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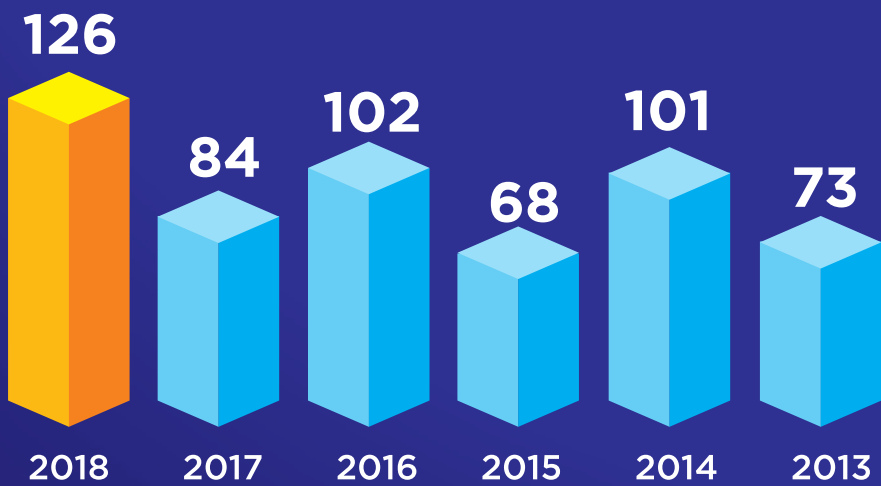
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page 10



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of Hamza bin Laden in
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page 12



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under-19 Asia Cup final
page 17

Kohli's India takes on
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NEARBY

Final status of all NRC applicants out

GUWAHATI
The National Register of Citizens authority on Saturday published the individual status of all 3.3 crore people of Assam who had applied for inclusion when the exercise began five years ago.

NEWS • PAGE 10

Yemen rebels attack Saudi Aramco plants

REUTERS
RIYADH

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi group on Saturday attacked two Saudi Aramco plants at the heart of the kingdom's oil industry, including the world's biggest petroleum processing facility in Abqaiq, and Khurais, sparking fires in the latest flare-up in the Gulf.

Saudi Arabia said it had brought the blazes under control, but three sources said oil production and exports had been disrupted.

PREPARES FOR IPO • PAGE 12

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Govt. unveils package to boost exports, revive housing sector

FM announces ₹50,000 cr. incentive scheme in third set of stimulus measures

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday announced a third set of government decisions to revive the economy, including a ₹50,000 crore export incentive scheme and a ₹10,000 crore special window to provide last mile funding for unfinished housing projects.

The decisions, announced by the Minister at a press conference on Saturday, follow two previous mega announcements designed to encourage private sector investment, and bring further stability into the banking system through several public sector bank mergers.

The third set of announcements focussed on giving a fillip to exports, which contracted 6.05% in August, and easing the plight of home buyers.

Last-mile funding

For the housing sector, the most notable decision was the setting up of a special fund that would provide last-mile funding for housing projects that are not categorised as non-performing assets and are not undergoing National Company Law Tribunal proceedings.

Booster dose

A snapshot of the key decisions announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman



EXPORT PACKAGE

1 New Scheme for Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Product (RoDTEP) to incentivise exporters

■ The scheme is aimed at offsetting the amount exporters pay as duties on exports

■ Revenue forgone for RoDTEP by the government is ₹50,000 crore per year

2 Electronic refund module for quick and automated refund of input tax credits to exporters by end of September

3 Banks to be provided higher insurance

cover for working capital loans to exporters

4 RBI to modify priority sector lending norms to increase credit to exporters by ₹36,000-68,000 crore

HOUSING PACKAGE

1 A special fund to provide last-mile funding for unfinished housing units

■ This will be available for non-NPA, non-NCLT, affordable and middle income projects

■ Govt. will provide ₹10,000 crore, other investors will put in roughly the same amount

2 External commercial borrowing guidelines will be relaxed to facilitate financing for homebuyers who are eligible under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

3 Interest on house building advances to be lowered

"The objective is to focus on construction of unfinished units," Ms. Sitharaman said. "The government, on the lines of the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, can contribute to the fund, while the rest of the investors would be LIC and other institutions and private capital from banks, sovereign funds, etc."

The Minister said the government's contribution to

the fund would be ₹10,000 crore and the other investors would contribute "roughly the same amount". The fund is to be professionally run with experts from the housing and banking sectors.

Duty remission

On exports, Ms. Sitharaman said, "One major decision is the setting up of the Scheme for Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Product

(RoDTEP), which would replace the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS)." "The existing dispensation in textiles of MEIS and the old ROSL [Rebate of State Levies] will continue up to December 31, 2019," she added.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 10

COSMETIC STEPS: CONG. • PAGE 10

'SPEEDY ITC E-REFUNDS CAN BOOST EXPORTS' • PAGE 13

Only Hindi can work to unite country, asserts Amit Shah

'One common language vital for nation's global identity'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In remarks that sparked angry reactions from some southern States, Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said Hindi is the only language that can unify the country and steps should be taken to promote it.

"India is a country of different languages, and every language has its own importance but it is very important to have a language of the whole country which should become the identity of India globally," he said on Twitter, writing in Hindi.

"Today, if one language can do the work of uniting the country, then it is the most spoken language, Hindi."

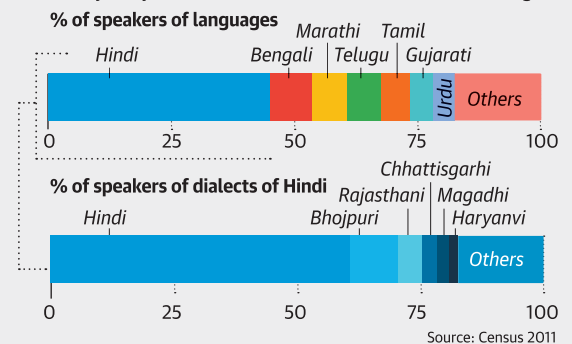
Gandhi's dream
Appealing to citizens to increase the use of the mother tongue and Hindi, Mr. Shah equated it to realising the dream of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel of one language for the country.

Later, at a Hindi Diwas event in Delhi, he said, "Today if you ask a Hindi-medium student to speak for 40 minutes in Hindi, he won't be able to do so."

"There is so much influence of English on us that we cannot talk in Hindi without its help. School students should be asked to speak in

One language, many dialects

Only 60% of total Hindi-speakers speak the native Hindi dialect. Effectively, only 26% have native Hindi as their mother tongue



T.N. leaders slam remarks

Political leaders in Tamil Nadu took exception to Home Minister Amit Shah's call for Hindi as the national language. DMK president M.K. Stalin said Mr. Shah's plan would make non-Hindi speaking people secondary citizens and undermine the country's integrity.

Hindi," Mr. Shah said.

Pointing out that the nation was home to 122 languages and over 19,500 dialects, he said people should realise that if languages were lost to foreign influence, "we will be severed from our cul-

Protest staged in Bengaluru

The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) and other Kannada organisations took out a rally in Bengaluru on Saturday to protest against Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement. The Opposition Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) too condemned it. • PAGE 8

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 10

HOME MINISTRY LEADS • PAGE 11

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HP JS-2019

GUJARAT JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2019

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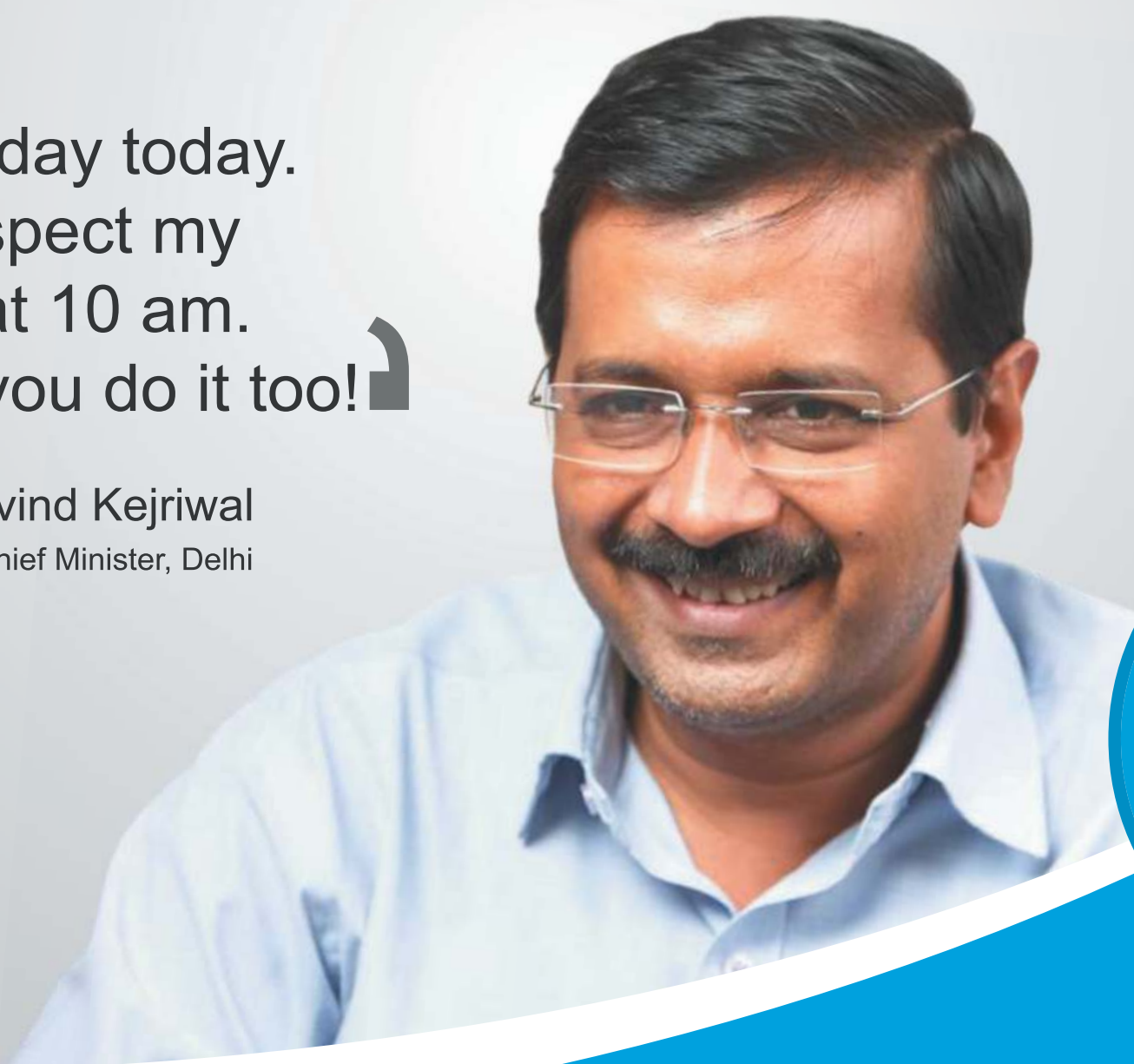
IT'S SUNDAY!

Come join this fight against Dengue today

10 हफ्ते . 10 बजे. 10 मिनट.

It's Sunday today.
I will inspect my
house at 10 am.
I hope you do it too!

- Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, Delhi



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वार हर
रविवार

Dear Delhiites,

Today at 10 o'clock, we have to inspect our homes to check if clean water has accumulated anywhere. We have to ensure that clean water has not collected inside flowerpots, coolers, vases, or anywhere inside or outside our house. If clean water has accumulated, we need to pour it out, change it, or add petrol or oil to it. We should inspect our homes every Sunday at 10 am for the next 10 weeks to save our family from Dengue and Chikungunya. After inspecting your house, do take a selfie and WhatsApp it to 8287972050

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Health Department, Government of NCT of Delhi

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‘Odd-even rule a gimmick to divert people’s attention from core issues’

Tiwari writes to CM asking him to reconsider decision to implement scheme

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP president Manoj Tiwari on Saturday wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asking him to reconsider his decision to implement the odd-even vehicle rationing scheme in the Capital arguing that it would cause “problems to the people”.

This, even as BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel accused Mr. Kejriwal of presenting false data to “mislead” the citizens of the Capital in a bid to justify his decision. On his part, Mr. Tiwari termed the scheme a “gimmick to divert the attention” of Delhiites from core issues which the AAP Delhi government had “substantially failed” to deliv-

“The decision has been taken without proper thought. This had created so many problems for Delhiites the last time

MANOJ TIWARI
Delhi BJP chief

er on.

Mr. Kejriwal had on Friday announced that the odd-even scheme would be implemented in Delhi from November 4 to 15 as part of the seven measures to combat high levels of air pollution in the city due to crop stubble burning in Haryana and Punjab.

“I am writing to you, with great anguish over your government’s decision to intro-

duce odd-even policy in Delhi once again in the month of November. The decision has been taken without proper thought. This had created so many problems for Delhiites the last time,” Mr. Tiwari wrote.

“In the interest of the people of Delhi, I urge you to rethink... this decision of implementing odd-even scheme and kindly spare Delhiites unnecessary hassles they would be subjected to with this move,” Mr. Tiwari also wrote.

The North East Delhi MP added that the move was an “insult” to law-abiding citizens who get their vehicles regularly checked for pollution as they would face problems in commuting and

dropping their children to schools.

Mr. Goel said that the last time that the scheme was implemented in Delhi, the NGT had pointed out that two-wheelers should not have been exempted.

The MP said: “Kejriwal failed to do anything to prevent pollution in Delhi during the last 55 months and now in order to cover up his failures he is staging a political drama of odd-even... The Energy and Resources Institute and EPCA found that it has not been effective in curbing pollution in Delhi. The way in which the Kejriwal government is implementing it will not prove to be effective in controlling pollution.”

Recovery of compensation needed to restore environment, says NGT

Pleas seeking quashing of orders on compensation dismissed

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Compensation needs to be recovered for the restoration of environment and for enforcing pollution norms, observed the National Green Tribunal, while dismissing a set of pleas that sought quashing of orders passed by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) on compensation.

The directions came when a group of steel pickling units approached the green panel to squash the DPCC orders citing that the units were not operational any longer.

‘Polluter pays’ policy

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh



Kumar Goel refused to set aside the DPCC orders for compensation while upholding the ‘polluter pays’ principle.

“Only contention in the appeals is that polluting activity has been stopped and no penalty can be imposed. In view of the undisputed factual position that pollut-

ing activity in violation of law was taking place, action of stopping such activity could not be held to be illegal,” the Bench observed.

While stating that there were “repeated rounds of litigation” pertaining to the matter, the Bench added, “Polluting activities in violation of master plan resulted in degradation of environment in a big way affecting the ecology and public health.”

The green bench further clarified that it was also “concerned with stopping of polluting activities and recovery of compensation for restoring environment and not with sealing which is a matter to be dealt with by municipal authorities.”

IN BRIEF

Police to act on video of men dancing atop cars

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Saturday said they are analysing the viral videos showing men dancing atop cars near the North Campus area, adding that appropriate action will be taken against the violators. The videos show men sitting and dancing atop vehicles, affecting traffic in the area. The clippings surfaced after the results of the DUSU polls were declared on Friday, after which celebration broke out in the area. PTI

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DELHI Timings
SUNDAY, SEPT. 15
RISE 06:06 SET 18:27
MONDAY, SEPT. 16
RISE 06:06 SET 18:25
TUESDAY, SEPT. 17
RISE 06:07 SET 18:24

Delhi Weather
Delhi City 35 28
Safdarjang 35 28
Palam 35 27

Delhi Palam Today
34°C Warm and humid weather with cloudy sky to continue.
Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C A hazy and humid morning turns warm day with cloudy sky.

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Air quality of Delhi-NCR
Delhi 72 Gurugram 76
Ghaziabad 68 Faridabad -
Noida 68 Greater Noida 78

DELHI TODAY

Dance: Odissi dance by Ankita Nayak, a disciple of Guru Madhumita Raut at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, Main Building, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.
Exhibition: "Close Your Eyes And", a group paintings exhibition by artists Arunava Mondal, Avijit Mukherjee, Katayun Saklat and Asis Kumar Sanyal at Open Palm Court Gallery, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Exhibition: "My Journey", a solo paintings exhibition by Sabia, at Visual Arts Gallery, IHC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Exhibition: "Rumination of an Un-fettered Mind", a mixed media work on paper by Laxmi Gupta at Triveni Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

Court acquits two men in robbery case

NIRNIMESH KUMAR NEW DELHI
A Delhi court has acquitted two persons in a robbery case after the victims failed to identify them in the trial. They also failed to identify the item which the accused had robbed of them.
The victims were robbed near a traffic junction in north-west Delhi when they were returning home on a two-wheeler. The accused had held them at gunpoint and forced them to hand over their bag containing a lunch box. The victims were not carrying any cash.
Lapses on the part of the investigating officer in the recovery of weapons, which the accused persons had used to scare the victims, were also factors in the accused's acquittal.
"It is fairly conceded by the prosecutor that both the eyewitnesses of the prosecution [victims] have turned hostile to the prosecution case. Both witnesses did not identify accused Hemant and Imran as being involved in the crime," Additional Sessions Judge Ajay Pandey said.
"The prosecutor had specifically pointed out towards accused Hemant and Imran and shown them to the witnesses. Still the witnesses did not identify them," the judge said. Both the witnesses also failed to identify the robbed property – the lunch box – in judicial test identification parade. Even during the trial, the lunch box was not identified by either of the witnesses.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper.

James Bond 007', accomplice held for snatching, robberies in city

They kept on changing house, identity to avoid being declared troublemakers

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI
Two men have been arrested for their alleged involvement in several cases of snatching and robberies, the police said on Saturday.
Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Anto Alphonse said that the arrested persons have been identified as Krishna alias James Bond 007 and his accomplice Vinod alias Toni.

Street crimes
They have been involved in numerous cases of street



Krishna alias James Bond 007 in police custody.

crimes, the police said.
Mr. Alphonse said that the police received an information on Thursday regarding the movement of two crimi-

nals near Kakrola. A trap was laid and two suspects were held. One countrymade pistol loaded with one live round were recovered from the possession of each of the accused. They were taken to a police station for further investigation.
During interrogation, Vinod said he had started committing crimes at an early age to make an "impression" upon his friends. He had been previously arrested in several cases of theft and snatching. He would use different names to introduce

himself to the police each time in order to present himself as a first-time offender. Krishna on the hand, who was a driver with an online cab aggregator, always wears a shirt with a '007' logo printed on it and prefers to be called as James Bond 007.
"Krishna was previously arrested for murder, attempt to murder and robbery. After getting released from jail each time, he used to shift to a new place in order to avoid being declared a bad character by the police," Mr. Alphonse said.

Woman shot at for intervening in couple's fight in outer Delhi

Accused fled with his wife after the incident; case filed

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI
A 21-year-old woman was shot at by a man after she tried to intervene in his fight with his wife in outer Delhi's Narela Industrial Area on Friday night, the police said on Saturday.
"The injured woman, identified as Rachna, is undergoing treatment at a private hospital and her condition is stable now. Ms. Rachna was shot in the abdomen. The victim lives with her husband and a one-year-old child," said a police officer.
A police team reached the spot after the police control room received a call regarding the incident. The injured woman was then ta-

ken to a government hospital but with her condition being "critical" at that time, she was referred to a private hospital," added the officer.
'Habitual offender'
The police said that Ms. Rachna was in her balcony when she was shot at. The accused, identified as Javed, fled in his car along with his wife after the incident. A case has been registered against Mr. Javed who is a habitual offender of Narela Industrial Area police station.
"We have registered a case on charges of attempt to murder and efforts are on to nab Javed," said Gaurav Sharma, DCP (Outer North).
The police said that Ja-

ved's in-laws live in the same building as Ms. Rachna. An argument had broken out between Mr. Javed and with his wife, after which he dropped her at her parents' home in the morning.
Around 9.30 p.m., he came back and started insisting his wife to return home with him. An altercation broke out after the wife refused to go with him.
"Javed was forcing his wife to get inside the car, when Rachna intervened in the altercation. Furious, Javed pulled out a pistol and fired at her. The bullet hit Rachna in the abdomen and she collapsed. The couple then fled the spot in their car," said a police officer.

Three injured as car hits street light

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI
Three persons sustained serious injuries after the car they were travelling in hit a street light in east Delhi's Mayur Vihar in the early hours of Saturday, the police said, adding that the occupants were inebriated.
A senior police officer said that the injured persons have been identified as Prateek, Atul and Prateek, all employees of a private company in Noida.
The police were informed about the accident on Mayur Vihar flyover at 12.41 a.m. on Saturday. "The police reached the spot and the injured persons were shifted to Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital. Their condition is said to be stable now," the officer said.

Man shot dead in north-east Delhi

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A man has been allegedly shot dead by two persons in north-east Delhi's Bhajanpura, the police said on Saturday.
The victim, Najim Khan, was a resident of Subhash Mohalla in Vijay Park and used to run a stall near Lal Qila, they said.
A senior police officer said that the two accused in the case were yet to be identified. A case under IPC Section 302 (punishment for murder) has been regis-



Najim Khan
tered against them, he said.

Family's allegation
The victim's family said he had an altercation with the

brother-in-law of a criminal named Vicky Mosin that led to his death. "There was a fight between Najim and Mosin's brother-in-law. Mosin used to threaten my brother," alleged Kayum (27), the elder brother of the deceased.
The police were informed about the incident on Friday night. An injured Najim was taken to GTB hospital where he was declared dead.
The police are examining CCTV camera footage to identify the assailants.

UPSC OPSC IAS/IFS/IPS OAS/OPS/OFS & Allied Services
Odisha Forest Service Odisha Education Service
ADMISSIONS OPEN For IAS-20 & OCS-19
Starts from 16th September 2019
REGULAR BATCH FOR PRELIM & MAIN
Morning Batch : 6.30am-9.30am | Evening Batch : 6pm-9pm
OPTIONAL SUBJECTS OFFERED
Political Science | Public Administration | Sociology | Odia | Geography | Home Science | Psychology
BATCH TIMING : 10am-1pm & 2pm-5pm
ODISHA MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION SERVICE EXAM
For OAS 2019
200hrs of Class on Paper-I & Paper-II
Exam Oriented Study Materials with Chapterwise MCQs
Test & VST Series with Discussion
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Online Test & Discussion & Video Classes for Outstation Students
Starts from 16th September 2019
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New Batch Starts From 19th Sept 2019
Time : 9.30am-11.30am & 12.00pm-2.00pm
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Consult a legal expert before signing. Don't rely upon unregistered/pre-signed documents.
Check and verify the license/approved layout or site plan/map as well as building plan and other clearances from concerned civic agencies.
Check status of land regarding any acquisition proceeding from Land Acquisition Collector (LAC), mortgage from Central Registry of CERSAI Act or Civil/Criminal litigations.
Purchase only through registered sale deed with preference of thumb/finger impressions over signatures.
Always make payment through Cheques/ DDs/RTGS and other Banking instruments in owner's name.
Take owner's signatures/thumb impression for payment along with original/chain of documents.
Take physical possession after finalization of payments and execution of documents.
e-mail to CP, Delhi at : cp.amulyapatnaik@delhipolice.gov.in
For any grievance or confidential information write to CP Delhi at PO Box No. 171 GPO, New Delhi

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For the beautiful game, a life of poverty and hardship

Working as a domestic help or farm labourer is par for the course for India's women football players

RAHUL KARMAKAR
PASIGHAT
Ringkhangsri Boro quit her job as a football coach to play for Assam at the ongoing 25th Senior Women's National Football championship in Pasighat, in Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang district.

It wasn't tough for the 32-year-old midfielder to take the decision. She is used to being a drifter after she was booted out of her home in Malmura Majgaon village in Assam's Udalguri district in 2007, the year she cleared her Class 10 and made it to the State team for the nationals.

"That job ensured me a place to stay and some money, barely enough to buy me food. I will not get paid for playing in the nationals, but money cannot buy me the happiness of representing my State in the sport I love," Ms. Bora said.

And she is not unduly worried about what next after September 24 when tournament ends. "I will find any

job to survive, but will never return home to the family that kicked me out for daring to defy their diktat and play football," she said.
Ms Bora's story, unfortunately, is not unique.

'Bonkora suwali'
Anjana Saikia too had to leave home in Gorudharia village in Dibrugarh district 10 years ago – to ease her family's burden of "feeding an extra mouth".

"Floods made my father, a marginal farmer, a daily-wage labourer. There were days when he could not find work to feed a family of five including my two sisters. So I moved out after I got selected for the U-17 Indian women's football team," the Assam team goalkeeper said.

Ms. Saikia befriended midfielder Mrinali Borah during a selection trial a decade ago. The friendship ensured her a shelter at the latter's house in Kakojan Bamkukurasowa village in Jorhat district. But the roof over her head comes



Miles to go: Achom Degio, left, and Roshni Ramching stay miles away from a football field. **• RAHUL KARMAKAR**

at a cost. She has had to earn her stay – from sweeping the floors and doing dishes to working at the paddy fields of her 'employer'.

"I am a bonkora suwali (maidservant). I play football for India too," said the 26-year-old, who has represented India twice in the U-19 team and twice in the senior team.

She had to miss two trips with the senior team for international meets because the local authorities did not clear her travel documents in time.

But, she added, she works more out of gratitude to the Borahs for letting her stay and study to finish her graduation and most importantly, and play in the local club to hone her skills, albeit most often with the men's team.

Ms Saikia had trained hard and applied for a job with the paramilitary Assam Rifles as well as Northeast Frontier Railway. She cleared all the tests but did not receive the call letter "maybe because I pursue the wrong sport".

Her team's fullback Lirbon Tissopi has a similar 'job pro-

file'. Ms. Tissopi works as a farm labourer at her village of Kheroni in Karbi Anglong district because her family needs her support.

"I have represented Assam seven times since 2007, the year my father died. I could not take part six times because I could not find the time to practice to qualify," she told The Hindu, matter of factly.

Assam coach Biswajit Narzary met the women's squad seven days before the championship. "They are a very good team. Better facilities and a reprieve from poverty can make them a great team," he said.

Footballers of host Arunachal Pradesh are luckier in terms of family support. But a tough mountainous terrain has forced them to stay miles away near a football field in the State capital Itanagar. Centre-back Achom Degio from Bana in East Kameng district and midfielder Roshni Ramching from Tagin in Upper Subansiri are two

such players.

Slow change

It is no different for some players from Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu either. The challenges and prejudice they battle today remain the same that D. Ramani, manager of the Karnataka team, fought more than four decades ago.

"Reluctant parents, taunting neighbours, uncooperative officials – I suffered all these while representing Karnataka in both football and cricket. But the mindset is changing. Many of our players today are from well-to-do families," Ms Ramani said.

Karnataka team captain Tanvie Hans, who shifted from Delhi two years ago, said she is fortunate to have been born in a resourceful family that "doesn't pester me to get married". She has been investing in a sports enterprise to ensure female footballers do not have to worry where their next meal comes from.

NORTH & EAST 7

At Azam's home, Akhilesh bats for Rampur MP

'Will withdraw cases if we return to power'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

In a show of solidarity, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav visited the residence of beleaguered senior party leader Azam Khan in Rampur on Saturday and met Mr. Khan's wife Tanzeen Fatima, a Rajya Sabha member, who has been ailing for some time.

Speaking to the press, Mr. Yadav asserted that the Rampur administration was working with a "feeling of revenge" against the nine-time MLA and sitting MP from Rampur.

Mr. Yadav also said that if the party returned to power in the State, all the cases against Mr. Khan would be withdrawn.

The former U.P. CM said he was taking copies of all the FIRs with him.

"I will get them scrutinised and a high-level delegation of the party will meet the Governor." In response to another question, Mr. Yadav said he had faith in the judiciary and was sure that Mr. Khan would get justice.

The SP leader recalled that the party's patriarch, Mulayam Singh Yadav, had also faced many "motivated" cases in the past. However, he avoided a direct response to a query on the eviction of the Lohia Trust from a Lucknow bungalow on Saturday by the State's property department on the orders of the Supreme Court. "Everybody knew that it belonged to Netaji (Mulayam Singh Yadav). We



Azam Khan

were already getting it vacated."

From goat theft to attempt to murder, more than four dozen cases have been filed against Mr. Khan. During his two-day visit, the SP chief stayed at Mr. Khan's Humsafar resort, which, according to authorities, was allegedly built on government land. However, Mr. Khan remained conspicuous by his absence.

Asked why his party was not taking the government headed by Yogi Adityanath head-on, Mr. Yadav said while the SP was never afraid of hitting the road, to take on the BJP both "sangharsh (struggle)" as well as "sangathan (organisation)" were needed.

Taking the BJP government at the Centre to task, Mr. Yadav questioned its defence equipment procurement policy. Referring to the Rafale and Apache deals, he said the defence deals with foreign governments had "weakened" and put a question mark on the "make in India" policy of the government.

'Transformed' police stations in Odisha from October 2

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

When the nation celebrates the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2, walking into any police station in Odisha may not evoke a sense of nervousness in the mind of the common man as officers won't dare to ill-treat a complainant.

As part of its much-talked about 'Mo Sarkar [My government]' programme, which would be rolled out from October 2, the Naveen Patnaik government on Saturday announced that the conduct of police officers towards complainants will be linked to their career progression.

"Our officers and police stations exist for the citizens. It is our utmost duty to treat the citizens with dignity, whenever they visit police stations, deal with their complaints in a professional, ethical and humane manner," he told policemen in all districts through videoconferencing.

Saying a system was put in place to take feedback from complainants, the CM added: "We will follow up with the complainant, how he was treated at the station and how his complaint was dealt with. The phone number of every petitioner will be recorded and available to everyone in the system – from the CM to the SP."

"Starting from October 2, I will personally make 10 phone calls every day. Based on the feedback, there will be immediate action appreciating those who are doing good work and initiating action against those who are not," he added.

'Retract decision to demolish Mangu Mutt'

Amarinder appeals to Naveen Patnaik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh wrote to Odisha's Naveen Patnaik on Saturday, urging him to retract his government's decision to demolish the Mangu Mutt in Puri, which is associated with Sikhism founder Guru Nanak.

Mr. Singh described as unfortunate the move to demolish the mutt, which has age-old significance for the Sikh community as Guru Nanak Dev visited the holy site to spread his message.

'Shocking decision'
"It was shocking that while the whole world was getting ready to commemorate the 550th 'Prakash Purb' of the first Sikh Guru, the historically important mutt, a symbol of the connection between Sikhism and the Jagannath Temple, was sought to be demolished by the Odisha government," said Mr. Singh in a



Jagannath Temple in Puri. **• FILE PHOTO: BISWARANJAN ROUT**

statement.

The Mutt is among many structures within 75-metre radius of the Jagannath Temple that are being demolished to ensure safety and security of the 12th century shrine, following a decision of the Odisha government led by Mr. Patnaik.

Opposing the move, several organisations earlier said at least 12 major mutts and shrines associated with the Jagannath Temple are located within the 75-metre demolition radius.

Haryana journalist slapped with FIR for report on rotting grain

Officials claim fake video aired; accused alleges cover-up

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Haryana police have booked a journalist based in Hisar for trespassing and defamation after he reported about stacks of foodgrain allegedly rotting at a warehouse of the State Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department.

The FIR was registered against Anoop Kundu, a journalist with the STV Haryana News – a television news channel – on September 8 at Uklana in Hisar.

The FIR has been filed under the Sections 451, 465 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code, based on the complaint of Sandeep Chahal, Assistant Food and Supplies Officer, Hisar.

The complaint states that the department officials came to know about the news being aired on July 18, and claimed that the footage shown was fake and not of the Uklana warehouse, aired with an intent to discredit

and defame the department.

The complaint also stated that the same day a team of officials went to inspect the warehouse and found that the grains were adequately covered with polythene and no stacks damaged due to rain water.

Stands by story

Mr. Kundu, however, stands by his story. He said that on July 17, after receiving a tip-off, he went to the Uklana warehouse. "I spoke to the security guard and sought his permission and then made the video, which showed the wet and spoilt wheat at the warehouse. The footage is not fake," he claimed.

"On July 18, a 21-minute story was run on the channel. Following this, the concerned Minister, Karan Dev Kamboj, spoke to the channel and promised action against the officials. On the same day, the Minister even suggested an inquiry into the issue. However, later in the

evening when I, along with some local BJP leaders and department officials, went to inspect the warehouse, the damaged grain bags were replaced with dry ones in a cover-up attempt. A few spoilt grain bags though were still there," claimed Mr. Kundu.

Mr. Kundu added that an official of the civil supplies department had even threatened him with dire consequences, following which he submitted a complaint with the Deputy Commissioner, Hisar, on July 25.

"While nothing has been done about my complaint, a case has been registered against instead. Also, an official inquiry was conducted into the incident and the probe completed within a day. I was not even called to record my statement," alleged Mr. Kundu.

Several journalists in Hisar recently held a meeting and expressed their anguish against the registration of FIR against Mr. Kundu.

Fear famine-like situation in Manipur: Minister

Price of Manipur rice, which usually sells at ₹30 per kg, has risen to ₹50 per kg

IBOYAIMA LAITHANGBAM
IMPHAL

Manipur Agriculture Minister V. Hangkhalian and others have expressed fear that there may be a famine-like situation in the State since the quantum of paddy production will be slashed in the coming days.

Officials said that due to incessant rain last year, verdant paddy plants were destroyed due to flash floods.

Due to this, the price of 1 kg of Manipur rice and 'black rice', which is unique to the State, has been hiked to a point where the average citizen cannot afford it, said officials on Friday.

Manipur rice usually sells at ₹30 per kg, but is currently being sold at ₹50 per kg. 'Black rice' is available at ₹75 per kg.

"In the wake of dry season, the government tried to

buy all water pumps available in the market. Vast areas were irrigated though many other fields were left out as there is no source of water," said Mr. Hangkhalian.

No canals for irrigation

Social activists said that though there are some small village dams across the ankle-deep rivers, the parched fields cannot be irrigated as there are no canals.

In view of the problems faced by farmers, the State Cabinet resolved last week to approach the Centre to have Manipur declared as a drought-hit State, said officials. However, till date there has been no response from the Centre.

State Consumer Food and Public Distribution Minister Karam Shyam said that currently Manipur has 'comfortable' rice stock.

HARYANA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED,
(A Government of Haryana Undertaking)
Bays No. 59-62, Sector2, Panchkula, Phone : 0172-2590608

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)
HMSCL invites e-tenders for of Purchase of Selection of Service Provider/System partners for providing Tablet PC, Biometric Finger Print, MDM Networking Connectivity for Implementation Roll of Tablet Based ANMOL etc application for Women, CUG SIM for Health Department and for two years Rate Contract for the purchase of Patient Transport Ambulances, Neonatal Ambulances, Autoclave with Shredder, Electrosurgical Unit, Glucometer, Microdebrider, Open Care System, Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) and Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT) the website www.etenders.hry.nic.in. Please see corrigendum if any regarding these tenders on the website www.etenders.hry.nic.in only.

Managing Director,
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Prdh 78745

नीलामी नोटिस
सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि विभागीय वाहन व विभागीय नक़्सा सामान बिक्री के लिए, साईकल, कुर्सी, कार, कुर्सी, फोटोस्टेट मशीन, कंप्यूटर, जल-ओरो, कुर्सी आदि दिनांक 26.09.2019 को दोपहर 12:00 बजे उपयुक्त मोहोदय द्वारा गणित कमेटी की वेब साइट पर लघु सूचनात्मक पत्रिका में जेसा है जहां है को खुली बोली पर नीलाम किया जायेगा। बोली देने से पूर्व 10,000/- रुपये का बैंक ड्राफ्ट बोलीदाता को जमा करवाना होगा। सबसे अधिक बोली देने वाले को पूर्ण राशि नौको पर ही जमा करवानी होगी। अन्य शर्तें नौको पर सूचा दी जाएगी। अगर कोई बोलीदाता वाहन को देखना चाहता है तो वह किसी भी कार्य दिवस को लघु सूचनात्मक पत्रिका में देख सकता है।
बोली को स्वीकार/अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार उपयुक्त मोहोदय द्वारा गणित कमेटी के पास सुरक्षित होगा।
Prdh 78743

कृते उपयुक्त पत्रिका

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI**
STORM WATER DRAIN DEPARTMENT

CORRIGENDUM-I

Subject :-	e.t.no. 7100159461 WS-478
Ref. :-	1. MGC/F/326 dated 13-09-2019 2. e-Tender Notice no.MCGM/SWD/WS/2019/4704/WS dated 11-09-2019

With reference to the above following modifications / corrections are applicable for the WS-478 work mentioned above.

Published as	To be read as
Name of Work WS 478 Rejuvenation of Oshiwara / Walbhat River by construction of service road, retaining wall, and road side drains on either banks of Oshiwara / Walbhat River	WS 478 Designing, Providing, Constructing and commissioning modernized and fully automated package / modular Sewage Treatment Plants along Oshiwara / Walbhat river on Design Build Operate (DBO), alongwith 15 years of Operation and Maintenance and laying of sewer network, construction of service road, retaining wall and road side drains on either banks of Oshiwara / Walbhat River
Time Period	24 months (Excluding monsoon) 30 months (Excluding Monsoon)
E.M.D.	Rs. 54,73,680/- Rs. 46,689,400/-
Estimated Cost	Rs. 54,73,67,982/- Rs. 46,69,81,735/-

Kindly refer eligibility criteria as per revised tender document uploaded.

PRO/1108/ADV/19-20**Dy.Ch.E.(S.W.D.)W.S. 14-09-2019**

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पत्रांक-2271 दिनांक-13.09.19

पूर्व निर्गत निविदा संबंधी सूचना
एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि विभागीय पत्रांक 2074 दिनांक 09.08.2019 एवं 2223 दिनांक 30.08.2019 द्वारा संशोधित निविदा प्रकाशित आमंत्रण सूचना दिनांक 06.09.2019 को आयुक्त उत्पाद की अध्यक्षता में सम्पन्न **Pre Bid Meeting** की बैठक में प्राप्त सुझावों एवं दृष्टिगत त्रुटियों के संशोधन हेतु उक्त निविदा को अपरिहार्य कारणों से स्थगित किया जाता है। **Pre Bid Meeting** में प्राप्त सुझाव एवं दृष्टिगत त्रुटियों के आलोक में शुद्धि पत्र निर्गत करने के उपरांत उक्त निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं निविदा खोलने की तिथि यथाशीघ्र पुनर्निर्धारित की जायेगी।
पूर्व का निविदा प्रकाशन का PR No. 214244 एवं 216063 है।

जिसे अब तक ना समझे, वो क़हानी हूँ मैं, मुझे बर्बाद मत करो पानी हूँ मैं।
PR 216883 (Excise) 19-20 (D)
ह0/—
(मनोज कुमार)
सरकार के अवर सचिव।

PRESS NOTICE
NOTICE INVITING BID

The **Executive Engineer, Dumporijo PWD Division, AP, Dumporijo** invites online tenders on behalf of the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, sealed items rate tenders in Two bid system from all the registered contractors in **Class -I Categories and Contractors eligible for National and International Competitive Bidding** for execution of works as detail below :-

Sl. No	Name of work	Estimated cost (Rs)	BID Security/ Earnest Money (Rs)	Start Time of Bid	End Time of Bid	Opening of Bid
1.	C/o Road from Bui PWD Road to Boggi Rijo via Leya Rijo & Takte Village (8 Km) Under CRF schemes in the State of A.P.	Rs.2509.71 Lakhs	Rs.50.20 Lakhs for Non-APST Contractor & Rs.25.09 Lakhs for APST Contractor	1000.00 Hrs of 13/09/19	1600.00 Hrs of 26/09/19	1100.00 Hrs of 27/09/19

The bids are to be submitted both **Online** in the web portal **arunachaltenders.gov.in** and in **Hard Copies** of the same to the **Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division Dumporijo, AP, Dumporijo**. The bid form and other guide lines can be downloaded from our web portal **arunachaltenders.gov.in** . Those contractors not registered on the website mentioned above are required to get registered beforehand. The intending e-tendering bidder must have valid class-III digital signature with facility of signing & encryption to submit the bid. The interested bidders shall have to read terms & conditions carefully before participating tender. For details visit :- **arunachaltenders.gov.in**.

Executive Engineer
PWD Division Dumporijo
Dumporijo.
DIPR/ARN/1722-24/19



Five killed as car catches fire in Andhra Pradesh

CHITTOOR
Two women and three children were charred to death, while one sustained severe burns, when the car in which they were travelling caught fire after it skidded off the road and fell into a ditch near Palamaner, 40 km from Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, on Saturday. All the six members of a family from Tirupati were on their way to Bengaluru. The police said the car hit a stone as it fell and the fuel tank burst in the impact causing the fire.

Ace shuttler P.V. Sindhu gets a luxury car

HYDERABAD
Ace shuttler P.V. Sindhu got a new luxury car on Saturday, thanks to the efforts of V. Chamundeswararath, vice-president of the Telangana Badminton Association, who pooled money from friends, corporate honchos, supported by cricketing great Sachin Tendulkar. The car keys were handed over by actor Akkineni Nagarjuna at the Annapurna Studios in the presence of coach P. Gopi Chand. Last month, she won gold at the BWF World Championships.

Sabarimala temple to open tomorrow

PATHANAMTHITTA
The Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala will be opened on Monday afternoon for the five-day monthly rituals in the Malayalam month of Kanni that begins on Tuesday. The temple melsanthi, V.N. Vasudevan Namboodiri, will open the sanctum sanctorum in the presence of the Tantri, Kandararu Mahesh Mohanararu, at 5 p.m. The temple will be closed after the Athazhapuja on September 21 evening, marking the culmination of monthly rituals.

Karnataka leaders, activists irked at Shah’s push for Hindi

Congress sees sinister agenda, JD(S) reminds Centre of the federal structure

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Union Home Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party national president Amit Shah’s tweet on Hindi Diwas, saying Hindi was the only language that can unify the country, drew widespread condemnation in the State.

The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) and other Kannada organisations held a protest rally here on Saturday, while the Opposition parties, the Congress and the Janata Dal (S) condemned it. The Kannada activists observed Saturday as “black day” with #StopHindimposition trending on Twitter.

State BJP leaders were silent on the subject through the day.

Congress leader Siddara-



Language concerns: The Kannada Rakshana Vedike staging a sit-in in Bengaluru on Saturday.

maiah tweeted that the “mis-information campaign that Hindi is our national language must stop”. Hindi enjoyed the same status of Kannada in the Constitution. He said the opposition was not to Hindi, but to its imposition.

JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy argued along the same lines asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi when the Centre would celebrate Kannada Diwas, as Kannada too enjoyed the same status as Hindi in the Constitution. “Remember that Kannadigas

too are part of the federal structure,” he said.

The Karnataka Congress tweeted: “Amit Shah should brush up his history knowledge. India is a country of unity in diversity and has never banked on one language for its existence. BJP agenda is implementation of sinister hidden agenda of RSS to divide our country by inciting people on grounds of religion and language.”

Kannada writer and former chairman of the Kannada Development Authority S.G. Siddaramaiah said the BJP’s idea of India always tilted towards homogeneity both in language and religion, “Hindi and Hindu.” “We need to remind them that ours is a diverse land and any imposition is nothing short of aggression,” he said.

BJP leaders ‘upset’ with Yediyurappa, son on shuffle

Anti-corruption activist had complained to Amit Shah

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Bharatiya Janata Party high command is said to be upset with Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa over a slew of transfers of officials in the State amid allegations that his son B.Y. Vijayendra was responsible for them. Party leaders have been monitoring the transfers in the State closely, party sources said.

Complaint to Shah

The high command had particularly examined transfers that were notified but kept in abeyance to accommodate incumbent officials in their postings.

Sources in the BJP said an anti-corruption activist had written to party president and Union Home Minister Amit Shah complaining that the transfer of a key official

in one of Bengaluru’s civic agencies was kept in abeyance and reversed within a day.

The complaint alleged that there was a “major scam” in the agency and the officer was reinstated within a day ‘after he paid a bribe’. This complaint in particular had created a flutter, sources claimed.

“The party’s top leaders are very keen on the BJP’s anti-corruption plank across the country and will not tolerate corruption,” a party strategist said.

Several members within the party have reportedly complained that the Chief Minister’s son had emerged a key figure in the transfer of officials in the government, and there were reports of his being told of the party’s displeasure.

Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy has also alleged that the Chief Minister’s son was instrumental in deciding the transfers and had warned Mr. Yediyurappa that he would have to pay for it if he did not control his son.

CM’s son denies

Responding to the reports, Mr. Vijayendra released a statement on Twitter recently denying the allegations of his interference in transfers. “Some vested interests who are unable to accept my political growth are indulging in a systematic campaign against me. Instead of supporting the Chief Minister as he fights devastation caused by floods in the State, they are indulging in false propaganda to tarnish the image of the government,” he said.

Deadline for Maradu residents ends today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

With a few hours left for the expiry of the deadline for evacuation, political parties have declared solidarity with the residents of the Maradu flats in Kochi.

On September 10, the Maradu municipality served notices on the residents of H2O Holy Faith, Golden Kayaloram, Alf Serene, and Jain Coral Cove to clear the apartments in five days, following a Supreme Court order to raze the buildings for violating coastal regulation norms. Most of the residents have refused to leave the apartments.

Though the deadline for evacuation would end on

Sunday, the Maradu municipal authorities are still in the dark regarding the crucial next step.

Meanwhile, CPI(M) State secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan said the party would stand by the residents of the apartments. The apartment owners could not be blamed for the acts of the builders and the officials who gave clearances to these structures, he said while inaugurating a solidarity meeting.

Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala also visited the apartments.

The All India Youth Federation demanded action against the builders and the officials.

New Bill wants engineers to register, follow ethics code

First draft of Bill submitted to HRD Ministry

R. SUJATHA
CHENNAI

Soon, engineers will have to register with a body to be able to practise their trade. A Bill to that effect is taking shape under the aegis of the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The first draft of the Bill has been submitted to the Ministry, which has recommended changes. It has been suggested having a

council to register engineers on the lines of those that exist for lawyers, doctors and pharmacists. The Bill has been drafted by a committee constituted by the AICTE.

The committee comprises Sandeep Sancheti, Vice-Chancellor of SRM Institute of Technology, Chennai; M.S. Ananth, former director of the Indian Institute of Technology - Madras; and J. Chandrasekhar, chairperson of Aerospace, School of Engineering, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore. Mr. Ananth is the chairman of the committee.

The suggestion for a Bill came from E. Sreedharan,

architect of the Delhi Metro Rail, who mooted a code of ethics and a council.

AICTE chairman Anil D. Sahasrabudhe told *The Hindu* that the committee had handed over its recommendations. “Right now, it is in the discussion stage. Some changes are required. It will take some time,” he said.

“The basic idea is like lawyers, architects, pharmacists and medical practitioners, engineers should get registered and there must be professional ethics and code which they all have to follow. If they don’t follow, their registration can get cancelled.”

Anand Singh, Nagendra acquitted in mining case

Case relates to export of iron ore

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

B.S. Anand Singh, one of the disqualified Karnataka MLAs, and legislator B. Nagendra, both from Ballari district, were acquitted in one of the several cases of illegal mining against them.

Special Court for Elected Representatives, Bengaluru, acquitted the duo along with others in a case pertaining to the alleged export of 1.3 lakh tonnes of iron ore from Belikeri port, a case in which the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed a chargesheet in 2017.

Judge Ramchandra D. Huddar cited lack of evi-



B. Nagendra & Anand Singh

dence for the acquittal, sources said.

The two are accused in multiple cases and face several chargesheets filed by CBI and the Lokayukta Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing illegal mining. While Mr. Nagendra faces 26 cases, Mr. Singh has 16 cases against him.

Dalit’s body exhumed in Telangana to ensure rains

Issue settled by both parties, claim police

B. PRADEEP
ARVAPALLY, SURYAPET DT.

The body of 50-year-old Dalit man Midthanapalli Bhiksham, who drowned in a village tank nine months ago was illegally exhumed by earlier this month in Kommala village of Telangana allegedly to ward off evil and ensure rains.

The incident came to light on Tuesday, two days after the family learnt from neighbours in the SC colony that Bhiksham’s body was dug up, and the skull separated from bones and burnt some 500 metres from the grave. The family then reported the issue to Arvapally police.

According to the victim’s family, Bhiksham had left home house on December 15, 2018 to tend cattle but did

not return. On December 22, his decomposed body was found in the sludge of the Kodur village tank. After an in situ post-mortem on December 23 in the presence of police, revenue and medical officials, the remains were buried on the tank bund, they recollected.

While none of the residents of Kommala or Kodur village, to whom the tank belongs, had opposed the burial then, a group of caste Hindus and SCs, including the village sarpanch’s son, all members of TRS, had raised objections on August 28 this year and ordered immediate shifting of the remains.

“They said the village was under evil spell due to Bhiksham’s grave,” said S.

Venkataiah, the victim’s brother-in-law. The family agreed to shift the grave under pressure from the upper castes but sought 10 days time. However, on September 1, fishermen of Kodur, saw large tyre marks on the grave site, indicating that a tractor or an excavator was used to shift the skeletal remains.

Arvapally police said during talks at the station with Bhiksham’s family members and the accused had confessed. “The accused have confessed to their mistake. Dignity of the dead, and the family, will be restored and the accused are constructing a new grave. There is no case; it has been settled,” sub-inspector P. Lokesh said.

Curtains on Onam festivities



Hundreds of Pulikali (Tiger Dance) performers passing through Thrissur town in Kerala on Saturday, bringing an end to the Onam celebrations.

Man beaten to death in Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MEDAK

In a shocking incident here in Telangana, a man died after he was beaten up by some villagers who suspected him to be a thief.

According to the police, one Maharajula Nagaraju, 36, while returning home in an inebriated condition on Friday night, took the cycle of Srinivas at Ganuga Basti at Kallakal village in Manoharabad. Suspecting him to be a thief, some villagers beat him up. Locals informed the sarpanch, who sent the village revenue assistant to rescue Nagaraju. He was shifted to his house, but by Saturday morning he died, allegedly due to the assault.

Tension prevailed in the village and the police had a tough time dealing with relatives of the deceased.

Pala campaigning enters final phase

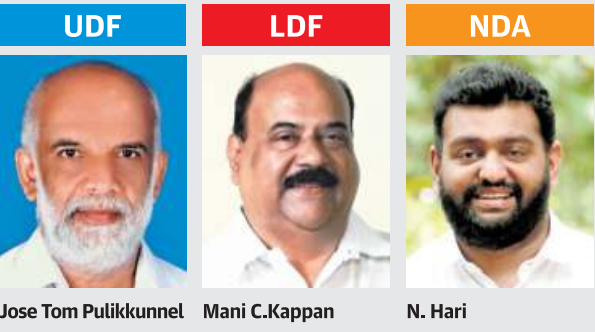
Top leaders of major fronts set to campaign in constituency

STAFF REPORTER
KOTTAYAM

The final phase of campaigning for the byelections to the Pala Assembly constituency in Kerala on September 23 is set to generate heat with top leaders of the three major fronts slated to visit the constituency in the coming days.

They include the Bharatiya Janata Party’s Sunil Deodhar, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, and AICC general secretary Oommen Chandy. The LDF hopes to improve its appeal in the final phase lining up its heavyweights, including Mr. Vijayan and Ministers.

The Chief Minister is slated to address voters in as many as seven locations over three days starting from September 18, where he will be joined by senior Communist



Jose Tom Pulikkunnel

Mani C.Kaplan

N. Hari

Party of India leaders K.E. Ismail, Pannian Ravindran, and P.Prasad etc.

Communist Party of India (Marxist) State Secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, Ministers M.M.Mani, K. Raju, and A.K. Saseendran have already been to the Assembly segment, attending various programmes. Ministers A.K. Balan, K.T. Jaleel, J. Mercikuttu Amma, and others will canvass votes in Pala.

UDF candidate Jose Tom Pulikkunnel, meanwhile, has been able to cover much ground the coalition lost on account of factional feud in the Kerala Congress (M).

Though the sudden withdrawal of P.J.Joseph from campaigning put the UDF on the back foot, it later succeeded in resolving the issue, at least for the time being.

The veteran Kerala Con-

gress leader, currently the working chairman of KC(M), marked his return to the election scene by attending a UDF meeting at Hosanna Mount late on Saturday.

Senior leaders, including Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala, KPCC president Mullappally Ramachandran, P.K. Kunhalikutty, UDF convener Benny Behnan, will campaign for Mr. Pulikkunnel.

The National Democratic Alliance, which has fielded BJP district president N.Hari, too seeks to match the rival camps’ move for move. It has brought in Mr. Deodhar, who is said to be behind the BJP victory in the Tripura Assembly polls.

Mr. Deodhar is slated to reach Pala on September 17 and will camp here for a couple of days.

Nadubhagam Chundan hits hat-trick

Tropical Titans wins the third round of Champions Boat League

STAFF REPORTER
ALAPPUZHA

Nadubhagam Chundan (snakeboat) rowed by Tropical Titans (Pallathuruthi Boat Club) completed a hat-trick of victories in the Champions Boat League (CBL) by finishing first in the Karuvatta Boat Race held here in Kerala on Saturday. The Tropical Titans had earlier won the Nehru Trophy in Alappuzha and Kottayam Boat Race.

The Karuvatta Boat Race, the third leg of the CBL, held on the leading channel of the Thottappally Spillway, was inaugurated by Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala.

Tropical Titans lifted the trophy, clocking 4:12.11, to remain on top of the CBL table. Coast Dominators (United Boat Club, Kuttamanga-



The Karuvatta Boat Race under way in Alappuzha on Saturday.

lam, Kainakary) finished second with a timing of 4:12.90 minutes and Mighty Oars (4:13.80) NCDC Boat Club, Kumarakom grabbed third place. At the end of the CBL’s third round, Tropical Titans leads the table with 40 points.

The Kerala Tourism-organised CBL is a three-

month championship with its 12 rounds being held on weekends coinciding with Kerala’s traditional water festivals. The boat league, which began with the Nehru Trophy Boat Race on August 31, will conclude with the President’s Trophy Boat Race in Kollam on November 23.

With a prize money of ₹5.9 crore, the CBL is ranked the fourth highest in all sports in India. The first three winners of each CBL match will get ₹5 lakh, ₹3 lakh, and ₹1 lakh respectively. All participants are entitled to a bonus prize of ₹4 lakh per match.

The fourth leg of the CBL will be held at Piravom in Ernakulam district on September 28. The other races in the CBL will be held on October 5 (Marine Drive, Ernakulam), October 12 (Kottappuram, Thrissur), October 19 (Ponnani, Malappuram), October 26 (Kainakary, Alappuzha), November 2 (Pulinkunnu, Alappuzha), November 9 (Kayamkulam, Alappuzha), November 16 (Kallada, Kollam), and November 23 (Kollam, President’s Trophy Boat Race).



IN BRIEF
Seven more cases against Chhota Rajan

MUMBAI
The CBI has taken over seven more cases registered against gangster Rajendra Nikhalje alias Chhota Rajan for further investigation. Charges invoked in the cases range from attempt to murder to extortion to criminal intimidation, officers said.

Six naxals killed in Chhattisgarh

RAIPUR
Six naxals were killed in three separate encounters with the police in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region on Friday night and Saturday, officials said. The encounters took place in Sukma, Bijapur and Dantewada districts. PTI

Truck operator fined ₹6.5 lakh in Odisha

BHUBANESHWAR
The transport authority of Odisha has slapped a penalty to the tune of ₹6,53,100 on a truck operator in Sambalpur district, which is being dubbed as the single-highest imposition in the State. The amount would have been much higher had the truck operator been penalised as per the amended Motor Vehicles Act.

Ex-Customs officer, wife booked in wealth case

MUMBAI
The Central Bureau of Investigation has booked a former Customs officer after his assets were allegedly found to be a staggering 1,293% more than his income as a government employee. The accused retired in August 2018 as an Assistant Commissioner.

E-auction for gifts given to PM Modi starts

NEW DELHI
An e-auction for around 2,700 gifts given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the past six months was started by the Union Culture Ministry's National Gallery of Modern Art on Saturday. The proceeds would go towards the government's Namami Gange project.

Ships of the desert



Camel fair: A Kachhi Rabari herder leading his camels to an annual fair at Kotda Chakar, near Bhuj in Gujarat, on Saturday. Nearly a thousand camels and sheep are brought to the fair, aimed at invoking the blessings of Goddess Momay Mataji. • VIJAY SONEJI

Alert man saved 8 lives when immersion took a tragic turn

Bhopal Collector presents ₹50,000 to Nitin, a fish seller

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Nitin Batham was whiling away his time by the Lower Lake on Friday when he noticed a 20-foot Ganesha idol about to be immersed by young men crammed in two wobbly country boats. He quickly ran to the lake, untied a boat, and hopped in, letting his nephew Viren Batham row it furiously towards the mass of flailing arms.

One at a time
By one, he saved eight of the 19 who were on the two boats. "By the time we reached the spot, 11 others had already drowned," he says. Although he dropped out of school after Class 8, Nitin, 28, attended swimming les-



Nitin Batham

sons diligently and took part in numerous competitions. Bhopal Collector Tarun Kumar Pithode presented ₹50,000 to Nitin on Saturday and said his name would be recommended to the Centre for an honour for showing the courage to save so many lives. Meanwhile, Mukesh Batham, pushes ashore battered idol frames bobbing on the calm waters of the lake. Sprucing up the ghat ahead of the Durga Puja, barely 20 days away, is the next chal-

lenge for the Municipal Corporation. Each year, ghat-based rituals provide a lucrative opportunity for Bathams, who are the fisherfolk and traditional divers residing on the edge of the lake. Lugging idols from trucks and arranging cranes, to ferrying boats for immersion, they even find work as government rescuers. "We are called whenever a corpse needs to be retrieved from a water body," says Sanjay Batham, who dived 18 feet into the lake on Friday to get back three bodies, "but now those from our community are being made scapegoats. The poor bear the brunt each time". On the one hand, Mr. Nitin is being celebrated for his heroism, four fishermen from the community, were arrested on Friday. A day later, three fishermen were rescued after their boat cap-sized in the lake.

Narmada dam at its highest level, to overflow for first time

Narendra Modi to visit State on September 17, his birthday, to offer prayers

MAHESH LANGA
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat's Narmada dam is set to overflow at its full 138.68-metre height for the first time, after it was completed with the installation of gates in 2017, amid State-wide celebrations the government has planned to mark the event.

As on 5 p.m. on Saturday, the level was at 138.14 metre, just 54 cm below the highest/overflow point.

Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd. (SSNNL) Managing Director Rajiv Kumar Gupta said, "Sardar Sarovar Dam: further storage necessary to control flood situation in Bharuch city due to high tide and 175 villages in three districts. The district administration requested to control outflow. Level



With large amounts of water being released from M.P. dams, SSD is receiving heavy inflow • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

touched historic mark 138 metres today. "For it to reach the full height will depend on technical and natural factors," he said. "With large amounts of water being released from the Omkareshwar and the Indira Sagar dams in Madhya Pradesh, the dam is receiving heavy inflow."

As per the details shared by the Narmada Flood Control room, the inflow was 8,94,730 cusecs, the outflow 6,30,444 cusecs and 23 gates were open up to 3.9 meters. After the installation and closure of 30 gates in 2017, its maximum height increased from 121.92 m to 138.68 m.

Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, who announced the celebrations, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi would present on his birthday on September 17 to offer prayers at the dam. He said the PM had accepted the invitation to kick-start the celebrations. To mark the Prime Minister's birthday, the Gujarat government and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party have decided to organise events to commemorate filling up of the dam and other reservoirs. Mr. Rupani said the State need not require any permission from any authority to fill the dam till its maximum storage capacity, dismissing Madhya Pradesh government's concerns about rising storage level that floods some villages there.

Attack on policeman: four dismissed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Saturday ordered the dismissal of three policemen and a home guard for not coming to the rescue of a Punjab Police Sub-Inspector, who was attacked by a group of drug smugglers in Chogawan village in Tarn Taran on September 13.

The officers and the home guard were dismissed following an inquiry by IG Border into the role of the raiding police party. An official spokesperson said the Chief Minister was angered by the incident and had said that such "cowardly behaviour" was "unacceptable". Five people have been arrested so far for the assault on the Sub-Inspector.

Right-wing outfit defaces Babur Road signboard

The organisation calls Babur a foreigner and invader

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Fringe right-wing organisation Hindu Sena defaced the signboard of Babur Road at Bengali Market in New Delhi with black paint on Saturday morning. The outfit has demanded that the name of Babur Road be changed. According to the organisation, the Mughal emperor was a foreigner who attacked India.

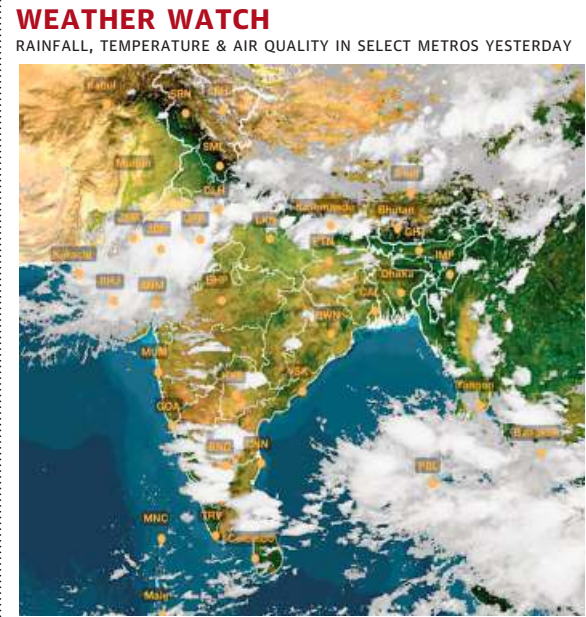


A policemen clicking the Babar Road signboard which was blackened in New Delhi. • R.V. MOORTHY

Hindu's prerogative
The country belonged to Ram, Krishna, Sant Ravidas and Maha Rishi Valmiki, it said. A senior police officer said that the patrolling staff noticed the defaced road

signboard and alerted the Barakhamba police station about it. "We have received no complaint regarding the de-

facement. We have alerted the civic agency about it and requested them to restore it as soon as possible," said the officer.



WEATHER WATCH
RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY
Forecast for Sunday: Heavy rainfall likely over Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, eastern Rajasthan, western Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Meghalaya and Gujarat.

Table with 4 columns: CITY, RAIN, MAX, MIN. Lists weather data for various cities including Agartala, Ahmedabad, Aizawl, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Gangtok, Goa, Guwahati, Hubballi, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur, Kochi, Kohima, Kolkata, and Visakhapatnam.

Table with 4 columns: CITY, SO2, NO2, CO, PM2.5, PM10, AQI. Lists air quality data for various cities including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Pune, and Visakhapatnam.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

NGMA gets ready to reopen renovated Jaipur House

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

After over a year of renovations aimed at restoring its earlier glory, Jaipur House - built as the home of the Maharaja of Jaipur in 1936 and serving as the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) since 1954 - is likely to welcome visitors next week. With a focus on preserving its architectural heritage, the renovations have also led

to more space for exhibiting art in the building. NGMA director Ritu Sharma said while earlier many of the 50 rooms in Jaipur House were out of bounds for visitors as they were used to store art works, now the entire building would be used for exhibitions. Storage has been moved out into the adjacent buildings in the complex constructed more recently. "It is more of a restora-

tion, not renovation as it has been in-tune with the heritage of the structure. For instance, cooling was an issue so we placed the air-conditioning units on the ground so as not to damage the beautiful arches of the building," she said. While the restored Jaipur House is expected to open on September 17 with an exhibition of around 1,000 works of Padma Shri awar-

dee and Gandhian Upendra Maharathi, the treasures housed by the NGMA, including works by Amrita Shergil and M.F. Hussain, are expected to be displayed only next year as the building would remain under the care of the Central Public Works Department for finishing touches. Culture ministry sources said PM Modi had visited the site on August 15.



The building was built in 1936 as the home of the Maharaja of Jaipur.

More whistling villages: MP stirs problem of plenty for Meghalaya

Mothers call their children by a tune in 23 villages

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

A Rajya Sabha member appears to have struck the wrong note for a cluster of villages in Meghalaya by singing paeans to one of them in the Parliament. Almost a month ago, the Bharatiya Janata Party's Rakesh Sinha asked the government to ensure the inclusion of Kongthong village in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage for preserving its practice of giving each child a unique tune - called jingwai iawbei in the Khasi language - instead of a name.



People hope that attention to the whistling tradition would ensure better facilities.

not the only whistling village. Out of the 53 villages in the Khat-ar Shnong area, 23 communicate through whistling and calling each other by a tune. Only one village should not get recognition," said Kyntiew Khongshei, the sordar or headman of Mawshuit village. Khat-ar means an area belonging to 12 clans of the Khasi community and Shnong means village. The area comes under the Sohra Hima (a kingdom-like traditional administrative unit) headed by a syiem or chieftain.

Sohra is the local name for Cherrapunjee in East Khasi Hills district. "Villages such as Mawshuit, Khrang, Mawmang, Mawsawmah and Warbah have had the same tradition as Kongthong. So all these villages deserve to get the same focus as Kongthong," Freeman Syiem, the chieftain of Sohra, told The Hindu. Mr. Syiem said he would coordinate a meeting among the heads of the 23 musical villages and the government if the move for the UNESCO tag takes concrete shape. The heads of the other villages hoped the world's attention to their whistling tradition would ensure at least a road like the one to Kongthong. In 2017, UNESCO had put Turkey's whistled language on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of urgent safeguarding. The UN body said that whistled language is a method of communication that uses whistling to simulate and articulate words.

Rape survivor gives pen drive with videos to SIT

Chinmayanand's home searched

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SHARJAHANPUR

The postgraduate student who has accused BJP leader Chinmayanand of rape on Saturday gave a pen drive containing 43 videos to the SIT to support her allegations. The woman was asked by the SIT to submit whatever evidence she had against the former Union Minister. The special investigation team questioned the student on Friday and collected evidence from Chinmayanand's bedroom here, sources said on Saturday. The SIT, formed on the orders of the Supreme Court, had brought the woman to Chinmayanand's

home on Friday morning where they continued the probe for around five hours, the sources said. The special team has called the student's mother for questioning on Saturday, they said. Chinmayanand, whose organisation runs several colleges, was questioned for about seven hours at the police lines here on Thursday night and his bedroom was sealed, they said. A team of forensic experts was also present at the residence. The woman alleged that important evidence has been removed from Chinmayanand's bedroom and it now wears a new look.

Woman, child killed by villagers

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

Witch-hunting reared its ugly head again when a woman and her five-year-old daughter were killed by fellow villagers in Odisha's Sundargarh district. Their bodies, packed in sacks, were thrown into the swollen Brahmani river. While the body of the woman was recovered four days after the murder, the girl's body was still not traceable. The woman's husband, who escaped from the attack, described the horrifying incident to the police. Sundargarh police registered a case sou motu after recovering the body from a river ghat in Bonai area. According to police, the incident had taken place in Rabanjihola village under Chandiposh police station limits on September 9. Villagers had held Gangi Kerketa and her five year daughter responsible for their 'misfortune'. They branded Gangi as a witch and decided to eliminate the family. After killing the two, the villagers had thrown bodies into the river. The husband of the woman identified the body. Many male members in the village have fled fearing arrest.

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Eligibility: Those born on or after January 1, 1985
Last Date: October 31, 2019
For Nomination form and other details, please visit www.insaindia.res.in.

ANNA UNIVERSITY
Sardar Patel Road, Chennai - 600 025
NOTICE
Ref No. 62041/PR13/Adv/AU/2019
It is notified that Thiru E.P.Sathyanarayana Setty, Lecturer of Mining Engineering, Anna University, Chennai is on unauthorized absence from 15.07.2006 to till date. He is directed to report to the Registrar, Anna University, Chennai within ten days from the notice failing which final decision will be taken on the merit of the case.
REGISTRAR i/c
DIPR/1049/Display/2019

FROM PAGE ONE

Govt. unveils package to boost exports, housing

The previous MEIS and the new RoDTEP are designed to incentivise exports by giving them rewards to offset the duties they pay to export their products. The rate of reward under MEIS varies between 2% and 7% of the free-on-board (FOB) value, depending on the item and the country it is being exported to.

Ms Sitharaman said the new scheme will incentivise exporters even more, but added that she could not specify by exactly how much since the rewards would be calculated on the basis of the actual duty paid.

“Textiles and all other sectors which currently enjoy incentives up to 2% over MEIS will transit into RoDTEP from January 1, 2020,” she added. “In effect, RoDTEP will more than adequately incentivise exporters than existing schemes put together. The revenue foregone is projected at up to ₹50,000 crore per year.”

In another move aimed at freeing up the working capital of exporters, the Finance Minister announced a fully electronic refund module for the quick and automated refund of input tax credits that will become operational by the end of this month.

For govt. servants

In an attempt to increase bank credit for home buyers, the government also said the external commercial borrowing guidelines will be relaxed to facilitate financing for home buyers who are eligible under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and that the interest rate on house building advances will be lowered and linked with the 10 Year Government Security yields.

“Government servants contribute to a major component of demand for houses,” Ms Sitharaman explained. “This will encourage more government servants to buy new houses.”

Only Hindi can work to unite country: Amit Shah

“There are 18 words to refer to a relationship in Hindi, whereas the word “Uncle” is used uniformly to explain all relations in English...We shouldn't surrender to slave mentality. Promoting Hindi should be our national responsibility. Had (Bal Gangadhar) Tilak and Gandhi not stressed on using Hindi, we would have lost it to the British,” he said.

He said Centre will teach children in the northeastern States to read and write Hindi. “When I was in Guwahati last week, I heard that many people are hiring private tutors to teach Hindi to their children. Centre has decided that we will teach them Hindi,” he said.

Hindi Divas is observed to mark the decision of the Constituent Assembly on

September 14, 1949 to extend official language status to Hindi. It was first observed in 1953.

Mr. Shah said Hindi should reach every individual and every home in the country.

“Next year we will hold the Hindi Divas functions in different parts of the country. I appeal to every parent to speak to their children in their own language and also with the co-workers,” he said.

He added that a language can survive only if the new generation feels proud in speaking it.

“It is our strength that we have many languages and dialects. We have to see that a foreign language does not overtake a native language,” he said.

Final status of all NRC applicants out

List uploaded on official NRC website

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The National Register of Citizens authority on Saturday published the individual status of all 3.3 crore people of Assam who had applied for inclusion when the exercise began five years ago.

The list, which records the names of those who have been accepted as citizens, those rejected and those whose appeals are pending, was uploaded on the official NRC website less than a fortnight after the final NRC was released on August 31, excluding 19.07 lakh people. Applicants have to key in their unique application receipt number (ARN) to view their status.

Each applicant was provided a unique ARN when he or she applied for the NRC updating exercise.



Residents check their names on the NRC website in Guwahati on Saturday. ■PTI

Complete family details

NRC State Coordinator Praateek Hajela explained the difference between the final NRC lists released 14 days apart. “Whereas the final NRC publication on August 31, 2019, consisted only of supplementary lists, queries were received about publication of results of all members of a family irrespective of their involvement in the Claims and Objections process. The results for the complete family will be available only for display online,” he said a few days ago.

“Queries were also received from the public about the issue of certified copies of rejection from final NRC... The process of collection of the orders passed by the NRC officers is being carried out to enable early availabil-

ity of the same to the public to file appeals,” he added.

About 30 organisations representing various indigenous organisations, including the All Assam Students’ Union (AASU), have demanded that the indigenous people excluded from the final NRC be included without forcing them to approach Foreigners’ Tribunals to establish their citizenship.

Rights groups and tribal organisations in Assam have claimed that at least 2 lakh indigenous people have been excluded from the NRC allegedly for lack of proper documents. Among the NRC-excluded are Koch-Rajbongshi, Karbi, Reang and Bodo tribes. Many non-tribal Assamese people have also found themselves on the rejection list.

“The names of indigenous people have been excluded while many foreigners have been included. The NRC must be free of illegal migrants and the indigenous should not be made to go through Foreigners’ Tribunals as they cannot be foreigners by any definition of the term,” AASU adviser Samujjal Bhattacharyya said.

Just cosmetic steps, says Cong.

Party says latest sops for housing, export sectors won't help economic revival

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Minutes after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced sops for the export and housing sectors, the Congress on Saturday termed the measures “cosmetic and piecemeal”, and said the measures would fail to revive the economy.

The Opposition party said Ms. Sitharaman was “clueless” on the state of the economy.

“I can only say that the Finance Minister is clueless as to how to deal with the gravity of the crisis,” Anand Sharma, Deputy Leader of the Congress in the Rajya Sabha, said at a press conference.

Noting that the situation had deteriorated since the earlier announcements to spur growth made by Ms. Sitharaman, Mr. Sharma said the latest steps too would not help.

“The steps that have been announced today will not revive the Indian economy, they are purely cosmetic, piecemeal and also conveys the arrogance and indifference to the seriousness of the situation,” he said.



The Congress leader said the government had failed to come up with a comprehensive revival package because it did not have the money to do so on account of a “huge shortfall” in revenue collection.

‘Lack of understanding’

“The Finance Minister of India is lacking in macroeconomic understanding,” said Mr. Sharma, who had served as Commerce Minister between 2009 and 2014. “A comprehensive package for economic revival was expected.”

He took on the Finance Minister for talking about retail inflation being under control.

“The objective is not to

control inflation; let the inflation rise but the economy be revived, let the investment take place, let the money be released, let the factories start producing again, let our people from engineers to employees, to blue-collar workers in the factories find employment again,” he said.

Job losses

“Millions have lost jobs and are continuing to lose jobs. Propaganda or abusing political opponents is not going to provide solutions to bread and butter issues facing Indian citizens. People want jobs. They want the economy to revive,” Mr. Sharma added.

He hit out at Ms. Sithara-

man’s earlier statement blaming millennials’ preference for ride-hailing services such as Uber and Ola over owning cars, and not high taxes, for the slump in vehicle sales.

Goyal’s slip-up

He took a swipe at Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal’s apparent gaffe in explaining that achieving the target of nearly doubling the size of the economy to \$5 trillion should not be looked at through the prism of maths.

Mr. Goyal had remarked that maths did not help Albert Einstein “to discover gravity”.

The slip-up was not lost on netizens who quickly took to Twitter to point out that gravity was discovered by Isaac Newton and Einstein is credited for his theory of relativity.

“Not only insulting the question on numbers and mathematics, but [he is] confusing the country or himself rather on Einstein and Newton,” Mr. Sharma said of Mr. Goyal’s remarks.

(With PTI inputs)

Rajeev Kumar skips appearance at CBI office

He has sought more time: CBI sources

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

A day after the CBI issued summons to former Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar to appear before the agency, the senior IPS officer on Saturday did not turn up at its headquarters in the city.

CBI sources said that Mr. Kumar had sought more time to appear before it.

The Calcutta High Court had on Friday vacated the interim order providing him protection from arrest by the CBI in the Saradha scam, following which he was issued summons by the agency.

The court in its order on Friday had said that “blanket protection of not arresting is not available in law and would amount to unnecessary interfering with the investigation”. The court observed that Mr. Kumar’s counsel had failed to prove that the CBI is harassing him or trying to injure his reputation. A team of CBI officers met their counsel Y.J. Dasgupta, and discussed their options for more than an hour.

Mr. Kumar was part of the Special Investigation Team set up by the West Bengal government to probe the case, before the agency took it up in 2014.

Cong. loses chair of 3 MPs’ panels

Party divested of stewardship of crucial External Affairs, Finance committees

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Opposition Congress will no longer chair the crucial parliamentary committees on Finance and External Affairs, which will now be headed by former Ministers Jayant Sinha and P.P. Chaudhary, respectively.

From heading six panels, the Congress’s count has been reduced to three.

The Finance and External Affairs committees were previously headed by Congress leaders Veerappa Moily and Shashi Tharoor, respectively. Mr. Moily lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The Congress will, however, be chairing the committees on Home Affairs, Science and Technol-



Jayant Sinha

ogy and Environment and Forests, and Information & Technology. These are to be headed by Anand Sharma, Jairam Ramesh and Mr. Tharoor, respectively. The Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, has shot off a letter of protest to the Lok Sabha Speaker.

“It’s official: government has decided to end the tradi-

Manmohan flays change in Finance panel terms

It undermines federal polity, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said here on Saturday that the Centre ought to have consulted the State governments before introducing additional terms of reference for the 15th Finance Commission seeking to create separate funds for defence and internal security.

Noting that unilateralism was not good for a federal polity and cooperative federalism, Mr. Singh said the best course would have been to go back to the Chief Ministers’ conference and consult with the States.

‘Trying to rob States’

“Otherwise, there will be a strong feeling that the Central government is trying to rob the States of its due resources and that is not good for the federal polity and cooperative federalism that we all swear by,” the former Prime Minister said at a seminar on “Additional terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission: implica-



Manmohan Singh

tions for the States”.

Earlier, in July, the Centre changed the terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission and mandated the panel to suggest ways for allocation of non-lapsable funds for defence and internal security. The Commission, which was to submit its report by October 30, has now been given time till November 30.

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury questioned the “legality” of the change at the last minute.

Kerala Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac, CPI general secretary D. Raja and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh spoke.

Nitish will continue as captain: LJP

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

With a proxy battle underway between the Janata Dal(U) and its NDA partner, the BJP, in Bihar, the alliance’s third main constituent in the State, the Lok Janshakti Party, said JD(U) leader and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar would continue as the “captain” of the alliance till the BJP officially throws its hat into the ring.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Union Consumer Affairs Minister and LJP chief Ram Vilas Paswan said, “Nitish Kumar is our captain and he will continue unless if the BJP decides to bring in a different captain.”

The debate was triggered by BJP legislator Sanjay Paswan’s comment that Mr. Kumar should step down and hand over the reins to the BJP.

To this, Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi, in a tweet, said: “Nitish Kumar is the captain of NDA in Bihar and will remain its captain in the next Assembly elections in 2020 also... when captain is hitting 4 & 6 defeating rivals by the innings, where is the question of any change?”

“Till now the BJP has not officially thrown its name in the ring for the CM’s post, then what’s the point of debate,” Mr. Paswan said.

Asked about disappointment with Mr. Kumar’s government, Mr. Paswan said the government headed by Narendra Modi will offset this. “Even if there are a few minus points of Nitish government, one can say the percentage is fairly low,” he said.

INTERVIEW | ASHWANI KUMAR

‘Internal elections in Congress will be divisive’

Not necessarily the best way forward, says former Minister

SANDEEP PHUKAN

A month after Sonia Gandhi again took charge as interim Congress president, former Law Minister Ashwani Kumar talks about challenges for the party. Edited excerpts:



There was complete unanimity on the choice of Sonia Gandhi as interim party president

ASHWANI KUMAR
Congress leader

Soon after Sonia Gandhi took over as interim president, you tweeted that workers should be treated with respect and their voices heard. Can you elaborate?

■ I had expressed a view, and maintain that the strength of the party depends upon a sense of belonging given to workers and leaders alike. This necessarily implies that the dignity and self-esteem of the party persons should be ensured at all times. It is self-evident that diminished and marginalised workers are unable and unwilling to give their best to the party.

The Congress has seen interesting views from senior leaders on the dilution of Article 370. You, too, had said the move finds acceptance in popular imagination but questioned the way in which it was taken?

■ I believe that on the decision regarding Article 370, the sensitivities of the people outside Kashmir lean in support of this decision.

However, this is not to say its wisdom stands finally at tested. History alone will pronounce upon the advisa-

bility of this move. There is, of course, the legitimate question whether this could have been done democratically after taking the State leaders into confidence. These are difficult but necessary questions. Some day in the future, we will know whether or not the decision has served the nation well.

The Congress has said whatever may be our differences, the nation will fight Pakistani propaganda unitedly.

After a prolonged leadership crisis after Rahul Gandhi’s resignation, Ms. Gandhi was given interim charge. Do you think the Congress should open up the process on how it elects the party chief?

■ Under the circumstances and given the fact that the party needs to be united and cohesive at this difficult time, the selection of Mrs. Gandhi as interim party

BJP gets new chiefs in Rajasthan, Bihar

Party relies on experienced hands

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI/PATNA/JAIPUR

The BJP on Saturday appointed Sanjay Jaiswal, MP, as its Bihar unit president and Amber MLA Satish Poonia as the chief of the Rajasthan unit.

In a statement in New Delhi, the party said its president, Amit Shah, had approved the two appointments and that of Ajay Kumar as the general secretary (organisation) for Uttarakhand.

Dr. Jaiswal, 53, is a three-time MP from the West Champaran constituency. A doctor by profession, he replaced Nityanand Rai who became the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs.

“This is an election year and the party has entrusted great trust and faith in me,”



Satish Poonia

he told presspersons in West Champaran.

The appointment of Mr. Poonia, hailing from Rajgarh town in Churu and MLA from Amber in Jaipur district, came two-and-a-half months after the death of State chief Madan Lal Saini on June 24. Mr. Poonia, 55, is considered close to the RSS.

The strategy to appoint a Jat leader is to throw a major challenge before the ruling Congress ahead of the municipal election.

Foreign Secretary Gokhale to visit Iran

sador Ali Chegeni had said India’s decision to “zero out” oil purchases would also affect India-Iran trade and mean that Iran would seek “other markets” to import goods from and supply LNG to. Mr. Chegeni also said despite New Delhi’s promises to expedite development of the Chabahar port, the construction and trade was “very slow”.

The issues are likely to be discussed during Mr. Gokhale’s visit, as well as the new scenario likely between the U.S. and Iran after the exit of U.S. NSA John Bolton.



ELSEWHERE

U.S. could have defence treaty with Israel

WASHINGTON
U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday he had spoken with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about a possible mutual defence treaty between the two nations, a move that could bolster Mr. Netanyahu's re-election bid just days before Israelis go to the polls. REUTERS

Iranian companies sign gas field agreement

TEHRAN
Two Iranian companies signed a \$440 million agreement on Saturday to develop a gas field in the sensitive Gulf. Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said the deal between two government-owned firms Pars Oil and Gas Company and PetroPars, to develop the Balal field, would be the first of many agreements. AFP

Turkey orders arrest of 223 over links to Gulen

ANKARA
Turkey has ordered the arrest of 223 serving military personnel across the country and in the breakaway state of Northern Cyprus over suspected links to cleric Fethullah Gulen's network, which Ankara accuses of organising an attempted coup in 2016, state media said on Saturday. REUTERS

11 killed in Brazil hospital fire

RIO DE JANEIRO
At least 11 people, many of them elderly, were killed when a fire swept through a hospital in the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro as staff and desperate visitors battled to rescue patients from smoke-filled wards. Hospital authorities said the blaze late on Thursday was thought to have been caused by a short circuit in a generator. AFP

Mugabe honoured at state funeral

Zimbabwe leader's remains will be interred in about 30 days

REUTERS
HARARE

Zimbabwe's founder Robert Mugabe was honoured as an icon, principled leader and African intellectual giant at a state funeral on Saturday, after a week of disputes over his burial threatened to embarrass President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

The remains of Mr. Mugabe, who died in a Singapore hospital earlier this month at the age of 95, will be interred in a mausoleum at the National Heroes Acre in Harare in about 30 days, his nephew said on Friday.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa was booed by the crowd in the stadium after a wave of deadly riots and xenophobic attacks in South Africa earlier this month that triggered inter-

Hong Kong witnesses pitched battles

Police intervene following scuffles between pro-China demonstrators and anti-govt. protesters

REUTERS
HONG KONG

Baton-wielding Hong Kong police moved in to break up scuffles on Saturday between pro-China protesters and those denouncing perceived Chinese meddling in the Asian financial hub, the latest in months of sometimes violent clashes.

The pro-China demonstrators chanted "Support the police" and "China, add oil" at a shopping mall, adapting a line used by anti-Hong Kong government protesters and loosely meaning: "China, keep your strength up". "Hong Kong is China," one woman shouted at passers-by who shouted obscenities in return in an angry pushing and pulling stand-off, marked more by the shouting than violence.

The clashes in the Kowloon Bay area of the Hong Kong "special administrative zone" of China spilled out onto the streets, with each confrontation captured by dozens of media and onlookers on their smart phones. Police detained several peo-



Coming to blows: A group of pro-China demonstrators fighting with anti-government protesters in Kowloon Bay district, Hong Kong, on Saturday. ■AP

ple. But the unrest was minor compared with previous weeks when anti-government protesters have attacked the legislature and Liaison Office, the symbol of Chinese rule, trashed metro stations and set street fires. Police have responded with

tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon.

Protesters complaining about perceived Chinese interference in the former British colony came out in their hundreds across the territory on Friday, singing and chanting on the Mid-Autumn

Festival. They have also gathered in malls, with occasional scuffles with flag-carrying China supporters, often denouncing police for perceived brutality.

On Saturday, anti-government protesters also gathered in the northwestern

New Territories district of Tin Shui Wai, with a brief stand-off with police. There were scattered scuffles between rival protesters elsewhere, including in the Fortress Hill area of Hong Kong island.

Four demands

The spark for the anti-government protests was a now-withdrawn Bill and concerns that Beijing is eroding civil liberties, but many young protesters are also angry about sky-high living costs and a lack of job prospects.

Their four other demands are: retraction of the word "riot" to describe rallies, release of all detained demonstrators, an independent inquiry into perceived police brutality and the right for Hong Kong people to choose their own leaders. The extradition Bill would have allowed people to be sent to mainland China for trial in Communist Party-controlled courts, despite Hong Kong having its own much-cherished legal system.

Drone attacks come as Aramco prepares for IPO

Houthi rebels have carried out a spate of cross-border and missile strikes in recent months

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIYADH

The two drone attacks on Saturday came as Saudi Arabia accelerates preparations for a much-anticipated initial public offering of Aramco, the world's most profitable company.

Aramco is ready for a two-stage stock market debut including an international listing "very soon", its CEO Amin Nasser told reporters on Tuesday.

"At 4.00 a.m. (0100 GMT)

the industrial security teams of Aramco started dealing with fires at two of its facilities in Abqaiq and Khurais as a result of... drones," the Interior Ministry said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. "The two fires have been controlled."

In recent months, the Houthi rebels have carried out a spate of cross-border missile and drone attacks targeting Saudi air bases and other facilities in what they

say is retaliation for a long-running Saudi-led bombing campaign on rebel-held areas in Yemen. The Houthi rebels launched "a large-scale operation involving 10 drones that targeted refineries in Abqaiq and Khurais in eastern Saudi Arabia", the group's Al-Masirah television reported.

Last month, an attack claimed by Houthi rebels sparked a fire at Aramco's Shaybah natural gas liquefaction facility – close to the

UAE border – but no casualties were reported by the company.

Rebel drones also targeted two oil pumping stations on Saudi Arabia's key east-west pipeline in May, shutting it down for several days.

Al-Qaeda attack in 2006

The Abqaiq plant, which Aramco says plays a "pivotal role" in its operations, has been targeted by militants in the past.

In an attack claimed by al-

Qaeda in February 2006, suicide bombers with explosive-laden vehicles attempted to penetrate the processing plant, killing two security guards. The two bombers also died in the attack, which failed to breach the compound, authorities reported at the time.

In 2014, a Saudi court sentenced a man to death for links to the 2006 attack. Two other Saudis were jailed for 33 and 27 years respectively, state media reported.

Cameron apologises for Brexit divisions

My approach failed, says former PM

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Former British Prime Minister David Cameron, who called the Brexit referendum and then saw the public vote to leave the European Union (EU), said in an interview published on Saturday that he is sorry for the divisions it has caused.

"I deeply regret the outcome and accept that my approach failed... The decisions I took contributed to that failure. I failed," he said.

Mr. Cameron also attacked former allies Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, who helped spearhead the "Leave" campaign.

Mr. Cameron says they "left the truth at home" dur-



Former U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron. ■AFP

ing the campaign, citing among other things the claim that Britain could save £350 million pounds per week that was being sent to the EU and could use that money to improve the National Health Service.

Hamza bin Laden is dead: Trump

His death was reported earlier but not confirmed by the U.S.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday confirmed that Hamza bin Laden, the son and designated heir of al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden, was killed in a counterterrorism operation along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

U.S. media reported in late July and early August, citing intelligence officials, that the younger Bin Laden had been killed sometime in the last two years in an operation that involved the U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper confirmed the death last month, saying it was "his understanding" that Hamza was dead, but Mr. Trump and other senior officials had not publicly confirmed the news.



Hamza, son of Osama bin Laden. ■AFP

"Hamza bin Laden, the high-ranking al-Qaeda member and son of Osama bin Laden, was killed in a United States counterterrorism operation in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region," Mr. Trump said in a brief statement issued by the White House. "The loss of Hamza bin Laden not only deprives Al-

Qaeda of important leadership skills and the symbolic connection to his father, but undermines important operational activities of the group."

The statement did not specify the timing of the operation.

The 15th of Osama bin Laden's 20 children and a son of his third wife, Hamza, thought to be about 30 years old, was "emerging as a leader in the al-Qaeda franchise," the State Department said in announcing a \$1 million bounty on his head in February 2019 – perhaps after his actual demise. He had put out audio and video messages calling for attacks on the U.S. and other countries, especially to avenge his father's killing, the department said.

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	1	5	8	2	7	3	4	9
9	4	2	5	3	6	1	8	7
7	8	3	4	9	1	2	5	6
1	2	4	6	5	9	7	3	8
3	7	8	2	1	4	9	6	5
5	6	9	7	8	3	4	2	1
8	9	1	3	4	5	6	7	2
4	5	6	9	7	2	8	1	3
2	3	7	1	6	8	5	9	4

Sikh preaches love, tolerance despite tragedy

The brother of Sodhi, whose family migrated to U.S. after the 1984 riots, was killed days after 9/11

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PHOENIX

Indian Sikh immigrant Rana Singh Sodhi still preaches love and tolerance 18 years after his brother was gunned down in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks by a man, who mistook him for a Muslim because of his turban and beard.

"I want there to be more awareness, more peace in the world," said Mr. Sodhi, who spent much of the first year after his brother Balbir Singh Sodhi's death speaking at schools and houses of worship. "I believe education is very important for our community. I made a commitment to reach as many people as I can."

The community will remember Balbir on the anniversary of his death on Sunday with a special meal at a local temple.

Recognised by govt.

Often working through the Arizona Interfaith Move-

ment, Mr. Sodhi has been recognised by the State's chapter of the Anti-Defamation League and by the White House under President Barack Obama's administration.

The shooter Frank Roque is serving life in prison for the first-degree murder of Mr. Sodhi's older brother at his Mesa, Arizona, gas station on September 15, 2011. Balbir was the first of scores of Sikhs as well as Muslims targeted in hate crimes after 9/11.

Another brother, Sukhpal, was shot and killed 10 months later as he drove his cab in San Francisco. Authorities did not confirm the second killing as a hate crime, saying it appeared to be a stray bullet from a gang shooting, but the family doesn't doubt he died because of his Sikh identity.

In the case of Balbir, at least, "I feel like we got justice," Mr. Sodhi said. Despite the loss of his



Empathy and kindness: Rana Singh Sodhi at a memorial in Arizona, for his brother, Balbir, in a 2016 photo. ■AP

brothers, Mr. Sodhi, now 52, said he considers himself lucky to live in a country that was founded by immigrants and that allows him to practise his religion, even while the Trump administration makes it harder for newcomers to settle in the U.S.

Three years ago, Mr. Sodhi forgave Roque in a telephone call to him in prison. After hearing remorse in Roque's voice, he said: "If I had the power to take you

out from prison, I would do it right now," according to a highly publicised recording of the conversation.

Mr. Sodhi said the family immigrated to the U.S. in 1985, one year after anti-Sikh violence killed thousands of people in their native India. They first settled in California, then Arizona. Balbir was shot dead while planting flowers at the gas station just four days after the 9/11 attacks. Attacks against Sikhs

Italy govt. lets migrants disembark

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ROME

Italy on Saturday agreed to allow rescue ship *Ocean Viking* to disembark 82 migrants on Lampedusa, in a reversal of the hard-line policy under the country's ex-Interior Minister Matteo Salvini.

Mr. Salvini was forced out of office last month after bringing the government down, and the new coalition has been trying to forge its own migrant stance.

It is the first time in 14 months that Italy has offered a migrant rescue ship a safe port, although it took Rome six days and European guarantees to redistribute the migrants before it did so. "The *Ocean Viking* just received instructions from the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre of Rome to proceed to Lampedusa," *SOS Mediterranean*, which operates the vessel, tweeted.

‘Allowing manual intervention will help’

Small error can hold up refunds: FIEO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Captains of industry, especially representing the manufacturing, have welcomed the measures announced by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday.

However, the response from the housing sector was mixed.

Knight Frank India said though the steps were welcome, they did not sufficiently address the issue of continued slow sales and low demand in reality.

‘Right direction’

“It is the third announcement by the Finance Minister in recent times to help beat the economic slowdown witnessed by several sectors. It is in the right direction and it would take some weeks for the trade to feel the impact of changes,” said T.T. Srinivasaraghavan, managing director, Sundaram Finance Ltd.

According to him, the government has started acknowledging problems faced by the trade. It was a ‘big positive’ that the Minister was addressing it by listening to each section of the society stage-by-stage.

TVS Motor Company CMD Venu Srinivasan said the government was listening and responding to the woes of India Inc. “I welcome the speedy response of the Finance Minister to boost housing and exports. The measures announced today [Saturday] are very encouraging,” he said.

The Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO) said that the government had understood [the problems] and come forward with a scheme to sort out some of the major issues



Israr Ahmed

faced by exporters, especially by micro, small and medium enterprises. Israr Ahmed, regional chairman, FIEO, felt the implementation of a fully-automated refund for input tax credit would help resolve the cash crunch of exporters.

However, a window for manual intervention should be made available in all stages as today’s system is very complex and even a small typing error would hold up refunds without any resolution, he noted.

City-based exporters said the announcement of FTA Utilisation Mission jointly with the department, FIEO and leading status holders would boost trade with the those nations having free trade pacts with India.

Akshaya Homes chairman and CEO Chitti Babu said that proposals of a special window to provide last mile funding for housing projects that are non-NPA and non-NCLT, would not only allow completion of construction of unfinished units, but protect the interest of homebuyers and their investments.

Uday Vummidi, vice-president, Chennai Jewellers’ Association, said the Dubai-inspired annual mega shopping festival should not be restricted to four cities and it should be held in 40 cities.

‘Speedy ITC e-refunds can boost exports’

Quick reimbursement to ease fund crunch, says industry; RoDTEP, a relief to labour-intensive sectors’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The government has taken prompt and adequate measures to boost exports, say exporters and analysts, reacting to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s announcements for the sector.

“The provision for Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Product (RoDTEP) and replacing the existing Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) scheme on export of garments and made-ups should ease the existing financial crunch,” said Govind Zanwar, vice president, Vibrant Terry Towel Global Expo and Textile Development Foundation (TDF), which is planning large-scale exports of terry towels to the U.S.

“The fully automatic elec-



Labour intensive sectors such as textiles should come under priority sector lending. ■ S. SIVA SARAVANAN

tronic refund for Input Tax Credit (ITC) and the Interest Equalisation Scheme (IES), will also help boost exports, particularly in the textiles sector. A quick reimbursement is much needed to ease

financial scarcity,” he added.

He said priority sector lending (PSL) would also help, and labour intensive sectors such as textiles and leather industry should be included in it.

A glimmer of hope for stranded homebuyers

Stress fund can be enhanced to benefit more projects, should include those in NCLT, NPA, say realtors

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s announcements for real estate is expected to provide the much-needed boost to the sector, and enable homebuyers get possession of their incomplete homes currently stuck in stalled projects due to want of funds.

“All that the Finance Minister announced would be a big gamechanger not only for the real estate sector, but also for the revival of the economy as a whole. Housing is one sector wherein if one rupee is spent, 42 paise comes to GDP growth directly. So, the announced measures will bring in great economic growth for the country,” said M. Murali, CMD, Shriram Properties Ltd.



Stretching budget: Definition of affordable housing needs to cover the ₹1 crore price tag, says NAREDCO. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

“All are outstanding steps and make a big difference. The provision for ECB funding will help in attracting big capital which is waiting outside the country. The impact will be seen in the fourth quarter and I will not be surprised if the GDP in the

fourth quarter will grow at 8-9% as an outcome of all the measures announced by her,” Mr. Murali said.

Chintan Sheth, director, Ashwin Sheth Group, said: “The announcements are some of the measures required to ensure flow of li-

quidity into the sector as it would address certain challenges being faced by the real estate sector. However, we look forward from the government on addressing concerns related to demand creation.” Developers’ body NAREDCO said the stress fund amount should have been enhanced to benefit more projects.

“For delayed and stalled projects, for example in the NCR, this will be a major problem, given that most of such projects are under NCLT and NPA, and will not get the benefit of this stress fund. This announcement will not solve the problem of delayed/stalled projects and affected homeseekers in locations like the NCR,” said Niranjan Hiranandani, national president, NAREDCO.

He said since the last-mile funding had been envisaged for affordable and MIG homes, the definition of affordable housing needed to change from the price tag of ₹45 lakh to ₹1 crore, as the current definition made no sense for the projects in Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai.

“The creation of a special window to provide last-mile funding requirements for housing projects that are non-NPA and non-NCLT and yet are stuck due to lack of funding, is a major boost to the housing sector [affordable and mid segment] and a perfect festive treat for lakhs of homebuyers who have been anxiously waiting for their prized possessions,” said Anuj Puri, chairman, Anarock Property Consultants.

SBI to seek clarity from RBI on fixed-floating home loan rate

‘Floating rate linked to repo caused asset-liability mismatch’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LEH

State Bank of India will seek clarity from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on introduction of the fixed-floating interest rate scheme for home loans.

Speaking to reporters, SBI chairman Rajnish Kumar said the need for such a product was felt after the regulator mandated repo-linked home loan rate.

He said the banks needed to find out a way on how to offer home loans with a fixed rate for a tenure of 5-10 years and a floating rate after that.

The linking of floating rate loans with repo rate has created challenges of asset liability mismatch, he said.

The SBI chairman also said the bank was ready to become the convener of the



Rajnish Kumar

State-level bankers committee (SLBC) of Leh & Ladakh, after the region becomes a Union Territory following the proposed bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir State. Jammu & Kashmir Bank is the current SLBC convener bank of the State.

SBI has opened its fourteenth branch in Ladakh region, at Diskit village in the

Nubra valley, which is over 100 km from Leh and has a population of 1,760 as per the 2011 census.

“The emphasis will be on the personal loan segment, such as education and housing loans,” Mr. Kumar said.

“There is a good scope for MSME loans also. However, the scope for agriculture and industry is limited,” he said. “When there is development, demand for funds will come. We can meet that demand,” Mr. Kumar said.

On the issue of mergers among public sector banks, Mr. Kumar said they would become stronger because of consolidation. It would be difficult for small banks to sustain themselves due to capital requirement, particularly in the area of technology.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

To keep ghost traders at bay, Aadhaar authentication or physical verification will be made mandatory for new traders coming under the Goods and Services Tax regime from January 2020, according to the GST Network.

Sushil Kumar Modi, who heads the Group of Ministers of the GST Network said: Aadhaar authentication of new dealers, which is optional as of now, will be made mandatory. In the last two years, we have noticed that there have been a good number of fly-by-night operators who made fake invoices.”

Under the new rule, those who do not prefer Aadhaar authentication, can go for physical verification, which will be carried out in three days. Currently, Aadhaar authentication is optional

and no physical verification is required.

Simplified returns

Speaking to mediapersons, Mr. Modi said the GST Council, due to low filing of annual returns, was contemplating a more simplified, new returns system.

“We are trying to make the returns system more simple compared to the earlier one, which was a bit complicated. All types of taxpayers will get a new system under three formats: Sahaj, Sugam and Normal. They will be rolled out in one go in January 2020,” he said.

The GSTN has decided to make tax refunds entirely online from September 24 this year and it would be done from a single source, either by the Central GST or State GST.

“Refunding has been a big issue since the launch of



Sushil Kumar Modi

GST, 30 months ago. We hope making it online will bring more transparency and convenience for traders and exporters,” he added.

According to Mr. Modi, most of the GST processes are now being done manually and this time-consuming exercise has led to transparency issues.

“Exporters and traders have been complaining about various refund related issues. I am happy to an-

nounce that from September 24, refunds processes are going to be completely online. Whatever type of refund it is, whether export refund or I-T refund, or any other kind of refund all will be online and will be from a single authority. The dealer will get payment from Public Finance Management System,” he said. Till date, ₹93,416 crore were refunded to the exporters, of which 74% of claims were either sanctioned or rejected. For the remaining 26% of refunds, traders are still running from pillar to post.

“So going online will be a big relief, especially for exporters. I congratulate Infosys for readying this platform for September launch,” he added. Cautioning the traders’ community further, Mr. Modi said from November, unless returns were filed, e-way bills cannot be

generated and alerts would be sent to non-filers after which they would not be able to generate the e-way bills.

“We have noticed that 27.22 lakh dealers have not filed their returns of June and July and their e-way bill can be blocked. Among them, about 5.2 lakh dealers are still using e-way bills,” he stated.

“We are giving them a chance and I will give an example of Karnataka, where 1.75 lakh are bound to be blocked. Among them 35,033 dealers were found using the e-way bills every month actively. So, alerts have been sent to these 35,033 dealers,” Mr. Modi added. The GST network currently has some 1.23 crore traders.

The next GSTN meeting will be held on September 20 in Goa.

PNB merger to be effective from April 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

The amalgamated entity of United Bank of India (UBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) will come into effect from April 1, 2020, a top official said on Saturday.

The merged unit, likely to have a new name, will be the second largest bank in the country after State Bank of India (SBI) with a total business volume of ₹18 lakh crore.

“The amalgamation process will take some time and the new entity will start functioning from April 1, 2020,” MD and CEO of UBI, Ashok Kumar Pradhan, said. Mr. Pradhan said the combined staff strength post the amalgamation will be 1 lakh with 11,400 branches.

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

While the replacement cycle till now has helped the tyre industry to mitigate the impact of the severe demand slowdown in the automobile sector, the segment – which accounts for about 50% of the tyre market – has started to fill the pinch.

While the sector is somewhat hopeful of an uptick in demand due to the festive season and expectations of pre-buying due to the shift to BS-VI norms, their hopes are largely pinned on measures such as scrappage policy and a reduction in GST rates to spur demand.

“The tyre sector being directly linked to the auto sector has been impacted by the slowdown as well. Although the replacement demand had somewhat cushioned the impact initially, particu-

larly for commercial vehicles, in recent months it is also showing worrisome signs,” Rajiv Budhiraja, director-general at Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA) told *The Hindu*.

He added that if the current situation continues, tyre demand would soon be in the negative territory across all the key segments. In a recent report, rating agency ICRA forecast a revenue growth of 3-4% for the tyre industry due to subdued vehicle production, weak consumer sentiment amid slowing economic activity, rising cost of vehicle ownership and softened rural demand. This is in contrast to a growth of 12% in FY18 and 14% in FY2019.

Replacement market

The replacement market accounts for over 50% of the



Fall in tyre production in Q1 of 2019 has forced firms to defer capex and cut down temporary jobs, says Rajiv Budhiraja.

tyre supplies on an average. For trucks and buses, it is as high as 70%. “The replacement segment, which represents over 55% of industry volumes, is likely to grow by 5-6% in FY2020 as against 5.7% in the previous year, while demand growth in the original equipment (OE) segment is pegged at lower le-

vels of 2-3% as against 7.8% in the previous year, affected by subdued vehicle production in FY20,” as per ICRA.

Mr. Budhiraja added that the total tyre production in the first quarter of the current fiscal (April-June 2019) declined by 4% year-on-year. This has forced tyre makers to defer capital expenditure,

and cut down production and temporary jobs, while pushing exports to help lessen the impact of the slowdown in the domestic market.

Output rationalisation

Apollo Tyres spokesperson said: “Our production is tuned to the market demand and as such this has called for rationalisation from time to time. In the current scenario as well, there is a need to rationalise the production, including rationalising of the contractual manpower.”

The spokesperson added that for Apollo Tyres, the demand from the replacement market was still strong and expressed hope that with good monsoons, along with the recent stimulus package by the government and the upcoming festivals will see a turnaround in demand from

the original equipment manufacturers.

Similarly, JK Tyre too has delayed its capital expenditure plans, while also rationalising production in what CMD Raghupati Singhania had at the company’s AGM described as “extremely concerning and if anything, grim” economic environment.

Liquidity issue

Rajiv Prasad, president of India operations at JK Tyre, said the company was working on pushing replacement sales and tapping opportunities in the export markets. “... in the short-term, the industry needs to cope with this change in demand... cash is also tight in the marketplace so, that is putting a constraint which is reflecting a bit on the replacement side as well.”

He, however, added that the replacement market is still seeing growth. He remained optimistic about the long-term prospects of the industry. “... till the time people and goods keep moving, tyres would be required... there is no impact from a long-term perspective.”

Stating that the company is trying to keep volumes up in the remaining three quarters of the fiscal, Mr. Prasad said the industry faced another stumbling block in the form of transition to BS-VI. “...nobody can really make a comment on it very strongly... how the whole auto industry is going to play out. This is something that you have to watch,” he said.

Mr. Budhiraja added that festive buying and the pre-buying on account of BS-VI were unlikely to be strong demand triggers.

Prashant Jhawar quits Usha Martin’s board

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Prashant Jhawar, the non-executive director of wire-rope maker Usha Martin Ltd. (UML), has resigned from the board citing illegalities and non-compliance of provisions of law by the directors and management.

In a regulatory filing, UML said that Prashant Jhawar had tendered his resignation, on September 13, from the board with immediate effect and accordingly, ceased to be a director of UML.

In a letter to the UML Board Mr. Jhawar said that in recent times there had been ‘challenges and obstructions’ on improving compliances and governance.

Mr. Jhawar mentioned that the petition filed by him along with his father B.K. Jhawar before the National Company Law Tribunal, Kolkata, against the acts of mismanagement and oppression at the company was pending.

B.K. Jhawar, the 83-year old former chairman of Usha Martin Ltd., lost his board position after shareholders gave a thumbs down to a proposal on his continuation beyond March 31, 2019. He is among UML’s founder-promoters.

However, another resolution moved at the EGM held in April 2019, seeking continuation of 81-year-old Brij Kumar Jhawar, the co-founder, and brother of Mr. Basant Kumar, sailed through, highlighting the ongoing feud between the two family factions. Brij Kumar Jhawar’s son Rajeev is now the managing director of UML.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Bengaluru, we have a problem

Has India’s moon mission been affected by the setback to the ‘Vikram’ lander?

MADHUMATHI D.S.

The story so far: Chandrayaan-2 took off from Sriharikota on July 22 to safe land the ‘Vikram’, carrying its ‘Pragyan’ rover, in a suitable high plain on the lunar surface, at a latitude of about 70° South. But soon after 1.50 a.m. on September 7, in the final minutes of the lander’s descent on its own, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) team in Bengaluru lost contact with the module.

What went wrong with the mission?

Chandrayaan-2, comprising an orbiter, a lander and a rover, journeyed from earth for eight days and reached the moon’s vicinity on August 20. On September 2, the lander riding on the orbiter was separated and got into a closer orbit around the moon, moving pole-to-pole at a distance of 35 km x 100 km.

Mission planners at ISRO had divided the last critical 15-minute parabolic descent into four smaller phases. At 1.38 a.m. IST on September 7, the lander perfectly cleared the ‘rough braking phase’, swooping down from 30 km to 7.4 km of the lunar surface in 10 minutes. Its velocity had dropped as required from 1,640 metres a second to about 400 metres a second.

It had now entered the second part, the ‘fine braking phase’ of 3 minutes, with the four throttleable motors switching off to further lower the velocity. It had to re-orient itself, take pictures of the landing site to look for hazards like slopes and rocks. The moon was just over 2 minutes and 2.1 km away. But by then, at the command headquarters in Bengaluru, the green lines on the screens showed that it had strayed from its path;

The lunar terrain is rocky and uneven. The moon’s gravity is about 17% of the earth and the moon dust that slowly rises and falls on landing can disable sensitive instruments of a lander

mission managers said they were not receiving any signal from the lander. Vikram had developed a problem, gone silent and had crashed at the fag end of a perfect journey, along with the stillborn rover. Some 20 minutes later, ISRO Chairman K. Sivan announced that contact had been lost with Vikram and that ISRO was piecing together its last set of data. While the failure analysis committee reconstructs and simulates the last moments to infer

the causes, theories about about what may have caused the crash: did the thruster/s overperform? Did Vikram lose altitude and not recover, losing the earth link? Or was it some other anomaly? However, since then, ISRO has spoken only once in the last seven days: just to say it had located the crashed Vikram and would try to reconnect with it. It must do so before the lunar night sets in around September 21, cutting off any solar power supply to the spacecraft.

Why was this mission important?

For ISRO this was the second moon mission after Chandrayaan-1 of 2008. The project, approved in 2007 and planned for 2012, had undergone a few twists, turns, delays and redesigns over the last few years. Finally in June, Dr. Sivan formally announced that it would be launched in mid-July.

Chandrayaan-1 was an orbiting mission and died just after eight months in orbit, but not before confirming the exciting presence of water molecules on the lunar surface. Chandrayaan-2 planned to take off from where its precursor left off and look intensively for water deposits from up close. It was a formidable combination of an orbiter, a lander and a robotic rover which aimed to look at the moon’s exterior, surface and interior in that order.

What were the challenges?

Dr. Sivan had repeatedly spoken of the challenges of soft landing on moon – the spacecraft had to land unharmed and intact, remain in touch with earth and do its assigned job. Of nearly 80 missions sent to moon since the early 1960s, less than 40% have succeeded. This year alone, China’s Chang’e 4 mission made the first ever landing on the far side of the moon in January and also deployed a rover. But in April, Israel’s Beresheet craft crashed on the moon.

The lunar terrain is rocky and uneven. The moon’s gravity is about 17% of the earth and the moon dust that slowly rises and falls on landing can disable sensitive instruments of a lander. Many technologies of Vikram are new: the lander and its legs, the autonomous rover, and the four throttleable motors.

What happens after this?

In the end, India did not arrive on the moon. The country had the aim of becoming the fourth member of the lunar club, after the Soviet Union, the U.S. and China. As for Chandrayaan-2, we may have heard the last of the lander and the rover. But the orbiter gliding 100 km above continues to bear the Chandrayaan-2 torch, beaming back pictures of the moon. The information it will send as it revisits the spot where Vikram lies may offer precious lessons for future planetary missions by India and other countries.

What does ancient DNA show about history?

How do genetic patterns relate to archaeological evidence about Indian pasts?

MUDIT TRIVEDI

The story so far: Last Thursday, the journal *Cell* published a paper, ‘An Ancient Harappan Genome Lacks Ancestry from Steppe Pastoralists and Iranian Farmers’, which claimed that the inhabitants of the Indus Valley civilisation lacked the steppe-pastoralist ancestry which had brought Indo-European languages into South Asia. The findings of the paper, whose key authors are the archaeologist Vasant Shinde, and the geneticists Vagheesh M. Narasimhan and David Reich, et.al, are based on the DNA sequencing of the remains of a woman found at Rakhigarhi in present-day Haryana. Another paper, published in the journal *Science* by the same authors, established baselines for the DNA of South and Central Asian populations over the last 10,000 years.

What is ancient DNA (aDNA) and what has it been used to study? Ancient DNA can be carefully extracted from archaeologically recovered bones, teeth or fossil plant remains. Small fragments are processed to sequence the genome of those ancient organisms. aDNA becomes degraded, on account of its age and the climatic and soil conditions it was buried in. Techniques developed over the past three decades have led to a revolution in how we understand the evolution and genetic history of a range of animals and plants, including species that are extinct today. Palaeogeneticists have been able to establish, for example, how genetic variation might relate to the independent evolution of species on different continents that were previously thought to be related, or, how populations that today appear distinct and in different geographical areas were once related and likely existed together in one region.

What can be done with aDNA from human samples? Special challenges are attached to the study of ancient human DNA, especially as contamination from modern human DNA is a real hazard and requires special techniques at every stage of the recovery and extraction process. Modern human DNA databases are built on samples from people like us, alive today. They have been used for several applications, prominently including attempts to understand the genetic predisposition towards certain diseases and responses to medicines in different social groups in South Asia. The comparison of aDNA samples with other aDNA and modern DNA databases can reveal otherwise unsuspected genetic histories. Scientists can trace the deep ancestry of ancient individuals and assess how their genetic makeup is distinct on account of specific variant genes (alleles), mutations and other markers (99% of all human DNA is common) and see how this compares with that of modern groups.

Thus the most common way of understanding the relatedness of DNA between groups and individuals is by their admixture percentages. Importantly, genes may co-vary with a group’s ethnicity – understood as the combination of language and material practices – but they also may not. There is no necessary correlation between the genes of the author of these words or the reader and what language their ancestors must have spoken, nor what their ‘identity’ was. The social processes of history are not the same as those which can be observed through population genetics. While populations display aggregate trends of admixture and patterns of deep shared ancestry, there are no ‘Aryan’ or ‘Harappan’ or ‘Dravidian’ genes.

What are the recent results? What do they establish? The two recent papers, (in *Science* and *Cell*), have provided complementary levels of insights into South Asian population history. For a detailed account of their findings and misunderstandings of their conclusions



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please see Tony Joseph’s article in this newspaper (Magazine, “We are all migrants”, September 15, 2019; <https://bit.ly/2kJdrss>). The first paper, ‘The Formation of Human Populations in South and Central Asia’, establishes baselines for the genetic history of populations in these two linked regions. Based on an unprecedented 523 aDNA samples ranging over 8,000 years across Eurasia, the authors demonstrate clearly what was known before but is now shown in greater detail with clear evidence, that over the last 10,000 years, the present-day distinctive mix of South Asian genetic variability was formed through the admixture of populations then resident in the region with successive groups who moved into the region. This is a process that happened not just once but several times. They make clear that these mixing of populations were far from “invasions”, and the trends in their data show slow long-term processes of migration, co-mingling and integration.

The best documented of these admixture events is the genetic interaction of populations then resident in Northern South Asia with groups associated with ‘steppe pastoralist’ ancestry and is unequivocally dated to 2000-1500 BCE. This period is well understood archaeologically as a complex era of post-Harappan deurbanisation, when different regions from Gujarat to Haryana show varying trends in crop patterns, settlement sizes and material culture at a time when rainfall and climate patterns underwent significant changes.

The latest evidence, in this case genetic, reaffirms what history and archaeology have consistently shown: that the South Asian subcontinent has never been ‘one people’

Distributions of this ‘steppe pastoralist’ genetic ancestry broadly correlate with the distribution of Indo-European language speakers today, and the presumed areas where earlier Indo-European speaking groups lived. Since Sir William Jones’s Third Discourse in 1786, (<https://bit.ly/2mg8dF9>) every generation of

scholars has tried to address how the philological links between Sanskrit, Persian and Latin, i.e. the Indo-European language family, can be linked and understood with reference to ancient migrations, material culture and ancient literatures. Ours is an era when DNA evidence, which intrinsically tells one nothing about language, ethnicity or religion, provides important but difficult to correlate new data to these debates. Contrary to what can only be called motivated misreadings: the aDNA studies make clear that the genetic makeup of South Asian populations changed between 2000-1500 BCE.

What does the woman from Rakhigarhi teach us? The second paper presents the results of the first successful aDNA extraction from prehistoric South Asia. Individual 6113 was an elite woman buried between 2300 and 2800 BCE (estimated) in a cemetery on the outskirts of the Harappan town of Rakhigarhi, located near the present-day city of Hissar in Haryana. This is a scientific achievement, especially as efforts to extract archaeological DNA have hitherto been few in South Asia and several attempts resulted in DNA that was too degraded or was contaminated.

Why is the collegium of judges in the spotlight?

Why has the debate on its functioning, especially on the issue of transfers in the judiciary, been revived?

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

The story so far: The recent controversy over the transfer of the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Justice Vijaya Kamlesh Tahilramani, to the Meghalaya High Court has once again brought to the fore a long-standing debate on the functioning of the ‘collegium’ of judges that makes appointments and transfers in the higher judiciary. Justice Tahilramani has submitted her resignation after her request for reconsideration of the transfer was rejected by the collegium headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI), Ranjan Gogoi, and four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court. While sections of the Bar have questioned the transfer as well as the lack of transparency about the exact reason, the Supreme Court (SC) has issued an official statement that the collegium indeed had cogent reasons and that these could be revealed, if necessary.

How did the collegium system come into being? The collegium of judges is the Supreme Court’s invention. It does not figure in the Constitution, which says judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed by the President and speaks of a process of consultation. In effect, it is a system under which judges are appointed by an institution comprising judges. After some judges were superseded in the appointment of the Chief Justice of India in the 1970s, and attempts made subsequently to effect a mass transfer of High Court judges across the country, there was a perception that the independence of the judiciary was under threat. This resulted in a series of cases over the years. The ‘First Judges Case’ (1981) ruled that the “consultation” with the CJI in the matter of appointments must be full and effective. However, it rejected the idea that the CJI’s opinion, albeit carrying great weight, should have primacy. The Second Judges Case (1993) introduced the Collegium system, holding that “consultation” really meant “concurrence”. It added that it was not the CJI’s individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the Supreme Court. On a Presidential Reference for its opinion, the Supreme Court, in the Third Judges Case (1998) expanded the collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.

What is the procedure followed by the collegium?



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The President of India appoints the CJI and the other SC judges. As far as the CJI is concerned, the outgoing CJI recommends his successor. In practice, it has been strictly by seniority ever since the supersession controversy of the 1970s. The Union Law Minister forwards the recommendation to the Prime Minister who, in turn, advises the President. For other judges of the top court, the proposal is initiated by the CJI. The CJI consults the rest of the collegium members, as well as the senior-most judge of the court hailing from the High Court to which the recommended person belongs. The consultees must record their opinions in writing and it should form part of the file. The collegium sends the recommendation to the Law Minister, who forwards it to the Prime Minister to advise the President. The Chief Justice of High Courts is appointed as per the policy of having Chief Justices from outside the respective States. The collegium takes the call on the elevation. High Court judges are recommended by a collegium comprising the CJI and two senior-most judges. The proposal, however, is initiated by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned in consultation with two senior-most colleagues. The recommendation is sent to the Chief Minister, who advises the Governor to send the proposal to the Union Law Minister.

Does the collegium recommend transfers too? Yes, the collegium also recommends the transfer of Chief Justices and other judges. Article 222 of the Constitution provides for the transfer of a judge from one High Court to another. When a CJ is transferred, a replacement must also be simultaneously found for the High Court concerned. There can be an acting CJ in a High Court for

The DNA of this person from Rakhigarhi, it turns out, is a mixture with contributions coming from very ancient ancestry shared with Iranian populations and that from what the authors term Andamanese or South-East Asians in the deep past of her ancestry. Of all the ancient samples, contemporary to her that we can compare her to, she turns out to be genetically closest to another group who were buried in Khorasan (principally at the site of Shahr-i-Sokhta in Iran). These individuals – some of whose graves had objects that were previously known to have connections to the Indus Valley Civilisation – share a similar mixture of ancestry and are also outliers in the larger comparative database.

Much media coverage has stressed her ‘indigeneity’ and not the fact that her genetic admixture makes one rethink the social geographies which the data groups her with, which are significantly more westerly than the limits of present day India. The result makes sense when we remember that the Indus Valley Civilisation, famed for its celebrated technical virtuosity, wonderful ornaments and cosmopolitan urbanisms were not one “people” let alone presumably those of one genetic signature. Rakhigarhi is one Harappan settlement out of thousands, in one of several cultural domains known within the larger civilisation and we know that only the elite were buried in these cemeteries. This is only the first aDNA result from the Indus Valley Civilisation, and, as the authors of these studies note, we need hundreds of samples from the South Asian archaeological past to begin to understand the complexity of South Asian population genetic history. Even so, what we can assert from these results is that our ancestor from Rakhigarhi was so different from us that no one alive today has her particular suite of admixed DNA ancestry.

What does all this mean? What happened in Indian history?

It is key that we use genetics to answer questions it can answer; and not use its evidence for answers we might want for other questions. Population genetic history does open new lines of evidence into pasts, but these do not correlate easily or well with what we have long known in South Asia to be complicated, messy pasts where lines of difference and assertions of similarity were historically contested and braided time and again.

Most people today would readily accept information about their susceptibility to diabetes or cancer from their genetic data. But no matter what our political sympathies, we would hesitate to accept that genetic cleavages that happened a 100 generations ago define our actions, choices and identity today. The aDNA results reflect what we already knew in greater detail from archaeological research conducted over the last 50 years. A host of Chalcolithic (Copper-Bronze using) and Iron Age cultures prosper between 2000 and 1000 BCE in almost all regions of the subcontinent.

No single larger story of genetics, or of language families (Indo-European/Dravidian), nor of the movement of people hypothesised from either can explain the manifest geographic, technological and cultural complexities of this millennium.

We must remember genetic population history is only one line of evidence and often a very reluctant one. Linking genetics and linguistics is difficult at best, and joining either to archaeology additionally so.

Similarly, what possible pride can there be in claiming an indigenous unbroken past, when even the newest of evidence, in this case genetic, reaffirms what history and archaeology have consistently shown: that the South Asian subcontinent has never been “one people”?

Genetics can only offer slim and contestable claims about how this history moved, and the authors make a series of conjectures about differences in present day caste group genetics and their relevance for understanding Indian history.

These conjectures cannot however speak for our history, where ideologies of one-ness and high-ness have always been resisted and contested. It is indeed, these contestations of one-ness that truly define Indian history.

Mudit Trivedi is a PhD student in Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Chicago

What is the common criticism made against the collegium system?

Many have faulted the system, not only for its being seen as something unforeseen by the Constitution makers, but also for the way it functions. Opaqueness and a lack of transparency, and the scope for nepotism are cited often. Retired SC judge Justice Ruma Pal once said: “The mystique of the process, the small base from which the selections were made and the secrecy and confidentiality ensured that the process may on occasions, make wrong appointments and, worse still, lend itself to nepotism.”

The attempt made to replace it by a ‘National Judicial Appointments Commission’ was struck down by the court in 2015 on the ground that it posed a threat to the independence of the judiciary. Dissenting judge, Justice J. Chelameswar, termed it “inherently illegal”. Even the majority opinions admitted the need for transparency. In an effort to boost transparency, the collegium’s resolutions are now posted online, but reasons are not given. Some do not believe in full disclosure of reasons for transfers, as it may make lawyers in the destination court chary of the transferred judge. Embroilment in public controversies and having relatives practising in the same High Court could be common reasons for transfers. In respect of appointments, there has been an acknowledgement that the “zone of consideration” must be expanded to avoid criticism that many appointees hail from families of retired judges. The status of a proposed new memorandum of procedure, to infuse greater accountability, is also unclear.

On transfers of High Court judges, the opinion of the CJI ‘is determinative’; the consent of the judge concerned is not required

CAPSULE



Fighting cancer
Healthy cells in our body release nano-sized bubbles that transfer genetic material to other cells. According to new research on mice, these extracellular vesicles could become mini treatment transporters, carrying a combination of therapeutic drugs and genes..



Gaining weight
Many people struggle to keep their weight in check as they get older. Now new research has uncovered why that is so: the rate at which lipid in the fat cells is removed and stored decreases with age thus making it easier to gain weight, even if we don't eat more or exercise less than before.



Turning CO₂ into fuel
An electrocatalysis reactor built at Rice University recycles carbon dioxide to produce pure liquid fuel solutions using electricity. The scientists behind the invention hope it will become an efficient and profitable way to reuse the greenhouse gas and keep it out of the atmosphere.

Climate change can reduce banana yield in India, study finds

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Global warming in the last about 60 years had helped increase banana yield at annual rate of 0.024 tonnes per hectare translating to an average increase of 1.37 tonnes per hectare in 27 countries since the 1960s. But with continued warming, the yield gains could slow down or even reverse in some countries leading to a drop in yields – 0.59-0.19 tonnes per hectare – by 2050, a study published in *Nature Climate Change* finds.

India, which is the world's largest producer and consumer of banana, along with nine other countries such as Brazil will see a reduction in the yield, the University of Exeter study finds.

At the same time, certain other countries – Ecuador



India, which is the world's largest producer and consumer of banana, along with nine other countries such as Brazil will see a reduction in the yield. ■ K. K. MUSTAFAH

and Honduras, and many in Africa – will witness an overall increase in crop yields.

“India could experience a major reversal with predicted negative effects of future climate change compared to positive effects in the past,”

the authors write. But the decline in production due to climate change in the case of India may be mitigated by strong, technology-driven measures to increase the yield.

According to the Food and

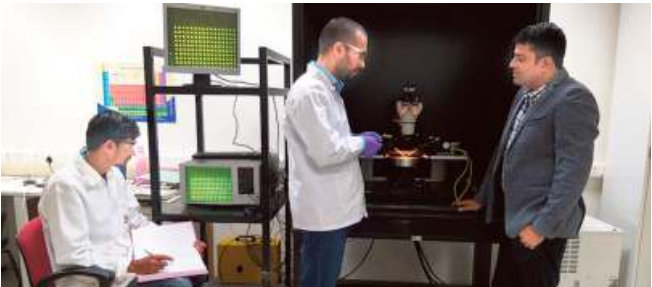
IISER Pune team fabricates a viable alternative to silicon diodes

The device shows high electrical conductivity and also high current rectification ratio

R. PRASAD

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Pune have fabricated a non-silicon, organic-inorganic hybrid diode that not only shows high electrical conductivity but also high current rectification ratio. The current rectification ratio obtained is comparable with commercial silicon diodes. A diode allows current to flow in only one direction. A diode is said to have a high current rectification ratio when the flow of current in one direction is manifold high compared with the current flow in the reverse direction.

In the case of silicon diodes, the current rectification ratio is in the order of 10³-10⁶, where 10⁶ denotes one million times. The



The diode displays high water repellence so will be moisture-resistant, says Nirmalya Ballav (right).

team led by Nirmalya Ballav from the Department of Chemistry at IISER Pune was able to achieve current rectification ratio close to one million times.

“This is the first time we have been able to achieve a very high current rectification ratio in the domain of organic-inorganic hybrid materials like coordina-

tion polymers,” says Anupam Prasoon from IISER Pune and first author of a paper published in the journal *Chemical Science*. “Earlier studies have been able to achieve rectification ratio of only 10².”

The non-silicon diode fabricated by the team was able to demonstrate that the high recti-

fication ratio remained unchanged even at an elevated temperature of about 180 degree C. “This demonstrates that our diode structure is stable even at high temperatures,” Prof. Ballav says. The diode displays high water repellence so will be moisture-resistant.

To fabricate the organic-inorganic hybrid diode, the researchers used a commercially available gold-coated silicon wafer as a substrate and functionalised it. The functionalised wafer was dipped in an inorganic solution and then in an organic solution. “We repeated this process for 10 cycles to get a coordination polymer,” says Prasoon.

Since the coordination polymer is less conducting and almost behaves like an insulating

material, the researchers doped it with a redox-active molecule. The top portion of the coordination polymer is doped while the bottom portion is not. The doped top layer becomes highly conductive. The doped and undoped portions together behave like a p-n junction diode.

The coordination polymers with a modular approach of inorganic and organic layers could make diodes or transistors not only cheaper but also add value in the emerging scenario of flexible electronics, says Prof. Ballav, who has filed a patent application.

“We hope our concept will be useful in the development of semiconducting coordination polymer-based thin film devices for real-world applications,” the authors write.

IIT Madras finds an eco-friendly way to degrade plastics

The strategy can degrade several varieties of plastic - Teflon, polyethylene, polypropylene

R. PRASAD



(Above) Abhijit Nag (seated) and Pradeep performing the degradation experiments. (Right) Glass beaker (top view) in which copper powder is stirred with glucose in water with a teflon-coated magnetic pellet causes polymer fragments to float on the surface.



impurities were being released due to mechanical action,” he says.

Teflon

So the team tested Teflon in different forms – pellets, tapes and plates. They repeated the experiment using a Teflon beaker and tried different metals too and still got the same result each time. The only difference was that the particles did not show bright red luminescence when copper, silver and iron were used instead of gold.

“We then got a clue that the PTFE polymer might be breaking down into molecules

through triboelectric degradation. An electric potential is produced at the interface of Teflon and water when the polymer is continuously stirred in water,” explains Prof. Pradeep.

Glucose added to water first leaches out ions from the metal surface. When the PTFE-coated magnetic pellet is continuously rotated, triboelectric charges get generated on the pellet. The PTFE gets negatively charged. The negative charge on the PTFE surface attracts the metal ions that have been leached out. The interaction between the metal ions and PTFE results in metal-polymer bonding, caus-

ing the carbon-carbon bonds to destabilise. This eventually results in PTFEs degrading into molecules.

No such degradation of PTFE was noticed in the absence of stirring, glucose or metal ions. The rate of degradation gets reduced at room temperature.

“The amount of triboelectric degradation depends on the amount of glucose dissolved in water. As the amount of glucose in water increases more metal ions get leached leading to more interaction between PTFE and the metal ions. As more metal ions bind to PTFE, there is enhanced PTFE degradation,” says Abhijit Nag from IIT Madras and the first author of the paper.

“Mass spectrometry signatures imply the presence of molecular fragments of PTFE polymer,” says Prof. Pradeep. “The fragments seen floating on the water surface might be due to aggregation of molecular fragments or due to fragmentation of the long polymer.”

“We have now tested it on polyethylene and polyethylene terephthalate (PET) and got similar results. For a given concentration of dissolved glucose, the reaction is slow as the generation of triboelectric charge is less compared with PTFE,” says Nag.

According to the paper, similar chemistry can possibly lead to micro and nanoplastics in food during cooking as many modern cookware are coated with Teflon.

“Triboelectric degradation of PTFE, polypropylene and other polymers might be occurring in nature in large water bodies such as oceans where metal ions are found in abundance and waves provide constant agitation,” Prof. Pradeep says. “This must be one of the ways by which microplastics get generated.”

Two asteroids flying by Earth pose no risk: NASA

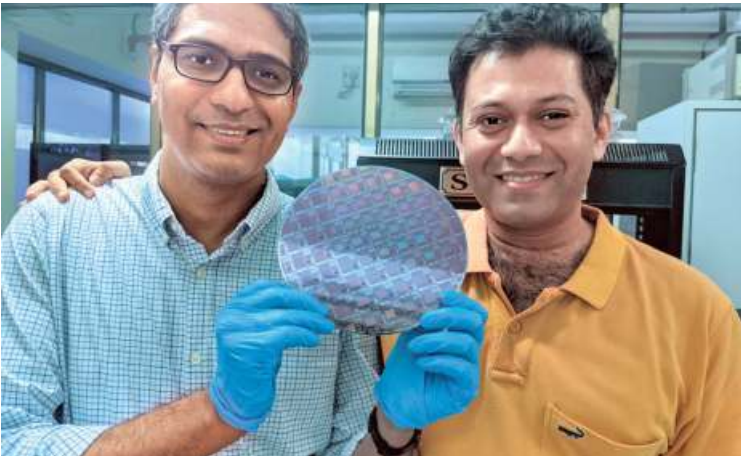
INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

NASA has said that the pair of asteroids flying by Earth this weekend could pose a threat to our planet.

“These asteroids have been well observed and their orbits are very well known,” said NASA's Planetary Defence Officer Lindley Johnson. “Both of these asteroids are passing at about 14 lunar distances from the Earth, or about 3.5 million miles away, but small asteroids pass by Earth this close all the time,” Johnson said.

Near-Earth asteroid 2010 CO₁, estimated to be 120 to 260 metres in size, safely passed Earth at 3.42 a.m. on Saturday. The second object, 2000 QW7 is estimated to be 290 to 650 metres in size will pass later at 11.54 p.m. on Saturday.

At the start of 2019, the number of discovered NEOs totaled more than 19,000, and it has since surpassed 20,000.



We demonstrated the technology on a 180 nm CMOS chip in the fabrication facility in Chandigarh to show the feasibility for manufacturing, says Udayan Ganguly (right).

Chip ‘fingerprint’ technology for secure transactions

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

The emergence of Internet of Things has brought in, rather urgently, a need for low-cost security technology. While passwords and other such forms of encryption are software-based, there is also a need for security at the hardware level. Every device, such as a chip, needs to be encrypted with a fingerprint-like identity. This is known as a physically unclonable function. Developing a technology to implement this is a highly competitive field, and IIT Bombay researchers have developed a device that can be used for this purpose. The research has been published in the journal *IEEE Electron Device Letters*.

Securing hardware

Secure transactions are ubiquitous today and demand security at various levels. For instance, credit card has a chip attached to it and the identity is downloaded with the card. To prevent the card from being cloned, the chip has to have an electronic fingerprint-like identity. Unlike an optical image of a fingerprint that can be lifted easily, this electronic fingerprint has several layers, thus making cloning hard. Such an identity is what the researchers have developed.

“Various technology start-ups around the world are addressing this challenge, for example, SiDense and eMemory, which have been acquired by larger companies in the last couple of years. This [what IIT Bombay has developed] is an indigenous capability in a cutting-edge technology with strong international interest,” Udayan Ganguly who is

in the Department of Electrical Engineering at IIT Bombay and is a part of the team that developed this technology says in an email to The Hindu.

Translating a new technology into a manufacturing line without disturbing its existing capabilities was the greatest challenge faced by the team. “We have achieved this by developing excellent working relationship and trust between IIT Bombay and Department of Space's Semi-Conductor Laboratory [near Chandigarh] to take calculated risks which are necessary to demonstrate new capabilities,” says Prof. Ganguly.

After developing the concept, the team demonstrated the technology on a 180 nm CMOS chip in the fabrication facility in Chandigarh to show the feasibility for manufacturing. This technology is currently being developed for Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

“Defence qualification is the first goal. Meeting stringent defence specifications will instill great confidence in our technology. Next, we will push for commercial applications such as e-commerce, credit cards to name a few,” says Prof. Ganguly.

Collaborative effort

The translation of the technology will require the participation of several bodies across the country – IIT Delhi will work on the circuits, Chennai-based Society for Electronic Transactions and Security will study the encryption, and Semi-Conductor Laboratory will manufacture the device.



Bacterial strain from IIT-Bombay soil removes pesticide

The bacterium uses carbaryl for its growth

ASWATHI PACHA

Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, is not just home to great science minds, it also harbours some unique microorganisms. Recently, researchers have identified a soil bacterial strain from the campus that helps in “complete remediation” of the carbaryl pesticide.

Carbaryl pesticide continues to be used in the agricultural sector in spite of experimental studies in laboratory animals suggesting it to be a probable carcinogen to humans. Carbaryl is also persistent in nature leading to pollution of both soil and water ecosystems.

The newly isolated bacterial strain utilises the pesticide as its source of carbon and nitrogen for its growth. The team was also able to identify the genes responsible and the metabolic pathway involved in the complete metabolism and bioremediation process.

The bacterial strain, whose species is yet to be identified, comes under the *Pseudomonas* genus and was able to grow well on medium supplemented with very high concentration of carbaryl.

The bacterial enzyme ‘carbaryl hydrolase’ acts on carbaryl and generates ‘1-naphthol’ and ‘methylamine’. While 1-naphthol is used as a carbon source, methylamine is used as the nitrogen source. Though many microbes like *Rhodococcus*, *Arthrobacter* have been previously reported to degrade carbaryl, the *Pseudomonas* strain recently reported in *Applied*

and *Environmental Microbiology* was found to be more efficient. It could completely degrade the pesticide in 12-13 hours. Researchers say that this is four to five times faster than other bacterial strains reported earlier.

A study of the genome showed that it has special genes responsible for carbaryl degradation. The bacterium might have acquired these genes from other related microbes that are capable of breaking down hazardous compounds. The team has recently published a review paper in the journal *Genes* explaining this process of movement of genetic material between organisms. This is called ‘horizontal gene transfer’ and is different from vertical gene transfer from parent to offspring.

Natural laboratory

“Nature acts as a laboratory on its own. Organisms in an ecosystem interact with each other and exchange genetic material for their benefit and survival,” explains Dr. Prashant S. Phale in a release. He is from the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering at IITB and is the corresponding author of the study.

“The bacteria are able to adapt themselves to recently introduced pesticides too. They do this by acquiring genes through horizontal gene transfer and also evolving some existing genes to perform new functions,” adds Dr. Rakesh Sharma, a collaborator and one of the co-authors from the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, New Delhi, India.

Argentina’s ‘shirtless ones’ rise up against hunger, IMF and austerity

As President Macri seeks re-election, the country is battling social distress, and an impossible public debt

BUENOS AIRES

 “This government does not represent us,” said Jacqueline Flores, one of the leaders of the Confederation of the Workers in the Popular Economy (CTEP). On a sunny September day, Ms. Flores was standing outside Argentina’s Congress building, in the midst of a protest against hunger. She was once a street vendor. As a young woman, Ms. Flores joined the movement of the ‘excluded workers’ or informal sector workers.

The government Ms. Flores referred to was that of President Mauricio Macri, who will face an election in October. Manuel Bertoldi, a leader of the Patria Grande Front, introduced a phrase to the conversation – ‘Macrisis’.

Mr. Macri’s policies have favoured

the narrowest sector of Argentina’s rich, and the international banks and financial institutions. As a consequence of his gifts to the wealthy, Mr. Macri’s government has found itself to be unable to honour its debts, with the currency in a state of free fall. He has even taken the country to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), an enormously unpopular decision given Argentina’s experience with the organisation in the first decade of the 21st century. The term ‘Macrisis’ captured the mood: there was dismay at the country’s return to the IMF, and this dismay was personalised around Mr. Macri, who had become a deeply despised figure.

Reports from the government and scholars validate the view of the ‘excluded workers’. A report from the National Institute of Statistics showed that about half the children in Argentina struggle below the poverty line, an increase by 11% since

last year. A study by the Catholic University suggested that nearly a third of Argentina’s population lives under the poverty line. Of Argentina’s 44 million people, a minimum of five million people cannot afford to buy the most basic necessities – according to a study by scholars at the University of Avellaneda. It is impossible to see these statistics and not be deeply moved. This is a country of great resources, and yet of increasing social distress.

The Peronists

In October 1945, thousands of Argentinians had gathered before the Casa Rosada, the President’s home in front of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, demanding the release of their leader Juan Perón from prison. They were called the *descamisados* (‘the shirtless ones’). Juan and Eva Perón’s base amongst the working-class and the urban poor went on to create a political seam that favours the ‘shirtless ones’ till this day. The ‘shirtless ones’ or the ‘excluded’ are a key constituency of the struggle in Argentina



against the IMF and the oligarchy.

From the *villa miserias* – the slums of misery – came the thousands of protesters in early September to demand the enactment of a suite of seven Bills that had originally been tabled in 2017. These Bills call upon the government to declare a

National Emergency against hunger. Various national food programmes would increase the food delivery in public schools and in the popular restaurants.

The money needed for these programmes, said José Seoane, the Buenos Aires coordinator of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, is a fragment of the interest payments that drain out Argentina each week.

Argentina sits on a \$101 billion debt with central bank reserves that are now around a mere \$10 billion. Since 2000, the country has already defaulted twice on its debt. It is almost certain that it will have to default once more. The \$56-billion loan from the IMF last year drove the country into a more perilous situation. There is no appetite for Mr. Macri’s very generous short-term bonds, and no sign that the IMF is ready to reschedule loan payments. Standard and Poor’s downgraded Argentina’s bonds to CCC-, deep into junk bond territory.

Mr. Macri is unlikely to win a re-

election in October. The presidency, opinion polls and the public mood indicate, is likely to be retaken by the Peronists – Alberto Fernández and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner – and their Frente de Todos (Front of Everybody) platform.

In late August, Mr. Fernández met with an IMF team and made it clear that the IMF’s loan and its conditions have not helped Argentina – inflation and public debt have grown, while the situation for businesses and families has continued to get worse.

In 2004, the IMF had admitted in a study of its earlier intervention in Argentina that the organisation “failed to highlight the growing vulnerabilities” in its “choice of policies” and that it “erred by supporting inadequate policies too long”. That report has perhaps been forgotten by the IMF, but not by the Peronists and the ‘excluded workers’.

“The Debt Is with the People, not the IMF,” read one banner at the September march. It was a clear summary of the situation.

No talking peace with a warring enemy

Trump’s move to call off dialogue with the Taliban has been welcomed by Afghan forces

KABUL

 U.S. President Donald Trump cancelled peace negotiations with the Taliban last Sunday after the insurgent group claimed responsibility for an attack in Kabul that claimed the life of a U.S. soldier.

In a tweet, Mr. Trump shared that he had planned to separately meet with Taliban leaders and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at Camp David. “[I]n order to build false leverage, they admitted to an attack in Kabul that killed one of our great great soldiers, and 11 other people. I immediately cancelled the meeting and called off peace negotiations...” he said. Mr. Trump was referring to an attack in Kabul that also claimed the lives of a Romanian soldier and 10 Afghan civilians.

The U.S. President’s decision brought to a halt a dialogue process led by U.S. Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad that had been taking place for 10 months with several rounds of meeting between the U.S. and the Taliban. The most recent of these seemed to have concluded in a deal that could have potentially seen an end to the U.S.’s 18-year-long conflict in the country.

The cancellation of talks was welcomed by many Afghans who had witnessed increasing violence and civilian casualties even during the duration of the process.

“I think the U.S. should have called off negotiations a long time ago, back when Khalilzad’s efforts did not change the Taliban’s position,” Samira Hamidi, Afghan activist and regional campaigner with Amnesty International told this writer. “Even after nine rounds of negotiations, the U.S. Special Envoy had



failed to address issues of cessation of hostilities and ceasefire with the Taliban. In fact the group not only used violence as leverage but also to force the U.S. to pressure the Afghan government to accept proposals such as cancellation of elections,” she reasoned, adding that the in-

creased Taliban attacks across the country and the resulting mass civilian casualties proved that the group was not serious about peace. “The U.S. also gave unnecessary legitimacy to the militant group, who believe they are close to a victory and [to] establishing an ‘Emirate state’ again. It is a worrying situation,” she said.

Mr. Trump followed his move to cancel talks with the militant group with another warning issued on the anniversary of the September 11 attacks, vowing to hit the Taliban insurgents “harder than they have ever been hit before”.

Taliban’s response

The group has responded with similar threats and several attacks since the peace talks were first called off. On Wednesday, hours before the U.S. observed the anniversary of 9/11, the Taliban fired a rocket at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. On the following day, a suicide car bomb killed four soldiers at a commando base in the Afghan capital.

Senior security officials who

spoke to this writer were concerned about an increase in violence, more so in the light of the presidential elections scheduled for later this month. “Yes, we do expect the level of violence to go up because the Taliban has threatened the [presidential] candidates, and [has] warned Afghans not to participate in the election,” one official said on the condition of anonymity.

However, the collapse of talks has not entirely ruined the prospects of peace. In fact, many Afghan analysts believe that this is but a phase in the negotiation process. “Despite the violence, which was expected from both parties to increase more pressure for bargaining, recent remarks by Mike Pompeo hint that the U.S. is still interested in a deal with the Taliban,” explained Omar Sadr, an Afghan analyst.

“This is also an opportunity for Taliban to sit down with the Afghan government and discuss a real peace process but only if it agrees to a conditional ceasefire. If the Taliban and the Afghan government sit for intra-

Afghan negotiations there are good chances for women’s participation as negotiators,” Mr. Hamidi added.


Meanwhile, Afghan security forces remain hopeful, yet cautious of the developing situation. “If they [Taliban militants] don’t agree to intra-Afghan talks then yes, we will hit them harder,” a security source said, echoing Mr. Trump.

He also indicated that the unceremonious pause in talks and Mr. Trump’s strong words had helped boost the morale of Afghan troops, who had been at the receiving end of the growing insurgent violence. “A week ago, everything was complicated for our security forces. While there was air support [from the foreign forces], our security forces needed moral support as well which wasn’t clear because of the Taliban negotiations with the U.S. even as they targeted the Afghans. But now there are no peace talks anymore and even [NATO’s] Resolute Support [Mission] announced that it will fight the Taliban. That’s a big morale booster for Afghan forces.”

Where non-white people are not welcome to rent homes

The housing market in this German city is loaded against foreigners, migrants and refugees

STUTTGART

 Srinivasa Prasad sounded both angry and sad as he talked about his experience of searching for an apartment in Stuttgart.

“A majority of renters were not interested in seeing me after they found out that I was not German. They even asked why I was not speaking their language,” said the Indian engineer, who recently moved from Hong Kong to Germany.

Mr. Prasad, an employee at a big German company, had only recently shifted to Stuttgart and wanted to settle down with his family. However, finding a proper apartment became a problem. Many landlords, and he contacted more than one hundred of them, did not want to

rent apartments to non-white foreigners.

A lot of them did not hesitate to show their blatant racism towards Mr. Prasad and his family. “I will never ever rent my house to someone like you,” one person wrote in a message. “We do not rent to people who do not speak our language,” another renter messaged Mr. Prasad.

A common occurrence

Racism in the German housing market is not a new phenomenon. Finding a place to live has always been much more difficult for foreigners, migrants and refugees than for white Germans. This also includes Germans whose parents or grandparents have a migrant background.

“When I talked with the renters on phone, everything appeared to be fine. They invited me to come and visit their apartments. But when I ar-

rived and they saw my black, curly hair, I felt immediately that their attitude had changed,” said Ömer Sarıkaya (name changed), a student from Stuttgart University.

Mr. Sarıkaya said most house-owners told him that they had found another tenant after they had met him. “In many cases, they were lying. I remember how I told a friend of mine to reach out to one renter after I received a negative reply from him. Surprisingly, the apartment [had become] free again,” he said.

In 2015, Germany’s Anti-discrimination Office had pointed out that discrimination, fuelled by racism, against minorities was regularly taking place in the housing market. In a report, the office had underlined the fact that prejudices were often shown in face-to-face talks. Additionally, those wearing obvious religious symbols, such as the Islamic *hijab*, were also at a disadvantage with it came to renting homes.

Mr. Sarıkaya, who has a Turkish-Muslim background, remembered

some of the questions he faced from landlords after they met him. “They asked me if my mother wore a scarf or how often she was praying daily. Some also asked me about my views on Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan or if I was affiliated with radical extremist groups,” he said.

Mr. Prasad finally found an apartment owned by another migrant. “I did not have the feeling that anyone cared about my religious background. They just heard me or saw me and came to the conclusion that they would not give me their apartment. I doubt that this would have happened if I was a white expatriate,” he said.

The engineer, who has a good income, also does not believe that money was a problem. “It’s just blatant racism, and I was very shocked when I witnessed that,” he said.

‘Believed to be unreliable’

Farhad Arefi (name changed), Mr. Prasad’s new landlord, has roots in Afghanistan. He grew up in Germany



and knows about the racism problem in the housing market. “Many white Germans believe that Asian, African or Arab migrants do not pay their rent because they do not have money or are unreliable. They have a lot of prejudices. For that reason, it is


very hard for migrants to find a flat,” he said. Mr. Arefi immediately accepted Mr. Prasad as his new tenant. He does not believe that the attitudes of German society will change anytime soon. “Racism is a big problem, and a lot of media outlets continue to portray migrants or refugees in a very bad way,” he said.

Some observers believed that political pressure on the government and legal action against the discriminating parties need to be stepped up to prevent racist behaviour in the housing market. For example, affected persons can be empowered to go to law as long as racism can be explicitly proved, like in the case of Mr. Prasad, who received such messages from his prospective landlords. The discrimination is also obvious if someone gets a rejection while the apartment is still free, as in the case of Mr. Sarıkaya. However, at the same time, many believed that house-owners have the right to decide whether or not to rent their apartment to a potential tenant.

From ‘mediation’ to ‘help’: Trump’s public utterances on J&K

Can the U.S. play a role in bringing India and Pakistan to the negotiating table?

LAHORE

 U.S. President Donald Trump earlier this month once again brought up the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) issue, offering ‘help’ to India and Pakistan. “I get along with both countries very well. I am willing to help them if they want, they know that is out there,” he told reporters.

This marked a departure from Mr. Trump’s earlier offer to ‘mediate’ between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, made in July when he met Prime Minister Imran Khan at the White House. India had not taken kindly to the statement.

Moeed Yusuf, associate vice-president of the Asia centre at the U.S. Institute of Peace, and author of *Brokering Peace in Nuclear Environments: U.S. Crisis Manage-*

ment in South Asia said he considered Mr. Trump’s statement “a mellowing down of that [earlier] position”, which he said was “not the U.S. policy position to begin with”. Mr. Yusuf also said that at the end of the day, Mr. Trump does genuinely want to be involved in these kind of very difficult high-profile international situations.

“That’s his style of diplomacy. But on this one, we have seen clearly that he has backtracked after meeting Indian Prime Minister at the G7 Summit so I don’t foresee any major changes here quite frankly, I don’t think he is going to be able to do much. He may say this every now and then but to pin hopes on a major change in U.S. policy at this point I think is unlikely,” Mr. Yusuf told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Yusuf added that where the U.S. and others will come into the picture is if there is a major India-Pa-



kistan crisis and there are war clouds over South Asia “because then the nuclear element comes in but unfortunately when it comes to dispute resolution, there is going to be talk but no real action from the international community.”

Speaking on the issue, Maria Sul-

tan, director-general of the Islamabad-based South Asian Strategic Stability Institute University, said that no crisis in Kashmir can remain limited in time or space and “it may become the Achilles heel for regional security”.

‘Highly exaggerated’

Analyst Zahid Hussain said that expectation that the U.S. could mediate between India and Pakistan “is highly exaggerated”. He pointed out that India has never accepted third-party involvement on the issue.

“However, the U.S. can play a role in bringing the two countries on negotiating table. Washington has played a significant role in easing tensions between them in the past. Mostly it is through backchannel diplomacy,” Mr. Hussain told *The Hindu*.

Foreign policy expert Fahd Humayun believes that since August 5, India has tried to allay international concerns on the possibility of a conflict, and underplay J&K’s geopolitical dimensions.

“But the creeping attentiveness of a string of U.S. lawmakers, including presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders, suggests a growing cross-sectional interest in an inflammatory dispute that American diplomats had, at least in the past decade, increasingly tried to hedge.”

He added that since the early 2000s, America’s pivot to the region had largely been balanced on an evolving strategic camaraderie with India. But there are at least three indications this year that America’s and the international community’s approach to South Asia may be undergoing a shift, he said.

“The first is the clear lessons drawn from [the events of] this February, when America’s hesitation to put itself in the middle of growing hostilities after the Pulwama attack in Kashmir led to the first aerial combat between Indian and Pakistani air forces since 1971.

“The second reason is that while the breadth of Indo-U.S. ties may still prevent the U.S. may from publicly acknowledging Pakistani outrage,

for many in Washington, the bloom is off the global rose as far as Prime Minister Modi’s approach to democracy and human rights are concerned. This is manifesting itself in multiple ways: concern expressed by the State Department vis-à-vis human rights in Kashmir, the refutation by a senior American diplomat of a suggestion that U.S. officials had been informed of the decision on Article 370 in advance, and the first-ever UN Human Rights report [earlier in the year] documenting human rights abuses by Indian security personnel.

“Third is the slow but vital recalibration of Pakistan’s image in Washington as a regional stabiliser whose support has helped the United States achieve significant progress in talking to the Taliban in Afghanistan. A successful visit by Prime Minister Imran Khan to Washington in July and a budding rapport with the White House has boosted the currency of Islamabad’s views, and its concerns, within strategic corridors,” Mr. Humayun told *The Hindu*.



Vijay Prashad is director of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research and chief editor, LeftWord Books



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Chance for India to set the record straight

Onus on the batsmen as Kohli and de Kock experiment with inexperienced bowlers

SA IN INDIA

RAKESH RAO
DHARAMSHALA

In home conditions, Indian cricket wears a different look. There is almost a touch of invincibility to it. The growth in confidence has also reflected in the improved results overseas, particularly in the shorter format.

But India's home record in T20s against South Africa surely needs improvement. India lost both decisive matches in the lone three-match series in 2015. In fact, India did avenge the loss in South Africa in February last year.

For skipper Virat Kohli, who never stops saying, "We want to win every match in every format, no matter where we play," it is an opportunity to set the record straight in the T20 series commencing here on Sunday.

Easier to handle

The members of this South African team, under wicket-keeper Quinton de Kock, appear easier to deal with, than their predecessors. But Kohli needs no reminding that shorter the format, brighter the chances of an upset.

For India, the trusted batting options are all there. Though back on familiar terrain, the top-order will have to bring out its best against an attack led by Kagiso Rabada.

After all, given the inexperience of the chosen bowlers, the onus to play match-winning roles lies heavily on the batsmen.

Meanwhile, the possibility of rain hampering the match cannot be ruled out. There



BLAST FROM THE PAST

■ The Men in Blue's T20 International debut came against South Africa, in Johannesburg 2006

■ India made a memorable start in the shortest format, winning a thriller by six wickets and with a delivery to spare

■ After Zaheer Khan (2-15) and Ajit Agarkar (2-10) had restricted the Proteas to 126, Virender Sehwag (34), Dinesh Mongia (38) and Man-of-the-Match Dinesh Karthik (31 not out) were the architects of the chase.

■ Virat Kohli opened the batting for the first time in his T20I career, against South Africa. Rohit Sharma, who walked in at No. 3 in the same game, won the MoM award for his 53 as India won the 2011 Durban game by 21 runs. Cut to the present, it's Rohit who opens the batting while his skipper bats at No. 3

■ Kohli is yet to score a half-century in a T20I against South Africa. He has 99 runs from five innings

■ India has not won a T20I game (bilateral series) against South Africa at home, losing both matches of the 2015 series (the third game in Kolkata was washed out)

■ Though India and South Africa began playing each other in T20Is since 2006, this is just the second visit by the Proteas for a T20I series in India

■ India has toured the Southern Cape four times, figuring in three one-off matches [series] in 2006 (won), 2011 (won) and 2012 (lost) and a three-match series in 2018 (won 2-1)



COMPILED BY R. NARAYANAN

2019 SCHEDULE

Sept. 15, Dharamshala
Sept. 22, Bengaluru

Sept. 18, Mohali
All matches start at 7 p.m.

was a heavy shower on Saturday afternoon that left the lush green outfield very soggy. Though more rain is forecast on Sunday, the groundsmen were confident of play.

For the South Africans, some of whom have played in India as part of the country's 'A' teams, the series offers opportunities to build some confidence.

Among the experienced, David Miller, de Kock and Rabada can make things difficult for the Indians. Pace-bowling all-rounders Dwaine Pretorius and Andile Phehlukwayo could provide some surprises.

Kohli indicated that India has around 30 matches leading to the next T20 World Cup. On offer were opportunities "to check out the guys are up and coming."

That also means the batting line-up could see a few regular names making way for new ones.

Weak spot

Lance Klusener, former all-rounder who is here as assistant batting coach, saw a chance for the South Afri-

cans against India's inexperienced bowling. "That (inexperience of Indian bowlers) is an area we are going to take advantage of."

The visiting team can also draw some confidence from the fact that the only time South Africa played the series-opener here, in 2015, it won by seven wickets. Interestingly, only Rohit, Dhawan, Kohli, Miller and Rabada are the surviving members from the 22 involved in that match.

Since then, how much more has changed will be known on Sunday.

The teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant, Krunal Pandya, Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja, Deepak Chahar, Rahul Chahar, Khaleel Ahmed and Navdeep Saini.

South Africa: Quinton de Kock (Capt.), Rassie van der Dussen, Temba Bavuma, Reeza Hendricks, George Linde, Andile Phehlukwayo, Dwaine Pretorius, Junior Dala, Bjorn Fortuin, Beuran Hendricks, Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada and Tabraiz Shamsi.

Match starts at 7 p.m.

Much ado about a photo!

RAKESH RAO
DHARAMSHALA

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's contribution to the Indian team and Virat Kohli's success as captain is well known.

Skipper Kohli has immense respect for Dhoni's inputs, and the value-addition they bring.

Saturday witnessed one such occasion when Kohli made his admiration for Dhoni known, loud and clear, during the pre-match press conference here.

Asked about his recent photo-tweet of Dhoni and him, taken during India's successful run-chase against Australia in the 2016 T20 World Cup match in Mohali, that sparked off speculation of the latter's retirement, Kohli said: "I was sitting at home and I, normally, put out a photograph and it became a news item.

"I think it was a lesson for me, that the way I think, the



Team man: Skipper Kohli has immense respect for Dhoni's inputs, and the value-addition they bring. ■FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

whole world doesn't think that way. There was nothing in farthest stretch of my imagination (to hint Dhoni's

retirement) while putting that pic out on social media. Like what did I write. I remember that game even

now..., every now and then. I never spoke about that game and so I thought I will put up a post. Now people interpreted it in a different manner in which there wasn't even an iota of truth.

On the same page

"Numerous times people have given up on sportsmen and they have proved people wrong. He (Dhoni) has done that many times in his career. So, one great thing about him is that he thinks of Indian cricket. And whatever we think, he is on the same page. The alignment is there. The kind of mindset he has, to groom youngsters and give them opportunities.

"When you decide to stop playing is an absolutely individual thing, and no one else should have an opinion on it. That's what I think. As long as he is available and continues to play, he is going to be very, very valuable."

It's about finding right balance: Kohli

RAKESH RAO
DHARAMSHALA

With an eye on the 2020 T20 World Cup in Australia, it is experiment time for the Indian selectors and the team's think-tank.

Captain Virat Kohli is excited about the prospects. Talking to the media ahead of India's first T20 match against South Africa in the three-match series here on Saturday, Kohli said, "Whenever there is a world tournament coming up, it is like a milestone and you start preparing from backwards.

Time to experiment

"These are opportunities where we can try various combinations with new people around – check their ability, character and composure to perform at the international level.

"So I think it's about finding the best balance that we can as a side and not necessarily stick to one combination. If all teams across the world are batting till No. 9, 10 why can't we?"

David Miller, the most experienced player in the



Experience counts: Miller, seen with coach Klusener, said he was willing to lend whatever support captain Quinton de Kock requires. ■AKHILESH KUMAR

Bilateral T20I record			
	Matches	India	South Africa
Overall	8	4	4
In India	2	0	2
In South Africa	6	4	2

South African squad looked at the brighter side of the young team.

"We've got a lot of energy in the squad. There are actually a lot of guys who have played a lot of cricket, in the A-side and domestically.

"We've come here to win and we're looking forward to

making our mark."

Asked about Quinton's de Kock's captaincy, Miller said, "He's been around for many years, and he's got an incredible cricketing brain. It's really nice to be alongside him and supporting him in whatever role he wants me to do.

England in driving seat

THE ASHES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

England seized control on the third day of the fifth Ashes Test on Saturday, building a likely match-winning lead of 382.

With two days of play to come and the weather in London set fair, the home side, on 313 for eight in its second innings, appears certain to pull level at 2-2 barring a miracle.

Nathan Lyon slowed England's progress in the morning session, nailing Rory Burns and captain Joe Root but those were rare early bright spots for the visitors.

SCOREBOARD

England — 1st innings: 294.

Australia — 1st innings: 225.

England — 2nd innings: Rory Burns c Paine b Lyon 20, Joe Denly c Smith b Siddle 94, Joe Root c Smith b Lyon 21, Ben Stokes b Lyon 67, Jonny Bairstow c Smith b Marsh 14, Jos Buttler c Labuschagne b Siddle 47, Sam Curran c Paine b Cummins 17, Chris Woakes c Smith b Marsh 6, Jofra Archer (not out)



Joe Denly... in fine nick. ■AFP

itors. Opener Joe Denly and Ben Stokesput on 127 for the third wicket as a tiring Australian attack ran out of steam.

3; Jack Leach (not out) 5; Extras (nb-1, b-7, lb-11): 19; Total (eight wkts. in 91 overs): 313.

Fall of wickets: 1-54, 2-87, 3-214, 4-222, 5-249, 6-279, 7-305, 8-305.

Australia bowling: Cummins 19-4-55-1, Hazlewood 19-5-57-0, Lyon 22-4-65-3, Siddle 13-4-52-2, Marsh 11-1-40-2, Labuschagne 7-1-26-0

India is the continental champ

Atharva derails Bangladesh's chase of a low total

U-19 ASIA CUP

AGENCIES
COLOMBO

Left-arm spinner Atharva Ankolekar returned with a five-wicket haul to help India clinch the U-19 Asia Cup with a thrilling five-run win over Bangladesh in a low-scoring final here on Saturday.

Defending 106, India dismissed Bangladesh for 101 in 33 overs, courtesy 18-year-old Ankolekar, who emerged the star with figures of five for 28 from eight overs.

While Ankolekar spun a web to derail Bangladesh's chase, he was supported well by pacer Akash Singh, who accounted for three wickets. Vidyadhar Patil and Sushant Mishra also chipped in with a wicket each.

Bad start

Bangladesh started badly, losing both openers in the first two overs. Skipper Akbar Ali (23) and Mritunjay Chowdhury (21) kept the team in the hunt and after their fall, Tanzim Hasan Sakib (12) and Rakibul Hasan (11) raised hopes of a Bangla-

desh win before India fought back with Ankolekar reducing the team to 78 for seven.

Ankolekar wrapped up the Bangladesh innings by dismissing the last two batsmen in the 33rd over as the Tigers fell five runs short of the target.

Earlier, skipper Dhruv Jurel (33) and lower-order batsman Karan Lal (37) came up with useful contributions to help India cross the 100-run mark.

India's decision to bat first seemed to backfire as left-arm pacer Mritunjay Chowdhury (three for 18) and off-spinner Shamim Hossain (three for eight) wreaked havoc. Karan was the last batsman to be dismissed as the team managed 106 in 32.4 overs. However, India had the last laugh as the bowlers got going.

The scores:

India Under-19: Suved Parkar run out 4, Arjun Azad c Akbar b Tanzim Hasan 0, Tilak Varma c Akbar b Mritunjay 2, Dhruv Jurel c Mritunjay b Shamim 33, Shashwat Rawat lbw b Shamim 19, Varun Lavande c Mritunjay b Shamim 0, Atharva Ankolekar run out 2, Karan Lal c Mahmu-

dul b Mritunjay 37, Sushant Mishra c Akbar b Alam 3, Vidyadhar Patil c Akbar b Mritunjay 0, Akash Singh (not out) 2; Extras (w-4): 4; Total (in 32.4 overs): 106.

Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-6, 3-8, 4-53, 5-53, 6-61, 7-62, 8-82, 9-84.

Bangladesh Under-19 bowling: Tanzim 7-0-22-1, Mritunjay 7-4-0-18-3, Alam 4-5-0-26-1, Rakibul 7-0-31-0, Shamim 6-2-8-3, Towhid 0-1-0-1-0.

Bangladesh Under-19: Tanzid Hasan lbw b Akash 0, Parvez Hossain Emon c Lavande b Patil 5, Mahmudul Hasan Joy c Jurel b Akash 1, Towhid Hridoy b Akash 0, Shahadat Hossain c Jurel b Ankolekar 3, Akbar Ali c & b Ankolekar 23, Shamim Hossain c Lavande b Ankolekar 7, Mritunjay Chowdhury c Tilak b Mishra 21, Tanzim Hasan Sakib lbw b Ankolekar 12, Rakibul Hasan (not out) 11, Shahin Alam b Ankolekar 0; Extras (lb-6, w-12): 18; Total (in 33 overs): 101.

Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-13, 3-13, 4-16, 5-40, 6-51, 7-78, 8-78, 9-101.

India Under-19 bowling: Akash 5-0-12-3, Patil 8-0-25-1, Ankolekar 8-2-28-5, Mishra 9-2-27-1, Karan Lal 3-1-3-0.

Toss: India Under-19.

India Under-19 won by five runs to clinch the title.



Bright stars: The India u-19 team that lifted the Asia Cup. ■COURTESY BCCI/TWITTER

Making mother and country proud

Couldn't have asked for anything better, says Vaidehi

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

Vaidehi Ankolekar, a BEST (The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport) conductor here, was busy with her duties in a municipal bus on Saturday morning; but was also constantly checking her phone for updates on the Under-19 Asia Cup final in Colombo.

The moment India was bowled out for 106, she sought permission from her depot seniors and rushed home.

A mother of two teenaged cricketers – the elder of whom, left-arm spinner Atharva, was donning India colts' blues in Colombo – Vaidehi wasn't sure whether her son would spin a web around the Bangladesh batsmen.

Delighted

"Once the pacers earned four quick wickets, I was



Atharva Ankolekar. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

hoping that Atharva will see the team through. Just couldn't have asked for anything better than him wrapping up the match with two quick wickets," Vaidehi told *The Hindu*, while taking a break from her primary school students' tuition at her home.

The lanky Atharva may have emerged as the toast of the nation with his dream

run in the Asia Cup, culminating in a match-winning performance in the final. But he has had to struggle ever since starting to ply his trade as a kid.

When he was nine, his father Vinod – also a BEST conductor who hoped his unfulfilled desire to be a cricketer would be accomplished by his sons – died in 2010. It forced his mother to double up as the breadwinner besides raising Atharva and his younger brother Parth, who is now in Mumbai's under-14 probables.

Vaidehi says while she juggled with the dual responsibility, Atharva matured as an individual fast. "I was struggling to keep the house running, so couldn't give as much attention to the kids as I wished, but Atharva looked after himself and young Parth," she says. "His maturity comes to the fore on and off the field."

Hari Krishna moves up



P. Hari Krishna. ■FILE PHOTO

CHESS WC

SPORTS BUREAU
KHANTY MANSIYSK (RUSSIA)

P. Hari Krishna and Vidit Gujrathi followed different routes to the third round of World Cup chess tournament here on Sunday.

On a day when B. Adhiban drew again and Nihal Sarin suffered his first loss to go into Sunday's tie-break games, Aravindh Chithambaram's campaign ended following a draw in a must-win game.

Hari became the first Indian to advance to the third round after drawing in 60 moves against Russia's Vladimir Fedoseev in Game Two of the second round. Since Hari won their first game on Friday, he was declared winner by 1.5-0.5.

Gujrathi worked his way to a 62-move victory over Russia's Alexandr Rakhmonov. Friday's game had been drawn. Gujrathi plays Wesley So in the third round.

Adhiban drew again with formidable Chinese Yu Yangyi to go into the tie-break games.

After posting three successive wins in the premier competition, Sarin suffered his first loss owing to mistakes committed under severe time-pressure.

The results (involving Indians): Round two, game two: Vladimir Fedoseev (Rus, 0.5) drew with P. Hari Krishna (1.5); Aleksandr Rakhmanov (Rus, 0.5) lost to Vidit Gujrathi (1.5); Yu Yangyi (Chn, 1) drew with B. Adhiban (1); Eltaj Safarli (Aze, 1) bt Nihal Sarin (1); Evgeny Tomashevsky (Rus, 1.5) drew with Aravindh Chithambaram (0.5).

(Tie-break games on Sunday will decide the matches locked 1-1).

TV PICKS

India vs South Africa: First T20I, Star Sports 1, 2 and Select 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
The Ashes: Fifth Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
KLM Open golf: DSport, 4.30 p.m.
World wrestling championship: Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 3 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: Star Sports Select 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m. onwards.

IN BRIEF



Sourabh seals spot in Vietnam Open final

HO CHI MINH CITY
Sourabh Verma outwitted Japan's Minoru Koga 22-10, 21-15 to progress to the final of the \$75,000 Vietnam Open Super 100 badminton tournament here on Saturday. Second seed Sourabh, who had won the Hyderabad Open last month, will take on China's Sun Fei Xiang. Sourabh had beaten Koga en route to his title win at the Slovenian International earlier this year. **PTI**

China defeats India

CHENNAI:
China outplayed India 25-16, 25-15, 25-21 in the Asian senior men's volleyball championship in Tehran, Iran, on Saturday. India will play Oman on Sunday.

Nagal in final

SPORTS BUREAU
BANJA LUKA (BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA)

Sumit Nagal got past fifth seed Filip Horansky of Slovakia 7-6(1), 6-2 in the semifinals of the €46,600 Challenger tennis tournament here on Saturday. In the final, the fifth-seeded Nagal will face seventh seed Tallon Griekspoor of the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, fourth seed Yasutaka Uchiyama of Japan stunned top seed Prajnesh Gunneswaran 7-6(7), 6-4 in the semifinals of the \$81,240 Challenger in Shanghai.

The results:
\$81,240 Challenger, Shanghai: Semifinals: Yasutaka Uchiyama (Jpn) bt Prajnesh Gunneswaran 7-6(7), 6-4.
\$81,240 Challenger, Istanbul: Doubles (semifinals): Andrey Golubev & Aleksandr Nedovyesov (Kaz) bt Hugo Grenier (Fra) & Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-4, 6-2.
€46,600 Challenger, Banja Luka: Semifinals: Sumit Nagal bt Filip Horansky (Svk) 7-6(1), 6-2.

\$15,000 ITF women, Tabarka, Tunisia: Doubles (quarterfinals): Natalia Siedliska (Ger) & Anna Ureke (Rus) bt Alice Viganlies (Ita) & Humera Shaik 6-2, 6-0; Nadia Echeverria Alam (Ven) & Anna Popescu (GBR) bt Likhitha Kalava & Bhuvana Kalva 6-0, 6-1.

Dhruv and Akanksha bag titles

SPORTS BUREAU
AHMEDABAD

Dhruv Tangri and Akanksha Nitture won the boys and girls under-18 titles in the National series junior tennis tournament, organised by the Altevol-Waske tennis academy, on Saturday.

Dhruv beat Aman Dahiya 6-3, 6-3, while Akanksha outplayed Renee Singh 6-3, 6-0.

The results (finals):
Boys: Under-18: Dhruv Tangri bt Aman Dahiya 6-3, 6-3.
Doubles: Mohit Bondre & Bhrguen Bondre bt Vansh Bhagatani & Aman Patel 6-3, 5-7, [10-8].

Under-16: Heerak Vora bt Deep Munim 6-2, 6-0.
Doubles: Anup Mahadev Bangargi & Sandesh Kurate bt Deep & Ayushmaan Arjeria 2-3 (retired).

Girls: Under-18: Akanksha Nitture bt Renee Singh 6-3, 6-0.
Doubles: Reshma Maruri & Suhitha Maruti bt Akanksha & Vanshika Choudhary 6-3, 3-6, [10-7].

Under-16: Vaishnavi Adkar bt Reshma Maruri 0-6, 6-3, 6-2.
Doubles: Amishi Shukla & Mekhala Manna bt Deepshika Sriram & Renee Singh 4-6, 6-2, [10-7].

Unrelenting rain drives players to despair

Arunachal Pradesh Football Association secretary says this was not expected

WOMEN'S NATIONAL

MANASI PATHAK
CHENNAI

The Senior Women's National Football Championship got off to a dreadful start on September 10 as heavy rainfall damaged the grounds in Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh.

Games were played on waterlogged and muddy grounds, contributing to injuries and leaving the players in despair. The rain came as a dampener, especially as people were warming up to the tournament.

Arunachal Pradesh Football Association secretary Ajay Kipa said the rainfall was unexpected. "Generally, it doesn't rain during September in Arunachal Pradesh. We had been working on getting the ground ready for three months. Till September 8, the sun was out. It started raining suddenly from September 8 evening and hasn't stopped."

Kipa said the grounds have natural grass. "If three



Pathetic sight: The rain has caused havoc and many players have been injured after playing in water-logged grounds.

•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

matches are played consecutively in continuous rainfall, how can we fix that?"

Matches shifted

The Local Organising Committee have shifted all the matches to three alternate grounds. The Championship would now be played at the Indira Gandhi Golden High School, Kiyit Secondary School, and Daying Ering Football Stadium, Nari.

Peerless stays on top

Holds Calcutta Customs to a 2-2 draw

CFL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Peerless SC continued to lead the standings of the Calcutta Football League premier division 'A' after managing to hold Calcutta Customs FC to a 2-2 draw in its seventh outing on Saturday. Nigerian forward Eze Stanley Ifeanyi struck in the 27th minute to give Calcutta Customs an early lead.

Peerless equalised off its Liberian striker Ansumana Kromah in the 67th minute but Customs secured the lead once again getting Stanley to score his second in the 69th minute.

Equaliser

With a defeat looking imminent for Peerless, Kromah fetched the equaliser in the

90th minute off a penalty.

The draw helped Peerless net 14 points from seven matches and keep itself at the top, ahead of Bhowanipur Club, East Bengal, Mohammedan Sporting FC and George Telegraph FC, which were in the second spot with 13 points each after playing seven matches.

Mohammedan Sporting, which beat BSS Sporting by a solitary goal, had played a match more than the others in the group.

Defending champion Mohun Bagan came next with 11 points from seven matches. With four more rounds to go, the contest for the local supremacy is seeing an interesting development with some of the smaller teams challenging the might of the city's big two – Mohun Bagan and East Bengal.

Tudu scores winner

SUBROTO CUP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

11 Gorkha Rifles Regimental Centre, Army Boys defeated Tripura Sports School, Badharghat, Tripura 1-0 in a closely contested quarterfinal of the Subroto Cup boys under-17 international football tournament here on Saturday. Birsha Tudu scored the match-winner.

The results (quarterfinals):

11 Gorkha Rifles Regimental Centre, Army Boys 1 (Birsha

Tudu) bt Tripura Sports School, Badharghat, Tripura 0.

Bangladesh Kriya Shiksha Protishthan 2 (Rumon, Mujibor) bt Esteqlal School, Afghanistan 1 (Qais).

BSL HS, Sector II D, Bokaro Steel City 1 (Laldunsanga) bt Govt. Pukpui HS, Pukpui (Lunglei), Mizoram 1 (Malsawmzuala). Penalty Shootout: 4 [Samuel, David, Laishram, Laldunsanga] 2 [Lalpektluanga, Lalawmpuia].

Hopewell Elias HSS, Shilong 1 (Ioanis Suchen) bt Bampather Bengenabari HSS, Charideo, Assam 0.

Advani enters final

Races past Mike Russell in the last four

WORLD BILLIARDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANDALAY (MYANMAR)

India's top cueist Pankaj Advani defeated England's Mike Russell 5-2 to enter the final of the IBSF World billiards championship here on Saturday.

In a clash of the titans, the defending champion Indian prevailed over the multiple time World champion Briton in the semifinal match. Russell had lost at the same stage last year to settle for a bronze.

Advani, who is vying for his 22nd World title, will face local player Nay Thway Oo in the summit clash in a repeat of last year's tournament.

In Saturday's semifinal against Russell, Advani scored three back-to-back centuries but managed to convert only two of those frames as the Briton took advantage of the Indian's error on 142 and made a 150.

The match was evenly poised at two frames a piece

Oo downs Kothari

In the other semifinal match, Thway Oo overcame India's Sourav Kothari 5-3.

After taking a 3-1 lead, Kothari made a spirited comeback to level the match 3-3.

However, the Myanmar star had other plans.

He clinched the final two frames by firing in an unfinished 150 break followed by a 130 break to seal his spot in the final.

The results:

Pankaj Advani bt Mike Russell 5-2 [150(114)-117(59), 142 (142)-150(150), 152(118)-122 (122), 45-151(74), 152(63)-142 (85), 151(123)-96(66), 151-61].

Nay Thway Oo bt Sourav Kothari 5-3 [151(65)-125, 151 (93)-95(93), 21-152(152), 150 (122)-77(68), 79(72)-151(83), 110(103)-150, 150(150)-0, 152 (130)-0].

Saurabh Chaudhary on a roll

Anjum Moudgil asserts her class, beats Kajal Saini

SHOOTING

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Giving one's best in every competition is often viewed as a cliché in the world of sports, but for the 17-year-old Saurabh Chaudhary, it is an honest routine.

Otherwise, it is hard to explain the manner in which he keeps beating his own World record, in air pistol as he did during the seventh National shooting selection trials at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad on Saturday.

Qualifying with an impressive 587, six points better than the next best, Saurabh shot 246.8 in the final, to beat his World record by 0.5 point. He had dominated the earlier trials, even though the qualification performance did not measure

up to his high standard.

Of course, his world record shot in the Munich World Cup would stand, as the International Federation (ISSF) considers only scores shot in the World Cups, World Championships and the Continental events for ratification.

When everyone would be cautiously happy to go down by a gear on the domestic leg, after a hectic international season, Saurabh does not believe in holding his fire.

Phenomenal season

The Asian Games, Youth Olympics and World Junior champion, Saurabh has had a phenomenal season, winning two individual gold and a bronze, apart from four mixed gold medals with Manu Bhaker in the World Cups.

"It made things difficult for us because we had planned to play touches. We had to change our tactics of playing from the flanks for scoring."

The results (day five): Tamil Nadu 2 (Pandiselvi 54, 59) bt Uttar Pradesh 0; Chandigarh 0 lost to Odisha 4 (Runi Nayak 62, 66, Subhadra Sahu 14, 74); Maharashtra 1 bt Himachal Pradesh 0 (Karen Pais 6); Chhattisgarh 1 lost to Goa 1 (K. Purushottam Shirvoikar 88).

Tactics changed

The wet conditions also forced teams to change their tactics. "We had to play in a water-filled ground. The ball wasn't moving well," said Tamil Nadu head coach R. Nivedha.

He may have enough scores to retain his place in the national team and be a part of the Olympic squad for Tokyo 2020, but Saurabh does not rely on any calculation. He just points and shoots his best, every time he picks up the pistol.

In the absence of Saurabh, who was eligible but opted out, Arjun Singh Cheema and Monu Kumar topped the junior and youth events with 241.4 and 241.3 respectively.

In women's 50-metre rifle 3-position event, Anjum Moudgil asserted her class by shooting 456.0 and beating Kajal Saini by 4.3 points. Anjum had shot 1170 in qualification, five more than Sunidhi Chauhan, who is trying to get back into the national squad after being relegated to the MQS section for the Rio World Cup.

Udhayveer Sidhu topped

Hazare Trophy: dates and venues

SPORTS BUREAU
BENGALURU

Bengaluru, Vadodara, Jaipur and Dehradun will host the Vijay Hazare Trophy 50-over cricket tournament which commences on Sept. 24.

The knockout rounds will also be held in Bengaluru at the same venues.

The quarterfinals begin on October 20 and the final will be held at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on October 25.

The schedule: Elite Group A: Bengaluru (Sept. 24 to Oct. 13): Goa, Maharashtra, Baroda,

Mumbai, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Vidarbha, Karnataka, and Railways.

Elite Group B: Vadodara (Sept. 24 to Oct. 13): Delhi, Vidarbha, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Baroda, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab.

Elite Group C: Jaipur (Sept. 24 to Oct. 16): Gujarat, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Railways, Bihar, and Services.

Plate: Dehradun (Sept. 24 to Oct. 14/16): Assam, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Puducherry, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Mizoram, and Nagaland (Chandigarh).

Umpire 'Raman Sir' no more

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Many umpires paid tributes on social media to G.K. Raman, who passed away in Chennai on Saturday. He was 89.

Born in Chennai, the Mumbai-based First Class

umpire, popularly known as "Raman Sir", officiated in 22 Ranji Trophy matches between 1967-68 and 1984-85 seasons.

He was employed with Central Railway for around four decades.

Pradeep clinches title

SPORTS BUREAU
RAIPUR

Pradeep Pant outplayed Sachin Patil 6-0, 6-1 to clinch the men's over-35 final in the ITF grade-4 seniors tennis tournament at the VIP's Club on Saturday.

The other two finals of the day were equally one sided, as Nitten Kirtane and Nagaraj Revanasiddaiah bagged the over-45 and over-55 titles with ease.

It was a double crown for all three, as Pradeep, Kirtane and Nagaraj had also won the doubles titles earlier with Avinash Kunwar, Vijay Kumar and Chandra Bhusan respectively.

The results (finals):

Over-35: Pradeep Pant bt Sachin Patil 6-0, 6-1.

Over-45: Nitten Kirtane bt Nelson Jatin Kumar 6-0, 6-1.

Over-55: Nagaraj Revanasiddaiah bt Dilip Singh Nongmaithem 6-0, 6-0.

USA beats Poland to finish seventh

BASKETBALL WC

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
BEIJING

Outgoing champion, the USA won its final match on Saturday at the Basketball World Cup – but it was still its worst finishing place in the tournament's history.

Team USA defeated Poland 87-74 in a low-key "classification" game to finish seventh overall, its lowest position since the competition began in 1950. Donovan Mitchell of the Utah Jazz had a double-double of 16 points and 10 assists.

USA has at least qualified to defend its Olympic title in Tokyo next summer.

Spain's Marc Gasol is one victory away from a rare feat – winning the NBA crown and a Basketball World Cup in the same year. Only Lamar Odom, a double winner in 2010 with USA and LA Lakers, has ever managed that, according to FIBA.

Now Gasol, who played a key role in the Toronto Raptors' run to the NBA title, is on the verge of joining him in the history books.

The 34-year-old proved his enduring quality by saving Spain in Friday's double overtime victory over Australia to set up a final against Argentina. Spain won 95-88.

He had 33 points, six rebounds and four assists after stepping up when his country needed him most.

The results: USA 87 (Mitchell 16, Joe Harris 14, Derrick White 12) bt Poland 74 (Mateusz Ponitka 18, Adam Waczynski 17, A.J. Slaughter 15).

Lakshya wins in Belgium



Lakshya Sen.
*FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LEUVEN (BELGIUM)
Lakshya Sen stunned second seed Victor Svendsen of Denmark 21-14, 21-15 in 34 minutes to clinch the men's singles title at the Belgian International Challenge badminton here on Saturday.
The 18-year-old had earlier beaten Denmark's Kim Bruun 21-18, 21-11 in a 48-minute semifinal clash on Friday night.

Zadran all the way

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAKA
Najibullah Zadran hit an unbeaten 69 as Afghanistan beat Zimbabwe by 28 runs in the first match of the tri-nation T20I tournament on Saturday.
Zadran smashed 69 off 30 balls with five fours and six sixes, guiding Afghanistan to 197 for five. Zadran and Nabi hammered sixes off seven consecutive balls between the 17th and 18th over to give Zimbabwe an imposing total to chase.
The scores: Afghanistan 197 for five in 20 overs (Najibullah Zadran 69 n.o., Rahmanullah Gurbaz 43, Mohammad Nabi 38, Williams two for 16, Chatara two for 53) bt Zimbabwe 169 for seven in 20 overs (Regis Chakabva 42 n.o., Brendan Taylor 27, Ryan Burl 25, Rashid Khan two for 29, Fareed Ahmad two for 35). **MoM:** Zadran.

Norwich ambushes Man City

Liverpool powers to another win; Abraham sensational for Chelsea

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON
Manchester City succumbed to a first Premier League defeat since January in stunning fashion to newly-promoted Norwich 3-2 on Saturday, as Liverpool opened up a five-point lead at the top of the table by beating Newcastle 3-1.
Tottenham and Chelsea bounced back to form with comprehensive wins over Crystal Palace and Wolves respectively, while Manchester United held out for a much-needed three points with a 1-0 victory over Leicester.

Tammy Abraham's sensational form continued as the English forward scored a hat-trick as Chelsea romped to a 5-2 win at Wolves.
Spurs was 4-0 up by half-time against Crystal Palace to record just its second win of the season as Son Heung-min scored twice, while Erik Lamela and an own goal from Patrick van Aanholt rounded off the scoring on a miserable day for the Eagles.

At San Sebastian, Real Sociedad ended La Liga leader Atletico Madrid's 100 % start to season with a deserved 2-0 win on Saturday.
Former Real Madrid player Martin Odegaard put the Basque side ahead with a deflected shot in the 58th minute before debutant Nacho Monreal doubled Sociedad's advantage three minutes later.

RB Leipzig came from a goal down to snatch a 1-1 draw against champion Bayern Munich on Saturday to remain top of the Bundesliga, a point ahead of second-placed Borussia Dortmund, which crushed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0 earlier.
The results: Premier League:



One for the ages: Norwich City players are an ecstatic lot after engineering a remarkable win over Manchester City. *GETTY IMAGES

Liverpool 3 (Mane 28, 40, Salah 72) bt Newcastle 1 (Willems 7); Brighton 1 (Maupay 51) drew with Burnley 1 (Hendrick 90+1); Manchester United 1 (Rashford 8-pen) bt Leicester 0.
Sheffield United 0 lost to Southampton 1 (Djenepo 66); Tottenham 4 (Son 10, 23, van Aanholt 21-og, Lamela 42) bt Crystal Palace 0; Wolves 2 (Abraham 69-og, Cutrone 85) lost to Chelsea 5 (Tomori 31, Abraham 34, 41, 55, Mount 90+6); Norwich 3 (McLean 18, Cantwell 28, Pukki 50) bt Man-

chester City 2 (Aguero 45, Rodri 88).
La Liga: Real Madrid 3 (Benzema 25, 31, Casemiro 40) bt Levante 2 (Mayoral 49, Melero 75); Leganes 0 lost to Villarreal 3 (G. Moreno 26, 90+3, J. Silva 39-og); Real Sociedad 2 (Odegaard 58, Monreal 61) bt Atletico Madrid 0.
Bundestliga: Borussia Dortmund 4 (Alcacer 28, Reus 50, 90 Guerreiro 83) bt Bayer Leverkusen 0, Mainz 2 (Quaison 40, St Juste 88) bt Hertha Berlin 1 (Grujic 83); Augsburg 2

(Richter 36, Niederlechner 43) bt Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Paciencia 73); Cologne 0 lost to Borussia Monchengladbach 1 (Plea 14); Union Berlin 1 (Andersson 14-pen) lost to Werder Bremen 2 (Klaassen 5-pen, Fuellkrug 55); RB Leipzig 1 (Forsberg 45+3-pen) drew with Bayern Munich 1 (Lewandowski 3).
Serie A: Fiorentina 0 drew with Juventus 0; Napoli 2 (Mertens 13, 67) bt Sampdoria 0.
Friday: La Liga: Real Mallorca 0 drew with Athletic Bilbao 0.

Dismal start by India's Greco-Roman team

WORLD WRESTLING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NUR-SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN)

In a dismal start for India, all four Greco-Roman wrestlers in action on Saturday exited the World Championships without winning a single round here.

Competing in non-Olympic categories, Asian Championship silver medallist Harpeet Singh (82kg), Sagar (63kg), and Manjeet (55kg) could not even score a single point in their respective bouts. While Harpreet lost to Petr Novak from Czech Republic 7-0, Sagar was beaten by local wrestler Almat Kebispayevand and Manjeet fell to Eldaniz Azizli from Azerbaijan, both by Technical Superiority.

Only Yogesh (72kg) resisted his American rival Raymond Anthony Bunker III before suffering a narrow 5-6 defeat. "Patience ... patience. I was not patient enough," Yogesh told foreign coach Temo Kazarashvili after he lost the close bout. "I have only myself to blame."

Exclusive portal on wrestling launched

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

An exclusive digital platform on wrestling www.wrestlingtv.in, was formally launched at the commencement of the 2019 World wrestling championships in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, on Saturday.

The portal, conceived by Sporty Solutionz, will show live-streams and match highlights, latest news, previews, expert reviews, behind-the-scenes stories, interviews and documentaries on the sport and its stars.

The website will stream 120 days of live content in its first year. This will include bouts from the World championships, World

Cups, continental championships, ranking series events and other age group events organized by the United World Wrestling (UWW).
"We know wrestling is big in India, which is a huge potential market. This wrestlingtv platform will take the sport to the next level. There could not have been a better beginning than starting it with the World championships," said UWW president Nenad Lalovic.
One can follow the digital channel on social media handles – @WrestlingtvIndia/ (facebook), @wrestlingtvIND (twitter) and @wrestlingtv.in (Instagram).

Panghal advances with easy win

BOXING WORLDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
EKATERINBURG (RUSSIA)

Asian champion Amit Panghal (52kg) and Manish Kaushik (63kg) clinched resounding victories in their second-round bouts to ensure there was no stopping India's stupendous run at the World boxing championships here on Saturday.

Panghal outpunched Chinese Taipei's Tu Po-Wei, while Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Kaushik also dominated The Netherlands' Enrico Lacruz as the duo clinched identical



Untroubled: Amit Panghal is declared the winner after his 52kg bout against Tu Po-Wei. *PTI

5-0 triumphs. Panghal faces Turkey's Baluhan Citfci in the next round.
The day, however, ended on a slightly disappointing

note with seventh-seeded Asian silver-medallist Ashish Kumar (75kg) going down to China's Tuohetaerbieke Tanglatihan in a split 2-3 verdict.

Ashwin Datta seals Formula LGB 1300 title

Raghul, Manav post wins in MRF FI600 races

MOTORSPORTS

SPORTS REPORTER
CHENNAI

A second-place finish saw Ashwin Datta of Momentum Motorsport emerge champion in the Formula LGB 1300 category with a race to spare in the fifth and final round of the MRF MMSC Fmsci Indian National Car Racing Championship at the MMRT, here on Saturday.

On a day of hectic scramble for points, Mamallapuram's Raghul Rangasamy eked out a two-point lead over Bengaluru teenager Sohil Shah in the premier MRF FI600 category with a win and a fifth-place finish in Saturday's two races. Faridabad's Manav Sharma was the other winner. With two more races to be run on Sunday, Rangasamy has 142 points to Shah's 140 while Mumbai's Nayan Chatterjee (121) is placed third.

Likewise, in the popular Indian Touring Cars category, Dhruv Mohite (Rayo Racing), driving the Volkswagen factory-supported Vento, moved within four points of leader Arjun Balu (Race Concepts) who retired due to a



Manav Sharma emerged winner in the second race of the MRF Formula 1600. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

freak incident (tyre deflation) in the very first lap. Mohite went on to finish second behind Volkswagen guest driver Daniel Rowe (South Africa), but earned full quota of 25 points. Balu has 148 points as against Mohite's 144 going into tomorrow's final race which will have a reverse-grid start.

Datta, who turns 21 in November, needed just one point to seal the championship going into this weekend and he managed to come in second behind teammate Deepak Ravikumar and ahead of Mohamed Ryan (M Sport) in the eight-lap race that was run behind a Safety Car in the mid-phase due to

on-track incidents involving three cars.

The result took Datta's tally to 163 points, well clear of Sohil Shah (M Sport, 95) who opted not to race in this category and concentrate on his races in the MRF FI600 class. Lying third in the championship is Chirag Ghorpade (Momentum Motorsport, 85). "It feels great to win the championship with one race to spare. I had a good race today, starting from 11th position as I could not post a time in the qualifying session due to some problems with my car. After about three laps, three cars in front of me, went off the track and later, myself and

Mohit Aryan were dicing for first and second. However, both of us went off the track under late braking in the last lap. In the process, Deepak Ravikumar capitalised and won the race ahead of me," said Datta.

The results (Provisional, all 8 laps unless mentioned):

MRF FI600 (Race-1): 1. Raghul Rangasamy (Mamallapuram) (13mins, 29.135secs); 2. Sohil Shah (Bengaluru) (13:30.653); 3. Yash Aradhyia (Bengaluru) (13:34.392). **Race-2 (7 laps):** 1. Manav Sharma (Faridabad) (14:48.254); 2. Nayan Chatterjee (Mumbai) (14:48.848); 3. Vishnu Prasad (Chennai) (14:48.857).

Indian Touring Cars (Race-1): 1. Daniel Rowe (South Africa) (15:25.637); 2. Dhruv Shivaji Mohite (Kolhapur) (15:27.894); 3. Arjun Narendran (Coimbatore) (15:28.264).

Formula LGB 1300 (Race-1): 1. Deepak Ravikumar (Momentum Motorsport) (18:56.445); 2. Ashwin Datta (Momentum Motorsport) (18:57.279); 3. Mohamed Ryan (M Sport) (18:57.770).

Volkswagen Ameo Class (Race-1): 1. Jeffrey Kruger (South Africa) (15:36.052); 2. Tasmin Peper (South Africa) (15:38.620); 3. Saurav Bandyopadhyay (Mumbai) (15:39.554).

and he quite smartly handled the situation despite driving a totally new car. He did not get enough time to test it but quickly fit himself well to battle with the best in a rally that is rated among the toughest in the world.

Starting the day in the 10th position, the three-time APRC champion was a bit slow in the eighth stage. He took 27:33.5s to complete the 33-km long stage. But he soon gathered pace and from there it was no turning back.

He posted the third fastest time in the ninth and repeated the same in the next two stages. He continued to work hard in the 12th and further hopes to carry the form into the final day.



Smart driving: Gaurav Gill handled the tough Turkish terrain with aplomb. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

champion.
He timed 3:51:39.2s for the 12 stages travelled thus far and looks good to finish on the podium in his category.

With abrasive roads and high temperatures that saw uncomfortable cockpit conditions, it was one big test for both the drivers and the co-drivers. Gill has seen it all

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Posies - a small bunch of flowers
Atishoo! Atishoo!
~~Hushha! Busssha!~~
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Gaurav Gill stages a brilliant fightback

RALLY OF TURKEY

SPORTS BUREAU
MARMARIS

After a mechanical failure let him down with two stages to go the other day, India's most celebrated rally driver Gaurav Gill (co-driver Glenn Macneall) fought back, as he always does, to climb up to the sixth slot after the 12th Stage in the Rally of Turkey here on Saturday.

Contesting as a registered driver for JK Racing in the WRC 2 category of the World Rally Championship, Gill took advantage of the scratch time and the seven minutes penalty for the three stages that he could not complete to master the rocky terrains like a typical



IN BRIEF

Universe might be 2 bn years younger: study

WASHINGTON
New calculations suggest the universe could be a couple billion years younger than scientists now estimate. Scientists estimate the age of the universe by using the movement of stars to measure how fast it is expanding. The uncertainty on how stars move contributed to the new calculation in a paper published in *Science*. **AP**



Actor Felicity Huffman gets two weeks jail
BOSTON
Actor Felicity Huffman was given two weeks jail time for paying bribes to help her daughter gain admission to a prestigious American university, the first high-profile figure to be sentenced in a cheating scandal that rocked the United States. **AFP**



Gangs Of Wasseypur on Guardian best films list
MUMBAI
Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap's cult film *Gangs Of Wasseypur* has become the only Indian film to feature in *The Guardian* list of 100 Best Films of the 21st century. Kashyap on Saturday took to Instagram to announce that his action drama has bagged the 59th position. The film featured Manoj Bajpayee and Nawazuddin Siddiqui. **IANS**

Edward Snowden says he would like asylum in France

His memoirs *Permanent Record* will be out next week

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Whistle-blower Edward Snowden, living in Russia since leaking a trove of classified documents showing the scope of post-9/11 U.S. government surveillance, wants to claim asylum in France, according to an interview published on Saturday.

Recalling he had already applied for French asylum in 2013 under former president Francois Hollande, Mr. Snowden, whose memoirs *Permanent Record* will be released on Tuesday, told France Inter radio he hoped President Emmanuel Macron would grant him that right.

"The saddest thing of this whole story is that the only place an American whistle-

Fire and thread: *Game of Thrones* tapestry is unveiled in France

A pictorial narrative was embroidered by 30 people on 87 metres of fine linen

REUTERS
BAYEUX

The French town of Bayeux has been home for nearly a millennium to a tapestry depicting a bloody battle for power.

Now it has another. An exhibition featuring a tapestry illustrating the events of hit HBO TV show *Game of Thrones* opened in Bayeux, Normandy, on Friday, just down the road from the museum where its 11th century inspiration is housed.

The tapestry was created in Northern Ireland, one of the principal filming locations for the series. Around 30 people worked for some 1,500 hours on the stretch of linen, which begins with King Robert Baratheon visiting the Starks in Winterfell. And 87 metres later, it ends in fire and blood with the final, controversial, scenes of the eighth season.

Depicting all that gore using jacquard threadwork was



Drama on cloth: A section of a tapestry on the *Game of Thrones* series. **AFP**

not easy, said project chief embroiderer Valerie Wilson.

It would have been a challenge that also faced the medieval embroiderers, who created the famous 70-metre Bayeux tapestry to recount the invasion of England by

William the Conqueror. The work brings to life scenes such as the 1066 Battle of Hastings, where Harold of Wessex is shown dying with an arrow to the eye.

"The *Game of Thrones* tapestry references the

Bayeux tapestry stylistically and in terms of some of the motifs that have been used and the way that the story unrolls in a linear fashion," said Mr. Wilson. The show was based on the books by George R.R. Martin.

Solid gold toilet stolen from art exhibition in U.K.

Fully-functioning model was made by an Italian artist

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

A gang of thieves on Saturday stole an 18-carat gold toilet from an art exhibition at Britain's Blenheim Palace, police said, causing flooding to the World Heritage Site.

The fully-functioning piece by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan was once displayed at New York's Guggenheim museum and offered on loan to U.S. Presi-



Pricey loo: The 18-karat solid gold toilet made by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan. **FILE PHOTO**

dent Donald Trump. A 66-year-old man has been arrested over the theft at the 18th century stately home in

Oxfordshire, where an exhibition of Cattelan works opened on Thursday.

"The offenders broke into

the palace overnight and left the scene at about 4.50 a.m. No one was injured during the burglary," local police said.

Detective Inspector Jess Milne said, "The piece of art that has been stolen is a high-value toilet made out of gold that was on display at the palace. Due to the toilet being plumbed into the building, this has caused significant damage and flooding."

She added, "We believe a group of offenders used at least two vehicles during the offence. The artwork has not been recovered at this time

Tiananmen Square 'Tank Man' photographer is dead at 64

Charlie Cole won the 1990 World Press Photo award

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JAKARTA

The photographer who snapped the defining image of China's Tiananmen Square crackdown – a solitary man defiantly blocking the path of a column of tanks – has died in Indonesia, according to U.S. officials.

American authorities confirmed the death of 64-year-old Charlie Cole in Bali, where the Texan had been a long-time resident.

"We offer our sincerest condolences to the family on their loss," a U.S. State department official said.

Cole won the 1990 World Press Photo award for his picture of a man in a white shirt, carrying a shopping bag in each hand, striding out into the road the day after troops killed hundreds of pro-democracy protesters in the heart of Beijing.

The man, whose identity remains unknown, stopped in front of a column of tanks and armoured vehicles



Taking a stand: Four cameramen became famous for photographs of the "Tank Man" in Tiananmen Square. This image was taken by Jeff Widener. **AP**

stretching far down the road, later climbing onto the vehicle to engage in a conversation with one of the tank crew as gunshots crackled in the air.

Iconic image

"Tank Man" has become one of the defining images of the 20th century, but the image remains largely unrecognised in China due to censorship of the image and the

wider crackdown. His mystique has been reinforced by his subsequent disappearance, probably at the hands of Chinese security forces.

Several photographers captured Tank Man's lone figure on film that day.

A picture of the scene by Jeff Widener of the Associated Press, snapped from the balcony of the Beijing Hotel, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

MIT engineers create blackest of all materials

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW YORK

Engineers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have created a material that they claim is 10 times blacker than anything that has previously been reported.

The material is made from vertically aligned carbon nanotubes, or CNTs – microscopic filaments of carbon that the team grew on a surface of chlorine-etched aluminum foil.

The foil captures more

than 99.96% of any incoming light, making it the blackest material on record, according to a study published in the journal *ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces*.

Space applications

The material may be useful in optical blinders that reduce unwanted glare or to help space telescopes spot orbiting exoplanets, said Brian Wardle, Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics at MIT.

U.S. baby born on 9/11 at 9:11 weighs 9lbs 11oz

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
WASHINGTON

A mother in the U.S. called her newborn daughter a "little miracle" as she was born on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks at 9.11 p.m. weighing 9lbs 11oz (4.39 kg).

Little Christina Brown came into the world at Methodist LeBonheur Hospital in Germantown, Tennessee. "She is a new life amongst the devastation and destruction," said her mother Cametrione Moore-Brown.

Baby Christina was born after a Caesarean section and operating theatre staff were stunned when the baby's time of birth and weight were recorded, the BBC reported.

"We heard the doctor announce the time of birth 9/11 and then when they weighed Christina, we heard gasps of astonishment when everyone realized Christina weighed 9/11, was born at 9.11 and on 9/11," said the father, Justin Brown.

"It was really exciting, especially to find some joy during a day of such tragedy," he added.

Commemorations were held across the U.S. to mark 18 years since the attack on September 11, 2001.

Rachel Laughlin, head of women's services at the hospital said such a coincidence was extremely rare. "I've worked in women's services for over 35 years and I've never seen a baby's birthdate, time of birth and weight all be matching numbers."

The 18th anniversary of the attack saw a moment's silence take place at various locations, including the sites of the attack. Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attacks and thousands more injured.

Blowing hot



Dragon dancers performing as people celebrate the mid-autumn festival in Wuyuan in China's central Jiangxi province. **AFP**

Yonfan's *No. 7 Cherry Lane* blends politics and cinema at TIFF

The animated film is set against the backdrop of the 1967 leftist riots between the pro-communists and the government in Hong Kong

NAMRATA JOSHI
TORONTO

If there is cinema can politics be far behind? Hong Kong's Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement reached the doors of Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) with a handful of peaceful protesters appealing for a "Free HK".

Ironically, iconic Hong Kong filmmaker, photographer and art connoisseur Yonfan's first animated feature film, *No. 7 Cherry Lane*, playing in the special presentations section of TIFF, is also set against the backdrop of protests: the 1967 leftist riots between the pro-communists and the government. While large scale demonstrations against British colonial rule are under way on the streets of Hong Kong, the ad-

dress, which is also the title of the film, becomes home for a stormy personal upheaval.

Ziming, a student at the University of Hong Kong, finds himself sucked into a love triangle involving Meiling, who he is tutoring in English and her mother Mrs. Yu. The forbidden emotions and transgressive carnal desires reach the peak with a bizarre but fascinating sequence involving cats. Politics and passion receive further fodder from the world of arts, specially literature, with animated discussions on Bronte and Proust running alongside, providing an intellectual propulsion to the political and personal unrest.

No. 7 Cherry Lane reminded me a lot of Bernardo Bertolucci's lush erotica *The*



Actors Tian Zhuangzhuang, Sylvia Chang, director Yonfan and Alex Lam. **FILE PHOTO**

Dreamers (2003), set against the Paris student riots of 1968, with a pair of siblings and an American student getting entangled in an erotic triangle in politically tumultuous times. Both films are

atmospheric, and both reference cinema. Yonfan doffs his hat specially to films, specially those involving younger men in love with older women (including *The Graduate*), reinterprets and re-

creates scenes in animation.

In the opening credits, he refers to *No. 7 Cherry Lane* as a dedication to Hong Kong. In an audience interaction, he spoke about 1967 as the year when he was 20,

"the year that was most meaningful to me". "No matter what happens, it is a place I love," he said of Hong Kong. The spectacularly vivid and mesmerising animation is as much about nostalgia and memory of the Hong Kong of his youth as it is about detailing and craft.

Right texture

According to Yonfan, original 3-D illustrations were turned into 2-D images on rice paper to get the right texture for the film and it took several years of hard work and intensive labour to put his passion project together.

Pietro Marcello's *Martin Eden*, about a sailor (Luca Marinelli) wanting to get educated and become a writer, won Marinelli the best actor award at Venice recently and

also bagged the Platform award at TIFF that champions "bold directorial visions".

The film is as much about love, class divides, aspirations and social mobility as it is about politics colliding with the world of literature. You feel one with the writer, his ideals and ambitions, interminable struggles, eventual success as well as the arrogance, ego, the conveniently changing world view and self-destruction that seep in along with it.

Marcello mixes archival footage in the film to create a sense of timelessness. *Martin Eden* is a compelling document about the eternal aesthetic, and political, conceits and posturing.

(The writer is in Toronto at the invitation of TIFF)