decades. His insight on issues and nuanced understanding of matters had very few parallels. He lived well, leaving us all with innumerable happy memories. We will miss him!" Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted.

Jaitley, 66, passed away at AIIMS here, and is survived by his wife and two children. Modi, who is in Abu Dhabi, spoke to Jaitley's wife Sangeeta and son Rohan to express his condolences. "Both of them insisted the PM does not cancel his foreign tour," a source said.

BJP president and Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, "I am deeply saddened by the death of Arun Jaitley. Jaitley's departure is a personal loss for me. I have lost not only a senior leader of the organisation but also an integral member of the family whose support and guidance I have been receiving for years."

BJP veteran L K Advani said Jaitley was a man with a deeply analytical mind who the party depended on to find solutions to complex issues. "A dedicated party worker for



Home Minister Amit Shah at Arun Jaitley's residence on Saturday.
Praveen Khanna

decades, he was someone who was inducted into the BJP core team when I was party president and he soon rose to become one of the most prominent leaders of the party," Advani said in a statement.

BJP's working president J P Nadda recalled Jaitley's fiery speeches in Parliament. "His beliefs will always be our guide. The demise of Arun Jaitley has created a vacuum in Indian politics which can never be filled... Be it strengthening the Indian economy or its defence, his role in placing India in the front row in the world is incomparable," Nadda said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh remembered Jaitley as someone who pulled the economy out of gloom.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said Jaitley's death is a loss to the nation, government and party. "I have seen him closely when he started as a student leader of the Vidyarthi Parishad. He was one of the top lawyers in the country..." Gadkari said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "A mentor to many of us, a guide and a moral support and strength. Have learnt so much from him. A fine large-hearted person. Always ready to help anyone/everyone. His intelligence, sagacity, astuteness have no match," she tweeted.

"Shocked at the demise of our guide and friend Arun Jaitley Ji. His wits, elephantine memory, great oratory skills, logical & unbeatable arguments & articulations will always be remembered. It is a great loss for @BJP4India," said Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar.

The RSS tweeted a joint statement of its chief Mohan Bhagwat and general secretary Bhaiyyaji Joshi. "The country is progressing on the path of development in various fields for which his contribution was necessary as well as important. May his soul rest in peace," the statement said.



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

LUTYENS TO LAJPAT NAGAR, EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE POLITICIAN

Always affable, with a deep knowledge of facts and law, it was Jaitley whom PM Modi turned to for counsel, and even BJP's detractors approached when in need of an explanation

SUNIL JAIN

ARUN JAITLEY was always more than just a Finance Minister. At different times, in different BJP-led governments, he had been a Defence Minister, Law Minister, Corporate Affairs Minister and, at all times, even if informally on occasion — thanks to a great relationship with most in the media — the information minister, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's chief troubleshooter.

Indeed, as the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha before 2014, he led his party's charge on most major issues, both within and outside Parliament.

Thanks to Jaitley's affable personality, tremendous knowledge of events and great knowledge of the law, he was one of India's top lawyers when he wasn't in the government — he was the go-to person for almost everyone — for investors frustrated with the government's policies, to journalists looking for an explanation on a government policy or simply for reassurance.

A product of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee era, he had deep friendships across the political system and, whenever he could, Jaitley never shied from helping anyone out; perhaps why, even when the media disagreed with what Jaitley had done, he got away relatively unscathed.

Was the government witchhunting in the case of P Chidambaram or being vindictive in the case of Prannoy Roy; were the Gandhis really guilty in the National Herald case, and so many other instances? Whether you finally agreed with him or not, it was Jaitley who gave the sharpest argument, with a complete history of the case, even fascinating anecdotes. A true raconteur, Jaitley enjoyed regaling his audience as much as they loved hearing him. Few anti-government television warriors managed to best Jaitley at most times.

Later, even when his health failed him and he could no longer have visitors, Jaitley explained the rationale for important government actions through his 24x7 blog.

Hardly surprising, then, that Modi valued Jaitley's counsel so much, when the latter wanted to stay out of the government due to health reasons, the Prime Minister did his best to convince him to stay on. His ability to weigh in on almost all issues apart, it was Jaitley who ensured that the BJP named Modi as its candidate for 2014 even as the old guard led by L K Advani were reluctant to do so.

If during the Vajpayee years, Jaitley's big contribution was junking the outdated concept of monopolies — any big business was distrusted — and replacing this with a more modern definition where abuse of dominance was to be the touchstone, he really came into his own under Modi.

His favourite pastime was eating food

He was clearly the government's go-to person on all matters judicial and played a key role in the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Bill — to propose an alternative to the collegium appointing/promoting judges — that was struck down by the Supreme Court. And, as FM, he was central to most government reforms such as the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), perhaps one of the most significant attempts to resolve the banks' NPA crisis; at a time when allegations of corruption are hurled without even a thought, Jaitley's IBC solution allows banks to take huge haircuts on their loans but without any accusation of favouritism by the government/banks.

Other reforms, apart from GST, that Jaitley played a big role in was the decision to open up the coal sector to private players, and even coming up with election bonds that kept the names of donors to political parties secret while payments were made by cheque was a Jaitley innovation; this is not perfect as donors can remain anonymous, but they remained so even in the past when they made donations in cash.

While Jaitley is blamed for GST being too complex with too many tax rates — what could he do when the states didn't agree? — it was primarily his persuasion that ensured the number of items in the higher brackets has constantly been pruned; though the composition of the GST Council allows for a vote, Jaitley chose persuasion and has never

used the vote for any decision.

When the UPA left him to deal with the tricky issue of retrospective tax, Jaitley came up with a judicial solution that ensured the government was not accused of favouring anyone while reversing a tax demand made under this law. He said that while the government would not use the law in future, he would accept all judicial — and arbitral — decisions on the existing cases.

If Jaitley had a weakness as FM, it was giving his officers too much leeway; as a result, he was unable to get them to reduce pending tax litigation as fast as he would have liked, and even allowed them to convince him to levy MAT on FII investments. Despite Jaitley's promise on being fair to victims of retrospective tax, the tax bureaucracy confiscated Cairn Energy's shares and dividends and, till now, kept arguing retrospective tax cases couldn't be arbitrated. It also ensured the promise of a 25 per cent corporate tax was never implemented for large firms, and the much-needed direct tax code which would reform the tax system was also delayed.

With two seasoned BJP politicians passing away within such a short period — coincidentally, Sushma Swaraj was also born in 1952 and also had her kidney replaced — a vital connect with the Vajpayee government, and the gentleness that it came to symbolise, has been lost.

The author is Managing Editor of The Financial Express

Opposition remembers outstanding MP, eminent lawyer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

LEADERS ACROSS the political spectrum set aside their differences in expressing sadness at the death of senior BJP leader and former Union finance minister Arun Jaitley. In their condolence messages, Opposition leaders remembered Jaitley's career as a parliamentarian and a lawyer.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said in a letter to Jaitley's wife that the news of the "untimely demise" was shocking. He said Jaitley was "an eminent lawyer, an excellent orator, a very good administrator and an outstanding Parliamentarian". In Jaitley's death, Singh said, the "country has lost a great leader who always worked for the betterment of the society".

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet, "I am sorry to hear about Mr Arun Jaitley's passing. My condolences to his family and friends. May he rest in peace."

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee tweeted, "Extremely saddened at the passing away of Arun Jaitley Ji, after a battle bravely borne. An outstanding Parliamentarian & a brilliant lawyer, appreciated across parties. His contribution to Indian polity will be remembered."



Congress leaders Sonia and Rahul Gandhi at Arun Jaitley's residence on Saturday.
Praveen Khanna

Odisha Chief Minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik said that Jaitley was a "distinguished lawyer, parliamentarian and an erudite person" and his "contribution to governance has been profound".

Kerala Chief Minister and CPI(M) leader Pinarayi Vijayan tweeted that Jaitley was "a legal luminary and an exemplary parliamentarian".

DMK president M K Stalin tweeted that "as a young democrat", Jaitley was "at the forefront of resisting Emergency and later, became an excellent orator, well-regarded lawyer and role model parliamentarian".

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu said he was "devastated" to learn about Jaitley's death, and tweeted that he cherishes "the many years of friendship shared with a humble leader who was also a great statesman".

BSP chief Mayawati and SP president Akhilesh Yadav tweeted their condolence statements in Hindi. Mayawati said, "He was a famous lawyer and a good person," adding that "his contribution to national politics cannot be forgotten". Akhilesh said Jaitley will be remembered as a "skillful orator, a successful lawyer and a kind politician".

NCP leader Sharad Pawar said, "We have lost an astute parliamentarian, avid reader and a compassionate leader." Loktantrik Janata Dal's Sharad Yadav said the death of his "dear friend... is a great loss for all of us" and remembered him as "a great lawyer, leader & distinguished parliamentarian".

Former Bihar CM and RJD leader Lalu Prasad said the news of Jaitley's "untimely" death was "very saddening".

Meanwhile, the CPI, said in a statement that Jaitley "was one of the respected political leaders and best parliamentarians" who had started his political career as a student leader. It said that "he will be remembered as an articulate speaker in Rajya Sabha who impressed all with his skills and knowledge".

'A good human being, large hearted, great orator and pillar for his party'

ABHISHEK SINGHVI

HAVING WRITTEN about Arun Jaitley's diverse facets today in two other dailies, let me write more anecdotally about the human being. He was punctilious about financial matters and extremely careful about not squandering or receiving state largesse. Someone present at Nainital, when Uttarakhand High Court was being inaugurated, narrates the incident when as Law Minister, Arun reached the official accommodation. He asked the caretaker about the stay charges. The caretaker, thinking that it

was only a query on a point of information, told him that for a guest it was Rs 200 per night while for a government servant it was Rs 100. Arun immediately fished out Rs 300 for himself and the friend he had brought along and insisted on paying. The caretaker later told the friend that this man would go far, since this was the first time he had seen a minister insisting on paying for boarding and lodging!

His support to his staff — financial, economic, moral, medical, educational — is legendary and it would be an understatement when it is said that his death has orphaned at least 25 families. A mutual friend told me

how, in London, when a staff complimented Arun on how smart he looked in a blazer, Arun took him to Marks and Spencer and bought him a blazer and tie. As he put on his new attire, he was told jokingly by Arun that "Raju ab ban gaya gentleman", ie. Raju has now become a gentleman. The clerkage collected for senior counsel by his office was converted into a trust and used to build houses for almost all his staff and also to educate their children, even abroad. One of them, I am told, is a partner in India's top law firm. He made a qualitative difference in their lives.

His favourite pastime was eating food

and watching old movies, the hot favourite being *Waqt*. It is said that on a cruise which stopped at Dubrovnik, while the family went out to see the beautiful city, Arun preferred to stay back and watch *Waqt* and some other earthy Punjabi comedies!

"Foodotes" is a better word than anecdotes as far as Arun and food are concerned. Mutual friends recount how he spent three hours searching for Saravana Bhawan/ South Indian food in Vancouver. He was one of the few who would be specific about planning the items for next day's lunch at the previous day's breakfast. The same friend tells of how he left a famous

Indian-food Michelin-rated restaurant in New York because he was unable to find "Nimbu Achar" and "Hari Mirch", though later the owner and he became good friends and exchanged recipes. He also recounts Arun's travel to and fro over 5 hours from Zurich to Lausanne and back to pick up Indian food from a Sardarji, very highly regarded for his tasty home-cooked delicacies in Lausanne.

His friendships were deep, abiding and unconditional. One of our colleagues at the Bar, a close college friend of Arun's, suffered a seemingly serious medical condition many decades ago. Arun, then a minister,

left everything and stayed day and night at the Mumbai hospital where he was being treated. Despite huge official preoccupations, Arun took the colleague's mobile phone and stayed put, answering all his calls personally. That colleague's eyes welled up with tears as he recounted the incident to me.

We have lost a decent man, a good human being, a large heart, a magnanimous disposition, a piercing intellect, a great orator, an even better communicator, an able lawyer and a pillar for his party.

The author is a senior Congress MP

7 ARUN JAITLEY

28 DECEMBER 1952 - 24 AUGUST 2019

'ASTUTE LEGAL MIND, DID NOT HESITATE TO HELP OUT FOR NATIONAL CAUSE'



Doing yoga while he was jailed during the Emergency.



As a student leader with the ABVP.



With Sushma Swaraj and Opposition leaders at a meeting in Parliament.

Guide to young lawyers, he had 'uncanny ability to simplify legal arguments'

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

CHIEF JUSTICE of India Ranjan Gogoi on Saturday expressed condolences on the death of former Union minister and senior advocate Arun Jaitley "on behalf of the country's judiciary".

Jaitley's contributions to law came both from his four-decade-long political stint and his career in law.

A graduate of Campus Law Centre, Delhi University, Jaitley started practicing law in 1977. He was designated a senior advocate in 1990 and had a short one-year stint as the Additional Solicitor General in 1990.

"Since he was in public life, Jaitley had the uncanny ability to simplify complex legal arguments. That made him appealing to any judge," senior advocate Siddharth Luthra said. "As a young lawyer," Luthra recalled, "I briefed him for a tech company (in a case in the 1990s). He understood tech aspects of the case very well but we were appearing before a judge who had little expertise in the field. Jaitley argued the whole case brilliantly by substituting references to an online market place with examples that the judge would be familiar with — such as placing a newspaper advertisement, or buying a product from a store."

He won the case, Luthra said. In his initial days, Jaitley shared his office with senior advocate Dushyant Dave for more than seven years and ran a successful practice and maintained a closely-knit group of friends in the profession — former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, corporate lawyer Rian Karanjawala, senior advocates Rajeev Nayyar, Anip Sachthey and Beena Gupta, among others.

More than his courtroom appearances, Jaitley was sought after by his clients for his legal strategies. He planned the litigation strategy in the Jain hawala scandal and suc-

cessfully defended BJP leader L.K. Advani.

As the Law Minister in 2000-04, Jaitley spearheaded the overhaul of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908. Several amendments proposed by governments earlier had met with resistance from lawyers but in 2002, Jaitley introduced a fresh Bill streamlining the procedures in a trial that saves judicial time and ensures speedy justice.

He did not appear in court after 2009, when he was appointed the Leader of Opposition. However, his last courtroom appearance in May 2017, where he was cross-examined by senior advocate Ram Jethmalani, was a master class for lawyers on how to cross-examine a tough witness.

Jaitley's deposition was in the criminal defamation case against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Jaitley also played an instrumental role in shaping two significant laws: the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014, and the Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017. The Supreme Court struck down the NJAC Act in 2015.

"Since he had observed the judiciary from both sides, he became more of a realist. Judicial accountability was a cause he felt deeply for," senior advocate Sanjay Hegde said.

In his blogs, Jaitley reflected on significant developments in judiciary. In April, he wrote a post criticising the sexual harassment charges against CJI Gogoi as an "assault on the institution."

"The hallmark of a good senior advocate is also how good a mentor he is. The success of Jaitley's juniors is proof that he was a very good senior advocate," senior advocate Raju Ramachandran said.

Among Jaitley's notable juniors are Chief Justice of Tripura High Court Sanjay Karol, Delhi High Court judges Navin Chawla and Prathiba Singh, former ASG Maninder Singh and senior advocates Vibha Makhijia and Upmanyu Hazarika.



Jaitley with former India skipper M.A.K. Pataudi at Kotla in 2010.

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

A LEGAL mind with astute skills in drafting legislation, Arun Jaitley, as Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, did not hesitate to extend his drafting skills to the then UPA government when it was struggling to clear the nuclear liability Bill, crucial for carrying out the India-US nuclear deal.

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan, who was handling the Bill as Minister of State in the PMO, recalled that Jaitley had "kept aside the hard stand advocated by some in his party" to help the government in a "national cause".

Chavan told *The Sunday Express*: "When the government was struggling with the clause on nuclear accident liability (it did not have the numbers, as the Left was against it), I approached the BJP. I went to Arun Jaitley and told him (that) it's important for the country, and we had worked hard to reach this point. He looked at the draft and made some changes to make it acceptable to more (parties). We modified the Bill, and the BJP supported it."

The Bill was passed after the government deleted the words "done with the intent to cause nuclear damage and such act" from clause 17(b). Had Jaitley taken a "hard stand", the Bill could not have been passed, he said.

Chavan also pointed out that Jaitley had moved the 91st Constitutional Amendment Bill, which paved the way for changing the anti-defection law in 2003. The 91st amendment makes it mandatory for leaders switching political parties — whether singly or in groups — to resign as legislative members and seek re-

Cricket enthusiast, keen administrator, BCCI's go-to man on all matters legal

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, AUGUST 24

ARUN JAITLEY served Indian cricket for close to two decades, and was vice-president of the BCCI for five years since 2008. While Jaitley, who entered cricket administration in 1999 as the Delhi & District Cricket Association president, never assumed the offices of BCCI president or secretary, that didn't stop him from being a key figure in its operations.

Recalling the 2005 BCCI elections, eventually won by Sharad Pawar, former BCCI secretary and past national selector Sanjay Jagdale said, "When I asked him (Jaitley) why he pulled out (of the race), he told me, 'Pawar is a friend. I will wait for my turn.'"

In a statement, the BCCI on Saturday said,

"A remarkable statesman, Mr Jaitley was a passionate cricket follower and will always be remembered as one of the most able and respected cricket administrators. During his long tenure as the president of DDCA, he brought about a tremendous change..."

Jaitley was BCCI's go-to man on all things legal. "His opinion was sought in financial matters as well," Jagdale said. "When BCCI had issues with service tax, he led the Board's delegation to the government and settled it. Mr Jaitley was a genuine cricket lover, who often turned up at Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium."

BCCI old hand Ratnakar Shetty recalled how Jaitley's legal acumen had helped Indian players in 2001, when former England batsman Mike Denness, as match referee in the India-South Africa series, penalised six Indian players for various offences. Sachin Tendulkar

was given a suspended one-Test ban on ball-tampering charges. Virender Sehwag got a one-Test ban for excessive appealing, and Sourav Ganguly, Harbhajan Singh, Shiv Sunder Das and Deep Dasgupta all got suspended sentences. "Mr (Jagmohan) Dalmiya, then BCCI president, turned to Mr Jaitley, who advised BCCI to challenge the match referee's decision. We...refused to budge," Shetty said. The ICC backed Denness, but the South African board sided with BCCI and replaced Denness with Denis Lindsay for the next Test, which ICC declared "unofficial".

Calling Jaitley a problem solver and crisis manager, BCCI treasurer Anirudh Chaudhry said: "He had a very pragmatic approach to situations. He was an integral part of BCCI... (But) once he was in the Union Cabinet, not once did he interfere in BCCI (matters)."

tee. Despite being the Leader of Opposition, Jaitley, who was adjudged the Best Parliamentarian in 2010, became a member of the committee and helped the government draft the Jan Lokpal Bill.

Jaitley set the line for the party's spokespersons for nearly two decades. From his days as a party spokesperson, he gave the final draft of the party's stand to its talking heads.

Known as a mentor to many of today's leaders, there are not many in the Modi ministry today who, at least once, did not seek the blessings or support of Jaitley during their struggling days in political life. Union ministers Piyush Goyal, Dharmendra Pradhan, Nirmala Sitharaman,

Prakash Javadekar and Anurag Thakur and BJP general secretaries Bhupender Yadav were mentored by Jaitley. He also mentored Srikanth Sharma and Siddharth Nath Singh, ministers in the Uttar Pradesh government. He often extended his support to Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis.

Jaitley also did not hesitate to publicly laud Opposition MPs when they fared well. During his interactions with mediapersons, he often praised RSP Lok Sabha MP N.K. Premachandran of RSP and CPI(M)'s former Rajya Sabha member P. Rajeev — both come from Kerala and are strongly opposed to the BJP — for their eagerness to study Bills and debate in the House.

He hoped to pull through till end

COOMI KAPOOR
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

ARUN JAITLEY had cheated death so often that many of us believed till the last that he would pull through. Despite recurring bouts of ill health, he had earlier fought back while retaining his courage, humour, sharp memory and abiding interest in every aspect of life.

Jaitley seldom let on that he was battling a series of crippling medical conditions. An acute diabetic for long, he had a heart bypass two decades back. In September 2014, in the first Modi government, the BJP leader was advised a bariatric operation to reduce his weight and help control his diabetes. But the operation at a major private hospital went horribly wrong and rumours spread that he was at death's door. It was the remarkable efforts led by Dr Ranjit Gularia and Nikhil Tandon at AIIMS which saved his life.

The country's premier medical institute would come to his rescue several times in the next few years, as Jaitley was the first to acknowledge. Most of the doctors were his personal friends.

In 2018, Jaitley had another medical crisis. Having attended a party rally in Lucknow despite a bout of flu, he returned to Delhi with swollen feet and discovered

that his potassium levels and other parameters indicated his kidneys were failing and a replacement was required. Within his own family, and his wife Sangeeta's large family, there were many relatives who were keen to donate an organ and were a match.

In the early days of a transplant, the danger of infection is very high. So Jaitley stayed away from ministerial duties from April till August last year. However, after a stint operating from home and interacting with officials and select visitors over Facetime, he returned to office while taking care to avoid infection.

However, soon fate had an even uglier shock in store. Early this year Jaitley noticed a slight swelling near his knee as he was applying oil. The AIIMS doctors diagnosed it as early stages of sarcoma, one of the deadliest forms of cancer which starts in bones and connective tissue and can spread to any part.

Jaitley flew with his whole family, at his own expense, to the famed Sloan Kettering hospital in New York and the cancerous cells were scraped off. Though he kept off a ministerial role, he continued to take a very active role in the 2019 BJP election campaign, wrote blogs regularly and met BJP spokespersons daily at the party office.

But, in April, when he developed a cough that prevented him from speaking at a book release function, it was discovered

that the sarcoma had spread to his lungs. He flew back to the US in the midst of the poll campaign for a week, on a trip that was kept a total secret. On his return, he refused to give up his party duties till the election campaign was over. Against his doctors' advice, he worked long hours.

Despite the best efforts of doctors, the tumour couldn't be checked. His body did not react well to repeated bouts of chemotherapy though oral medication appeared to be working. In end of July, a large tumorous lump was drained out with only the rim of the malignant cells remaining.

Jaitley still remained hopeful that he would soon be on the mend. What came as a big shock in midst of this was the sudden death of Sushma Swaraj, a political contemporary, on August 6. In a statement, Jaitley said he felt "broken".

On August 9, his blood pressure rose and he complained of breathlessness and was shifted to AIIMS. But he gradually slipped into semi-consciousness. In the last few days his kidneys had again started failing.

His complicated medical condition inevitably took a toll on his heart, and he died of cardiac arrest Saturday.

Throughout his long struggle, his wife Sangeeta, known universally as Dolly, was a pillar of support.

Ministers, leaders pay respects at AIIMS, residence

ASTHA SAXENA & ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

SENIOR DOCTORS at AIIMS, where Arun Jaitley was admitted to the Cardio-Neuro Centre on August 9 following complaints of breathlessness, on Saturday said the former Union minister's medical condition deteriorated late Friday night.

"He suffered multiple cardiac arrests in the morning, after which a team of doctors tried to revive him," a senior doctor said, adding that they failed to revive him.

In a statement on Saturday, AIIMS said, "It is with profound grief that we inform about the sad demise of Shri Arun Jaitley, Hon'ble Member of Parliament & Former Finance Minister at 12:07 pm..."

Political leaders arrived at AIIMS soon after the hospital announced his death. From Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Smriti Irani to former minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Congress leaders such as Jyotiraditya Scindia, they all stood with the family. Around 3.30 pm, the body reached the family's residence in south Delhi's Kailash Colony. Among the first to arrive there was

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly and senior BJP leader Vijender Gupta, who was also present at AIIMS. Recalling his association with Jaitley during their Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) days, Gupta said, "He was a mentor figure for me. My political career would not have started but for him. I was around 20 years old, aspiring to contest the DUSU polls, but some court cases were coming in the way. On a Sunday, he (Jaitley) opened his chamber, which was then near Sis Ganj Sahib Gurudwara in Chandni Chowk, and got a petition filed in court. I could contest the polls because of that..."

President Ram Nath Kovind, Home Minister and BJP chief Amit Shah, Union ministers Harsh Vardhan, Jitendra Singh and BJP working president J.P. Nadda, party MPs Vijay Goel and Manoj Tiwari, among others, offered floral tributes at the family's residence.

Goel also recalled his association with Jaitley in 1971, during the DUSU polls while in Sri Ram College of Commerce. "We were part of the same team in which he was DUSU president and I was the general secretary... We took out a rally during the Emergency under his leadership," he said. The last rites will be performed at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi on Sunday.



Shri Arun Jaitley possessed a unique ability of discharging the most onerous responsibility with poise, passion and studied understanding. His passing leaves a huge void in our public life and our intellectual ecosystem.

RAMNATH KOVIND, PRESIDENT

Jaitley strove hard and burnt the midnight oil to bring about a consensus across the political spectrum in ushering the revolutionary GST regime. He made immense contribution to public discourse on various issues...

VENKAIHA NAIDU, VICE PRESIDENT

I am deeply saddened by the passing of Arun Jaitley. I express my condolences to his family...

RANJAN GOGOI, CJI

The sheer range of his thoughts and vision was amazing. This, coupled with his formidable legal acumen and brilliant oratory, made him one of the most outstanding Parliamentarians of all time. The last three to four months, even when life was ebbing out of him, he kept on enriching the national discourse through his blogs.

SUNIL ARORA, CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Shri Arun Jaitley's wit, his understanding of diverse issues, leadership qualities and penchant for detail, earned him accolades from everyone. An able administrator, a mentor and a person whom we could look up to...

OM BIRLA, LS SPEAKER

He was a man with multifaceted personality, infectious smile, compassion, true integrity... I have had opportunity to see him work closely in Parliament and the government. He was an ideal Parliamentarian, a forceful orator with knowledge, wit and humour...

HARIVANSH, RS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN



None of the guns fired during the final salute.

Gun salute that wasn't: Police report says cartridges were damp

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, AUGUST 24

AN INVESTIGATION by the Supaul police has found that the reason none of the 21 rifles fired during the final salute to former Bihar chief minister Jagannath Mishra on 21 August, was "moisture", more so because of the area being flood-hit. The police are yet to submit their report.

Sources told The Sunday Express that it has been found that "blank cartridges did not fire because of being moist". "It may be because of the storage of cartridges at a damp place. It is possible that the pack that contained blank cartridges to be fired was not repacked after taking out some cartridges," said a source requesting anonymity.

"Some jawans were given a fresh set of blank cartridges later and they fired. It suggested that the arms were fine," said a Supaul police source. Supaul SP Mridunyan Choudhary did not respond to calls or text messages.

Bihar Director General of Police Guptheshwar Pandey said, "We are bringing out a comprehensive order on the upkeep and maintenance of arms and ammunition, reiterating annual firing practice, physical verification of arms stores by senior police officers. It would also ensure that the Police Manual on ways to avoid moisture are adhered to."

The first such instance in the history of the state where all 21 rifles in a gun salute failed to fire has put a question mark on the maintenance of firearms and cartridges at weapons stores of the Bihar Police. There is a weapons store in each of the state's 40 police districts, besides 16 establishments of the Government Railway Police, Bihar Military Police (BMP) and Home Guards.

Some armourers who have carried out inspection of weapons stores at several districts in the last 10 years said the storage of weapons and cartridges at "damp" stores, at times because of "leaking roofs", is a major area of concern.

One reason for this is the erratic physical inspection of weapons stores by concerned officers. "Monitoring should be made a mandatory quarterly exercise," said a police officer.

Another major area of concern, said a police officer, was "the absence of annual firing practice". "Some districts have not conducted firearms practice for six-seven years now."

The Bihar Police has, in all, 303 rifles, 763 bolt action rifles, SLRs, INSAS rifles, Amogh rifles and AK-47s.

Oppn leaders sent back from Srinagar airport

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SRINAGAR,
AUGUST 24

A DELEGATION of Opposition leaders including former Congress president Rahul Gandhi flew to Srinagar on Saturday but were sent back to Delhi from the airport. The leaders slammed the denial of entry, with a CPM politburo statement calling it "daylight robbery of rights" guaranteed by the Constitution.

In a letter that they wanted forwarded to Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik, the leaders said, "We are here at the public invitation of the honourable Governor who asked us to visit and see for ourselves the peace and normalcy that prevails."

The delegation included Congress's Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma and K C Venugopal, CPM's Sitaram Yechury, DMK's Tiruchi Siva, TMC's Dinesh Trivedi, CPI's D Raja, NCP's Majeed Memom, RJD's Manoj Jha, D Kupaendra Reddy of JD(S) and Sharad Yadav of IJD.

The leaders said that "the objections to the delegation's movement outside Srinagar Airport and the apprehension expressed in the order are baseless". Recording their "strong objection to the basis of our detention", they said it was prima facie "undemocratic and unconstitutional".

When asked at a media briefing why the delegation was not allowed to enter to Srinagar city, state government spokesperson Rohit Kansal read out Friday's tweet by the J&K Department of Information and Public Relations: "... Attempts should not be made by senior political leaders to disturb the gradual restoration of normal life. Political leaders are requested to cooperate and not visit Srinagar..."



Congress's Rahul Gandhi and Ghulam Nabi Azad, CPI's D Raja and other opposition leaders after arriving in Delhi. Amit Mehra

Press Council moves SC, backs J&K restrictions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

The Press Council of India (PCI) has moved the Supreme Court stating that restrictions on communications facilities in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of revocation of special status under Article 370 was in the "interest of security and sovereignty of the nation".

In an application seeking implementation in a petition filed by Kashmir Times executive editor Anuradha Bhasin, who has demanded lifting of the "communication blackout" in J&K, the Council said "very aptly, there is no mention in the entire Writ Petition about abrogation of most contentions provision of the Constitution by Parliament, which has caused the restrictions on communication facilities and other facilities in the interest of security and sovereignty of the nation".

The plea referred to duties of the Council as laid down in the Press Council of India Act, and said "it is evident" from the provisions that "applicant is duty bound not only to ensure the freedom of press, but also to ensure on the part of newspapers, news agencies and journalists, the maintenance of high standards of public taste and foster a due sense of both rights and responsibilities of citizenship and to keep under review any development likely to restrict the supply and dissemination of news of public interest and importance".

The application also stated that PCI framed Norms of Journalistic Conduct, and that clause 23 of the Norms "prescribes for self-regulation in reporting by journalists in matter of paramount national, social or individual interests...".

Bhasin's petition had come up for the SC's consideration on August 16. The court deferred the hearing saying it would like to give some more time to the issue.

Meanwhile, the SC is likely to hear on Monday a writ petition filed by CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury seeking issuance of a writ of Habeas Corpus to direct authorities to produce the party's J&K leader and former MLA Mohammed Yusuf Tarigami.

In Valley town, VHP man pleads his detained Kashmiri friend's case

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
HANDWARA, AUGUST 24

OUTSIDE THE Government Guest House in this north Kashmir town, an improbable scene was unfolding. Rakesh Khanna, a member of the Amritsar Vishwa Hindu Parishad, lamenting the absence of "insaniyat", was pleading with the guards to let him go past the black iron gates. Because inside was his friend, Aijaz Ahmed Sofi, president of the Handwara market association, now under detention.

Sofi, and son of a former legislator, was detained on August 9.

Standing at the gates of the guest house, Khanna, a former president of the Amritsar market association and a member of an organisation that had been most vocal in demanding the abrogation of Article 370, said Sofi was "a friend of 29 years" and almost "a family member".

Khanna, a kirana and textile trader with family business links in Kashmir from his father's time, took out his mobile phone to show pictures of himself at an RSS shakha, campaigning for the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections, and dismantling a Pakistan stall at a textile fair in Amritsar a couple of years ago.

"Everything was going well. I

camp in a rented house in Srinagar for months at a time because of my business. Things had become peaceful. Tourists had started coming. Ab saara kaam phir se kharab...," he said.

Rukaiyah, Sofi's wife, had sent word to him for help. "That's why I somehow got here from Srinagar, taking a lift in a private car. She and their children have been trying to meet her husband for days, but they are not being allowed," Khanna said.

The Sofis are an affluent family. The son is studying to write the IAS exams in Delhi. The two daughters study in Srinagar where they stay at Khanna's home. At their home, Rukaiyah said the police had come looking for her husband at midnight on August 4, and not believing her when she said he was away in Srinagar, they searched all the rooms. She said they came once more, and when Sofi returned, he went to the SP and gave himself up. "He told me, 'I don't have a gun, I am not underground, why this drama of raiding the house? I am going to the police station, and I will ask them to arrest me,'" his wife recalled.

The guest house, where Sofi has been detained, has been turned into a CRPF camp. At its heavily guarded gates, Khanna pleaded with the guards: "He's

my friend, he's like my brother, he's a social worker, his wife is ill, his children are crying. Why are you doing this to an innocent man? What is his fault? Why have you arrested him? He hasn't hurt anyone in his life," he told the guards.

Sofi's only fault, Khanna told *The Indian Express*, was that he had taken part in a dharna in Srinagar some years ago. "There's a video clip of him raising slogans that resurfaced recently. Now what the big deal if someone raises a couple of slogans? Who hasn't done that?" he said.

The guards told him politely that they did not have the authority to let in any visitors, and that he needed a written letter from the SHO of Handwara police station, but they agreed to bring Sofi to the gate. He stood on tiptoes behind the tall gate, only his face showing, as Khanna gave him an update on his mother, wife and children. As the two friends, one an ardent VHP member, and the other a Kashmiri Muslim who the authorities consider a threat to law and order, faced each other across the closed iron gate, Sofi broke down, and Khanna left for the police station, assuring him he would try his best to see if his wife and children could meet him.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Block development council polls soon

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, AUGUST 24

THE JAMMU and Kashmir administration on Saturday announced the decision to hold Block Development Council elections.

Sheetal Nanda, Secretary, Rural Development, said "Elections will be held to 316 Block Development Councils across the state, and preparations are on."

The administration has set a

target of September-end to complete the exercise, she added.

At the daily briefing in Srinagar on Saturday, J&K Administration's spokesperson Rohit Kansal called it the "next step towards operationalising and institutionalising the Panchayati Raj mechanism in the state".

Nanda said: "The first step (towards holding the polls) is to conduct the reservation exercise, which has been completed in the Valley and is in its last stages in Jammu division. After that,

(we will take up) election notification. The Chief Election Officer, under whose supervision and conduct the elections will be conducted, is also in the process of getting everything ready."

On the law and order situation, Kansal said daytime restrictions have now been lifted from areas under the jurisdiction of 69 police stations across the Valley. "This is up from 50 police station (areas)... In Jammu division, the figure is 81 police stations without any daytime restrictions," he said.

AYYAJ TAMBOLI, BIJAPUR DM

AWARD CATEGORY: HEALTH

From zero surgeries to 300 this year: How a defunct district hospital was revived in Maoist hotbed

DIPANKAR GHOSE
BIJAPUR, AUGUST 24

IN THE centre of Bijapur town, where signs of conflict abound — be it large 'Fight against Maoism' posters or the Mine Protection Vehicles parked outside the police station — is an oasis of modernity: the District Hospital.

When *The Indian Express* visited the hospital in September 2018, the building thronged with people from across the district. But until 2016, when the building was renovated, almost every patient was referred to hospitals in Jagdalpur, about 150 km away.

However, over the last two years, a maternal and neo-natal care centre, called Umang, with 50 beds was developed, and new operation theatres were built. The hospital, where no surgeries were held in the last two years, witnessed 300 this year.

The individual who spear-



headed the modernisation drive is Ayyaj Tamboli, the 37-year-old district magistrate of Bijapur.

"The most important challenge was human resources. In a place like Bijapur, which has a tribal population and is affected by Naxalism, this challenge is magnified. We tried to attract human resources through different innovative strategies and it worked



Tamboli receives the award from Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari; (right) at the Bijapur hospital.



Express

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 Associate Partners: [Logos]

well. Spirited people joined the hospital and they have taken it up as their initiative. So it is their success," Tamboli said after receiving *The Indian Express* Excellence in Governance Awards that celebrated the finest work done by DMs across the country on August 21.

"I was posted to Bijapur in April 2016. My senior colleagues in Raipur had told me that health is something I should concentrate on. I realised that most tribal patients want either to be operated near home or not at all," he had told *The Indian Express* earlier.

Madkam Goma is in the hospital, attending to his father who is recovering after being operated for a tumour. "He had the tumour for many years. Earlier, a doctor in this hospital had asked us to go to Jagdalpur for treatment. But we didn't have enough money. Recently, an ASHA worker in our village told us that the hospital had improved. So we visited again and he was treated," says Goma.

Security officers stationed here admit that prior to the renovation of the hospital, most personnel injured in blasts were

rushed to Raipur or Jagdalpur in helicopters and that took time. A commandant of a battalion near Gangaloor in Bijapur, who did not wish to be named, said, "Now most of the surgeries take place here and the doctors are excellent too... A camaraderie has also developed. On the request of doctors, our CRPF jawans often visit the hospital and donate blood because iron deficiency is common among the people here," says the commandant.

While modern infrastructure has helped improve diagnosis and treatment, it is human capital that has been the catalyst. These doctors were lured to Bijapur from different parts of the country with attractive contracts and the idea that they would have the opportunity to shoulder greater responsibilities as opposed to what they would have in bigger cities. These doctors live in a hostel complex in the hospital premises with their spouses, who have also been offered jobs with the district administration.

"We incentivised doctors to come and live in Bijapur. Some visited the place and then decided to stay," says Tamboli.

Saifai medical college ragging; 7 suspended

Lucknow: After a group of students was ragged, the Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences at Saifai has suspended seven students of the 2018-batch for three months and imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on each. ENS

Kerala mourns lifeguard who died saving woman

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
AUGUST 24



Johnson Gabriel

A LIFEGUARD for 13 years, Johnson Gabriel was credited with saving at least 10 lives at popular beach destinations in the city. On Wednesday, he dived in the choppy waters and saved the life of a woman.

On Saturday, a day after the body of the 43-year-old was fished out, people of Kerala recalled his sacrifice.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan posted on Facebook, "Lifeguard Johnson Gabriel...daringly saved a life, disregarding his (own) safety. This government would be with his family."

Gabriel's wife Shalini, 39, said, "I am proud of what he did — saving a life. His name — Gabriel —

means guardian angel. In his life, and death, my husband proved to be a true guardian of lives."

On Wednesday, a woman allegedly jumped in the water on Shankumugham beach, disregarding warnings. Gabriel also jumped in the turbulent sea and got hold of her. He swam back and managed to hand her over to another lifeguard. But huge waves engulfed him and smashed him against concrete blocks.

Chandran Nair, chief coordinator of lifeguards at the Tourism Department, said, "He had saved at least 10 to 12 people over 13 years in his job as a lifeguard."

Use of individuals' data a concern: Srikrishna

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

RETIRED SUPREME Court judge, Justice B N Srikrishna, who headed the government-appointed Committee two years ago to go into drafting a data-privacy law for India, spoke on a variety of issues and difficulties in operationalising a system in India that would ensure safety and privacy of data collected.

Justice Srikrishna was speaking at an event in New Delhi hosted by Mozilla and the Internet Freedom Foundation, to mark two years since the Supreme Court's judgement which decreed that the Right to Privacy was a fundamental right.

Speaking on the bid to link Aadhaar with election data to secure the identity of voters, he said,

"Individuals' data being used in election is a matter of concern. We have talked about Cambridge Analytica. Then we will have Delhi Analytica, Mumbai Analytica, Chennai Analytica etc. It is here in our own backyard."

Asked if the internet in India should be declared a public utility so it could be regulated, Srikrishna said it was not a good idea.

On the government's proposed law to ensure data privacy, Justice Srikrishna said his Committee had given a draft Bill to the government but he was not aware of the government's plans currently. He also spoke of privacy needing to be protected from both excessive state control and the ability of private parties to access and use it in a way that violates citizen rights. "I don't exist for the state, it is other way round. State exists for me".

11 IDEA EXCHANGE

NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

“Absurd comparisons are being made, that the US is growing at 3.5... But they are 10 times bigger... When Vajpayee remitted office, we were a \$480 bn economy, when Dr Singh left, we were \$2 trillion. Where are we today?”



WHY ANAND SHARMA

In the past month, despite opposing many of the govt's measures — abrogation of Article 370, the triple talaq Bill, arrest of former home minister P Chidambaram — the Congress has failed to mobilise support for its positions. Plus, after being stuck in an internal struggle for a non-Gandhi party president, it went on to opt

for Sonia Gandhi again, with many of its top leaders speaking in different voices. With three state polls around the corner, Anand Sharma, the Deputy Leader of the Congress in Rajya Sabha and a CWC member, admits to it being a difficult time for the party, and believes strengthening at district level will help revitalise Congress



“It was best possible solution (for Cong chief). Ms Gandhi commands respect... At least there is stability now, workers know we are getting ready for polls... We have to go back to giving autonomy to provincial panels...”

MANOJ CG: How bad is it for the Congress, in terms of optics and perception, to have one of your senior leaders, P Chidambaram, arrested in an alleged case of corruption?

I think it is not good for any political party. In this case, the government has been selective in its approach. Its every move is backed by very strong propaganda. So there are selective leaks, there are plants, and the person is vilified even before they can offer any defence. Whatever alleged offence is there in case of P Chidambaram... but the manner in which the investigating agencies have moved raises questions about liberty, about the personal freedom of an individual, and whether the allegations will stand scrutiny in a court of law.

Also, what we need to reflect on in a larger context is that under what circumstances should arrest be a must? Was the government hunting a terrorist or somebody accused of a heinous offence, or an individual who will run away from law enforcement authorities?... A former home minister, a sitting Member of Parliament, a senior lawyer of the country, is not going to disappear. The images which went out of country, in this case and in many other cases, are not a positive reflection on India as a strong constitutional democracy.

There have been cases in recent times where the judiciary should have been more vigilant and alert in upholding the foundational values that are critical when it comes to detentions of political leaders, like it is happening in J&K. In a democracy, if you have leaders of the Opposition being prevented from visiting a state, people being detained for weeks and weeks... Where are the fundamental rights? The courts, the high courts and the Supreme Court, are the custodians when it comes to guaranteeing the provisions of the Constitution. But we find now that every issue is being kicked down the road... Whether it is the case of former chief ministers being detained in J&K, whether it is in this case (Chidambaram's arrest)... But what has gone wrong, and very disturbingly so, is that when an immediate intervention is required, they are not forthcoming at all. Institutional strength and integrity in those institutions which are supposed to uphold our democracy and Constitution, if they are weakening or abdicating even in perception... In case of judiciary, I have no hesitation in saying that if they don't intervene in time... it's meaningless. Not only in the case of detentions, but also in this (Chidambaram's) case. It's a cause of worry.

MANOJ CG: But in the case of detentions in J&K, it took several days for the opposition parties to even come together and organise a protest. And the initiative came from the DMK, not from the Congress.

I think an effort was made, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting was called. Leaders of the Congress and other opposition parties went to Srinagar, Jammu, but they were not allowed to come out of airports, not allowed to meet anyone. Even the formidable unity of the Opposition which was there on these issues... Certain political parties have been neutralised... The Congress party cannot tell other parties what their view should be. People of the country have not been adequately informed or sensitised. The government has near total control on the electronic media. What we were seeing before the elections has not stopped but expanded... the hypernationalism etc. Today, for a large number of people, fundamental rights, liberty, these are not fundamental issues. The 'other', patriotism, ultra-nationalism and the binary that has been created... The Opposition will have to stand up. This country needs a balancing of the narrative. At present, it's distorted and swings in favour of the BJP-RSS propaganda. That needs effective countering.

LIZ MATHEW: But what is stopping the Congress or any other opposition party from mobilising people on the issues that you mentioned?

...Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh was a composite state that joined the Union of India. Earlier too states have been carved out. Union Territories have been created, states have been divided, UTs upgraded... But never before has any state been divided and then downgraded to two UTs. This is a first. That is where the mobilisation is needed... Now there is a concern that this can be done to other states too. For any change in the territory of a state, the wishes of the people have to be factored in. That means a recommendation from the elected Assemblies, as it happened in case of Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh, Bihar-Jharkhand... There has been a constitutional manner in which these things have been addressed.

‘The courts are custodians of Constitution. But issues now being kicked down road, J&K or Chidambaram’

Deputy leader of Congress in Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma expresses worry over judiciary not intervening on time and the state of the economy, asserts “firm action” from Oppn soon, insists poll defeats a collective responsibility, and says Gandhis integral to Congress



Former Union minister Anand Sharma with Deputy Associate Editor Manoj CG in *The Indian Express* newsroom. Amit Mehra

The opposition parties are talking to each other. There was a *dharna* at Jantar Mantar (Delhi). The numbers (of opposition parties) are an issue. In the coming weeks, there will be some firm action by the Opposition.

LIZ MATHEW: It is not just on the issue of Kashmir, we don't see the Congress raising other issues strongly either. Has the party given up?

No... Since the election results came out on May 23, the Congress and the other opposition parties are coming to grips with the reality. After such an intense election... to regroup and move towards agitational politics... it does not happen at the press of a button. Parties will have to prepare at various levels, and we had to settle our own internal matters as well. To some extent, that may have caused a delay. Also, some of our state party units are preparing for elections which are around the corner. Some states are fighting floods... But there will be a time when agitational politics and mass mobilisation will come; the opposition parties are talking.

LIZ MATHEW: But the natural calamities do not seem to be affecting the BJP's poll preparations in Haryana, Maharashtra or Jharkhand, while your leaders are talking in different voices.

Well, we are more democratic. We may sound chaotic on occasions, but at least we give freedom to our people. Elections will be fought. You are right that the BJP is marching ahead... It's triumphalism, they are filled with euphoria, they have unprecedented resources at their disposal. They are the richest political party in the world... But elections will be contested. Yes, they have won in parliamentary elections, it was a big victory. They have increased their vote share, they have expanded. But still they are less than 37.5 per cent. We cannot draw much comfort from that, but there they are. A majority of the country is still not with them. They may have crossed the 300 mark, but in both percentage and numerical terms they are nowhere near the past Congress victories of Indira Gandhi... So there is a huge difference. We have to focus on our organisation and ways to revitalise the party.

LIZ MATHEW: Do you agree with your party leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi that the Congress should not have demonised Prime Minister Modi?

When have we demonised? There were questions to be raised on PM Narendra Modi's reckless decisions, on demonisation, which hurt the economy

and took away millions of jobs. It is not demonisation, it is the correct thing for the Opposition to do. The government cannot function in this manner, taking arbitrary decisions... The corruption allegations were real. Those issues had to be raised, whether by the opposition parties in Parliament and outside, or by the media. I will still say that the fundamental questions in the Rafale deal have not been answered... I strongly disagree with anybody saying that this was demonisation.

SANDEEP SINGH: As a former commerce minister and senior Congress leader, how do you plan to take the economic slowdown issue to the people?

That is our first priority. This government is not going to do any course correction or listen to us. Their approach is not democratic... The government is running away from any discussion on the economy. We cannot call it a downturn, or a slowdown. I would call the economic situation grave. Fudging of numbers, embellishing numbers have gone on for too long.

The first issue is unemployment, layoffs... Nobody knows the real number. As per some conservative numbers, we have lost three-and-a-half to six million jobs in the last three months, not less than that. The automobile sector alone would be a million-plus. And another three million could be lost by November. That is what the fears are. The auto-component sector has lost a large number of jobs. Showrooms have shut down, and there have been a large number of job losses there too. The (slowdown) is not confined anymore to the auto sector, it has expanded. Now, Parle could lay off 10,000 people. Britannia is laying off another few thousand people. Other sectors too. The Prime Minister has said

that 75 per cent of the capacity of the industry is being utilised. The numbers keep changing... The government's official number is now 73 per cent. This means that 27 per cent of the manufacturing capacity of the country is idle. The real number is 40 per cent. If we do not do something drastic to infuse capital... Private capital is not available, it has to come from the State. But public investments are not taking place because the government is broke. Look at the revenue situation of the government, where is the money going to come from? It is not going to come from the Prime Minister's speeches or the claims of the ministers. I am horrified when the Finance Minister says that we still remain the fastest growing economy.

The (growth) number went down to 5.8 in Q4, it may go down further. What kind of absurd comparisons are being made, that America is growing at three-and-a-half... But they are almost 10 times bigger than you. The five trillion dollar economy (number) is good, it should have happened given the growth numbers between 2004 and 2011-12. There was a slowdown (then), there was a global financial crisis, and the fact is that when Atal Bihari Vajpayee remitted office, we were a \$480-odd billion economy, and when Dr Manmohan Singh left, we were almost \$2 trillion. Where are we today? This is the sixth year of the Modi government. If we are growing, we should have done far better, we should have been three-and-a-half (trillion dollar economy). But we have not even touched three. We are still struggling and now falling again. All the engines of the Indian economy are stuttering.

The real unemployment numbers, the official numbers are coming... They may delay release of the data... But any economist will tell you that India's real unem-

ployment today is 20 per cent. It is frightening. Where are we growing?

This is where the mass mobilisation will have to happen, particularly among the youth and farmers. If the economy does not revive, for a country of our size, where the median age is about 25 years, what will happen to the young people — crime, social strife. So how long will this talk of hypernationalism and polarisation help the country? We will work out a plan with other opposition parties. The (mobilisation) will happen.

MANOJ CG: The more things change, the more they remain the same for your party. After all the talk of having a non-Gandhi president, you have gone back to a Gandhi again.

It was the best possible solution. We had a marathon CWC meeting... Ms (Sonia) Gandhi commands trust, faith and respect. A large number of people felt that since we are heading for elections immediately... It took time for us to persuade her. She accepted. At least there is stability now and the workers know that we are getting ready for the state elections in Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand. There are many states where the Congress has been becoming weaker and weaker, we have to go back to what we always did. We were strong in the mandals. Our cadre-feeding frontal organisations, the youth and labour organisations, were strong. We had strong district committees. That is where the thrust and the focus needs to be... More functional space and autonomy to provincial committees and state committees to take decisions. Maximum decisions should be taken in state capitals, except the larger policy decisions. We have to look at some structural changes to revive the party.

SEEMA CHISHTI: In 1952, when Jawaharlal Nehru won the first general election, he was the tallest leader and the others were nearly wiped out. Yet those leaders continued their political role. Can the Congress learn from that?

We have to persevere and these are difficult times for the Congress and the country; we owe it to those who gave us freedom. We are the inheritors of an ideology. We have to resurrect ourselves. If the Congress does not become strong, the balance would be lost. The balance must be restored, otherwise we will not have any democracy... There is a national need for the Congress to be strengthened.

RAVISH TIWARI: After the defeat in the 2014 and 2019 general election, there

was no accountability fixed in your party. How do you revitalise the Congress in such a situation?

Rahul Gandhi accepted his responsibility and decided to step down. I am of the view... that it cannot be individual accountability. It has to be collective because there are so many people involved at various levels. Honest reflection and serious introspection have to be done. It cannot be delayed.

P VAIDYANATHAN IYER: If the Congress considers the failure a collective responsibility, then why did the CWC not demand a discussion on the AK Antony report on the reasons for the 2014 defeat?

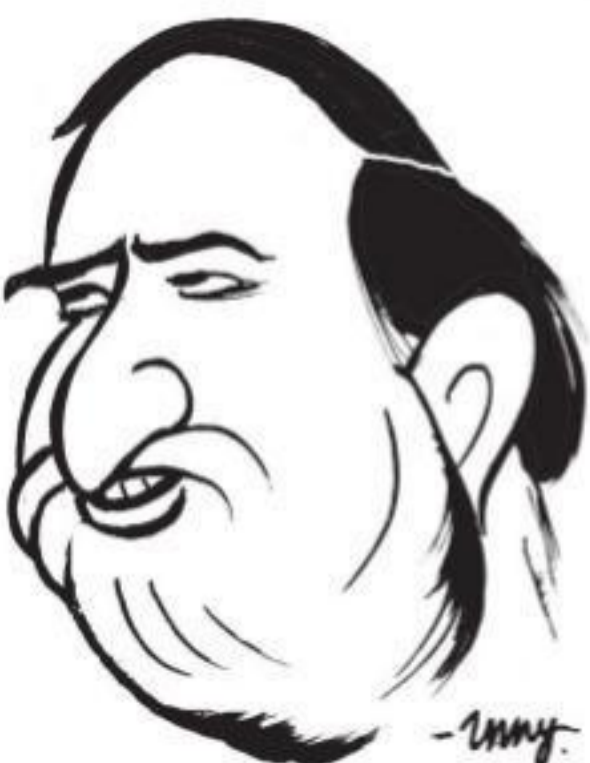
I can't go in the past. What is important is that 2019 should be different... We must have introspection and deliberations, look at the structural issues and other factors. The worry now is that instead of getting traction, we got attacked for certain things that we said. We were right in our approach but there was a delay. This is where introspection will help.

P VAIDYANATHAN IYER: Despite having several leaders in the party, why is the Congress back to the Gandhi parivar for leadership?

We have leaders in the state. We have chief ministers and former CMs... Even now we have gone by consensus. It was a rare unanimous view of the CWC this time... We do not see the Gandhis as separate from the mainstream Congress. After all, it has been a long relationship. They have been elected by the party. The way we look at it from Delhi may not be the ground reality as seen from the states or the districts. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi will remain integral to the party and its decision-making process.

AMRITH LAL: The 'consensus' you mentioned always seems to be in favour of the status quo. Why does the Congress not have elections to party posts?

The major national parties in India follow consensus, not nominations. Historically, the Congress has been a consensus-based party. Even prior to Independence, we didn't have balloting... If there is no consensus on a person who has been given charge for a state or district, he or she will collapse. So consensus means inclusion... Through consensus you not only give responsibility to the person who has the maximum support, but also ensure that the others are not excluded in the process. If we don't do that, we are already weak in many states, and we will end up losing more people.



12 BIG PICTURE

HOJAI 32.99% PEOPLE OUT OF DRAFT NRC

WILL I now have to drag my old mother to the Foreigners' Tribunal? Or will she be sent to a detention camp? Isn't it better to poison her instead?" asks an agitated Manoj Das, 40, a businessman of automobile parts in Assam's Hojai town.

His mother Kamala Das, soon to turn 70, is among 40 lakh people in the state who did not make it to the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC) that was published in July last year and who now wait in nervous anticipation for the final list that is to be released on August 31, the date mandated by the Supreme Court.

On this list hinge several potent political questions — who is a citizen, who isn't; what is home, what is away; who is an outsider, who is a son of the soil. Yet, the NRC process, which seeks to establish Indian citizenship of persons living in Assam primarily through decades-old tattered documents and oral evidence, has struggled to untangle this citizenship mesh.

Holding a laminated paper, yellow and torn at the edges, Das says it was all his mother had to prove her citizenship — a certificate from 1948 declaring her father, Bisweswar Das, as a refugee migrating into India from East Pakistan. But the authorities had said it wasn't good enough as a legacy document, and Kamala Das's name was kept out of the draft list. She is the only one in the Das family to not make it — Das, his father, wife and children are in.

Das says his mother had a chance when her claim came up for appeal — Kamala Das had studied up to Class 1 in a school in Sivrasagar district of Assam and Das could get a document to prove that. "But the school had no documents from that long ago. So I could not submit any new document during a hearing in 2018. If my mother's name does not appear in the final NRC, then what?" worries Das.

He claims his mother's relatives — a manager and the son of a dead brother — attempted to establish their linkage to Bisweswar Das and have made it to the draft list.

Around 20 km away, in Doboka town of Hojai district, Abdul Matin, a 33-year-old businessman, is perturbed. His wife Nasema Begum, 24, has not made it to the draft — he says a certificate by a gram panchayat linking her to her family was rejected. During the claims round, he submitted their *mikamanna* and is now hoping she will make it to the final list when it is released on August 31.

"The tension does not go away — it is affecting work, life. We both keep talking about what will happen next. If she has to go to the tribunal, then what? And if the tribunal rules against her, how do we ensure she does not end up at a detention camp?" says Matin.

The Deadline

Ahead of the August 31 date for the release of the final NRC list, the fate of lakhs of people in Assam is caught in a new politics. *The Sunday Express* visits two places which frame that politics — ABHISHEK SAHA in Hojai, the district with the highest exclusion rate as per government data from the draft NRC, and TORA AGARWALA in Dhubri, a Muslim-majority border district that is among those with the fewest people out — to tell stories of what it is to be a name on a list, or off it

PHOTOGRAPHS
TORA AGARWALA & ABHISHEK SAHA



(C'wise from left) Sisters Nisha, Niyati are out due to a 'mistake' in their father's name; Subimal Hajong, an ex-SB jawan, wonders what being out of NRC means for his service record; at her Dhubri home, Ayesha Bewi banks on a lawyer's card to save her

number of Bengali Hindus, its core vote-bank in Assam, don't find place in the final NRC. It's this worry that has prompted a softening of its approach on the NRC.

Dev, the BJP's Hojai MLA, says he is just back from a visit to the house of Madan Mullick, one of the 855 'martyrs' of the six-year-long Assam Movement of the 1980s. His wife has received a notice from a Foreigners' Tribunal and she and her son are unlikely to be in the NRC.

"You can well imagine that if this is the fate of a martyr, what might befall a common man, a Bengali of migrant origin. The country was divided on the basis of religion. Therefore, there needs to be a mechanism to ensure that Hindus who have come seeking refuge are not excluded from the NRC. Everything cannot be dictated by clauses and rules. There also needs to be some wisdom on the part of those making decisions. That's my only appeal," Dev says.

BJP leaders in Assam now hope that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, will come to the rescue of non-Muslims excluded from the NRC. The Bill relaxes the eligibility rules for immigrants belonging to six minority (non-Muslim) religions — Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians — from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Speaking over the phone, Janunamukh MLA and Badruddin Ajmal's son Abdur Rahim Ajmal says the worry is that "genuine Indians" will be let out.

"Families have attended so many hearings, and yet it is not clear whether their names will be included or not. During the NRC updation process, people travelled from far-off places to attend hearings. Now we have full faith in the Supreme Court that no genuine Indian will be let out of the NRC," Abdur Ajmal says.

As Hojai's unique character means almost no community has been spared the NRC axe, the BJP, sources in the party say, will have a problem on its hands if a large

NRC COUNTDOWN

SIX DAYS TO AUGUST 31

are people from other Northeastern communities — like the Hajongs and Manipuris.

At his home in Dherapatra, a remote village in Hojai, former Sashtara Seema Bal jawan Subimal Hajong, 52, sits with a sheaf of documents and a photo of himself in uniform. Hajong, who was posted in Srinagar during the Kargil war, is not in the draft NRC. Neither are his wife Kadoli and mother Durgamoni.

"It has become a huge headache for me. I am not scared of being taken to a detention camp, but what will people say if my name is not in the NRC? They will say, look, Subimal worked as a jawan but has no documents to prove he is Indian," says Hajong.

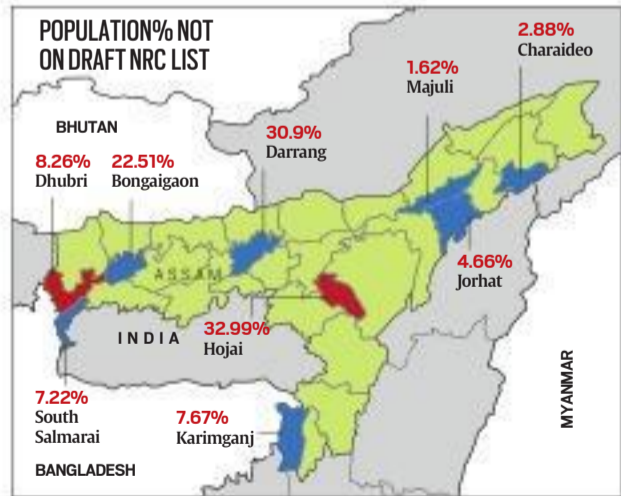
In Hojai, everyone has a sense of rootlessness, says historian Ankur Tamuli Phukan, who is from Lanka town in the district.

"Hojai is a district of migrants, whether Assamese or Bengali or Muslims or indigenous communities like the Manipuris. The district has a complex, interesting history, and

Outside an NRC Seva Kendra in Doboka, sisters Nisha, 50, and Niyati Acharjee, 47, wait to get their documents verified. Their names were not in the draft NRC because of a "mistake" in their father Gyanendra's name in the 1971 voter list.

Among those excluded are Assamese speakers too. Ratul Saikia, 45, his wife Bichitra, 38, and his two sons — one 21 and the other 12 — have been left out of the draft NRC. A livid Saikia says, "They say the exclusion is due to some technical reason which will be sorted out. We hope that happens. But we are not happy at all about this. If the indigenous are left out, who will be in? This rush to publish the NRC, discarding the state government's demands for re-verification, could lead to an NRC with errors."

Some names were missing from the list



NRC OVER THE YEARS

- 1951:** NRC is first compiled in Assam, based on Census of that year
- 2005:** Decision to update 1951 NRC is taken at tripartite meeting between the Centre, Assam government and All Assam Students' Union
- 2010:** A pilot project to update NRC is notified in two revenue circles in Barpeta and Kamrup districts. However, the government temporarily suspends the project after four persons are killed and scores injured in reported police firing on a demonstration taken out to protest against alleged anomalies in the process of enumeration
- 2015:** NRC updation process begins in Assam, under direct monitoring of the Supreme Court
- 1951:** NRC is first compiled in Assam, based on Census of that year
- AUGUST 31, 2015:** Last date for submitting applications for inclusion in NRC. 3.29 crore people sign up
- DECEMBER 31, 2017:** Partial NRC draft is published, with only 1.9 crore names out of 3.29 crore
- JULY 30, 2018:** Final draft is published leaving out over 40 lakh applicants. Consequently, nearly 36 lakh people file their 'claims while' objections' are received against over two lakh among the 2.89 crore included in the final draft
- JUNE 26, 2019:** An additional exclusion list is published, further dropping over one lakh people included in the final draft
- AUGUST 31:** Final NRC is awaited



DHUBRI 8.26% PEOPLE OUT OF DRAFT NRC

IT WAS in Chalkura char, one of the many sandy islands in Assam's Dhubri district, that Arman Sikdar's great grandfather was born. Though 61-year-old Sikdar doesn't remember much of the man, days before the final NRC is out, it is these fuzzy memories that help assuage his fears. Last July, Sikdar's family — five brothers and their children spread over three chars — found their names missing from the final NRC draft. It was more of a shock because around him, people seemed to have made it.

Over the past year, the farmer has appeared for so many hearings that he feels he has become a "hearing expert". And if, on August 31, his name fails to make it, he's ready to attend more. "I will be there, with all my documents. I am not afraid," he says.

Long dismissed as havens for Bangladeshis immigrants, Lower Assam's Dhubri district is filled with hundreds of char, or riverine islands, many that lie metres away from the Bangladesh border. Sikdar's char is further away, nearly 20 km from the border. "Yet when we villagers go from one char to another with our cows, the Border Security Force checks us multiple times, asks us for IDs and sometimes beats us up for no reason," says Sikdar.

Over the years, for char inhabitants, this treatment has become routine — where they are questioned by authorities, ignored by politicians and derided by the greater Assamese society.

So, when last July, the final NRC draft was released, and a majority of the district's residents made it, they felt relieved. "We showed them," says 49-year-old Anul Hogue, also a resident of Chalkura.

The euphoria, however, was short-lived. On August 1, the Assam government, released a confidential document with district-wise exclusion figures across the state. The government questioned the low exclusion rate in minority-dominated border districts — Dhubri, among others — and asked for an NRC re-verification on those grounds. Dhubri had an exclusion rate of 8.26 per cent — low compared to the state average of 12.15%.

With the Supreme Court rejecting the plea for re-verification, the government is looking for ways to get round the problem. On August 19, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal hinted at a possible legislative path to deal with those wrongly included in the NRC.

"How can border districts, especially known for sudden and abrupt population growth, have exclusion rates less than the state average? Aren't these the very districts where the border police catch the most infiltrators? Our plea for re-verification has nothing to do with minority or majority. It is based on logic," senior BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma tells *The Sunday Express*.

When news of this kind reaches Dhubri, people like Hogue, whose entire family is in the NRC (in both the first and the final drafts), feel angry. "Sometimes I want to break the television when I see these politicians talking. One *netra* commented that when they come near Dhubri, they feel sad, seeing all the 'Bangladeshis'," says Hogue, who worked with the BSF from 1987 to 1994. "Last July, I thought the NRC was going to end these doubts against us. But sadly, it has made no difference. NRC or no NRC — we are not safe. I guess it is our faces. We look like Bangladeshis."

Most chars in Dhubri — as is typical of



(Top to bottom) Dhubri has hundreds of char, or riverine islands, that lie metres from the Bangladesh border; Mohiron Bibi has no documents to establish pre-1971 ancestry; Arman Sikdar's great-grandfather was born in Chalkura char in Dhubri. Yet, he and his five brothers and their children are out of the NRC list

chars through Assam — disappear and reappear according to the whims of the temperate Brahmaputra river, and Chalkura is no exception.

Back in the day when Sikdar's great grandfather lived in Chalkura, it was so big that it had to be divided into "North" and "South" portions. But 30 years ago, the Brahmaputra swallowed a huge chunk of it. "Now part of the char is under the Brahmaputra," says Hogue.

Each time a char is submerged, the residents shift to a new one, where life has to be built from scratch. "Since Independence, chars have been like this: no schools, no hospitals, no electricity, no law, no order — one just depends on Allah," says Nurul Molla, an advocate in Dhubri town.

Molla grew up in a char in the neighbouring district of South Salmara Mankachar, carved out of Dhubri district in 2016 and also borders Bangladesh. According to state government figures, 72.2 per cent of the South Salmara district's population was excluded from the draft NRC.

"I was one of the luckier ones who made it out of the char, straight to Guwahati University," Molla says.

But the less fortunate remain in the char, as farmers and daily wagers. Some cross the river every day to pull rickshaws in Dhubri town. "Things take a turn for the worse every monsoon when chars are completely cut off. Even boats are banned by the government then. We are then just stuck like that for days," says Molla.

Like Airoingjunga char's Kamala Bibi was for days in her inundated home during the recent wave of Assam floods in July. A month after the waters have receded, the level to which the water rose is still visible as a dull line on the walls of her bamboo hut. "We spent four days on our bed that we tied at a higher level, just waiting for the rains to stop," she says. That week, Kamala, in her 40s, did not think about the NRC — she is the only member in her family who has not

Mosque or Panbari mosque, located about 25 km east of Dhubri town. The Ramrakuti Satra, a monastery founded by poet-saint Srimanta Sankaradeva at Satrasal, is also in the district.

"But few are aware of these realities. For most, Dhubri is a place filled with only Bengali Muslim immigrants. While it is true that it is a minority-dominated district, the demography is very mixed," says Parvati Sultana, assistant professor at PB College, Dhubri. "Most Muslims are actually *deshi* Muslims (13th-century converts from indigenous communities such as Koch Rajbongshi and Mech), some are Bihar Muslims and the ones in chars are usually Bengali Muslims. Apart from that, there are Biharis, Nepalis, Bengalis and Rajbongshis. This perception of lakhs crossing the border is a misconception — those who do manage to enter are usually a floating population and they return. The BJP's recent comments are nothing but religious profiling."

Conversations with NRC workers in Dhubri seem to corroborate her opinion. "Surprisingly, even among those excluded, there are not many Muslims. Most of the excluded are tribals from neighbouring Meghalaya and West Bengal, who don't have documents," says an official on condition of anonymity. Sultana says that this is because inhabitants of Dhubri, after years of being considered suspects, are extremely conscious about their Indian identity.

"Many people move out of Dhubri to work and study — but they are back every single election to vote. That is why the voter turnout is invariably high. They keep documents very carefully. This is not a recent phenomenon because of the NRC. They have documents from 1951 intact," she says.

Another NRC worker, however, feels that the porous riverine border has led to a lot of unfiltered migration. "It is very easy for them to get voter ID cards and other fake cards. You buy a voter ID card for Rs 500. In fact, that is the first thing they arrange for when they come here, in collusion with the locals," he alleges.

Back in Chalkura char, Hogue says, "We don't even have enough space for our own houses here, why would we want Bangladeshis to encroach on our space?"

Even in the heart of Dhubri town, among those excluded, the general anxiety is not about the NRC. "I do not understand heavy Last week, in Bidyapara No. 10 Ward, Ayesha Bewi came across a lawyer for the first time in her life. The man, who had appeared to be in her neighbourhood — a slum in the heart of Dhubri town — gave her his card. Now Bewi, a 69-year-old widow, has wrapped the card in a piece of cloth, several times over, and keeps it pressed. Schools have started coming up in chars but they are barely functional. As a result, char residents lag behind in literacy. Some women do not even open their mouths out of the chars. They have been worst affected," says Molla.

"Line nai, medical nai (There is no electricity, there is no hospital). And they call this char a town area!" says Mohiron, who is not aware of the August 31 list. On paper, the char is under the PM's Saubhagya Yojana, a scheme to provide electricity connections to "all households", but the solar lights are yet to reach Airoingjunga. "If we have minor illnesses, we just bear it but when we are seriously ill, we have to go all the way to Dhubri town, where the nearest hospital is — first by boat, then by road," says Mohiron. "Even if we do get the NRC, does it mean all this will change?" she asks.

"Why are you asking about the NRC? We all have documents. So why are we being questioned?" asks an agitated Saira Bewi, 50.

There are rumours in the neighbourhood of possible rechecks. "I do not understand. They are here, they have put us on the NRC without any reason?" asks 49-year-old Surajamal, an auto driver. "Actually the problem is not the NRC. The problem is that this is Dhubri. There can be no solution."



Boys, interrupted

At school that ran a drive against fancy haircuts, children wait guiltily for their hair to grow back

SANTANUCHOWDHURY

SOME WEEKS ago, as Soumya Prasad Mondal walked the slow walk from the classroom door to his last-row seat, much like Virat Kohli's long walk from the pavilion to the 22-yard cricket pitch, he was received with envious hoots from the boys and shy, appreciative glances from the girls.

"I watch a lot of cricket. Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya don't just play well, they look really cool too. I wanted to be like them. So I went to a barber shop near the school and asked him to give me Kohli's haircut," says the Class 9 student of the Nayapat Sudhir Kumar High School at Contai in East Midnapore district. That's how he ended up with one of the coolest looks in school — hair slicked back and fades along the sides.

But now, Soumya can't wait for his hair to grow back. Late last month, his headmaster Basanta Kumar Ghorui warned him and about 20 other students not to sport fancy haircuts. The following day, the parents were called in for a "counselling session" where they were asked to persuade their children to have "normal haircuts". His parents — father is a businessman and mother a homemaker — had nodded as the headmaster spoke, occasionally darting angry glances in Soumya's direction.

Principal Ghorui went a step further and, on August 2, issued a notice to two barber shops near the school. The notice, in Bengali, asked the barbers to give "uniform" haircuts to students from classes 5 to 12, adding that "under no circumstances are students to be given... stylish haircuts. Please discourage them."

The next day, Ghorui held a meeting with the hairdressers and requested them to "help the school maintain discipline". The Nayapat school is among two in West Bengal that were recently in news for their campaigns to dissuade children from sporting fancy haircuts. Around 450 km away from Contai, in Murshidabad, the New Farakka High School organised a "sensitisation programme" for 40 local barbers in the presence of police officers.

These days, Soumya is on the defensive every time the subject is brought up. "I was not the only one with hair like this. My classmates got such haircuts too," he says.

Headmaster Ghorui hopes he has tackled the "problem". "We have been facing this problem since the last one year. Boys come sporting these stylish haircuts that go against the culture of this school. Look around you. We have these statues of Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji



(Top) Students of Nayapat Sudhir Kumar High School; (above) one of them with 'fancy' haircut. Partha Paul

Subhas Chandra Bose, ours is a plastic-free zone. We didn't want a few children to influence others. So we spoke to the students and parents, and issued notices to two barbers near our school — one of them is a former student," he says.

Established in 1947, the Nayapat school is spread over 10 acres. More than 1,500 students, both day-boarders and hostellers, study here. "Children have to be disciplined while in school. Once they go to college, they are free to cut their hair any way they want," says librarian Subrata Gupta.

A few metres away from the school gate is a men's salon, its air thick with the smell of aftershave lotions and shampoos.

As he gives a teenager a "normal haircut", Kartik Barik, 26, says it's unfair that "all the blame is on us hairdressers". "Students come with various demands... say they want a Kohli haircut or that they want to look like Pandya. What option do we have but to do as they say?" says Barik, himself sporting a stylish cut.

Pointing to photographs of models sporting taper fade haircuts stuck to a mirror in the salon, Barik says, "These cuts are for between Rs 50 and Rs 70. The 'normal' ones are for Rs 30." He earns around Rs 12,000 a month.

"Now I will be careful," he says, carefully snipping hair off along the teenager's ear. "I hope they just bring their parents and force us to give them fancy haircuts."

Principal Ghorui, however, believes he has the parents on board — "most of them do not approve of such haircuts".

Debasish Maity, whose son Snehasis is a Class 11 student and sported a taper fade haircut until recently, says "I don't want my son to be scolded again for his haircut. He will have to wait till he gets into college to have these haircuts."

Back at the school, a few students walk along the ground, their heads bent, many with closely trimmed hair.

The girls have questions

Post-Unnao, the video of a Class 11 student demanding answers from a police officer in Barabanki had gone viral. How long will we be told what to do, stay silent, and toe the line, ask her classmates

MAULSHREE SETH

IT WAS three days after the vehicle in which the Unnao rape victim was travelling was hit by a speeding truck, leaving her battling for life. It was hours after the Supreme Court had directed transfer of all five cases registered in connection with the rape, allegedly by BJP MLA Kuldeep Sengar (now suspended), from Uttar Pradesh to a court in Delhi. At an event held by police at a school in Barabanki on July 31, to raise awareness among girl students of their rights, one Class 11 student rose up and asked a police officer how they could protect them against powerful people like Sengar.

The video of the girl asking the question went viral, and in the days after, her nervous parents refused to send her to school. It's 20 days later, and her Class of 2020 have questions. Lots of them. For their teachers, parents, male counterparts, and police, in this small town, in a predominantly rural district, from where most look to migrate to nearby Lucknow and Faizabad, and where female literacy hovers near the 44 per cent mark (compared to 59 per cent for males).

That day, the classmates remember, police had come to their school as part of their "anti-Romeo" drive to teach girl students how to "protect" themselves. The school, one of the oldest and most prestigious in Barabanki, is run by a trust. Recalls a 17-year-old, wearing her school uniform of grey kurta, white salwar and dupatta, "First of all, we were surprised there were no boys in the room. We told police that rather than instructing just us, why don't they tell the boys too to respect our decisions? Many of us tried asking this, again and again, but they had no answer."

So far listening quietly, another girl says angrily, "Instead of a direct reply, we were counselled that our state and the country are 'purnush pradhan' (patriarchal). Someone tried to make this point by 'explaining' how mothers cook and fathers go out to work. One of our classmates replied that at her home, her father cooked and that both her parents went



A police station near the school where an 'anti-Romeo' squad is based. Express

to work. Again, they had no answer."

What makes the teenagers angrier though are the conditions around them which necessitate a police event like the one held on July 31 — and the silence expected of them since, particularly of their classmate who spoke up that day. All the girls who spoke with *The Sunday Express* said while they were willing to identify themselves, their parents may not be happy about it.

"Gharwale bolte hain, yahan mat jao, woh mat karo (Parents tell us, don't go there, don't do that). Their concern is genuine. But is that a solution?" says one Class 11 student, adding that her elder brother is even more "protective" and does not let her go out alone.

As others break out laughing, saying her brother goes everywhere she goes, another girl says it is not a joke. "My parents feel more secure sending my 5-year-old brother with me. I may have to protect him if something happens, but the presence of a male member, even if he is 5, is supposed to make me feel secure!" she bursts out angrily.

A 17-year-old asserts that the July 31 event should have also included boys. "They should respect us and seminars like these should have equal representation of boys."

A classmate believes orientation should be held for parents too. As other girls nod, she says, "We are taught each day to feel afraid. All our parents tell us, 'Sidhe jao, Sidhe aao (Go

straight where you have to go, and come straight back). If someone says something, ignore it.' We do not want to ignore. We too want freedom, but the news about rapes scares both us and them."

Another classmate says the only solution is for parents to be assured of their daughters' "security". "Laws are strict but we wish they were implemented strictly as well, so that those threatening us feel afraid, not us."

Barabanki Superintendent of Police Akash Tomar admits the girls were outspoken at the event held on July 31. However, he denies any pressure from their side on that account. "There was no issue of security. The girl (who asked the question) and her parents felt more harassed by the media, but after we assured them, all the girls have returned to school, and there are no issues."

Not just Unnao, the Class of Barabanki knows about the Kathua rape case as well, and its ramifications. They keep themselves informed about the worlds far away from theirs through social media but also news updates on phones. Their favourite books include *The Last Lecture*, by Jeffrey Zaslow and Randy Pausch (on the beauty and brevity of life), and *The Lost Jewels*, the short story by Rabindranath Tagore on greed. They learn foreign languages such as French and Korean on YouTube, and they are fans of K-pop.

All students of science, one of them says,

"I want to become the health minister, but not just like that. I will first study medicine and become a doctor, so that as minister I can solve the issues of women." Another, the school's vice-captain, wants to become a writer.

Their male classmates are hesitant in comparison, both to speak their mind as well as about their future. They confess they don't talk to the girls, afraid of being teased. "We hardly interact with them. Moreover, for all us boys, the worst punishment a teacher can give is making us sit with the girls. I know it is not right but a majority feel this way," says a Class 10 student, as his friends look on in silence.

The principal of the school, who also refuses to be identified, says they are proud of their students, especially the girls. "We encourage our students to ask questions. Some of the police officers told me the girls in our school are very smart."

Among the facilities at the school, the principal cites proudly, is a counsellor to guide the students through issues such as this.

A few kilometres away, the father of the girl whose video went viral, however, remains anxious, about what it means for her — and his family. Sitting at the stationery shop he runs, he refuses to say much. "My daughter tried to explain to me that whatever she said was right. But she is naive. I was afraid to send her to school initially but then, after police assurance, we sent her. However, she is my only child and I no longer let her come home alone on a rickshaw. I close my shop at 1.15 pm for half-an-hour every day, to pick her from school and drop her home."

At her house, surrounded by her friends who cheer her on, the 17-year-old says she understands his fear. But, she asserts, she doesn't share it. "Papa darey huey thai. Lekin mera question valid tha (Papa got scared. But my question was valid). Many saw it as directed at a particular party, but I would have said the same if someone from the Congress was involved. Me and my classmates all wanted to know the same thing; whether police could save us from criminals (such as the MLA) before harm was done to us."

The hills have caves

Post PM Modi's visit in May, demand soars, Kedarnath to get a second tourist cave, and then more

LALMANI VERMA

THREE MONTHS after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spent a day at a meditation cave at the Kedarnath shrine in Uttarakhand, in the final days of the general elections, the Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) has started the construction of another cave 15 metres away, "seeing the demand".

Before Modi stayed at the 'Rudra Meditation Cave', from May 18 to 19, it had received just two bookings, says B L Rana, General Manager (Administration), GMVN, that looks after the cave. "But since then the demand has increased. We are doing advance bookings now." The cave had been first

opened for bookings in August last year.

The Rudra cave was booked for the entire month in June, when Kedarnath gets the maximum pilgrims. As the monsoon set in, the number of bookings fell to nine in July but are again up to 14 in August, with one more week to go. There is advance booking for 10 days in September and eight days in October. In all, there have been 74 bookings so far in the current tourist season, that starts in April and lasts till October-November. Only one person can stay in the cave at a time.

Developed by the Kedarnath Development Authority (KDA) under supervision of the Public Works Department (PWD), from a natural cave, the 125 sq-ft Rudra Cave is located 500 metres up from the

Kedarnath shrine, and faces the Kedarnath and Bhairavnath temple. It was built at a cost of Rs 11 lakh, with facilities like electricity, water, geyser and heater. Tourists are provided meals, and there is a phone to summon an attendant in case of an emergency.

Ahead of the PM's visit in May, the cave was modified at a cost of Rs 4 lakh. "The quality of bedding was improved. A geyser was installed. The toilet seat was changed from Indian style to Western. A window was built for a view of the shrine," says a PWD official.

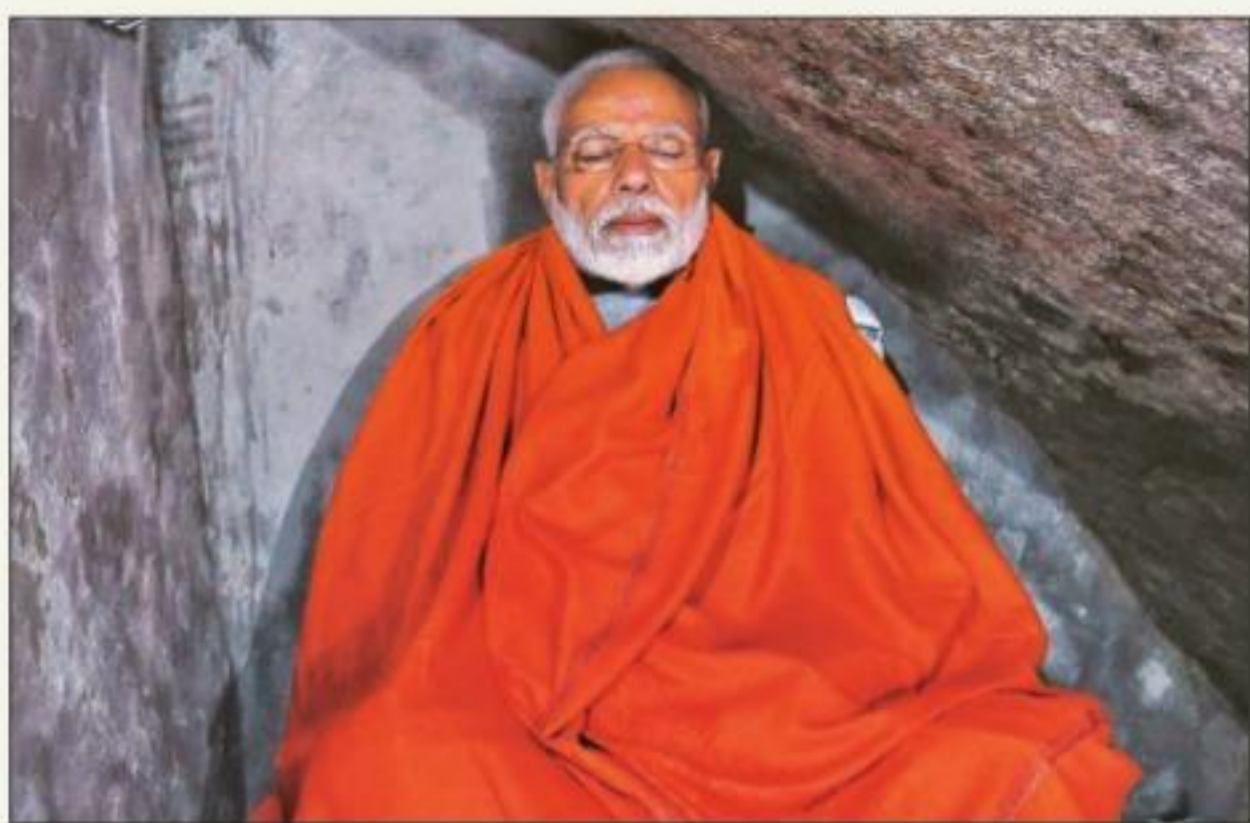
The new cave will be similar, though its carpet area may vary. Three more such caves are proposed to be developed for Rs 50 lakh. Vikas Wagh from Satara in Maharashtra, who stayed in the cave on June 2, says, "The

service was satisfactory, but there is very little space inside. One has to be careful while walking. There was power outage at least thrice. Though it was restored promptly, there should be a permanent solution because telephonic lines also get cut off then."

Ravi Agarwal of Mumbai, who stayed in the cave for three days in June, says, "One should not have high expectations when one goes to a cave for meditation at religious places. I did not feel the need for anything."

From the 74 bookings so far this year, the GMVN has earned a revenue of Rs 1.04 lakh. It charges Rs 1,500 as rent for a full-day stay and Rs 990 if one spends just a day there.

Modi's stay at the cave was "complimentary" as he was a "State guest".



The PM at Rudra Cave, which was modified before his visit for Rs 4 lakh. File

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A 15-YEAR-OLD IN SRINAGAR MAKING A CALL



‘Assalam-u-Alaikum papa, are you okay?’

Amidst a communications clampdown in the Valley, a daughter gets in touch with her father

ADIL AKHZER

HADIYA'S father left home, in Mazhama village near Srinagar, on July 18 for Haj. Less than a month later, came the abrogation of Article 370, stripping J&K of special status, followed by a complete communications clampdown in Kashmir.

He had been speaking to his family almost every day on video call since July 25, telling them to "stay safe" as troops mobilisation in the Valley led to all kinds of rumours. The last call was on August 4, when he promised Hadiya, the youngest of his three children, that he would call her again the next day. Then, the phones went dead.

Mother Yasmeena says as Eid approached, on August 12, Hadiya, a Class 9 student, became more and more quiet, seeking to talk to her father. "She didn't even celebrate Eid," says Yasmeena, who said she didn't want her family to be photographed or her husband named.

On August 19, there was the first ray of hope. A neighbour told them that the government had set up facilities at a police station at Parimpora in Srinagar for people to make calls. But the police station was 13 km away.

Despite restrictions, Yasmeena says, "We didn't wait a minute... Hadiya took out her Scooty, I sat pillion, and we started for Parimpora. All three of my daughters ride the Scooty but since Hadiya is closest to her father, she went."

Yasmeena remembers Hadiya's face shining as they approached the police station and saw the people making phone calls from there. "We waited for some time. But, when we handed over the telephone number to the officials, they apologised saying they can't make an international call."

Dejected, the two started back, when a policeman told them they could make an international call from the Deputy Commissioner's office in Srinagar. "Since it was late, we decided to go back home and return the next day," Yasmeena says.

The next day, Hadiya and Yasmeena



On Eid, residents crowded around Army men to make calls. @PIBHomeAffairs Twitter handle; (top) at Dy Commissioner's office, which has facility for STD/ISD calls. Shuaib Masoodi

started for Srinagar again, on her Scooty. They thought they were early, covering the 13-km distance by 8.30 am. But when they reached the office, there was already a long queue.

"We didn't know that people would arrive earlier than us. Many had been waiting for more than two hours. We were told our serial number was 253," Yasmeena says.

For the next seven-and-a-half hours, they waited inside the hall, almost not budging. "But there were more than a hundred people ahead of us. At 4 pm, we left." They didn't want to risk returning home in the dark.

At the Deputy Commissioner's office, the calling facilities consist essentially of a round table kept in a large hall, surrounded by chairs and holding five cellphones. Two have international calling facility and three STD, with six government officials managing them. People are given a serial number and asked to wait their turn. Calls are mostly limited to two-three minutes. Some take the chairs while waiting, but as the numbers swell, the queue spills over to outside.

Inside the centre, there is complete silence. If needed, people talk in whispers, their ears straining to hear the names being called out on the microphone by an official.

Though the centre opens every day at 9 am, people start lining up from 6 am. "So far, people have made 21,000 incoming and outgoing calls from here," says Wahid Islam Dar, the in-charge of the centre. "In the initial days, there was a huge rush. Now that landline phones have been restored in some places, around 500 people visit us every day."

Over the past 16 days, Wahid says, he has "seen it all." "These are emotional days for us. Recently, there was a case where a person called up to enquire about his relatives who had gone for Haj in Saudi Arabia. He was told one of them had died. He left weeping."

The official adds that while they work late into the night, till 11 pm, the phones keep ringing till many hours after. "We even receive abuses from people because they want to talk to their family members and don't get through. At times, we give the number of the local SHOs so that they can call there to talk to their relatives. Once, I myself went to Palpora area after a girl called from Pune and asked for help to talk to her family."

Hadiya made her third try to talk to her father on August 22, pleading with her mother to come with her. On that day, they left for Srinagar half-an-hour earlier. "This

time our serial number was 375," recalls Yasmeena. "We waited the whole day but again, our turn didn't come. We got back home at 9 in the night."

But Hadiya was determined, and the next morning, the mother and daughter left for Srinagar again, even earlier. However, it being a Friday, there were more restrictions on the road. "It took us more than an hour to reach the Deputy Commissioner's office. We were stopped at 10 places at least. I had to lie, say I had to go to hospital. Only then did they let us go," says Yasmeena.

"When we reached the office, Hadiya was crestfallen as there was a long queue again." As her eyes swelled with tears and the two decided to turn back than spend another day waiting, one of the officials at the centre called out for them. They had recognised the two. "They said since you have been coming for three days and had left late Thursday, we will give you priority today."

Finally, three hours later, they called out Hadiya and Yasmeena's names, and an official handed over a simple Android cellphone. Hadiya says she let her mother talk first. Yasmeena kept it brief, mindful of the limited time. "I asked him how he was, and said we were fine and were calling from the Deputy Commissioner's Office and could not talk much." She also managed to ask her husband when he would be coming home.

Hadiya took the phone next. She could only say, "Assalam-u-Alaikum papa, are you okay?", before breaking down. Her mother patted her back, saying, "Don't worry, beta, he is coming on August 28."

The wait of three-and-a-half days had ended in a call of a minute. But Hadiya and her mother don't mind. "For me, it was enough to hear my father's voice," says the 15-year-old. "We could have talked a little longer but we know everybody is waiting. My conscience didn't allow me."

On August 23, among those in the queue is Ghulam Nabi, 43, a resident of Chadoora who has been waiting for four hours. "I don't think I will get a chance to talk to my son in Dubai," he says. "Why is the government not lifting the blockade? Why are they playing with our emotions?"



Majeed (left) with stepbrother Hussain in Sankari village, Rajouri. Arun Sharma

‘My children are there, I’m here..’

This is PoK resident Majeed's first visit across LoC. In wake of Art 370 tension, he can't return

ARUN SHARMA

ABDUL MAJEED has not slept for several nights. Stepbrother Altaf Hussain says the 76-year-old keeps calling out for his children and small grandchildren at night.

They live only 50 km away, but in village Khairatta in Kotli district across the Line of Control, in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. Majeed is living on borrowed time here, at Sankari in Jammu province's Rajouri district, his return blocked by the cancellation of the Poonch-Rawalakote bus service — one of the two cross-border people-to-people services to fall prey to the rising India-Pakistan tensions since the abrogation of Article 370.

Majeed is among the 28 passengers from PoK stranded on the Indian side after Pakistan, on August 19, declined to allow the bus to cross over through Chakkan Da Bagh. Officials said six Indians from J&K, who had gone across the LoC from Chakkan Da Bagh are similarly stranded there, though the period of stay mentioned in their permits is yet to expire.

People living in PoK and J&K are allowed to travel on the bus, which runs Mondays, to meet relatives on the other side with permits.

It is Majeed's first trip across the LoC since Partition. He arrived at Sankari on July 15 on a 28-day permit, to meet Hussain, 65. While the permit expired on August 12, he had been trying to leave since August 4, fearing he might get stuck due to holidays on account of Eid, and Indian and Pakistani independence days.

"I first left Rajouri along with my brother Altaf on August 4 for Poonch (87 km away)," Majeed says. But August 4 midnight, clampdown was enforced across J&K before the abrogation of Article 370. "The bus too got suspended due to it."

They then prepared to board the bus on August 12. "But the authorities asked us to return as Pakistan was refusing to open gates on its side of the LoC."

Sankari, that has nearly 400 houses, has a large number of people serving in the Army and other security forces. Of Altaf's three sons, one is in the Army. Majeed has eight children, including five daughters. All except two sons are married. One of his sons works as a barber in Saudi Arabia, while the other two are farmers owning nearly 3.6 acres of land.

Majeed originally hails from Rattal Basai village in PoK. He along with his elder sister Khurshaid shifted to the house of his maternal aunt in Khairatta after their mother Fateh Begum married Abdul Latief, a soldier in the Army assigned to the Pakistan side after Partition, after their father's death. However, Latief left his job and came to Sankari on the Indian side to be with his family, Altaf says. Altaf was born to Latief and Begum in 1954 at Sankari. Majeed and Khurshaid, 4 and 7 respectively at the time, got left behind.

In 1989, Altaf says, he went over to meet Majeed and Khurshaid. "My mother used to tell me I have a brother and sister. Somehow traced them." He stayed in PoK for three months. "On return, when I showed their photos to my mother, she looked at them and breathed her last."

The brothers lost contact again after militancy erupted in the Valley, and the LoC became a hot zone. It was a chance contact four years ago that brought them together again. Majeed and Altaf's sons, who were both working in Saudi Arabia at the time, got in touch through Facebook.

Until six months ago, respective deputy commissioners, with the consent of the Foreigners' Regional Registration Office, would extend permits of PoK residents in case they were unable to board the bus on due date. But with some using this provision to overstay, it was scrapped.

At present, five PoK residents, including the son of a former militant, are known to be staying past their permit in Jammu region after a stay order from the high court against their deportation. One of them, an old PoK resident, has appealed to be allowed to die in Poonch and be buried there as he had no one on the other side of LoC.

"We have informed the Ministry of External Affairs about the situation," a senior official said, talking about the 28 PoK residents stranded in J&K. "It is a humanitarian issue. We can't force them to leave."

Pointing out that people from both sides are stuck following the renewal of tension, Iftikar Hussain, a retired Armyman in Sankari, says, "We want peace. There is no purpose fighting as Pakistan cannot get an inch of J&K, or India of PoK."

Altaf points out that former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had opened the cross-LoC routes to enable people divided by history and geography to meet each other. "We want peace so that families can continue to meet, like brothers... After all, if one person dies on our side in Pakistani firing, four get killed on the Pakistan side too when India retaliates."

Majeed says that boarding the bus in PoK, he had been apprehensive about what awaited him across the LoC. "I found people who were hospitable, and no difference from us," he says, adding that like here, over there too, teachers remained absent in government schools, medicines were in short supply in hospitals, and power and water supply was erratic.

But, with home now seeming further away, Majeed longs for it. Pointing to his brother's "trembling hands", Altaf says, "He may die here due to the stress."

That's what worries Majeed too. "Of course I worry. I am on this side, and my children on the other," he says. As some villagers try to pacify him saying this too was his home, the 76-year-old mumbles, "Apna ghar te apna hi hota hai (What can take the place of home)."

Looking for 'Raghuvansh' in Ayodhya

SC said it was "curious" about if one could find Ram's descendants in the holy town still. From Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas to ordinary residents, all wonder how

AVANEESH MISHRA

HEARING the civil dispute in the Ram Janmabhoomi case, the Supreme Court earlier this month said it was "curious" to know whether any descendants of Lord Ram were still living in Ayodhya. The advocate representing Ram Lalla Virajman, K Parasaran, assured the Bench that they would try to find out.

Even Ayodhya is "curious". To know how. So far, seven people have come forward to claim links to Ram, or to 'Raghuvansh'. Six of them are from Rajasthan, including members of the royal families of Jaipur and Udaipur, and one from Rae Bareilly. None is from Ayodhya.

But, in this town whose history is now inextricably entwined to the country's politics, there is no shortage of theories.

Jagatguru Ram Dineshcharyaji Maharaj, the Acharya of 'Ramanand Sampradaya' (a

sect considered to be descendants of Ram's sons), says that as Lord Ram belonged to 'Achyut gotra', the Kshatriya saints of that gotra should be considered Ram's descendants.

"In *Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurani* it is mentioned that the last king of Ikshvaku dynasty was Sumitra. The *vansh* of Ram ended in Kaliyug and there is proof of this in the Puranas. Now the thing that connects Lord Ram with the *sant samaj* is Achyut gotra, the gotra of Lord Ram," says Dineshcharyaji.

He adds, "As no one can prove himself to be a descendant of Ram through scientific methods, our holy texts are the second-best source. And the Puranas confirm that Ram belonged to Achyut gotra."

In his book *Jain Culture in Ayodhya: Evolution and Development*, Ayodhya resident Dr Ramanand Shukla, a historian, mentions this lineage too, as well as how it was "lost".

The kingdom of Ayodhya, also referred to

as Saket, Prathampuri, Ikshvakubhoomi, and Awadhपुरi at various times, was established by Vaivasvat Manu, he says. "Manu's elder son was Ikshvaku and the Suryavansh started from here. The sixth king in the dynasty was Prithi and on his name we call this planet Prithvi. His great grandson Shrivasta established Shrivasti. Another king in his dynasty was Bhagirath who is believed to have brought the river Ganga to Earth. Later in this dynasty was king Raghu and on his name we call Ram's dynasty as Raghuvansh. His son was Aja, and his son was king Dashrath who, according to Ramayana, is the father of Ram," says Shukla.

He adds, "Other important kings in the Ikshvaku dynasty were Kush's 28th descendant Brihadbala, who fought in the Mahabharata on the side of the Kauravas. Last in the list is King Sumitra, who was defeated by Mahapadma Nanda, who is known as the founder of the Nanda dynasty. There was no



Ram Ki Paudi in Ayodhya. Vishal Srivastav

Ikshvaku king in Ayodhya after that."

Mahapadma Nanda is believed to have been the contemporary of Chanakya and Chandragupta Maurya, who lived in the fourth century BC. After that, Ayodhya became part of Magadh, and then Nanda and Maurya. As per popular belief, after Sumitra was forced to leave Ayodhya, he went to Rohtas (in Bihar) and the trail is lost after that, Shukla says.

What is clear is that the present royal family of Ayodhya, still venerated by the town, has nothing to do with Ram. They are said to be 'Shakdweepiya Brahmins', from somewhere near present-day Iran. According to popular belief, three 'Shakdweepiyas' known for their knowledge of medicines were called to Ayodhya from Shakdweep (near Iran) during the Ramayana period after a royal family member got leprosy. Later, around 250 years ago, their descendants were gifted Ayodhya during Nawab Saadat Ali Khan of Oudh's time.

Present 'Ayodhya king' Yatindra Mohan Mishra, a respected name in the Indian literary world, admits, "Our history in Ayodhya is 250-300 years old and cannot be connected to epics, which are thousands of years old."

Mishra continues to live in the Rajbhawan, situated less than a kilometre away from the disputed Ram Janmabhoomi site.

Also within the same distance lives Shashank Shekhar. Wondering what purpose a hunt for Ram's descendants would serve, he says, "If we consider claims that Ram was born in 5114 BC, more than 7,000 years have passed. How can we find a dynasty trail now?"

Ghanshyam, who runs a confectionery shop near the disputed site, feels the Supreme Court query has set off a debate which has no end or meaning. "Now people will randomly

start claiming to be Ram descendants to gain media attention. This is disrespectful."

Ankit Tiwari, an advocate, agrees. "The stories of Ramayana go back to when there was no other scientifically known civilisation. In that case, isn't there a possibility that a significant number of people, all over the world, are descendants of Ramayana characters?"

Says Pandit Siya Kishori Sharan, a priest, "What is important is not who shares Ram's lineage but who believes in him. The true followers of Ram are his true descendants."

The head of the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas — a trust set up for construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya, which owns 42 acres of the acquired land around the Ram Janmabhoomi site — Mahant Nriya Gopal Das also wonders at this search. Saying "every human being is connected to the lineage of Lord Ram," he says, "If you want to find a direct descendant, then I can say that the BJP MP from Kaiserganj (130 km away), Brijbhushan Sharan Singh, is a direct descendant."

The president of the Wrestling Federation of India, Brijbhushan Singh is one of the accused in the Babri Masjid demolition case, listed several cases against him, including attempt to murder, in his 2014 poll affidavit, and was once accused of sheltering members of the Dawood Ibrahim gang.

INSIDE TRACK



SOCIAL FAUX PAS

It was a major social faux pas at the President's At Home at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Independence Day. Ambassadors and other important guests felt slighted at the cavalier treatment meted out to them and many left without even a cup of tea. This was after, setting a new precedent, the host, President Ram Nath Kovind, left his own party before the guests could even partake a morsel. That the President was leaving was amply clear since the military band played the national anthem, which is done only after the event winds up. To add insult to injury, guests were asked to reach the venue at 4.30 pm

when the function started only at 6 pm and continued till around 7.15 pm. Not even water was offered in the reception hall. In contrast, during the first two years of Kovind's tenure many had appreciated the effort to make the function more informal and friendly by permitting guests to mix with the VIPs, after the walkway greetings with the president, prime minister and vice-president were over. But, because of heavy-handed security arrangements, intermingling of invitees is generally near impossible in recent times with guests segregated into separate enclosures with cordons.

VENDETTA POLITICS

P Chidambaram made himself scarce for the first 27 hours after his anticipatory bail from the Delhi High Court was cancelled, because it is the normal legal strategy to avoid jail till one applies to the appeals court. Otherwise you get stuck endlessly in prison. But his party felt that it was a PR disaster to take this course of action, as many on social media mocked a former home minister for going underground. But Chidambaram is not an emotive figure like Indira

Gandhi who won much public sympathy during the Janata rule for her arrest. Charan Singh, then home minister, had vowed that he would one day put Mrs Gandhi in the same cell he stayed in at Tihar. When a case was filed against her in 1978, she refused to seek bail, summoned the media to witness her arrest and sat on a dharna at a railway crossing singing an old World War-II song 'Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye'. Chidambaram refused to indulge in theatrics or even mention Home Minister Amit Shah's name. Many see parallels with both Emergency and post-Emergency arrests. They believe Shah nurses a grudge that Chidambaram as Union home minister ensured Shah as Gujarat home minister was implicated in the Ishrat Jahan encounter case, though the Gujarat government had got the tip-off on it from the Intelligence Bureau in Delhi. History has shown that vendetta politics seldom works.

SELF-APPOINTED REPS

Several opposition parties have stopped sending their representatives for TV political debates since they feel that the

anchors favour the government and they do not get a fair hearing. To overcome this handicap and to appear objective, the channels invite participants whom they term sympathisers of party X, Y and Z. This too has been objected to. Misa Bharti confirmed that the RJD had written to channels that they could not unilaterally decide who could represent their party. Even the RSS has reservations to all and sundry being dubbed as 'RSS ideologues'. At a recent TV talk show, a frequent guest described as 'RSS ideologue' asked sheepishly that the strap line be removed and 'political analyst' be inserted instead. The anchor protested that if he had to invite a political analyst he had a wider range to choose from.

QUESTIONABLE QUERY

The Congress straw poll among CWC and special invitees to select an interim president was fashioned so that all participants were intimidated into giving the same answer: the Gandhi family. The loaded question put to those whose preferences were sought was, "Everyone else wants Rahul Gandhi to continue.

What do you think?" A disgruntled Congress leader admitted privately that "an honest conversation is not possible in the party". While some blame the old guard, it had nothing to do with old or new guard. The truth is that the Gandhis believe they are indispensable and did not want to risk appointing a non-family member, even temporarily, to the job. They had in mind the example of Sitaram Kesri, who refused to budge once appointed.

UP'S SHADOW CM

The announcement of the new Uttar Pradesh Cabinet was delayed because the Delhi BJP high command had to check Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's list and make changes to ensure caste considerations, regional representation, and that some bad eggs were removed. Though to the outside world the Yogi is all-powerful in his state, in fact it is the little-known Sunil Bansal, state general secretary, organisation, who wields almost as much influence, since he has the ear of Amit Shah. Incidentally, Rajnath Singh's son Pankaj was again omitted from the ministerial list.

FIFTH COLUMN



Victims of an evil system

IT WAS with deep interest but little sympathy that I watched the arrest of P Chidambaram last week. As I watched that small army of officials from the Enforcement Directorate and the Central Bureau of Investigation enforce their authority on a man who was once their boss, memories flooded back of what happened to me when Mr Chidambaram was Finance Minister. I have told the story in full, gory detail in my book *India's Broken Tryst*, but a precis is necessary.

I was staying in the seaside home of a friend. It was a lazy Saturday afternoon. I was half asleep in front of the TV when the study in which I rested filled up with a group of men (and one dwarf-like woman). They screamed in unison that I had to 'come down at once'. The Government of India, they yelled, we are from the Government of India, and this is a raid. On the way down I accidentally touched the dwarf woman and she screeched 'don't touch me' as if I had molested her. When I got downstairs, I saw that there were around 30 people in the raiding party. Their first purpose seemed to be to intimidate me.

This is not easy. I yelled back when they yelled at me and this calmed them down. But, my protestations that the house they were raiding did not belong to me made no difference. They went through my private things and evaluated every little piece of jewellery I had. When they did not find whatever it was they came in search of, their aggression waned slightly but only slightly. There continued to be menace in their manner as if they were dealing with a criminal who was guilty till proven innocent. These men were from the Enforcement Directorate.

What happened to me happens to thousands of ordinary Indians routinely. Anyone trying to run a business, no matter how small, is constantly at the mercy of officials who handle economic offences. Criminals and terrorists are treated as innocent till proven guilty, but with supposed economic offenders, this basic principle of justice is usually reversed. Anyone who thinks that the platoon of TV reporters who covered Chidambaram's arrest were there by accident needs to think again. Live television has emboldened officials to make the most of their 15 minutes of fame, so media trials of 'celebrity offenders' are now the norm.

It is hard to feel even a modicum of sympathy when political leaders become victims of the unjust system they have created and carefully nurtured. If there are those in Narendra Modi's government who are gloating privately about what happened to a man who was once a powerful minister, I urge them to stop and reflect. Tomorrow it could be their turn. And, the day after it could be yours. Our investigative agencies have licence to use primitive methods of investigation. Ordinary tax inspectors today have powers to arrest those with 'black money'. The men who made this law clearly did not notice that these officials are among the most corrupt in the Government of India or that 'black money' can be planted and a false case made.

The manner in which Chidambaram was publicly humiliated last week was wrong. There was no reason for officials to start jangling over walls in that fake show of diligence. There was no reason for the media to be informed so that TV reporters could cover every detail of the arrest of a former minister in the Government of India. But, the reason why it is hard to feel sympathy for Chidambaram is because in the many years he spent as Finance Minister and Home Minister he never once tried curbing the powers of agencies like the Enforcement Directorate.

The methods they use are so barbaric that a young businessman jumped out of a window in Delhi's Loknayak Bhawan once rather than spend another night in the custody of the men torturing him for information. Dr Manmohan Singh was Finance Minister then and I remember drawing his attention to this tragic suicide. He said he was horrified and that he would do something about it, but this was 30 years ago and nothing has changed.

Before he was arrested, Chidambaram made a moving speech in the Congress party's head office. He said, 'I believe that the foundation of democracy is liberty. The most precious Article of the Constitution of India is Article 21 that guarantees life and liberty. If I am asked to choose between life and liberty, I shall unhesitatingly choose liberty.'

If only he had remembered this when he was Finance Minister he may have done more to guarantee the liberty of those hounded by his officers in the Economic Offences Wing. It is hard to feel sympathy for political leaders when they become victims of the system they have created.

Follow Tavleen Singh on Twitter @tavleen_singh

When the next recession could lead to a revolution



A RECESSION looms, and the nation's CEOs are growing fearful.

It isn't the potential of downturn itself that has them alarmed — downturns come and downturns go, but whatever happens, chief executives, like cats, tend to land on their comfortably padded feet.

Instead, the cause of their fear appears to be something more fundamental. As Alan Murray, the CEO of *Fortune*, writes in a cover story chronicling the C-suite anxiety: "More and more CEOs worry that public support for the system in which they've operated is in danger of disappearing." They're worried that when the next recession breaks, revolution might, too. This could be the hour that the ship comes in: The coming recession might finally prompt the masses to sharpen their pitchforks and demand a reckoning.

Company executives are right to worry. A downturn will mark the end of a record period of uninterrupted economic expansion. The US economy has been growing for more than a decade, stock indexes recently hit new highs, and the unemployment rate is at a 50-year low.

And yet the vast majority of Americans will not look back on the past decade as years of fat and plenty. This was a gilded expansion, a decade of creaking wage growth and profoundly unequal outcomes. The number of Americans receiving food stamps is 40% higher now than in 2008, yet we have twice as many billionaires as we did a decade ago.

This was an expansion driven by outsized gains to a handful of "superstar" firms in "superstar" cities. Economic devastation reigned in rural areas alongside catastrophic success in urban ones — an expansion marked by housing crunches and infrastructure nightmares that every level of government seems incapable of addressing. Corporate profits grew as if there were no tomorrow, but they didn't trickle down to everyone else. Instead, dividends and stock buybacks got bigger while CEO pay went through the rose-gold roof. The rest of us got smartphones, money-losing conveniences and mountains of student debt.

And so, when recession comes, we'll be right to ask: Was that it? Is this the best it gets? And if so, isn't it time to go full Elizabeth Warren — to make some fundamental, radical changes to how the US economy works, so that we might prevent decades more of growth that disproportionately benefits the titans among us?

But the CEOs now have a plan to head off revolution. They want you to know: Actually, they really do care about the world. Like, a lot.

This week, in a statement widely feted by well-meaning Davos types, the Business Roundtable — an association of chief executives of nearly 200 companies, declared that the era of soulless corporatism was over. The Business Roundtable once held that a corporation's "paramount duty" was to its shareholders. Now, the Roundtable is singing a new, more inclusive tune. A corporation, it says, should balance the interests of its shareholders with those of other "stakeholders", including customers, employees, suppliers and local communities.

I spent a tedious few minutes this week trying to come up with an analogy to convey how thoroughly empty I found the Roundtable's gesture to be. I think I got one: Imagine a co-worker has been stealing your lunch from the office fridge for years. Then, one day, he strolls in with a big grin and grand announcement. Maybe he unfolds a scroll and blows a trumpet. He has realised that "lunch maximization" might not have been the best approach after all, and he will now try to be aware of the wider consequences of some of his actions. Yes, he still really wants your lunch. Yes, he will probably still fight any efforts to prevent him from taking your lunch. But you should know that he also feels a tinge bad about how it's all worked out.

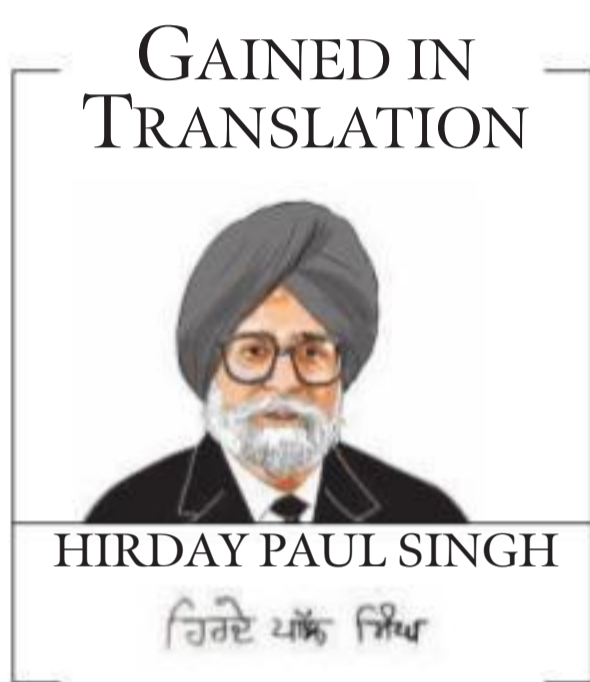
I mean: Yay? It's nice that CEOs have vowed to turn over a new leaf. But their statement lacks any call for greater structural changes in the US economy — changes to how companies are taxed or regulated, or how executives are paid.

And because a public corporation's most direct incentives remain tied to stock performance, there's no reason to believe that corporations will voluntarily move away from pleasing shareholders alone, despite the new, high-minded ideals. In fact, the fanfare surrounding the Roundtable's empty statement could be read as an effort to stave off structural economic reform rather than accelerate it. It's a way for the CEOs to tell us that they're on the case, so we don't have to resort to something unthinkable, like a Warren presidency.

If I sound cynical, it's only because I'm not a complete idiot. In the Donald Trump era, America's CEOs have become masterful at talking out of both sides of their mouths. They'll rush to issue virtue-signaling denunciations of the latest outrage from Trump in order to please their woke, restless customer bases, while on the downlow, they'll champion his tax cuts and regulatory dismantling. And when the president gets too rowdy, they'll tell him to knock it off over a friendly dinner.

It's all a game to the moguls in charge. Their greatest fear is that we'll stop playing. NYT

Revisiting Partition

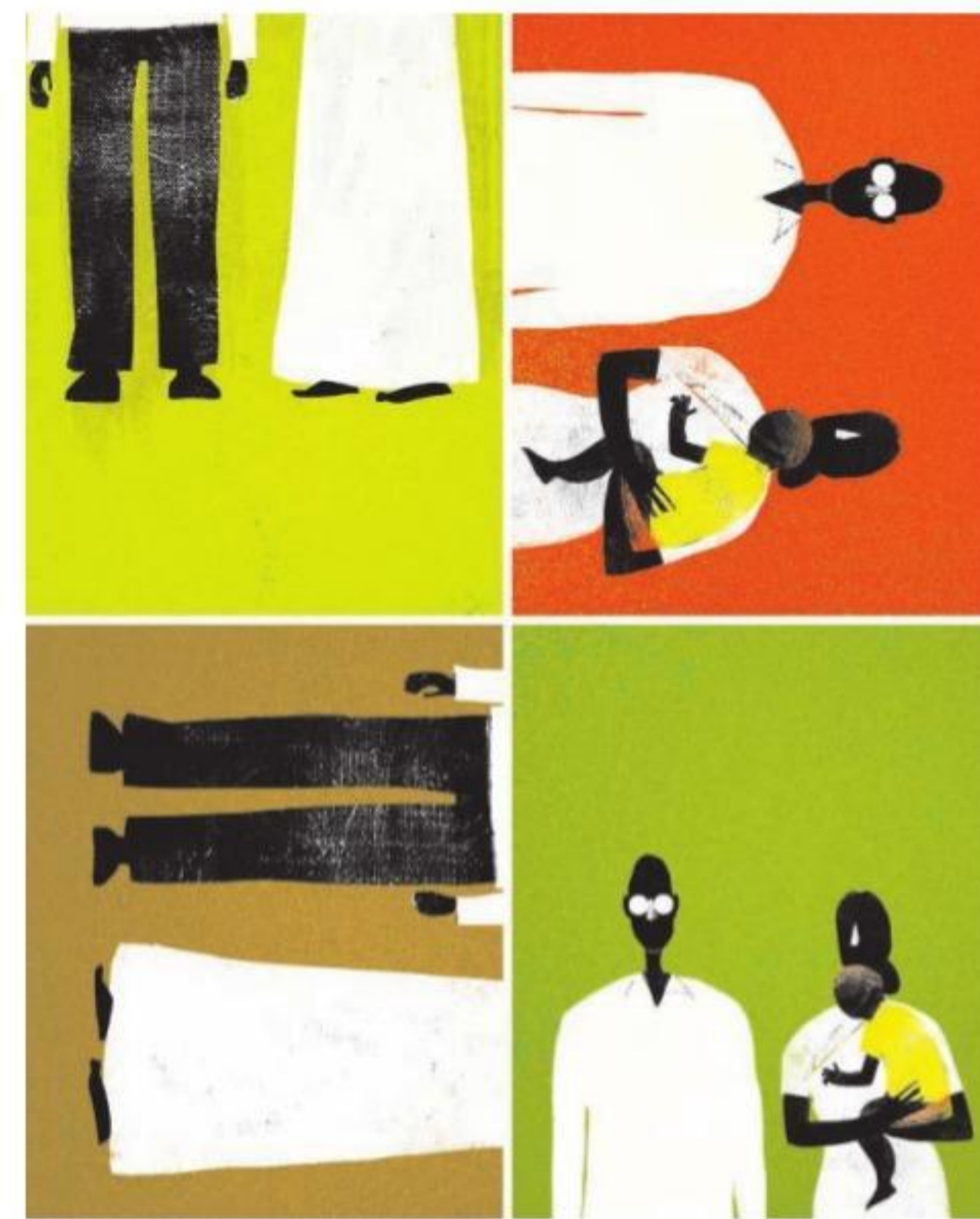


AFTER MUCH rhetoric and grandstanding, the powers-that-be abruptly abrogated Article 370, along with some parts of Article 35 A, which were an integral part of the secular Constitution of India. This drastic act has created a very fluid situation. We know not what will be the shape of things in near future. But there are many rumours swirling around, there is talk that this will further deepen the divide between people of two communities. And that it will lead to more bloodshed. If this happens, the outcome may also be very similar to what occurred at the time of partition of India into two.

August 15, 1947, which is a day of independence for India from the British rulers, is also a day of 'ruination' for a large number of people. It was on this day that India was politically partitioned into two separate lands — India and Pakistan — on the basis of religion. Its after-effects were horrifying. Unfortunately, I was one of those witnesses to this holocaust, when I had just entered the very impressionable teens. This event left an indelible mark on my memory, and even today, when I have crossed over to the mid-eighties, the memory of those days makes me shudder.

I had an almost idyllic and peaceful childhood, while living in a tiny township named 'Preet Nagar' (Town of Love). Set up in 1938 by my father Gurbakhsh Singh (renowned Punjabi novelist and short-story writer), it was equidistant between Lahore and Amritsar, and surrounded by many villages, big and small. Thanks to its vibrant natives, masters in their creative fields, it was recognised as the first rural socio-cultural hub of Punjab. The ideal of this township was that here "all hearts should throb in unison, and the atmosphere should be filled with the mesmerising tunes of songs celebrating love".

But when the Independence Day of India and Pakistan was being celebrated in all other parts, life at Preet Nagar came to a standstill. It tentatively became part of Pakistan, as it was at the fringe of villages where a majority of the population followed the Islamic faith. But fortunately there was no unwanted commotion whatsoever in this area, as the simple-hearted villagers themselves knew not their future. But on August 18, when the actual line of demarcation was drawn, after giving due consideration to natural compulsions, our township along with a number of villages having Muslim majorities were assigned to India.



Suvajit Dey

We know not what will be the shape of things in near future in J&K. But there are many rumours swirling around, there is talk that this will further deepen the divide between people of two communities. And lead to more bloodshed. If this happens, the outcome may be very similar to what occurred at the time of Partition

Now the minority started dominating over the majority. Excited by this sudden change, incited by outsiders, and pressured by the large-scale forced migration of non-Muslim population from Pakistan with their attendant tales of violence, the people around here launched widespread killings of innocent Muslims. This forced the migration of Muslim population towards those areas which were now a part of Pakistan. Those who were without much means took shelter in our township. True to real human values, residents of this township provided them best possible protection according to their abilities. At an appropriate time, they also arranged for their migration to Pakistan.

But this humanitarian act of our township made its residents "personae non-gratae". This gave a great advantage to anti-social elements, who started looting and marauding it. The peaceful life of this

township was instantly guillotined. Thus, by the fag end of that year, the entire population of this township had to move away to safer places. This made every one of them a refugee in their own homeland. This stroke of history left many horrifying marks on this township, which was once a blissful land of dreams.

By the time India became a republic, earnest efforts had been made to wipe out the depressing atmosphere prevailing in this township. It was hoped that this township would also revive, quite like the mythical bird phoenix that rises from its own ashes. Concerted efforts were made to revive the golden period of this township where people led a wholesome co-existence regardless of the differences of religion and caste. But unfortunately, being very close to the borders, with an unfriendly, unreliable and unpredictable neighbour, most of the old residents were scared of coming back. So life in this township carried on at its own slow pace, but the magical atmosphere of the olden days never returned. This is a big tragedy.

Having witnessed these tragic happenings, I do sincerely hope the situation currently prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir will not lead to the ghastly happenings that took place in 1947. I hope and pray that the complicated Kashmir problem will be amicably resolved and settled for the good of the whole nation and of Kashmir itself.

Singh is a writer and graphic artist. Translated from Punjabi

OUT OF MY MIND



RSS CHIEF Mohan Bhagwat has a question troubling him which he wants debated. He asked the question at the time of the Bihar elections four years ago. It embarrassed the BJP then and he had to keep quiet. But he has raised it again. It is a question which is at the heart of the RSS and its vision for the future of India. Only someone not in electoral politics can raise such a question. It deserves a serious debate.

Bhagwat's quota poser needs a debate

Bhagwat asks how long should the SC/ST reservations last? Of course, these reservations were put in the Constitution for a 15-year period initially. The view was that the historic disadvantages visited upon the SC/ST people over millennia deserved to be corrected. A period of 15 years must have seemed sufficient in those hopeful days when, on the threshold of freedom, people believed that independent India will achieve economic miracles once foreign rule had ended. Alas, decades of slow growth made reservations unremovable.

The expression 'Scheduled' is because at the end of the Round Table Conferences held in early 1930s, the British government published a White Paper in which they listed in an Appendix (Schedule) the

castes and tribes of India which were to get special treatment as and when Dominion Status was granted. This was a victory for B R Ambedkar who had worked relentlessly to win concessions for Dalits.

But there is a fundamental problem in any Constitution which treats all citizens as equal but has to push Affirmative Action for some subgroup of the population — Black Americans in the US and SC/STs in India. Bhagwat's dream for the ideal Hindu Rashtra wishes to treat all those who reside in the land of the Indus — call them Hindis (defined as including Muslims, unlike V D Savarkar's definition) — as equal. Leaving Muslims aside, the basic contradiction is between the ideal of equality among Hindus and

the facts of the hierarchical social structure of Hindu society. To make matters worse, since the Mandal Report commissioned by the Janata government of 1977-80 (which included the Jana Sangh), these hierarchical inequalities have been valorised by OBC reservations. It is not just the SC/STs but the 7,000 jaatis who claim inequality and want to preserve reservations.

Bhagwat wishes all reservations would wither away and Hindus could be a single people. He knows it cannot happen yet but he wants to pose the question of equality versus entrenched reservations. This is what he wants to discuss. At what stage of prosperity can India give up reservations? After all, other democratic societies have income and class inequalities

but do not require affirmative action. Why not India?

But if being Hindu requires everyone to have a caste identity, then hierarchy is ineradicable in a Hindu nation. Hindu Rashtra has to be fundamentally socially unequal or it is not Hindu. Separate cells each for the 7,000 jaatis define a Hindu society. Bhagwat knows this difficulty. The RSS has always wanted to unite Hindus into a single mass, overcoming caste divisions which are social not religious. No matter how prosperous India becomes, social hierarchy is likely to remain. Can Hindu society have jaatis without hierarchy? Can caste divisions be horizontal not vertical?

Bhagwat deserves a debate and an answer.

17 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Mette Frederiksen

US
Trump praises Denmark PM, days after calling her 'nasty'

Washington: President Donald Trump heaped praise on Denmark's prime minister Friday, two days after he cancelled his state visit to the country and slammed her for dismissing his idea of buying Greenland as absurd. The US leader said he got a call from Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, who he had previously called "nasty" when she rejected his idea of buying Greenland. But on Friday he appeared to reverse course, calling her "a wonderful woman". "We had a great conversation," he said.

NIGERIA
Twelve dead in Boko Haram village attack

Niamey: A night raid blamed on Boko Haram has left a dozen villagers dead in southeastern Niger on the frontier with Nigeria, a local official said Saturday. The attack on Friday night in the border district of Gueskerou, is the latest to hit the Diffa region near Lake Chad, which is crisscrossed by militant groups and traffickers who murder and kidnap people in local communities as they compete for money and influence. "Twelve villagers were killed on Friday at around 8:00pm (1900 GMT) by Boko Haram elements," a local elected official told AFP.

YEMEN
Govt forces take separatist army camp

Sanaa: Yemeni military officials say forces loyal to the country's internationally recognised government have wrested control of a military camp from a separatist militia backed by the United Arab Emirates just outside a key southern city. They say government forces seized control on Saturday of the Elite Force militia's camp, west of the city of Ataq, the capital of oil-rich Shabwa province. The camp's takeover came a day after government forces pushed the Elite Force out of Ataq.

LEADERS GATHER IN FRANCE FOR THREE-DAY SUMMIT

Test of unity, last chance to restore G-7 community, warns Council head

RICHARD LOUGH & MARINE PENNETIER
BIARRITZ, AUGUST 24

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump arrived in France on Saturday for what promises to be a fraught meeting of major industrialised nations, with friction over trade, climate change and Iran likely to snarl the talks.

The three-day Group of Seven meeting in the Atlantic seaside resort of Biarritz takes place amid sharp differences over a clutch of global issues that risk further dividing a group of countries already struggling to speak with one voice.

Summit host French President Emmanuel Macron wants heads of Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States to focus on the defence of democracy, gender equality, education and the environment and has invited Asian, African and Latin American leaders to join them for a global push on these issues.

However, in a bleak assessment of relations between once-United Western allies, European Council President Donald Tusk acknowledged it would be hard to find common ground, denouncing "senseless disputes" between G-7 capitals.

"This is another G-7 summit which will be a difficult test of unity and solidarity of the free world and its leaders," he told reporters. "It is increasingly difficult, for all of us, to find common language and the world needs more of our cooperation, not

WORLD DEBUT FOR UK PM JOHNSON

■ ADDING TO the unpredictable dynamic between the G-7 leaders are the new realities facing Brexit-bound Britain: dwindling influence in Europe and growing dependency on the US. New Prime Minister Boris Johnson will want to strike a balance between not alienating Britain's European allies and not irritating Trump and possibly jeopardising future trade ties. Even so, diplomats played down the likelihood of Trump and Johnson joining hands against the rest. "There won't be a G5+2," one senior G-7 diplomat said.

less," he said, adding: "This may be the last moment to restore our political community."

Trump's history of pugnacity at multilateral gatherings, which brought last year's G-7 summit to an acrimonious end, means there is scant hope for substantive agreements. His fireworks at the Charlevoix summit in Canada last year prompted foreign policy analysts to dub the Group of Seven nations the G-6+1.

US officials said Trump would tout his policies of tax cuts and deregulation and press allies to follow his example to stave off problems with the global economy. REUTERS

SOME KEY ISSUES ON THE TABLE

E. The US' allies have all but given up on the idea that the summit will produce unity and consensus about global issues. Macron has said the group would not even try to issue its usual joint statement. "It's pointless," he said.



WINE WARS: French President Emmanuel Macron samples local produce and wine in Anglet on Saturday, a day after the US threatened tariffs on French goods. Reuters

TRADE WARS
Trump's willingness to use tariffs as leverage over allies as well as adversaries has severely strained the relationships with other leaders. Trump recently escalated his tariff war, responding to China's retaliation with another increase in his own levies on Chinese goods.

NUCLEAR DEAL STANDOFF
European states have been scrambling to save a 2015

nuclear deal between world powers and Iran since Trump pulled out of the accord last year and re-imposed sanctions on Tehran that have crippled its economy.

'WINE WARS'
Trump has also vented his frustration about France's imposition of a tax on companies like Facebook. (He called it "foolishness" and risked insulting the G7 host by threatening

tariffs on French goods, including wine, in response.) Tusk vowed that the EU "will respond in kind".

CLIMATE CHANGE
French officials conceded there is no hope that Trump joins the group in expressing its concern about climate change despite news that fires in Amazon rain forests could accelerate the planet's environmental crisis.



EU's Tusk will be known as Mr No Deal, warns Boris

REUTERS
BIARRITZ, AUGUST 24

BRITISH PRIME Minister Boris Johnson has warned European Council President Donald Tusk that unless he agrees to change the Brexit divorce deal, Tusk will be known as "Mr No Deal".

Johnson was responding to Tusk's earlier comments that he would not cooperate in preparing for a no-deal Brexit.

The prime minister wants the EU to drop the so-called Irish backstop, which is an insurance policy designed to prevent the return of a hard border between the Irish Republic and the British province of Northern Ireland.

"I would say to our friends in



Boris Johnson arrives in France, Saturday. Reuters

the EU if they don't want a no deal Brexit then we've got to get rid of the backstop from the treaty. If Donald Tusk doesn't want to go down as Mr No Deal then I hope that point will be borne in mind by him too," Johnson told reporters.

Amazon fires: Brazil tribal chief slams Bolsonaro, calls for aid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RIO DE JANEIRO, AUGUST 24

BRAZIL'S LEGENDARY indigenous chief Raoni on Friday accused President Jair Bolsonaro of wanting to destroy the Amazon rainforest and called for international help to put out fires raging in the region.

The elderly Kayapo chief, internationally recognisable through his traditional lip plate and feather headdress, called for Bolsonaro's removal from power. "He wants to finish with the forest, with us. It's really terrible what he does," Raoni Metuktire told AFP by telephone from Germany, accusing Bolsonaro of emboldening farmers, loggers and miners.



Protesters march on the French-Spanish border, in Hendaye, on Saturday; (above) a lunch meeting between Macron and US President Donald Trump in Biarritz. Reuters



His remarks come as Bolsonaro authorized the deployment of the armed forces to help put out the fires, amid grow-

ing European criticism as well as offers of assistance from US President Donald Trump and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Tear gas, petrol bombs mar Hong Kong protests

China frees detained British consulate worker, UK govt welcomes move

JESSIE PANG & TWINNIE SIU
HONG KONG, AUGUST 24

HONG KONG police used tear gas to break up anti-government protests in a gritty industrial suburb on Saturday after some activists threw petrol bombs and bricks, as China freed a British consulate worker whose detention helped fuel tension.

Four MTR subway stations were closed around Kwun Tong, a densely populated area of the Chinese-ruled city, but thousands packed the streets anyway, most carrying umbrellas against the sun. Police used tear gas after some protesters threw Molotov cocktails and bricks and others tore up "smart" lamp posts equipped with surveillance cameras. Others had set up roadblocks with bamboo scaffolding.

It was the first use of tear gas in 10 days after a series of mostly peaceful demonstrations in the former British colony.

"Give me democracy or give me death," was spray-painted on a wall, an illustration how the demands of the protesters have

After repeated warnings to the protesters..., police officers deployed tear gas and minimum force to disperse protesters" — GOVT STATEMENT

expanded from the withdrawal of a bill that would have allowed extraditions to China.

The government said in a statement the protesters "posed a serious threat to the safety of everyone" at the scene.

The British government on Saturday welcomed the release of an employee at its consulate in Hong Kong who had been detained in mainland China.

Simon Cheng was held for 15 days for violating public security management regulations, police in Shenzhen, across the border from Hong Kong, said Saturday. "Simon and his family have requested privacy and we would be grateful if this is respected." REUTERS



Hong Kong police fire tear gas during a clash on Saturday. AP

PURSUED BY US No aid from Greece, Iranian tanker says headed for Turkey

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI, AUGUST 24

AN IRANIAN-flagged oil tanker pursued by the US amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington changed its listed destination to a port in Turkey early Saturday after Greece said it wouldn't risk its relations with America by aiding it.

The crew of the Adrian Darya 1, formerly known as the Grace 1, updated its listed destination in its Automatic Identification System to Mersin, Turkey, a port city in the country's south and home to an oil terminal.

However, mariners can input any destination into the AIS, so Turkey may not be its true destination. Mersin is some 200 kilometers (125 miles) northwest of a refinery in Baniyas, Syria, where authorities alleged the Adrian Darya had been heading before being seized off Gibraltar in early July.

Iranian state media and officials did not immediately acknowledge the new reported

destination of the Adrian Darya, which carries 2.1 million barrels of Iranian crude oil worth some \$130 million. Nor was there any immediate reaction from Turkey, whose President Recep Tayyip Erdogan deals directly with Tehran and Russia over Syria's long war.

The ship-tracking website MarineTraffic.com showed the Adrian Darya's position as just south of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea. At current speeds, it estimated the Adrian Darya would reach Mersin in about a week.

The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In US federal court documents, authorities allege the Adrian Grace's true owner is Iran's Revolutionary Guard, a paramilitary organization answerable only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The US declared the Guard a foreign terrorist organization in April, the first time America named a military force of a nation as such.

RIISING NUMBER OF CASUALTIES AMONG FOOD DELIVERY WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

One more way to die: Delivering food in Cape Town's gig economy

KIMON DE GREEF
CAPE TOWN, AUGUST 24

HE HAD delivered his last food order for the evening and was driving home from Pinelands, a Cape Town suburb, when an oncoming car swung in front of him, knocking him off his motorbike.

Friends and family arrived within 20 minutes, but the motorcyclist, Christian Hakomeyimana, was dead. A 20-year-old Rwandan migrant, he had been a contractor for Mr D Food, an online food delivery service. "That car hit him so hard," said Xavier Nshimiyimana, one of his closest friends. The bike,

he said, was smashed to pieces — "completely beyond repair."

Hakomeyimana's death in the July 5 crash was just one in a rising number of casualties among food delivery workers in South Africa. The emergence here of food delivery apps like Mr D Food and Uber Eats has drawn thousands of motorbike riders — predominantly migrants — into poorly regulated and highly precarious work.

"Food delivery is an inherently dangerous line of work in South Africa," said Mark Graham, a geography professor at Oxford University who studies the gig economy in develop-

ing nations.

According to the Motorcycle Safety Institute, a local organization that collects accident statistics, at least 70 delivery riders — most of them food couriers — have died in South Africa over the past year. Hundreds more have been injured. "As demand for food and small item delivery increases, so does risk to the rider," said Hein Jonker, the institute's director.

South Africa's food couriers often drive unsafe motorbikes with broken lights, missing mirrors or parts held together with string and tape. Most lack formal motorbike training and ade-



A Mr D Food delivery driver in Cape Town. NYT

quate protective gear.

"Business owners have no responsibility to contracted riders," Jonker said. "This is a serious matter of exploitation."

Mr D Food, which along with Uber Eats controls nearly 90% of South Africa's booming food delivery market, declined to answer questions. A spokeswoman for Uber South Africa, Samantha Fuller, said in response to questions from The New York Times that her company would begin physically inspecting the bikes used by its couriers. This was not done in the past, she said.

In South Africa, the dangers

of being a food courier are particularly acute. The country is infamous for its high rates of traffic mortality, with more than twice as many fatalities per 100,000 people in 2016 than in the United States, according to the World Health Organization.

A spokeswoman for the Cape Town traffic department, Maxine Bezuidenhout, said that her agency did routine checks and that it suspended unroadworthy vehicles, including motorbikes, from operating on public roads. But the industry, too, should help fix the problem, Bezuidenhout said.

In South Africa, few Uber drivers can afford their own vehicles, instead renting them from partners. In July, the car Hakomeyimana was using was involved in an accident, and while waiting for it to be repaired, he returned to food delivery.

"I can't sit around — I need to earn something," his brother recalled him saying. Two days later, Hakomeyimana was dead. He was an experienced rider and owned a bike in good condition, according to his brother, who works as a mechanic. "But even for him, it wasn't safe," he said. NYT

18 ECONOMY

FINANCE MINISTRY ISSUES CLARIFICATION

'FPIs exempt from enhanced surcharge on capital gains in equities, derivatives'

ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

CLARIFYING FURTHER on Friday's announcement regarding rollback of the enhanced surcharge for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), the Finance Ministry said on Saturday that the relief would be applicable not only on capital gains from transfer of equity shares, but also for income from the sale of derivatives.

The Finance Ministry said usually derivatives in the form of futures and options are not treated as a capital asset, but investment from FPIs gets different treatment. The income from the transfer of the derivatives is treated as business income and is liable for normal rate of tax.

However, in the case of FPIs, the derivatives are treated as capital assets and the gains arising from their transfer is treated as capital gains and subjected to

EXPLAINED
Rollback could give much needed boost to growth

FRIDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT by the Finance Minister to rollback the tax surcharge on FPIs gave a massive boost to investor sentiment.

Industry sources believe that the confidence of foreign investors will be boosted with the removal of enhanced surcharge, with some even being confident that more steps will be taken in coming days to boost economic growth so that the country's GDP can attain its true potential of 8-9 per cent.

a special rate of tax as per Section 115AD of the Income-tax Act.

"Therefore, it is also decided that the tax payable on gains arising from the transfer of derivatives (future & options) by FPI which are liable to special rate of tax under section 115AD of the Act shall also be exempted from

the levy of the enhanced surcharge," a statement from the Finance Ministry said on Saturday.

The enhanced surcharge shall be withdrawn on tax payable at special rate by both domestic as well as foreign investors on long-term and short-

term capital gains arising from the transfer of equity shares in a company or unit of an equity oriented fund/business trust which are liable for securities transaction tax and also on tax payable at special rate under section 115AD by the FPI on capital gains arising from the transfer of derivatives, the Ministry's statement further said.

The enhanced surcharge, however, will continue to be levied on the business income arising from the transfer of derivatives to a person other than FPIs.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman — as part of measures to support the faltering economic growth — had on Friday announced the rollback of enhanced surcharge on long-term and short-term capital gains arising from transfer of equity shares for both domestic and foreign investors.

"The pre-Budget position is restored," she had said at a press

conference Friday.

The surcharge was increased by 3 per cent and 7 per cent on those earning between Rs 2 crore and Rs 5 crore and over Rs 5 crore, respectively, as part of the Budget proposals announced by the Finance Minister on July 5.

This had resulted in different taxation outcomes for FPIs registered as Association of Persons or trusts and companies, even as those registered as companies were spared of this surcharge.

Ever since the Budget announcement, markets have been seeing a selloff on most trading days, largely in light of the FPI impact. Friday's decision reverses the levy that had been announced to be imposed in the Budget 2019-20.

The higher surcharge will continue to be applicable for higher net worth Individuals (HNIs), but it will be reviewed after the 75th Independence Day, the government said.

Finance Minister who ushered in change

In the five budgets he tabled as Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley introduced steps to boost investment, worked to ease business environment, and created a financial inclusion framework for the poor by bringing them into banking net, providing low-cost insurance and launching a nation-wide health insurance scheme

BUDGET 2014-15

Foreign direct investment norms and limits for defence, insurance, housing and manufacturing sectors were significantly eased under Jaitley's watch

A much sought after 10-year tax holiday for developers of power projects was announced to rekindle investor sentiment in the sector

BUDGET 2015-16

Proposed to create a Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank, with a corpus of Rs 20,000 crore, and credit guarantee corpus of Rs 3,000 crore to refinance microfinance institutions through Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

Announced launch of Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana to cover accidental death risk of Rs 2 lakh, Atal Pension Yojana for a defined pension depending on the contribution and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana which covers both natural and accidental death risk of Rs 2 lakh

BUDGET 2016-17

The Budget 2016-17 was pitched as a budget for agriculture sector and rural India with enhanced allocations for rural roads, irrigation, interest subsidy on farm loans and schemes aimed at improving farmers' welfare. It also announced



Arun Jaitley, during his tenure as Finance Minister, outside his office at North Block with the briefcase containing the Union Budget 2017-18, flanked by Cabinet colleagues and senior bureaucrats. Express File Photo

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, allocating Rs 5,500 crore, more than the Rs 2,954.65-crore under all existing crop insurance schemes in 2015-16

BUDGET 2017-18

Union Budget 2017-18 moved to bring down anonymous or unnamed cash donations by individuals to political parties from the current Rs 20,000 to Rs 2,000. The government also announced abolition of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, the body which cleared foreign direct investment plans up to Rs 5,000 crore

BUDGET 2018-19

The showpiece of the Union Budget 2018-19 was an ambitious National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) for over 10 crore poor

and vulnerable families, an estimated 50 crore individual beneficiaries, with coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year. This scheme was subsequently launched

The Budget also promised that the minimum support prices for all crops will be fixed so as to guarantee farmers a 50 per cent return over their production cost. To benefit MSMEs, corporate tax rate was cut from 30 per cent to 25 per cent for companies with turnover up to Rs 250 crore

Imposed long-term capital gains tax of 10 per cent on gains exceeding Rs 1 lakh arising from sale of listed equity shares or units of equity-oriented mutual funds. Proposed 10 per cent tax on dividend income distributed by equity-oriented mutual funds. Both these taxes are in place

BRIEFLY

'Banks sitting on a comfortable liquidity position'

Guwahati: State Bank of India chairman Rajnish Kumar on Saturday said most banks have a comfortable liquidity position and emphasised the need for credit flow in the economy. "Banks like SBI are sitting on a comfortable liquidity position. What is needed is flow of credit. There is some new trend about aggregator model... people prefer to use Ola, Uber for their transport. There is some shift visible from people wanting ownership of vehicles. This is a global trend and India is not an exception," he said. Kumar said he had a meeting with Assam government officials here, and received "valuable" feedback on the initiatives taken by it.

USFDA sends observations to Ipcalab unit

New Delhi: Ipcalaboratories on Saturday said the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has conducted an inspection of its formulations manufacturing unit in Silvassa and issued three observations. In a regulatory filing to BSE, Ipcal said the USFDA had conducted the inspection of the its formulations manufacturing unit situated at Piparia (Silvassa) from August 19-23. PTI

Stimulating demand is overriding priority of both govt and RBI: Das

Happy to note that some structural reforms are on anvil, Reserve Bank Gov says

GURDIP SINGH
SINGAPORE, AUGUST 24

THE RESERVE Bank will continue to unlock entrepreneurial energies and set the country firmly on track to become \$5 trillion economy in the next five years, Governor Shaktikanta Das said here on Friday.

The RBI chief said the slight slowdown in the last quarter was a temporary one and the economy is likely to end the fiscal with higher growth rate of close to 7 per cent.

"The policy focus will continue to be on unlocking... entrepreneurial energies and set India firmly on the trajectory towards its aspirations of becoming a \$5 trillion economy within the next five years," he said at a dialogue with Indian business community.

As the financial sector repairs and emerge out of the balance sheet stress, a speedy revival of demand in the economy assumes vital importance in order to reinvigorate, he told over 200 business executives from leading corporations.

"Stimulating demand is currently the overriding priority of both the Government and RBI (Reserve Bank of India).

"Some structural reforms are also required, and I am happy to note that some structural reforms are on the anvil," Das said.

He noted that with the budget for the remaining part of the fiscal announced, govern-

'UNLOCKING ENTREPRENEURIAL ENERGIES'



Express File Photo

The Reserve Bank Governor said that the policy focus will continue to be on unlocking entrepreneurial energies

Das was on a two-day visit to Singapore during which he met Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat, and his counterpart Monetary Authority of Singapore managing director Ravi Menon

ment spending would see a boost, which will have salutary impact on the economy.

Das was on a two-day visit to Singapore during which he met Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat, and his counterpart Monetary Authority of Singapore Managing Director Ravi Menon.

Das also met top leaders of financial sector and global financial companies.

In India, the household savings are the principle livable resources in the economy, said Das, pointing out that of the total household savings of 17.2 per cent of GDP in 2017-18, only 6.6 per cent were in the form of net financial savings.

"Greater financialising of the savings can increase the pool of domestic resources and it can substantially ease financial pressure on the balance of payment of the country," he said.

The financial system, comprising institutions and markets, has a key role in bringing these resources towards the productive sector, he pointed out. Elaborating on the RBI's 35 bps repo rate cut on August 7, he said the banks have reduced lending rates for new loans by about 29 bps as a follow up since then.

Normally, it takes about three quarters for the policy rate transmission to happen.

"But now it is happening faster and our interaction with the banks shows that we can expect faster and higher level of monetary policy transmission passing the benefits of the rate cuts to new loans."

During his more than one-hour interaction with business leaders, Das shared efforts being made to rebuild the financial sector and recoup the stressed non-banking financing companies

(NBFCs).

The RBI Governor highlighted several measures announced in the Union Budget in July to strengthen the sector.

The RBI chief also mentioned that while some NBFCs had not done well, there were others that had good balance sheets and were performing well. The RBI, he said, was monitoring NBFCs and Housing Finance Companies that account for bulk of the credit from NBFCs and were systematically important.

"We have a fairly reasonable grip of where they (these entities) stand. When we notice any kind of weakness, fragility in NBFCs, we are interacting with their promoters and nudging them to find market-based solutions to the stressed situation," he said.

"It is our endeavour to ensure that we do not experience failure of another systematically important large NBFC. This is something we are working and monitoring on a day-to-day basis."

He also highlighted that the banking sector was turning around and governance reforms were being implemented.

Das said that gross NPAs came down from 11.8 per cent to 9.3 per cent, and are likely to go down to further by the end of the current fiscal. The fresh infusion of Rs 70,000 crores by the government would raise the ability of the public sector banks to expanding lending, especially to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector. PTI

'FINANCIAL SECTOR HAS LOST A TRUE FRIEND AND GUIDE'

"... A devastating loss for India and for me, personally. Arunji was the best friend, philosopher and guide that we had. Knowing him was one of the greatest privileges of my life"

AJAY SINGH,
CMD, SPICEJET

"The country has lost a proud son; a patriot; a nationalist and someone who was a firm believer in the tremendous economic potential our country had to offer"

SANDIP SOMANY,
PRESIDENT, FICCI

"Mr Jaitley will be remembered for many landmark reforms like GST and IBC... the country and the financial sector has lost a true friend and a guide"

RAJNISH KUMAR,
CHAIRMAN, SBI

"His legal acumen was highly acclaimed but his sound advice went far beyond and he was sought even for family matters, personal career advice and crisis management of all sorts"

SUNIL MITTAL, CHAIRMAN,
BHARTI ENTERPRISES

"In every interaction he enriched me with his wisdom and wise counsel. I am deeply saddened by his untimely demise and offer my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family"

SANJIV MEHTA,
CMD, HINDUSTAN UNILEVER

"As a legal and intellectual stalwart, he stood out for his ability to multitask by simultaneously holding charge of key ministries. India Inc must honour his legacy"

DEEPAK PAREKH,
CHAIRMAN, HDFC LTD

Over 100 stakeholder consultations on RCEP in last 6 yrs: Comm Min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

THE COMMERCE Ministry on Saturday said over 100 stakeholder consultations have been held on the mega free trade agreement RCEP in the last 6 years.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed free trade agreement being negotiated by 16 countries.

The members include ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam — and China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

"More than 100 stakeholders' consultations have been held by the Department of Commerce and other lead ministries and departments seeking industry inputs for formulating India's interests, covering a wide spectrum of the economy including agri, chemicals, petrochemicals, pharma, plastics, textiles, metals, auto and machinery," it said in a

statement.

The Department of Commerce also received industry feedback in the area of rules of origin, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), anti-dumping, countervailing duties, safeguards measures and Intellectual Property Rights as well, it said.

Further, several industry consultations were also organised by Fici, PHD Chamber of Commerce and CII.

Recognising the importance of states, the commerce secretary have led delegations to various states and held regular engagements with Chief Secretaries and officials on the various aspects of RCEP to make them aware of the developments.

In the various working groups/sub-working groups, senior representatives of other departments have been leading the negotiations such as Revenue, Central Board for Indirect Taxes and Customs, Economic Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Financial Services, and Telecommunication.

AFTER TRUMP ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL 5% DUTY ON CHINESE GOODS

Beijing warns Washington to stop 'wrong actions' or face consequences

REUTERS
BEIJING, AUGUST 24

CHINA SAID on Saturday it strongly opposes Washington's decision to levy additional tariffs on \$550 billion worth of Chinese goods and warned the United States of consequences if it does not end its "wrong actions".

The comments made by China's Ministry of Commerce came after the US President Donald Trump announced on Friday that Washington will impose an additional 5 per cent duty the Chinese goods, hours after Beijing announced its latest retaliatory tariffs on about \$75 billion worth of US goods, in the latest tit-for-tat moves in their bilateral trade dispute.

"Such unilateral and bullying trade protectionism and maximum pressure violates the consensus reached by head of China and United States, violates the principle of mutual respect and mutual benefit, and seriously

ACTION 'VIOLATES CONSENSUS', SAYS CHINA

China's Commerce Ministry on Saturday said "such unilateral and bullying trade protectionism and maximum pressure violates the consensus reached by head of China and United States"

Trump's latest tariff move, announced on Twitter, said the United

States would raise its existing tariffs on \$250 billion worth of Chinese imports to 30 per cent from the current 25 per cent starting on October 1

The US President's announcement came hours after Beijing declared its latest retaliatory tariffs on about \$75 billion worth of US goods

damages the multilateral trade system and the normal international trade order," China's commerce ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

"China strongly urges the United States not to misjudge the situation or underestimate determination of the Chinese people," it added.

Trump's latest tariff move, announced on Twitter, said the

United States would raise its existing tariffs on \$250 billion worth of Chinese imports to 30 per cent from the current 25 per cent beginning on October 1, the 70th anniversary of the founding of the communist People's Republic of China.

At the same time, the US President announced an increase in planned tariffs on the remaining \$300 billion worth of

Chinese goods to 15 per cent from 10 per cent.

The United States will begin imposing those tariffs on some products starting September 1, but tariffs on about half of those goods have been delayed until December 15.

Trump was responding to Beijing's decision on Friday night that it was planning to impose retaliatory tariff on \$75 billion worth of US imports ranging from soybean to ethanol. China will also reinstate tariffs of 25 per cent on cars and 5 per cent on auto parts suspended last December.

The White House economic adviser said earlier in the week the Trump administration was planning in-person talks between US and Chinese officials in September. It is unclear if the bilateral meeting would still take place. The year-long trade war between the world's two largest economies has roiled financial markets and shaken the global economy.

Trump 'wouldn't stop' Fed chairman Powell if he offered to resign

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 24

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump sharply criticized chairman of the US Federal Reserve Jerome Powell on Friday and said he would not try to stop the chief US central banker if he offered to resign. Trump, departing the White House to travel to the G7 summit in France, told reporters, "I'm not happy with Jay Powell."

His comments continued a war of words against Powell that, along with retaliatory tariffs imposed on US goods by China, helped trigger a sharp drop on Friday in the US stock market.

"I don't think he's doing a good job at all," Trump told reporters as he left the White House shortly before midnight on Friday.

"I don't think he's much of a chess player, but I've got him so, you know, that's what I have," added the president, who earlier questioned on Twitter who was "our bigger enemy," Powell or Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

"I'm not happy with Jay Powell... I don't think he's doing a good job at all... I don't think he's much of a chess player, but I've got him so, you know, that's what I have"

DONALD TRUMP
PRESIDENT, UNITED STATES

resign, Trump replied: "Do I want him to resign? Let me put it this way, if he did I wouldn't stop him."

Powell was in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, on Friday for a meeting with other central bankers. He said the Fed would "act as appropriate" to keep the United States economy healthy in a deteriorating global economy but stopped short of committing to a series of rate cuts sought by Trump. Faced with growing risks to the economy, the Federal Reserve cut rates for the first time in more than a decade last month, and markets overwhelmingly expect the central bank to deliver another cut at its September policy review.

BRIDGE

Jump reopening bids in the passout seat by a non-passed hand show strong hands. They are NOT weak. For example a jump to 2NT shows 20-21 it is not unusual.

When a finesse is sure to lose (club finesse), try to arrange a throw-in play to avoid the finesse. Stripping the hand before the throw-in is one way to go. When given a ruff and a sluff (say West leads a heart after being thrown in with a heart), discard from the short side of the critical suit (clubs) and ruff on the long side. Translation: Discard the CQ (the hand that is shorter in clubs) and ruff in dummy. The discard of an honor card (DJ) indicates the top of a sequence. It indicates the card that would have been led had the player making the discard been on lead.

THE WEST HAND: ♠A♥AKJ1075♦6♣K104 THE EAST HAND: ♠6♥98♦J109854♣J976

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2231

- QUICK CLUES ACROSS 7. Put off or prevent (5) 8. Sluggish (9) 10. To the right (prefix). (6) 11. Noticed or witnessed (8) 12. Common songbird (8) 13. Music symbol (4) 15. Take for granted (7) 17. Achieves or accomplishes (7) 20. 202 in Roman numerals (4) 22. Removing from office (8) 25. Co-ordinates measured parallel to the X-axis? (8) 26. Allow (6) 27. Hospital vehicle (9) 28. Insignificant (5)

- DOWN 1. Remorseful ones (9) 2. Takes the risk of or braves the dangers of? (8) 3. ___ to: is the property of? (7) 4. Stale joke or anecdote (8) 5. Ark's resting place (6) 6. Connected for power (5) 9. Hindu ascetic (4) 14. Articulate precisely (9) 16. Principal supporter (8) 18. Declared, said or claimed (8) 19. Move forward (7) 21. Desert plant (6) 23. Seeds of apple, etc. (4) 24. In short, a unit of electric current (5)

- CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS 7. Programmable computer chips offering noted programmes (5) 8. Girl, it's clear to see, may be cut up (9) 10. Extremely clever somewhat in part (4,2) 11. Catch up with what's been achieved by shooting from the other side (8) 12. Charge a great deal (8) 13. Colony article on the way up (4) 23. Starting the meal perhaps in a fog (3,4) 17. Be least affected by group of Liverpoolians? (7) 20. That sounds such a noble way to express admiration (4) 22. The blow that culminates the

- losers (8) 25. Carpet a university residence (8) 26. Descriptive of a man who can't settle (2,4) 27. Loons have silent pipes (9) 28. Show off a bird to the king (5) French take up the Spanish guitar (7) 21. Party member interrupts notices and improvises (2,4) 23. A classical author I'd nothing against at first (4) 24. Go at university and make it more lively (3,2)

SOLUTIONS TO 2230

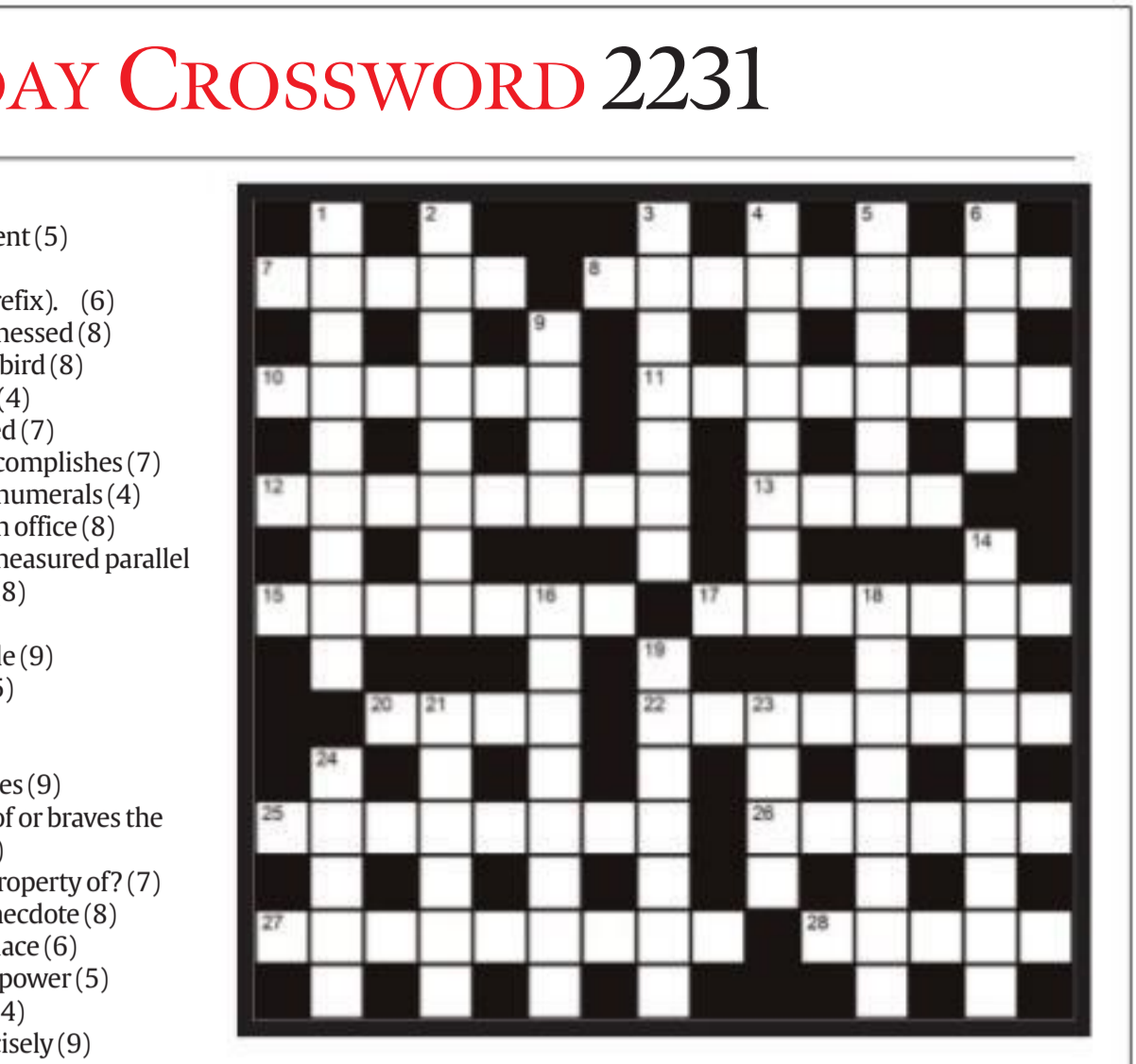
- QUICK CLUES ACROSS: 7 Gunner, 8 Traverse, 9 Alfresco, 10 Dennis, 11 Catacomb, 12 Upsets, 13 Change of air, 18 Timber, 20 Oblivion, 22 Sherpa, 23 Emission, 24 Usefully, 25 Doodle. DOWN: 1 Nuclear, 2 Encroach, 3 Fresco, 4 Handicuff, 5 Tennis, 6 Assist, 8 Troublesome, 14 Normally, 15 Invasion, 16 Richest, 17 Monocle, 19 Benefit, 21 Lairds. CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS: 7 Citrus, 8 Exaction, 9 Undulate, 10 Likens, 11 Sparsity, 12 Hidden, 13 Dulcet tones, 18 Fulra, 20 Exorcism, 22 Clutch, 23 Damascus, 24 Mahogany, 25 Armet, 26 Damsel, 27 Kidnaps, 2 Frou-frou, 3 Askari, 4 Ballyho, 5 Stoked, 6 Pointed, 8 Every other day, 14 Coachman, 15 Excuse me, 16 Fuel tax, 17 Assures, 19 Citron, 21 Oompah.

SUDOKU 3948

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.

SOLUTION SUDOKU 3948

SOLUTION: SILENCE, TEEPE, SKIES, UNDA, CALIPH



losers (8) 25. Carpet a university residence (8) 26. Descriptive of a man who can't settle (2,4) 27. Loons have silent pipes (9) 28. Show off a bird to the king (5) French take up the Spanish guitar (7) 21. Party member interrupts notices and improvises (2,4) 23. A classical author I'd nothing against at first (4) 24. Go at university and make it more lively (3,2)

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.

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No: T No.09&10/2019-20/SE/Q. KILFB - Tranche 12.WRD 025-35(2017-18)-Chathanoor Drinking water project - Extension of Distribution system from JICA scheme in various villages under Chathanoor constituency - Chirakkara Village (Package IV), Poothakkulam (Package VI). EMD: Rs. 100000,100000. Tender fee: Rs. 7500+1350,7500+1350 (18% GST - It will be paid by the contractor on reverse charge basis while filing his returns). Last Date for submitting Tender: 23-09-2019 02:00 pm.

गुजरात नगर परिषद का कार्यालय, जमशेदपुर। अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

Table with 6 columns: क्र. सं., कार्य की विवरणी, प्राकलित राशि (रु. में), अद्यन की राशि (रु. में), परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य (रु. में), कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि. Row 1: गुजरात नगर परिषद अन्तर्गत निवाह मयन निर्माण कार्य।, 3,29,97,410.00, 6,59,948.00, 10,000.00, 12 माह

Central Government Employees Welfare Housing Organisation (M/o Housing & Urban Affairs, Govt of India) SALE OF CGEWHO LAND AT SHATABDI NAGAR, MEERUT

1. CGEWHO proposes to sell 49416.35 Sqm (12.207 acres) of well demarcated, contiguous and free-hold residential land allotted by Meerut Development Authority (MDA) located in Sector- 4C, Pocket-A, Shatabadi Nagar, Meerut on "as is where is basis" through e-auction.

If it's your Birthday

Sunday August 25 Your instinct is to spend, spend and spend again, but do stop and think whether the cost is worth it. Take a minute to consult the experts and you will safeguard your future.

Monday August 26 You'll need to pay meticulous attention to detail. You'd do best to give the orders and then wait for other people to carry them out.

Tuesday August 27 You may be determined to press ahead with practical tasks but, if you're sensible, you'll probably decide to put off until next week whatever doesn't have to be done today.

Wednesday August 28 If you're planning activities for the coming month, go for anything which is sociable. Your desires will change later, and what makes sense now will be a different proposition within six months' time, so build in flexibility.

Thursday August 29 Keep the big picture in mind, but pay more attention to the tiny details. If you lay the foundations for your future enterprises firmly and fairly, then you can only be headed for success. There is no other option.

Friday August 30 Your instincts are taking over, driving you forward. It could be that the answer to old problems and the solution to today's questions lie in your heart. But the truth could also lie in the past.

Saturday August 31 The future lies in your hands. You've got a choice, that's for sure. But, as always at such times, you're not certain what exactly to go for. Perhaps you're waiting for a push from a partner. But, then, maybe it would be better if you took the initiative yourself.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) You must be able to get on with plans which may have had to be put on ice, perhaps because of increasing complications in your public or professional life.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) You have a reputation for being thoroughly reliable and completely honest. Now that anywhere up to eight planets are lining up to support your finer qualities, you will be recognised for the tower of strength that you are.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) A brilliant relationship between Mercury, ruler of bright ideas, and a number of other vital planets, should make all awkward decisions that much easier to take.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) Jupiter, the most helpful of all the planets, is in the crucial stages of its twelve-year cycle, much to your deep satisfaction.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) A new personal astrological phase is beginning, so see this as an ideal time to make an entirely fresh start.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) The continuing presence of that powerful planetary trio, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, in inspiring regions of your chart, is bound to make your emotional life rather complex.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) This may be a tricky time of year for other people, but not for you. True, you will be under some pressure both at home and at work, yet Jupiter's presence offers you powerful protection.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) You may have encountered annoying delays for quite some time now and, as a result, your inner equilibrium may have been upset: such is the effect of the deep and compulsive planet Pluto.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23) As a Sagittarian, you must have become aware of the fact that you have much in common with Gemini, your opposite sign, including your reluctance to settle down.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) You might now feel that the odds are stacked against you yet, although you are facing a number of problems, the truth is that you are doing rather well.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) Your prospects are improving. There will be so much for you to enjoy, experience and achieve, now that the planets are focusing on your sign.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Difficult indications are receding. Meanwhile, Jupiter, your benevolent ruling planet, reminds you that once again the tide of fortune is running strongly in your favour.

Government of India Bhabha Atomic Research Centre BARC Facilities, Visakhapatnam NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER Online item rate tenders in two bid (stages) system are hereby invited through e-tendering mode by The Regional Director, BARC Facilities, Anu Vihar, Mekarasi Hill, Gajuwaka-Yalamanchilli Road, Maduturu Sub Post Office, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh-531011, on behalf of The President of India from eligible contractors for the following works:

NIT No: BARC (V)/CES/NABTD/ET/33, Dated: 21.08.2019 Name of Work: Construction of Field House and other associated civil works for NABTD at BARC campus, Achatapuram, Visakhapatnam (Dist.), Andhra Pradesh. Estimated cost - Rs.1.60 Crores. Cost of EMD: Rs.3.2 Lakhs. Completion Period: 15 Months. Detailed NIT & e-Tender Documents available for free view/download: 26.08.2019 to 16.09.2019 (17:00 Hrs.). Last date and time of online submission of tender: Upto 15:00 Hrs on 30.09.2019

NAGPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-AUCTION NOTICE Civil Lines Nagpur (M.S.) Name of the Work: - Organizing an online e-Auction from financially sound advertising Firms for grant of Advertising Rights under Outdoor Advertising Media through Kiosks on the Property (Street Light Poles) of Nagpur Municipal Corporation for Purposeful and Lawful Advertisement for total period of initially for one year and after subjective satisfaction, extent for further period of two years. The bidders shall have past experience of carrying out similar type of work in past years.

ASSAM SKILL DEVELOPMENT MISSION 5th Floor, Katabari, DPS Road, NH-37 Garchuk, Guwahati - 781035 ASDM Tender No.: ASDM-2101/2019/103 Date: 22-08-2019 TENDER NOTICE Sealed Tenders are invited from reputed agencies having adequate experience in implementing Technical Intern Training Program at North East Skill Centre (NESC), Assam Skill Development Mission, Gorchuk, Guwahati.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY NOTICE OF INVITING E-TENDER DRM(C&W), DRM office, Bikaner acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders on 05/Mech/ENHM/2019-20 date: 21.08.2019. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

CORRIGENDUM NO. 02 e-Tender No. 14 for 2019-20 Ref.: i) This Office Tender Notice No. 14 for 2019-20 issued vide letter No. Swd/Ab/Ab/Tender/2019/20/3112, Dated 26.07.2019 ii) Chief Engineer, P.W. Region, Konkan Mumbai issued vide letter No. CE(K)/Tender/9633, Dated 19.08.2019 FOLLOWING Time Table Change is hereby made in the below state work other Terms and Condition remain unchanged. Brief particulars of the work are as follows:

20 SPORTSLINE



KEITHELLAKPAM JEMSH SINGH
(Imphal, Manipur)
Age: 19

A volleyball enthusiast and an animation movie fan. Barely rode a cycle as a child and on the rare occasion he did, it was one of those milkman bicycles. Initially refused to attend selection trials but eventually budged. Now a junior world champion.

YANGLEM ROJIT SINGH
(Bishnupur, Manipur)
Age: 17

He first tried his luck in football but was quick to realize the chances of him getting selected were slim as hundreds had appeared for the trials at the SAI Centre. Wasn't aware of the sport until he appeared for the trials, where he was selected for national camp.

GOUTAMAMI IRUNGBAM (coach)
Age: 35

A former national level cyclist, Irungbam is now the coach of junior team.

LAITONJAM RONALDO SINGH
(Imphal, Manipur)
Age: 17

Named after the Brazilian football legend, he wanted to make a career in aquatics. Was told about cycling trials when he was in middle of his swimming training. Ronaldo got out of the pool, walked to the athletics ground and gave the test. Now a junior world champion.

NIKITA N
(Bombooflat, Andaman)
Age: 17

Did not know what cycling was until the federation and SAI conducted a talent hunt programme. When the trials were held, she did not even know for which sport it was – she was just happy that it gave her a chance to move to Delhi. It was only when the coaches told her that Nikita got to know that she was chosen for cycling.

ESOW ALBEN
(Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar)
Age: 18

A rower, he was offered a scholarship by SAI to pursue rowing. However, he chose cycling and was the one of the first athletes selected for the academy in Delhi in 2014. He is the current junior world number 1 in sprint and keirin events, and has won medals at back-to-back junior world championships.

TRIYASHA PAUL
(Madanpur, West Bengal)
Age: 17

A former 100m and long jump athlete. She was spotted by a scout, who convinced Paul and her father that her abilities would come in handier in cycling. A trial was held on an athletics ground in 2016, following which she was admitted to the centre in Delhi. This year, she won silver in team sprint at Jr Asian Championship.

RK SHARMA
(coach)
Age: 52

A Human Resource manager with the Indian Air Force, Sharma opted for VRS in 2013. Almost immediately, the former national-level cyclist undertook a diploma coaching course offered by the international cycling union (UCI) and became the sprint team national coach in 2014.

Abhinav Saha

Not too long ago, India had one dust-ridden velodrome, no qualified coaches, few cyclists and five bicycles. Then a retired Air Force HR manager took under his wings a group of athletes with a promise to make them elite cyclists. MIHIR VASAVDA meets the young world beaters pursuing a sport where India has virtually no history

"RONALDO NE jaise he goal score kia, main paida ho gaya. Toh main bhi ban gaya Ronaldo (Just as Ronaldo scored the goal, I was born. That's how I also became Ronaldo)" Laitonjam Ronaldo Singh blushes as he concludes the tale behind his name with this charming punchline.

The story goes something like this: In the summer of 2002, when Ronaldo was bulldozing past defenders and knocking off goals for Brazil in the World Cup in Japan and South Korea, thousands miles away in Imphal, Laitonjam Romen Singh and Sundari Devi were expecting their first child.

An international water polo player who was now serving the CRPF, Romen was a die-hard Brazil fan and a true Ronaldo faithful. He had placed a couple of bets with a colleague – Brazil will win the Cup and Ronaldo will end up as the highest scorer.

On June 22, when Sundari Devi went into labour, Romen was posted in Srinagar, following the World Cup. "My father was watching the replay of a Brazil game and at the exact moment I was born, Ronaldo scored a goal. Same time," Ronaldo laughs, and quickly adds a disclaimer, "That's what my father told me!"

A week later, Brazil defeated Germany in the final, all thanks to Ronaldo's brace. "He won ₹80,000 I think... my father said Ronaldo brought him luck and so he named me Ronaldo," the 17-year-old says.

Surely not quite like the legend he's named after, Ronaldo, but the young cyclist, too is seen as a "fenomeno" of sorts on the world junior circuit. Last week, India won its first-ever world gold – senior or junior, women or men – in cycling. And Ronaldo, partnering Rojit Singh Yanglem and Esow Alben, played a pivotal role. He rode one of the fastest anchor legs as he wiped off Australia's 0.03 second advantage, built over the first two laps, and led India to team sprint gold medal in the Junior Track Cycling World Championships in Frankfurt.

Junior results generally spread optimism but are little tricky. Many a times, they turn out to be false dawns. But it is difficult to underestimate or overlook the significance of this breakthrough performance. Not too long ago, the track inside India's only world-class velodrome, the capital's egg-shaped sports complex inside the Indira Gandhi Sports Complex that was built during the 2010 Commonwealth Games, was covered in a thick layer of dust.

There were no qualified coaches, few cyclists and barely enough bicycles. Fast forward five years, and India are top ranked and world champions in men's junior team sprint. The top-ranked junior cyclist in individual sprint and keirin events, too, is an Indian – the prodigious teenager Esow – and Ronaldo, the world number 3 junior sprinter, is fast closing in on his teammate.

The growing presence at the top in juniors and consistent podium finishes, with timings that are respectable even at a senior level, points at the fact that this may, after all, might not be a flash in the pan. It took a retired Air Force Human Resources manager and his ragtag

bunch of committed teenagers who were once into rowing, swimming, volleyball, football and track and field to script a turnaround in a sport that India has absolutely no history in.

That they defeated Australia, a track cycling superpower, to win their first gold medal made it a lot more laudable.



There's this inspiring tradition in Australian cycling that all young pedal pushers from Down Under talk about. As a part of the initiation, they are asked to undertake a "Champions Walk" that takes them through the corridor in the bowels of the velodrome at their national training base in Adelaide. The walk takes them past a gallery which has pictures of the country's legendary cyclists like Cadel Evans, Stuart O'Grady and Katherine Bates. It serves as inspiration for the younger generation as well as remind them of the legacy they need to carry forward.

There was a time, roughly about seven years ago, when the Indian cyclists walked at the IG Stadium velodrome they were greeted by decaying walls and an overpowering stench of urine. However, it wasn't always like that at the country's only cycling arena. It had seen better days. The IG Stadium velodrome was among the last projects to be initiated before the 2010 Commonwealth Games but one of the first to be ready. It was built in a mere 17 months at a reported cost of Rs 150 crore. It was also hailed as one of the best facilities in the world by cyclists from across the Commonwealth, and there was hope that it would become the home of Indian cycling.

However, once the Games were over, the place was turned into junk. In the aftermath of the CWG scandal, as the officials squabbled in courts, the government suspended the cycling federation. It stayed like that for almost two years after the CWG and the velodrome was locked. The timber track was wrapped in plastic sheets to 'protect' it from Delhi's extreme weather pattern. The seats were broken and remains of dead pigeons were scattered around the stadium.

During his visit in 2012, the then International Cycling Union (UCI) president Pat McQuaid called it a 'matter of shame'. His Asian counterpart, Hee Wok Cho, too put his disappointment on record, saying he was 'not happy with the maintenance' of the velodrome. "It (velodrome) was in shambles," says Onkar Singh, the secretary general of the Cycling Federation of India. "We spent ₹2 lakh just on cleaning the stadium."

That, however, was just one part of the mess. The federation had a grand total of five cycles at their disposal. But it wasn't as if there were riders queuing up for those five rides – India did not even have that many talented cyclists who could pose a challenge in Asia, let alone the world. But even more worryingly, it seemed at the time there was no one in the country who had the knowledge to produce riders.



(L-R) Ronaldo Singh, Rojit Singh, Esow Alben and Jemsh Singh with their team sprint gold medal at the junior track world championship in Frankfurt. UCI Twitter



Some countries launch their youth programmes on the back of colossal failures, like German football did at the turn of the century. A few others build on their success, as was the case with Australia's cycling programme after the 1984 Olympics. India's push in cycling, however, was born out of extreme desperation.

Cycling is one of the most-watched, marquee sports at the Olympics that offers a bulk of medals. Curiously, not one Indian cyclist has qualified for the Games since Tokyo 1964. And even though it looks unlikely that the trend will change when Tokyo hosts its second Olympics next year, the wheels have at least been set in motion for the 2024 edition.

Indeed, it wasn't without the good old bureaucracy leaving its mark. "From the time we first proposed this idea to the Sports Authority of India to when it was eventually approved, five director generals got changed. Every time we made a presentation, that DG would be shifted and we had to begin all over again," Onkar says. It would've been funny if it wasn't so frustrating. The federation's idea was based largely on the journey of Andaman cyclist Deborah Herold – the 2004 tsunami survivor who splashed on to the scene by winning two gold medals at the 2014 Track Asia Cup. Onkar says Deborah, who started training in Delhi in 2011, was a 'pilot project'. "We were looking for athletes in raw, untouched regions who could be trained at the centre in Delhi. Deborah was our pilot project. It succeeded and we wanted to expand it," he says.

In 2014, two years after the proposal was first floated, things finally began to take shape. The UCI, SAI and cycling federation joined hands to launch a training centre in Delhi. The world body even donated 40 cycles to India. Now all that remained was to create a form pool virtually out of scratch. And they managed to do that just as easily as it sounds. "We looked at models of different countries before adopt-

ing England's system and tweaking it a little based on our research. We decided to recruit a completely new bunch of riders. But we looked for athletes... "Onkar says, "...not cyclists."

They first had to weed out the non-performers. And quite aptly, that task was taken up by a former Air Force HR manager, who was now the chief national sprints coach, RK Sharma. "Coaching seniors, I thought, was a waste of time because they had reached their limit," says Sharma, who took a voluntary retirement from Air Force in 2013 to get a coaching diploma in cycling. "I had to tell them, 'you can't go beyond this level. So it's better if you go for your studies or whatever else you want to pursue.' We had to catch young athletes. Even if they couldn't ride a cycle, it was okay." It literally was like that.



When Nikita N queued up at the SAI Centre in Andaman for a selection test two years ago, she had no idea about the sport for which she was trying out. The then 15-year-old knew just two things: the scouts had come from Delhi and this was the only way for her to move to the Capital. It was only when the coaches went to Nikita's house in Bombooflat to meet her parents and inform them about her selection that she got to know it was for cycling. "I did not even know cycling was a sport. I hardly cycled as a child... but that didn't matter. I was excited just to go to Delhi," she says.

This year, she won a silver medal in team sprint at the Junior Asian Track Championship, partnering Triyasha Paul, who was a 100m runner and long jumper before the federation and SAI's talent spotters urged her to take up cycling. The country's top cyclist and world's best junior Esow was a rower in Port Blair before he switched to cycling after appearing for selection trials in 2014. His sprint teammate Keithellakpam Jemsh Singh, 19, was a volleyball player and had barely ridden a cycle before moving to Delhi. Yanglem Rojit Singh aspired to be a footballer while Ronaldo hoped to follow his father's footsteps and take up a water sport.

"The talent spotters made us run 150m sprints, chin-ups, push-ups and 1600m runs. I didn't know I was doing this for cycling and there was no way to guess it either because there wasn't a cycle anywhere around," Ronaldo says. Sharma, the chief sprints coach, says the trials were designed to test explosiveness and endurance. "We got normal athletes who didn't even know how to ride a bicycle. Sprint is a straightforward event – you have to be faster than your competitor. So our team checks their physical capabilities. And for me, the most important requirement for me is, if he is overtaken by another rider *toh uske tan badan mein aag lag jaani chahiye* (then he should be infuriated)," Sharma says.

These cyclists formed the core junior group. They live at the SAI hostel next to the velodrome. Every weekend, teachers from a nearby school visit the trainees and offer them tuition.

It is a rare break from their grueling training programme, which is strictly regimented.

Everyday, they spend hours on the cycle, hurtling down the track at blinding speed. In the gym, they lift upwards of 120kg in leg press, among other exercises, to get the muscular thighs they crave for – a cyclist's thigh stands out just like a wrestler's ear. The rest of the time is spent in recovery. And once they are back at the hostel, they are cut off from distractions.

During camp, the cyclists' mobile phones are deposited with the coach, only allowed for a couple of hours every evening to talk with their friends and family. "If they keep the phone with them, they'll be on social media till late in the night. For the kind of schedule they follow, it is very important that they rest well and recover. So no phones are allowed in the premises and at 9.30pm sharp, the lights are out," Onkar says. There have been instances where those who've broken the curfew have been asked to leave the camp. "I understand it is a bit harsh. But if you want results, there has been to be a strict mechanism in place," Onkar says.



The coach and federation take pride in the fact that, except the equipment, the entire programme is 'made in India'. The federation's annual budget has gone up from ₹1 crore seven years ago to approximately ₹25 crore now. From five cycles, the federation now has 195 – each costing between ₹2 to 10 lakh. The sprint group, almost non-existent a few years ago, comprises 20 junior cyclists. "None of this would've been possible without the federation, SAI and Honda, one of our biggest supporters," Sharma says.

For India, this is just a baby step into a blurry world where every millisecond matters. Cycling has morphed into a virtual arms race, with countries exploiting technology for marginal gains. From deploying methods like wind tunnel testing to wearing advanced skin suits and riding custom-made cycles, there's an intense competition between national programmes.

They would assume that India, having warmed up to the sport so late and with a limited budget, already start with a massive disadvantage compared to the other nations. But in their projection to the sports ministry, the cycling federation has given in writing that they will win a medal at the 2024 Olympics.

For a country that has not been able to send a cyclist to Olympics for the last 55 years, it comes across as a rather bold and ambitious target. But Sharma is confident. "Why isn't it possible? Till now no one could dream we could win a medal at a junior world championship. We did that without any external help or technology. We just had a velodrome, a few kids and a strong plan," the 52-year-old says.

His optimism rubs off on the cyclists. "2024... Surely. That's my target," Ronaldo says. "The way we are developing, it is a realistic goal too." Just how good is the Brazilian football legend's namesake at netting goals, though, remains to be seen.

BRIEFLY

Crystal Palace stun Man United

Manchester: A stoppage-time goal by defender Patrick van Aanholt gave Crystal Palace their first Premier League win at Old Trafford as they beat a toothless Manchester United 2-1 on Saturday. Van Aanholt powered a shot past United keeper David De Gea after new signing Daniel James scored an 89th-minute equaliser to cancel out Jordan Ayew's first-half opener for the visitors. Marcus Rashford, who put in a forgettable performance like most of his team mates as United lacked creativity in midfield and bite up front, missed a 70th-minute penalty when his spot-kick cannoned off the post. The result left both sides on four points from three games but while Palace manager Roy Hodgson will have been delighted with his team's smash-and-grab victory, his counterpart Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was fuming. "We just were not clinical enough in front of goal and they scored two very easy goals," Solskjaer told the BBC. **REUTERS**

Gokulam Kerala win Durand Cup

Kolkata: Gokulam Kerala FC won the Durand Cup in their maiden appearance, defeating Mohun Bagan 2-1 in the final at the Salt Lake Stadium on Saturday. Marcus Joseph scored a brace, but the upset was made easy by a listless display from Bagan. Only in the last quarter, the Kolkata giants, 16-time Durand Cup champions, showed some urgency. But they lacked penetration in the final third. Gokulam went down to 10-men, when Justin George received a second yellow card on 87 minutes. Bagan's consolation goal came on 64 minutes, when Gokulam 'keeper CK Ubaid made a hash of the Chamorro header and dropped the ball over the goalline. Tempers flared towards the end and Fran Morante on the Bagan bench was shown the red card. **ENS**

Nair misses out on ton, Kalsi hits 105

Bangalore: Out-of-favour India batsman Karun Nair missed out on a century by one run but Himachal Pradesh's Ankit Kalsi made 105 before India Red were all out for 285 in their Duleep Trophy match against India Blue on Saturday. India Red fought back to reduce their opponents to 74 for 3 in 24 overs at stumps, getting the key wickets of the highly-rated Shubman Gill (9) and in-form Rituraj Gaikwad (37). Earlier, resuming at overnight 163 for 2, Nair's hopes of scoring a hundred were dashed when he was stumped by Snell Patel off left-arm spinner Saurabh Kumar. After losing Harpreet Singh Bhatia (2), Kalsi found an able partner in the talented Ishan Kishan (50), and the two built a crucial partnership. While the left-handed Kalsi continued with his stodgy ways, fellow southpaw Kishan was more enterprising and hit some attractive shots. His exit, however, put paid to the team's hopes of putting up a 300-plus total. **PTI**
BRIEF SCORES (DAY 2): India Red 285 all out in 124 overs (Ankit Kalsi 105, Karun Nair 99, Ishan Kishan 50; Divesh Pathania 4/55, Jalaj Saxena 3/57, Aniket Choudhary 2/69) vs India Blue 74 for 3 in 24 overs (R Gaikwad 37, J Undakat 2/18).

Silver, silver

Sindhu eyes elusive world championship gold after entering 3rd successive final by beating All England Champ Chen Yu Fei of China

SHIVANI NAIK
AUGUST 24

You could be forgiven for thinking 2018, when Carolina Marin got stuck into her in the World Championship finals, never happened. For such is the allure of PV Sindhu's 2017 World's loss in a titanic final to Japan's Nozomi Okuhara. That 73-shot rally at Glasgow, the match nearing 2 hours, that breathless retrieving, the wafer-thin scoreline deficit, Okuhara's arching back, Sindhu's desperate forecourt lunges and that doomed net tap; by the time Sindhu had her revenge at Korea a month later with a 56-shot rally stitched in, Indians were trained in swooning over these opera-level tragedies.

The duo is back at Basel's 2019 World Championship final, for Season 2 of this epic drama, with all of India neck-deep in love with badminton's iconic women's singles rivalry. The country's seldom had an athlete as dominant as Sindhu at the topmost levels of racquet sports. That she keeps missing gold in finals, has nevertheless kept Indians parched and hungry for a title victory.

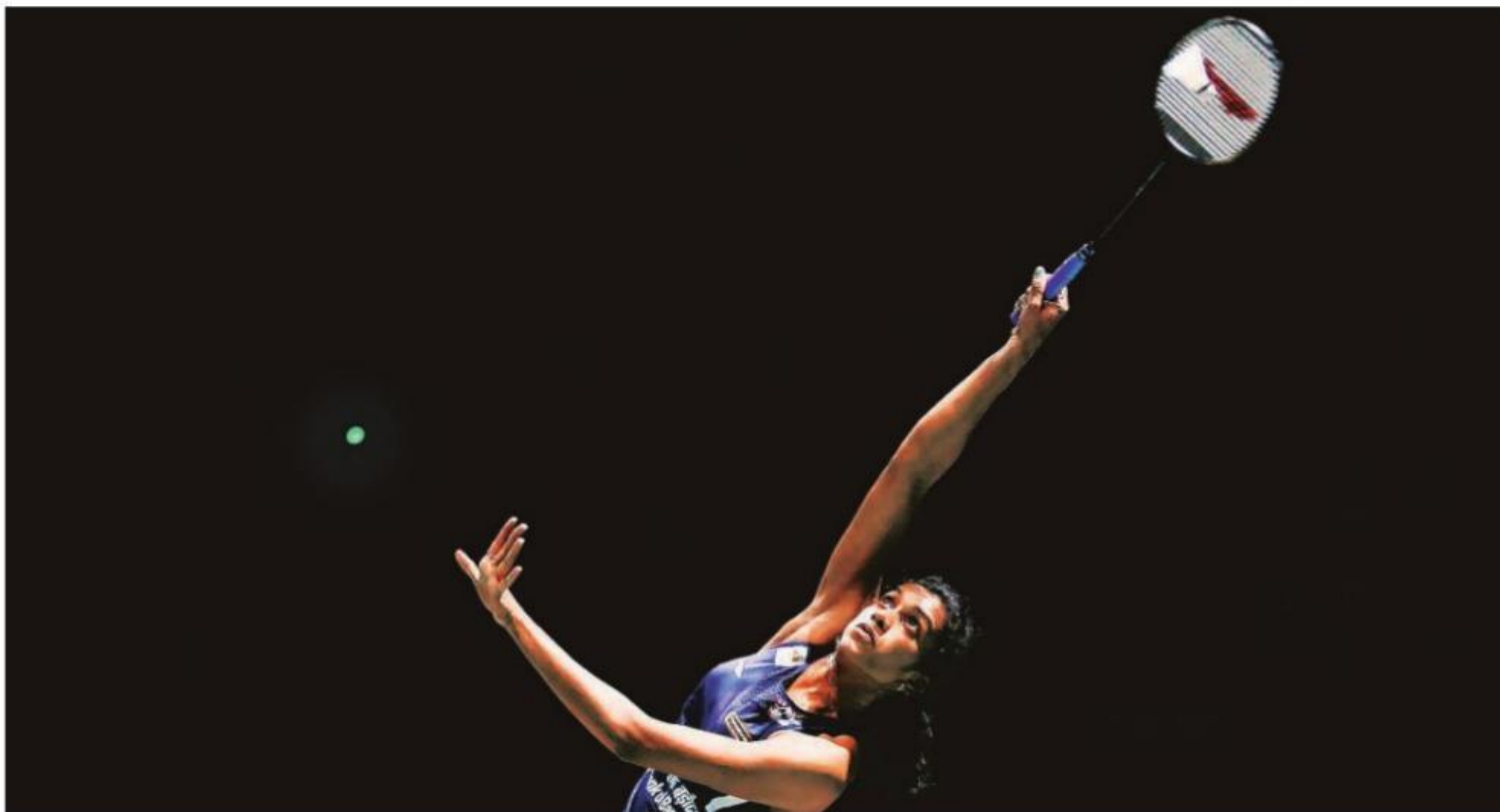
Some reckon that if Sindhu can keep the unforced errors in check and keep the pace at which she's been playing this week, the title is her's for the taking. Sure there will be a point after every four or five in spurts, where Okuhara will try breaking the momentum and drag Sindhu into a stretched slugfest. But just look at Sindhu's defense on a smash to her backhand and how she swats it away cross or the poise with which she pushes calmly at the net, and you'll know 2019 ain't 2017. Okuhara's retreat into defensive battles might be hard to sustain this time around. Sindhu decimated Chinese Chen Yufei 21-eye-popping-7, 21-14 in 40 minutes in the semis. The Japanese former champ rallied from a set down to beat Intanon Ratchanok in 3.

Expect her to play the length game and snatch extra time on returns, and also expect Sindhu to negotiate it clinically in straight sets by pushing the pace to stymie Nozomi.

She's playing amazingly freely and bossed the Chinese Yufei with an all-court rampage. Still, 15-all in a decider is where Indians will begin biting their nails, and hope she can relax, use every legal delaying tactic to gain that extra half a second to calm her nerves for the elusive "last two points" that eluded her in Glasgow. Finals are finals and unless Sindhu blasts her way out of trouble, she'll need to remember Nozomi is Nozomi. A Japanese not easily intimidated with her own rituals and sense of zen and time, who came out of a stiff semi after staring down the barrel. While Sindhu might go in as favourite (she had in 2017 too), the Indian will need to be armed with a Plan B for 15-all, should the bulldozing not flatten Nozomi. In the semis, Sindhu reckoned she was well prepared and while she maintained the lead at all times, even the few unforced errors could be shrugged off because of the confidence of the lead. Scoreboard pressure though, can do funny things. She said all the right things.

"It's very important to keep yourself focussed because it's not yet over for me. I'm happy but I'm not satisfied yet. There is one more match to go. I definitely want to get the gold for sure. But it's not going to be easy. I have to focus very much and be very much patient. And give my best in the final."

It's her SOP, at all times, even extraordinary ones like a third World Championship final. Coach Gopichand sets a lot of store on being physically in top shape — if you want to last the psychological wringers and mental hits. It's what they fell back on post 2017. "It's important for you to have a good preparation and feel good when you get in physically. I



Sindhu, the Rio Olympics silver medallist, will face Japan's World No. 4 Nozomi Okuhara in the final of the World Championships in Basel on Sunday. *Reuters*

think a lot of times you will forget what has happened in the past. Much of what you feel as negativity or bad thinking post the match can be gone if you prepare well next time around. That's something we've done consistently with Sindhu. Whenever she has lost over the years we went back and worked on our mistakes and that helps her to regain confidence," he says adding it's heartening to see her perform consistently at biggest stages.

In better shape

2017 he insists was a tough final to lose especially with the kind of expectations Sindhu had going in for the first time. "Sindhu really wanted to win. But having had the experience of playing a few more finals this time, she will be in better shape. Also the fact that she goes into the finals with relatively easier rounds while last time around Sindhu had to really struggle with long matches till quarters and semis and get to the finals. It's good to be physically rested a bit more than what she was last time," he adds.

He doesn't discount nerves and memories of past losses meddling and muddling her mind. "Because the venue is pretty similar, conditions seem very similar. But Sindhu seems better prepared. And the last time she's played Okuhara she beat her pretty convincingly," he stresses.

Overall, Team Sindhu have tried to keep it normal and real, avoid all hysterics.

"On court instructions need to be very precise and clear. And she will do it. That's helped. Outside of the court she has enough energy. I haven't seen very many people with that kind of energy to keep working and keep doing a bunch of other stuff. When she's with people she loves it, when she's shopping she loves it. She's got a lot of energy outside of the court. I see a lot of athletes who will be tired after a session. But if you tell Sindhu after a session let's go out and she'll be ready immediately. Very different, very social, very warm. So that's really helped to keep things very positive," he adds

Momota schools history-maker Sai

SHIVANI NAIK
AUGUST 24

A SPARK has been lit with B Sai Praneeth's bronze medal at the World Championships. But the legend like a candle can burn out faster than the wind. A good follow-up shot to India's first men's singles medal in 36 years, would be getting into serious contention at the Olympics. Sai's 21-13, 21-8 loss to World No.1 Kento Momota in the semifinals had only flickers of possibilities of how intact India's men's brigade can emerge from being thrown into a foundry with the world's very best.

Otherwise, Sindhu-Saina will headline yet another Olympics. For those are the high standards the Indian women have set: win it or leave it.

Just as well that Sai Praneeth went down emotionally after his quarters win against Jonathan Christie, shed some happy tears to celebrate a big rare bronze. For Momota was only going to highlight the deficiencies in a sobering schooling in the 42-minute semifinals. The Indian had more than an inkling. Sai was in the match till 10-10 — a third of the entire duration, unsurprisingly the first unexhausted third.

In this he played a clever cross-game to move Kento Momota from this flank to that, with the crosshairs for the kill focussed on left-handed Momota's backhand around waist length across his body. Momota's a master of retrieving, he can do it endlessly.

But he seemed to appreciate when his pet cross-court smash sent from the back court corner had Sai diving full stretch to his right and sending back a return that stunningly cleared the net and teased.

There was also Sai's overhead smash



Sai Praneeth lost to World No.1 Kento Momota 21-13, 21-18 in the semifinals of the World Championships. *Reuters*

which he plays like a NBA player's hook shot - leaning backwards, sending it shooting forward at 12-16. But then Kento had had enough and cleared his throat at this opening act to his big final tomorrow — finishing it awfully quickly. At the other end, the knocking blitz wiped away all thoughts of a smug celebration of a medal, as the rude reality checked in.

"I suddenly lost 3 points with small mistakes and with that the flow," he said. In a small voice he continued to BWF, "Compared to last time I was playing the strokes, pushing the pace but not getting points. So I was mentally getting tired and I didn't know what to do after 3-4 strokes went."

Sai Praneeth praised his conqueror as someone with a "all-round game and can

vary it according to the opponent."

There were positives from the tournament, but he didn't dwell. Sindhu had made her third Worlds final, the sort of stat that buries all comparative positives. But lessons were plenty. "When you compare Momota with other players, you can't just go in blindly. You need to be fit enough and stay with him and keep on changing strategies.

Main thing is you have to be fit, mentally fit." Coach Gopichand has linked mental fitness to physical fitness — something that Indian male shuttlers bought into only when Mulyo Handoyo piped in. Korean coach Park Tae Sang, might now start the renewed pestering.

But in light of this medal, former international Arvind Bhat pleads for urgency. Bhat reckons Sai Praneeth, Prannoy and Srikanth all have the necessary games, but need a bedrock of fitness, which is non-negotiable. "Sai has to lose weight. He's at least 4-5 kg heavy to be competitive consistently at top medal level. Badminton needs you to be underweight, most top players look malnourished, but all of our men's singles guys need to get the lean muscle mass up. And this will need sacrifices - doing things they completely hate, like running," he says. He gives the example of Chinese Lin Dan in 2012 when going for his second Olympic title. "Apparently thrice a week he undertook long runs in hot weather on a scalding beach, just to train for situations that could be completely different. He risked illness and missing out on Olympics even. But sacrifices need to be made, even if it means cordonning players off for a year," he explained. "Everyone will train 3 sessions like a donkey. An Olympic medal needs a sacrifice above that." Losing to Kento Momota might just ignite that flame.

1ST TEST

One for all, all for one: Led by Ishant, pace unit delivers on a placid track



EXPRESS IN WEST INDIES

SANDIPG
NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA), AUGUST 24

THE BIGGEST appraisal of Indian bowlers, if indirectly, came from West Indies batsman Roston Chase, who remarked: "There were no magic balls. There were no unplayable deliveries." He was referring to his colleagues' lack of application and purpose, but indirectly he was complimenting the resourcefulness of Ishant Sharma and Co. For on a flat, if benign surface, they blew up the hosts' endeavour to surpass the tourists' lead, with a combination of patience, purpose, cricketing intelligence, and beyond it, collectivism. There was nothing spectacular, but the beauty of this Indian bowling unit is that they needn't be spectacular to leave batting line-ups in disarray.

It's a fair measure to judge a bowlers' mettle on what he does on unhelpful, batsman-friendly conditions, when there is no swing available, when the strip doesn't induce disarming bounce, when it's not crack-laden, when it's just a placid, sun-blached second-third day pitch, when a bowler has to rely on brains, brawn, craft and nous, when he has to haggle for tough wickets.

It's equivalent to a batsman grinding out runs in difficult conditions, purchasing tough runs in adversity. So much then is glorified

about batsmen, but less so with bowlers, whose toils on placid wickets go unsung and under-appreciated, dismissed regularly as an after-thought. Often in such eventualities, they pin the blame on the batsmen's indiscretion, their impatience, their impetuosity, rather than reflecting on the plotting and build-up to their wickets.

Hence, as much as the West Indies' batsmen present a case for their shoddy batting effort, the Indian bowlers deserve credit for making them look shoddy through collective planning and purposeful execution. None embodied this virtue than Ishant Sharma, harnessing the cross-wind — planning, plotting, planning and pushing batsmen into making mistakes, detecting the smallest of weaknesses, exploiting it to the fullest and grabbing every little chance that came his way.

The two return catches, one of their only anchorman, Kraigg Brathwaite and then of their most explosive batsman, Shimron Hetmyer, merely demonstrated his sheer will. Especially the return catch of Hetmyer. Not the most elastic of fielders, he had to plunge his six foot four frame to the ground in his follow-through to snaffle the low-flung projectile. In a fraction of a second, in less time that you bat your eyelid, leaving even the agilest of Indian fielders, Ravindra Jadeja baffled. "That was an unbelievable catch," Jadeja praised.

Ishant was a man stirred — extracting the slightest of assistance from the surface, like the wind that blew across him. Initially, he was bowling from the Sir Curtly Ambrose End but as soon the wind began to blow, he switched ends. Now, he has steaming in from the Andy Roberts End, bowling with the intelligence and awareness that could have



Ishant Sharma was the pick of the bowlers (5/43) as India bowled out West Indies for 222 and took a first innings lead of 75 runs in the first Test. *AP*

made Roberts of latter years proud.

The wind enabled out-swing, not prodigious swing, but just subtle movement, which was allied with the one that cut into the right-hander. In a spell of unremitting intensity in the afternoon on Day Two, he harassed their best Test batsmen, Shai Hope and Roston Chase, both he devoured. Hope with a beautiful delivery that shaped in and slightly bent away, drawing him forward and forcing a faint nick. An inch-perfect than a magic ball.

The ball that got Chase wasn't wicket-ball — it's a way of balancing out the wicket-taking balls that went wicket-less — but it stemmed from the sheer pressure he was piling on him, peppering him ball after ball of relentless discipline and teasing accuracy. On

the fourth-stump channel, some that shaped in, some that held its line with the angle and some that seamed away. So a leg-side-bound loose ball implored a boundary, but the delivery held off the surface and Chase was early into the shot.

Chase was his third wicket, Hetmyer his fourth and Kemar Roach his fifth, which he celebrated effervescently. It might have been his most swifty five-for. Then it could have been anyone's.

Power of teamwork

It could have been Jasprit Bumrah's or Mohammed Shami's as well. That's the most glittering feature of the trio — they're relentless in their pursuit of out-witting and out-thinking batsmen, swapping roles, switch-

ing lengths and supporting each other through thick and thin. For batsmen, there's no succour, no respite. Just plain hard work.

It helps that all three are differently-skilled as well as versatile. Bumrah is arguably the most different and gifted, the smiling executioner. Ishant is the most experienced and worldly-wise, the gnarling leader. Shami is the most bustling, the feisty enforcer, even if he could blow hot and cold at times. Together, they make a feared trio — Bumrah can marvel with a variety of precious toys, Ishant can be always in your face, and Shami has a knack of producing match-turning spells when the team wants them the most.

Though they have different preferred lengths and trajectories, they can masterfully interchange. All of them can comfortably bowl short, full, or back-of-length depending on the surface. It's a rare gift, as hit-the-deck bowlers sometimes struggle on those that collude a fuller length.

Ishant in his early years was a classic case. But beyond the confluence of their varied skills, they're good friends, which to Curtly Ambrose is the essence of hunting in packs and the aspect of the Indian bowling that has impressed him the most.

"I see shades of myself and Courtney (Walsh) in them. We were great friends on and off the field. We never tried to out-do or compete with each other. If it was his day, it is his job is to take wickets. I would just look to keep it nice and tight outside the off-stump, the put the pressure on the batsmen. If it's my day, he would do the same. So that was the reason we were so successful as a pair," he explained to this newspaper.

They are good friends too. The vibes are perceptible on the field — they're constantly

involved with each other, feeding off each other, talking tactics, tackling batsmen, sometimes bantering and pulling each other's legs, but always together. Off the field, you can see them sitting around the same dinner table, strolling the beach together and even batting together at the nets. Their fondness and respect is mutual. This automatically translates into results on the field.

The trio is still in the nascence of the partnership that could make India a world-conquering force, to augment their World No.1 status, but the more they play the together, the brighter they look like evolving into an irresistible pace-attack, like Ponting's McGrath-Gillespie-Lee triumvirate, though likening them to Lloyd's quartet is flattering.

Comparisons aside, such a luxury few Indian skippers could have dreamt of in the past. But Kohli is blessed that way. He could summon anyone of them and expect him to log in a decent shift, find the much-required breakthrough and keep India in the game, as it was during West Indies's first innings. When wickets were hard to come by, when the sun was patting down fiercely, when the batsmen were bedding in, he could just signal anyone of his three pacemen to provide him with a match-turning spell.

It was so in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. And so it was in North Sound. It was Ishant who turned up in the first innings. But it could be anyone in the next. And there were no magical, jaw-dropping deliveries, but honest grit, craft and intelligence.

BRIEF SCORES: India 1st innings 297 all out in 96.4 ovs (A Rahane 81, R Jadeja 58; K Roach 4/66) vs West Indies 1st innings: 222 all out in 74.2 ovs (R Chase 48, J Holder 39; I Sharma 5/43, Md Shami 2/48, R Jadeja 2/64).

Nagal to make Grand Slam debut against peerless Federer

SHAHID JUDGE
MUMBAI, AUGUST 24

SUMIT NAGAL'S year began in Pune, loitering around the tennis courts of the Balewadi Sports Complex. He kept his tennis gear close at hand, hoping against all odds, that his rank of 361 would get him a wild card, or a spot in the qualifying round of India's only ATP event. Anything would do. But nothing came. "I didn't get in," he had offered, feebly.

The ensuing nine months have been the source of great frustration and mental fatigue for the 22-year-old. But importantly, the most rewarding. And on Friday he quashed any sign of tiredness in the way he punched the air and emptied out his lungs in a roar of cele-

bration after winning 5-7, 6-4, 6-3 against Joao Menezes of Brazil in the final qualifying round of the US Open.

From hanging around the outer courts in Pune, Nagal has secured himself a spot in the main draw of a Grand Slam for the first time in his career, and will play his first round match in the largest tennis arena in the world, Arthur Ashe Stadium, against the greatest player, 20-time major champion Roger Federer.

"The situation he was in, moving up was the only way. We knew that once he gets healthy, he will be on the right path," says Somdev Devvarman, a former India no 1 who has watched Nagal grow closely. "Now he qualified and he's going to play Roger. That's huge for the sport in India because obvi-

ously it's going to be televised. It's good for Sumit Nagal. These are the kinds of experiences that he can positively relate to.

The hard work he's put in, he's getting the rewards for it now. Regardless of what happens (against Federer) he should understand that the big results are ahead of him at this point in time."

Making the cut for the US Open qualifiers came through no act of benevolence from the organisers-part - Nagal had worked hard and earned his trip to Flushing Meadows. From starting the year ranked 361, he's risen to a career high 190 after a run of form that saw him make the semi-finals five times in seven consecutive Challenger events.

Along the way, he picked up impressive wins over former

world no 17 Albert Ramos-Vinolas and former world no 24 Martin Klizan before going through the qualifiers and making it to the main draw of an ATP 500 event, in Hamburg, for the first time in his career.

The change in fortune though, Devvarman asserts, comes as a result of the work he's put in off-court.

In the past year, Nagal has sought the tutelage of Sascha Nensel - who has coached former world no 4 Nicolas Pietrangeli and former WTA world no 9 Julia Goerges - and trainer Milos Galecic, who has previously worked with Devvarman.

"Milos is very professional and is a leading global expert in strength and conditioning," Devvarman says. "He looked at what's happened to Sumit as a good challenge for himself as



Sumit Nagal beat Menezes in the final qualifying round.

From hanging around the outer courts in Pune, Nagal has secured himself a spot in the main draw of a Grand Slam for the first time in his career, and will play his first round match in the largest tennis arena in the world, Arthur Ashe Stadium.

well. Milos is an utter professional and he sets very high standards for the athletes. And Sumit is automatically held to a very high level of professionalism, which is something that he has lacked in the past. Now that he's made that improvement, he's got the results."

Indeed, Nagal has come a long way from his days of wandering on the sidelines of tournaments, hoping to get in. And he had to suffer a lot. "You had no idea if you'd get into tourna-

ments. I was getting emails around Thursday or Friday saying 'hey, you got into this tournament,' then you have to rush to get there," Nagal told The Indian Express last month.

"It was tough and was getting very annoying, mentally, and financially. You were never really prepared to play for a particular tournament because you spent most of the time just hoping you can get in. I just wanted to play because I was hungry and motivated. That's why it

didn't stop me from going all those distances."

Now though, he's been earning the right to play in tournaments. He was worthy of a shot at the US Open qualifiers, and he's made the most of it.

And with compatriot Prajnesh Gunneswaran securing direct entry at the US Open, this will be the first time since Wimbledon 1998 that two Indian singles players will compete in the main draw of a Slam. On Friday, against Menezes, Nagal lost the first set and was down a break in the second.

That's when he won seven of the next eight games. Pulling off a comeback win to make it to the biggest stage of his career was rather fitting.

After all, this entire season has been all about Nagal clawing his way back.

England not throwing in the towel as yet

REUTERS/AFP
LEEDS, AUGUST 24

CAPTAIN JOE ROOT'S defiance gave England hope of saving the Ashes series as his unbeaten 75 helped the hosts to 156-3 in their second innings on day three of the third test at Headingley.

Australia sensed victory was in sight inside three days having set England a daunting 359 runs to win after they - 1-0 up in the five-match series and needing only one win to retain the urn - were all out for 246 in their second innings.

That meant England were set a target that, if reached, would be the second-highest run chase in test cricket at Headingley, and two quick wickets put the hosts in trouble at 15-2.

Out to avoid a third successive duck, however, Root dug in, putting on a vital 126 for the third wicket with Joe Denly (50), and the skipper was unbeaten alongside Ben Stokes (two not out) at the close with England needing 203 more runs for victory. Surrey openers Rory Burns and Jason Roy both fell cheaply shortly after lunch.

Left-hander Burns (seven) edged a lifting Pat Cummins delivery to David Warner at first slip before Roy, yet to convince as a Test match opener, played down the wrong line to Josh Hazlewood, who took 5-30 in the first innings, and was bowled.

Root, in on a pair, got off the mark with a three off fast bowler Hazlewood to the delight of his home Yorkshire fans in a capacity, sun-drenched crowd.

Denly, the only England batsman to reach double figures in the first innings with 12, repeatedly played and missed either side of being hit on the head by a Cummins bouncer.



Joe Root kept England afloat with an unbeaten 75 against Australia at stumps on Day 3. Reuters

But both he and Root applied themselves on an increasingly slow pitch that was making life tough for Australia's pace attack.

And there was a huge cheer from the crowd when Root's controlled hook off Hazlewood raised a fifty partnership with Denly.

Odds favour Australia

The odds were still hugely in Australia's favour, given only three sides have made more than 300 to win in the fourth innings of a Test at Headingley -- Australia (404-3 in 1948), England (315-4 against Australia, 2001) and the West Indies with 322-5 two years ago.

Earlier, Marnus Labuschagne missed out on a maiden Test hundred as he top-scored with 80 in Australia's second-innings 246.

It was his third successive fifty since becoming world cricket's inaugural concussion substitute in place of star batsman Steve Smith during the drawn second Test at Lord's.

Australia resumed on 171-6

with Labuschagne 53 not out after making 74 -- seven more than England managed between them -- in the first innings.

Labuschagne drove Stuart Broad for a textbook four through extra cover to go to 60 only to be dropped next ball when diving wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow floored a one-handed chance heading towards Root at first slip -- the third time Labuschagne was reprieved in his innings. Labuschagne had moved on to 70 when, as happened with his second ball at Lord's, he was hit on the helmet grille by a Jofra Archer bouncer.

But after being examined by the Australia team doctor, Labuschagne uppercut an 88 mph (141 kph) Archer bouncer for four. Labuschagne was 74 not out when Cummins's dismissal left Australia 226-8.

BRIEF SCORES: Day 3 stumps: England 67 (Hazlewood 5/30) and 156/3 (J Root 75*, J Denly 50; Hazlewood 2/35) trail Australia 179 and 246 (Labuschagne 80, Stokes 3/56, Archer 2/40, Broad 2/52) by 203 runs.

Latham ton sets tone for Kiwi response

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
COLOMBO, AUGUST 24

A SPARKLING century by Tom Latham powered New Zealand's first innings reply after Sri Lanka posted 244 on day three of the rain-hit second Test in Colombo on Saturday.

Latham, on 111, put together an unbeaten 70-run stand with B.J. Watling, on 25, to thwart the Sri Lankan bowling attack that had made early inroads into the Kiwi batting. The tourists were 196 for four at stumps, still trailing Sri Lanka by 48 runs.

Earlier Dhananjaya de Silva made 109 to lift Sri Lanka after they resumed the day on 144 for six following their decision to bat first. But Latham made the day his own as he registered his 10th Test hundred -- fourth against Sri Lanka -- to hold the New Zealand innings after they lost key wickets including skipper Kane Williamson for 20. Latham combined the right dose of caution and aggression as he hit 10 boundaries in his 184-ball stay at the wicket so far. "Tom is getting better and better every season. He had a great summer back home," New Zealand paceman Tim Southee, who claimed four wickets in the Sri Lankan innings, told reporters. "Great to see him kick on and continue that form overseas especially to come here and play the way he has played on conditions that are tough."

Off-spinner Dilruwan Perera opened the bowling for Sri Lanka and claimed two wickets, dismissing opener Jeet Raval, for nought, and Henry Nicholls, for 15. Paceman Suranga Lakmal sent Williamson trudging back to the pavilion after the batsman edged an away-going delivery to be caught at second slip.

Latham and Ross Taylor, who made 23, tried to steady the innings by putting together 50 runs before left-arm spinner Lasith

Latham, on 111, put together an unbeaten 70-run stand with Watling to thwart the Lankan bowling attack.

Embuldeniya broke the partnership. Embuldeniya drew Taylor out of his crease only for the batsman to edge the ball to slip. Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella had to leave the field after damaging the little finger of his left hand while attempting a catch off a Kumara delivery.

In the morning session, De Silva moved from his overnight 32 to complete his fifth Test century. Southee returned figures of 4-63 while pace partner Trent Boult got three wickets. De Silva, who was dropped on nine by paceman Boult off his own bowling on day two, put on crucial partnerships including a 43-run stand for the eighth wicket with Suranga Lakmal. The middle-order batsman, who hit 16 fours and two sixes in his 148-ball stay, reached his century with a boundary to third man off Southee as he raised his bat to the applauding dressing room. "We were in a bit of a tough situation and the idea was to try and get to 230. Great support from Dilruwan and the lower-order guys to help us to get where we are," said de Silva. "Very pleased with the effort I put in today. I have not been able to come up with a big score for quite some time now." After the first two days were affected by rain, the third day's play witnessed 90 overs despite a 28 minute delay due to rain in the final session. Sri Lanka lead the two-match series 1-0.

BRIEF SCORES: Day 3 stumps: New Zealand 196 for 4 (Latham 111*, Dilruwan 2/76) trail Sri Lanka 244 (De Silva 109, Southee 4/63, Boult 3/75) by 48 runs.



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Ever Be Resolved ?

on

Monday 26th August 2019 at 5.00 PM

Venue: Auditorium, Nehru Memorial Museum & Library
Teen Murti House, New Delhi

Moderator:

Amb. Surendra Kumar
Founding President, IAFA

Panellists:

Shri Salman Khurshid
Former External affairs Minister, GoI

Amb. Lalit Mansingh
Former Foreign Secretary, GoI

Amb. Kanwal Sibal
Former Foreign Secretary, GoI

Gen (Retd) Deepak Kapoor
Former Chief of the Army Staff

Dr Seshadri Chari

Member National Executive Committee, BJP

Chair:

Shri Shakti Sinha
Director, NMML

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