

Haryana's Unique Initiatives To Support Traders

Mukhya Mantri Vyapari Niji Durghatna Beema Yojana Implemented

Mukhya Mantri Vyapari Kshatipurti Beema Yojana Implemented

Haryana Traders' Welfare Board Constituted

Haryana Enterprises Promotion Centre Set Up

MANOHAR SARKAR
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BCCI probes links between players, bookie in TN league

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL & DEVENDRA PANDEY
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 15

AN INDIA player, an IPL regular and a Ranji Trophy coach are among those who figure in an internal investigation by the BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU), which has found rampant corruption in the Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL).

Sources involved with the probe say that bookies and match-fixers, after taking control of a franchise through an illegal deal with the team owner, are running "the team in such a way that they make windfall gain in betting".

Sources said that this "serious development" has the potential to compromise virtually the entire TN Twenty20 league, since "important persons in touch with bookies are spreading in different teams".

They said that the investigators got wind of the operation following a money dispute between those involved. The ACU is taking legal opinion on this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

DATA RELEASED BY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTRY

Ahead of UN meet, India says 21 killed this year in ceasefire violations by Pak

Says 2,050 instances, including in support of cross-border infiltration

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

AHEAD OF THE 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly that begins on September 17, during which India and Pakistan are expected to face off over Kashmir, India on Sunday said the Pakistan Army has committed more than 2,050 "unprovoked" ceasefire violations this year in which 21 Indians have been killed.

Such details are usually released by the Defence Ministry

but the Ministry of External Affairs shared the data in a bid to build a case that Pakistan has been trying to push cross-border terrorist infiltration since the beginning of the year and create instability in the Valley.

This comes amidst Jammu and Kashmir continuing to be under lockdown, with a communication shutdown in place since the Centre's August 5 decision to revoke the special status to J&K and bifurcate the state into two Union Territories. The Centre has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED E. Bid to corner Pak

AS PAKISTAN steps up the rhetoric over J&K, India has gone on the offensive by revealing the number of ceasefire violations by Pakistan's Army. Before the UN General Assembly, the ball has been set rolling to corner Islamabad on cross-border terror.

Imran's latest: Possibility of conventional war

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 15

PAKISTAN PRIME Minister Imran Khan said there was no question of talking to New Delhi after it revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, as he warned about the possibility of a conventional war with India which could go beyond the subcontinent.

"So that's why we have approached the United Nations, we are approaching every international forum, that they must act



'UN must act right now'

right now," he said.

Khan said he "absolutely" believes war with India could be a possibility. "...this is a potential disaster that would go way beyond the Indian subcontinent," he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

If need be, UP can look at NRC in phases... Assam an example: CM Yogi

RAVISH TIWARI & BHUPENDRA PANDEY
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 15

DESCRIBING THE implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam as an "important and brave decision", Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that his government is not averse to carrying out such an exercise in his state — if need be, in phases.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* in an interview, the Chief Minister also said that his government will "respect" the verdict in the Ayodhya case that is being heard in the Supreme Court.

Listing a series of achievements since his government took charge more than two years ago, the Chief Minister pointed to qualitative changes in health and education, including a revamped syllabus in schools and tackling



THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW

"PEOPLE HAVE FAITH THAT IF I WORK AS PER LAW, WILL GET SECURITY, GOVT WILL SUPPORT"

YOGI ADITYANATH
UP CHIEF MINISTER

the menace of proxy teachers. He said that his government has acted with transparency to tackle unemployment and attract

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MS University asks its students to join rally against Article 370

AISHWARYA MOHANTY
VADODARA, SEPTEMBER 15

STUDENTS FROM MS University attended a Bharat Ekta rally Sunday after a WhatsApp message by the institution's administration urged them to participate "for nation building" and "in support of the abolition of Article 370" by the government.

The message sent by the university to all students through WhatsApp groups read: "For nation building, University urges all



Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani flags off rally. Bhupendra Rana

staff and students of MSU to join Bharat Ekta March organised by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Next step in lifting Valley curbs: Allow BSNL post-paid mobiles

P VADYANATHAN IYER
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE NEXT small step in easing the clampdown in the Kashmir Valley is likely to be a further opening up of telecom curbs. Senior officials in the state administration said they are pushing for opening up post-paid BSNL mobile connections in the Valley immediately.

According to officials, J&K Police has advocated this relaxation in internal meetings and a decision is expected at the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Journalists wait to access the Internet at a temporary media centre set up by the government in Srinagar, Sunday. PTI

Meanwhile, Khattar says Haryana will have its NRC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15

JOINING THE chorus of BJP leaders seeking a National Register of Citizens (NRC) in their states on the lines of the exercise carried out in Assam recently, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday said the government would implement NRC in the state.

Talking to reporters in



'Family ID card database will be used'

Panchkula after meeting Justice H S Bhalla (retd), former chairman of the state Human Rights Commission, as part of the BJP's nationwide Jan Sampark

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

IN RAJASTHAN, WELFARE SCHEMES AT CLICK OF A BUTTON

PAGE 12

IISc, Wipro join hands for driverless car on Indian roads with potholes, cattle

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

JOHNSONTA
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 15

BUILDING AN autonomous or driverless car for Indian roads may seem like an impossibility — given the volume of traffic in cities, the unpredictability of road conditions, the behaviour of people, accident rates and even the presence of stray cattle.

However, scientists and researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and IT major Wipro Ltd have joined hands to create a driverless car for Indian conditions with a targeted rollout date of March 2020.

The collaboration is also an effort to take IISc and Wipro to the frontiers of new technology



The car being used for data collection in the project

— automation, robotics, machine learning, artificial intelligence and neuro morphic systems.

The nearly one-year collaboration project to build an autonomous car for Indian conditions is an extension of a nearly three-year effort at Wipro to build an autonomous car using data for roads in Europe and the US.

The efforts at Wipro have resulted in "a ground-up autonomous vehicle" but the real challenge now is to build a car by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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3 THE CITY

DROWNED IN LAKE WHILE TRYING TO SAVE COLLEAGUE

Army officer who died in Congo was to return to India this month

SHIVAM PATEL
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE BODY of Lieutenant Colonel Gaurav Solanki, who died in an accident in the Democratic Republic of Congo on September 8, arrived in Delhi on Sunday night and will be handed over to his family on Monday.

Solanki, who had been stationed as a military staff officer with the United Nations Peacekeeping mission in Congo since September last year, had drowned in Lake Kivu while attempting to rescue a fellow Indian Army officer who had fallen into the lake while kayaking.

While the other officer returned safely to the bank, Solanki didn't, and an intensive search operation, involving helicopters and speed boats, was



Lt Colonel Gaurav Solanki

launched to rescue him. Four days later, his body was recovered from the lake near Goma, which borders Rwanda in East Africa, Army sources said.

Col Aman Anand, spokesperson for the Army, said, "He had gone kayaking in the lake. The waves turned hostile and he saw another officer's kayak capsized. While the other officer made it to the bank, he couldn't."

In his 15 years with the Indian Army, the 37-year-old had served for around 10 years in Kashmir. He also had postings in Manipur and Agra.

The Army spokesperson said, "He was awarded the Wound Medal and Sena Medal (Gallantry) for successful operations against Pakistan-supported terrorists... He was an exceptional officer who performed well in the field as well as in academics."

Solanki, who was to return to India later this month, is survived by his wife and two children.

At the family home in New Delhi, Solanki's elder brother said, "He would never speak about his achievements and would quietly keep his medals and trophies in his study at our house. When we asked him what the medals were for, he would smile and change the topic. For him, the country

was everything and he was always committed to the Army."

Solanki graduated from the National Defence Academy in December 2002 and was commissioned into the Jat regiment around 2004 and later volunteered for the elite special forces.

A former batchmate of Lt Col Solanki said, "He was an absolute joshi box. He had both his knees replaced around 2015, but he was back on track within six months. He would go out of his way to help others. We used to call him 'Sollu', short for Solanki. He was a thorough gentleman and ticked all the boxes of how an Army officer should be."

The family last saw him in 2018, when he was posted in Agra. The last rites will be conducted on Monday at the Army Cremation Ground in Delhi Cantonment.

12,000 fined for RFID violations at toll booths

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE SOUTH Corporation has fined more than 12,000 people for entering the capital without radio frequency identification (RFID) tags in the past two days. However, many commercial drivers continue to enter the city without the tag, creating long tailbacks at many toll plazas.

This, coupled with technical glitches in identifying the tags at some toll plazas, has led to scuffles between truck drivers. Instances of private vehicles entering lanes meant for commercial vehicles has further worsened the situation at most of the 13 border-entry points of Delhi in the past two days.

The deadline for commercial

vehicles to switch to the cashless RFID system ended Saturday.

When *The Indian Express* visited toll plazas in Ghaziपुर and Noida, officials said they were still allowing people who have not recharged the RFID tag to pass after making cash payments, as many have not yet acquired the tags or got them recharged.

SDMC additional commissioner Randhir Sahay said these are initial hiccups, as many are yet to affix RFID tags.

Environment Pollution (Prevention & Control) Authority (EPCA) chairman Bhure Lal said no further extensions will be given to acquire the tags.

On Friday, the EPCA had asked commercial vehicle drivers to cooperate with the RFID project.



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Food & Water Contamination Rising At Alarming Pace Due To Poor Awareness: FMSDGs

One of the greatest challenges that the food sector in India today faces is the dominance of unorganised players who contribute to 80% of the food processing sector (by volume). These small unregistered units make the sector largely unregulated and vulnerable to safety hazards perhaps due to very small profit margins or even intentionally or through natural processes.



The food sector in India is a key for the overall development of the economy as it lies at a critical junction between the base agriculture sector and the emerging Indian consumer, whose aspirations and commitments are driving a fundamental shift in lifestyle preferences, including food habits.

However, food and water borne diseases are a growing problem due to lack of awareness, and pose a significant risk to health and socio-economic development of the country. Being a major cause of morbidity and mortality in India, it therefore needs to be urgently addressed, says the study on "Twin Burden of CDs and NCDs: Economic Burden of Food and Water Contamination in India" jointly brought out by the Foundation for Millennium Sustainable Development Goals (FMSDGs) and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI).]

Tackling contamination and ensuring that only safe and healthy food reach our plates also opens up immense opportunities for creating value (and wealth) for sector participants all across the value chain.

Food contamination is a huge economic burden

An alarming picture:

₹32,941 Crores

in 2016-17: Estimated total direct medical cost due to food-borne and water-borne diseases.

Total economic cost due to food and water contamination could reach

₹7,37,457 Crore

by 2022. (From NSS 71st round survey and IHME)

(From NSS 71st round survey and IHME)

Indirect costs associated with food-borne and water-borne diseases impose a greater burden on the economy than direct medical costs.

The indirect costs account for 96% of the total economic cost, whereas the direct costs account for only 4% of total economic cost.

The indirect costs can be broken down further into morbidity and mortality costs. The largest cause of food-borne and water-borne illnesses is Diarrhea, lower respiratory and other common infectious diseases, followed by nutritional deficiencies.

Curtail rampant use of pesticides and insecticides

With the rampant use of pesticides, insecticides and a variety of chemicals for preservation of crops and seeds along with use of irrigation water that is high in arsenic content, the contamination starts from input or farm level itself. Harmful non-permitted colors are the most common additives found in food consumed at all levels, whether in households, in the food service establishments and business firms, or in street foods and across all components of the food sector.

Mycotoxins, metals and pesticides in daily foods and milk have been found to be highly toxic and carcinogenic.

About 70% of deaths are likely to be of food-borne origin.

These sources of pollution are not independent of each other and are all pervasive, posing severe threats to the overall ecosystem.

Clearly, the causes and effects are interlinked and therefore tackling contamination of finished products alone will not produce results if other forms of soil, air and water pollution are left uncontrolled. For e.g., if the garbage dumping on land or untreated sewage in water bodies goes unchecked, there is little that can be done to avoid contamination of food and water.

It is alarming that these sources of pollution or contamination are not limited to a few levels in the food sector value chain but can be found across the chain with inter-linkages between and among each level.

Global Burden of Disease study shows that dietary risks in terms of intake of sub-optimal level of nutrients, which may be due to contaminated foods, pose the greatest risk to human health, responsible for more deaths than any other risks globally, highlighting the urgent need for improving human diet across nations.

Opportunity to ensure contamination-free food

Urgent steps needed:

Set up a database which can work as a warning signal that will be helpful for the country to limit losses

Develop an awareness system related to food spoilage and contamination

Research for identifiable symptoms of food-borne and water-borne diseases

Six-pronged strategy recommended:

- Scientific analysis of various contaminants in the food chain
- Integrated working of various arms of the government
- Integrating incorporated units with food safety/ regulatory mechanisms
- Ensuring safety of domestically produced food as per set standards



consumed by 95 percent of population.

The challenge, therefore, before authorities and regulators is to generate mass awareness to improve quality of food and water used in preparation of food for consumption at household level as well as market place."

Dr. D. S. Rawat, Vice Chairman
Foundation for MSDGs

- Developing proper data base of burden by food-borne/ water-borne diseases in the country
- Mobilising adequate infrastructure and food safety system

Besides, use of safe agricultural practices, quality control and laboratory testing, hygienic preparation of food in the unorganised sector and complying with inspection procedures of food establishments is also recommended.

A multi-pronged approach to tackle all forms of pollution in order to combat the menace of food and water contamination is required to reduce the overall health burden of the country.

Right at the outset it is imperative that the government, policy-makers and other stakeholders establish a regulatory framework to prevent food contamination right at the most basic level.

The participation of private sector is also the key to lead the change by leveraging knowhow and expertise to root out the menace of contaminated food.

HARDLOOK

GURGAON RAPID METRO



The Rapid Metro provides connectivity between Cyber City and Golf Course Road. *Praveen Khanna*

Rapid decline

Caught in a tussle between the Haryana authorities and the companies handling it, the Gurgaon Rapid Metro stares at an uncertain future. SAKSHI DAYAL reports on the crisis facing the project that benefits 59,000 people every day

CONCEPTUALISED IN 2008, Gurgaon's Rapid Metro was meant to address "the rising population and its associated infrastructure problems" in a city weak on public transport. It was to this end that the Haryana Urban Development Authority, now known as the Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP), invited potential bidders to develop a Metro rail link between Sikanderpur Metro station of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and National Highway 8 (NH8).

Built in two phases in 2013 and 2017, the 11.7-km line with 11 stations on its route ferries 59,000 commuters on a daily basis.

The line, and people who use it, today stare at an uncertain future.

HSVP and the companies handling the Metro have issued termination notices to each other, alleging "material breaches" in the contract. The issue reached the Punjab and Haryana High Court earlier this month, and it held that the conflict "may be resolved by negotiation", and asked the firms to run the Metro till September 17.

But even before the Metro became entangled in this tug of war, it had been facing issues of insufficient footfall. Experts *The Indian Express* spoke to highlighted two factors for the Rapid Metro not generating the expected revenue: Poor route selection and high fares, ranging from Rs 20 to Rs 35.

Matter of choice

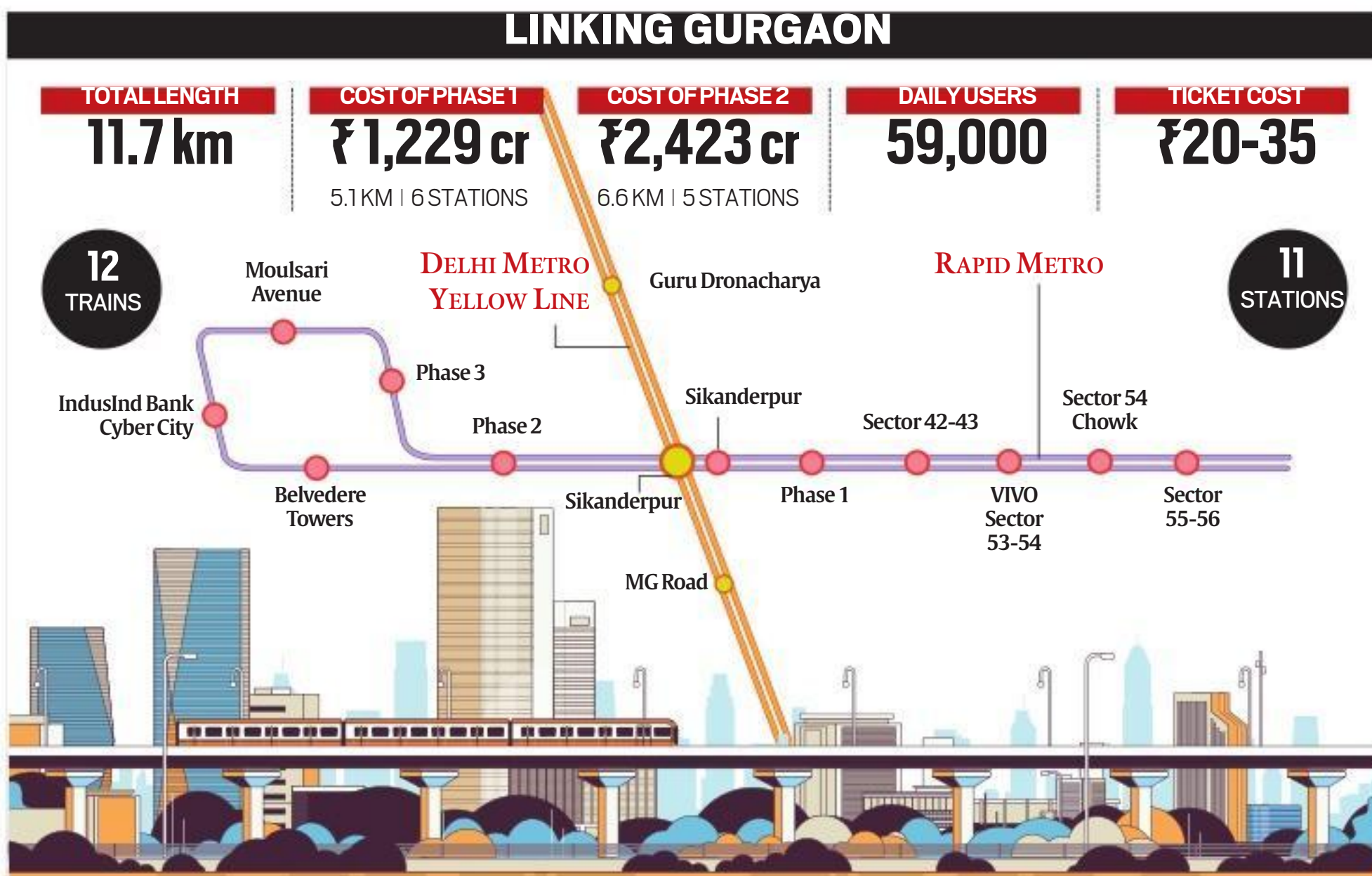
Although the Rapid Metro provides connectivity between Cyber City, home to offices of several MNCs, and the upscale Golf Course Road, where several offices, malls, and high-end gated condominiums are located, this alignment, experts said, was poorly chosen.

Sewa Ram, Transportation Planning Expert at the School of Planning and Architecture, said one of the reasons for the Rapid Metro's struggle is that planners failed to realise that a lot of the employees working at Cyber City do not actually live in Gurgaon.

"There was a procedural failure in the planning of the Metro — the corridor was seen in isolation and not put in the context of a larger mobility plan. It connects to a completely commercial area, and then to very selective residential localities, which does not serve the purpose. It was also not realised that a lot of people working in Cyber City offices don't stay in Gurgaon — the heavy traffic that enters the city from New Delhi each morning is proof of this. So how would the Metro line be a success?" said Ram.

"In terms of its route as well, there is a problem. The Metro does not cover the entire city, but very select locations. Its length is too short for it to be considered the main line of travel in the city. At best, it can serve as an extended line or as a feeder mode. Even the traffic it gets is mostly because it is connected to the Delhi Metro's Yellow Line at the Sikanderpur Metro station," he said.

Amit Bhatt, Director of Transport at WRI, India, reiterated this. "The Cyber City-Golf Course Road corridor is not a high density one. Cyber City generates a lot of employment, but most of the people working there do not live in Gurgaon... The second stretch the Metro covers, Golf Course Road, already has a 16-lane road running below it, and people prefer to take that as it saves time, rather than climb-



HOW THE CRISIS UNFOLDED

NOV 2013: Phase 1 of the Rapid Metro, between Sikanderpur and NH8, completed

MAR 2017: Phase 2, between Sikanderpur and Sector 56 on Golf Course Road, completed

JUL 17, 2018: RMGL and RMGSL issue notice to HSVP, calling on them to cure purported material breaches within 90 days

OCT 11, 2018: HSVP responds to notice, denying allegations of material breaches, and granting 60 days to RMGL and RMGSL to cure its breaches and withdraw notice

NOV 5, 2018 TO MAR 4, 2019: Meetings held to discuss modalities of HSVP taking over project in an amicable manner. No amicable resolution reached

JUNE 7, 2019: RMGL and RMGSL respond to October 11 letter, denying breach of agreement. Also issuing termination notice that would be effective in 90 days i.e. on Sept 9, 2019

AUG 26, 2019: HSVP and HMRTC issue termination notice to RMGL and RMGSL following their failure to cure breaches

SEPT 6, 2019: HSVP and HMRTC file

civil writ petitions requesting "quashing" of termination order dated June 7, 2019, terming it "illegal", "arbitrary" and "against public interest"

SEPT 6, 2019: Court directs Rapid Metro to continue operations until midnight of Sept 9, 2019

SEPT 9, 2019: Court finds that dispute "may be resolved by negotiation", defers hearing of case to Sept 17 to allow time for the same. Directs RMGL and RMGSL to continue operating and managing Rapid Metro rail until the date

ing up the stairs, going through security, and waiting for the Metro," he said.

Connectivity to the other side of NH8, especially to Old Gurgaon, may have yielded better results, experts said.

"Other steps need to be taken for the Metro to be effective in the city, even if HSVP takes over. For instance, the fare needs to be rationalised. For people who want to save money, the Metro is too expensive at Rs 35 for an 11-km stretch. They can easily get other shared transportation, such as autorickshaws that will take the same amount of time. Another way is to link the line to the other side of the highway, which is a high density area and where a lot of commute happens," said Bhatt.

Transport experts have also expressed concerns about the belief that a simple handover to HSVP will change the fate of the Rapid Metro. According to sources from IL&FS, the Metro is yet to make profits, with all the additional income flowing in being redirected into repaying its debts.

Unlike other Metro projects, like the Delhi

Metro, where 4% of the operational cost goes into financing, for the Rapid Metro, the annual report of 2017-2018 reveals that 65% of the operation cost was of financing. Being a publicly-funded project, the Delhi Metro was eligible for loans at discounted rates unlike the Rapid Metro, where money had to be borrowed at the prevailing commercial rates.

For those who have been relying on the Rapid Metro for the last six years, the uncertainty over the future of the line is a cause for worry.

Radhika Sharma, who lives in an independent bungalow in Sector 56 and works at a multinational corporation in Cyber City, said the Metro has been a lifeline ever since she moved to the city from Lucknow a year ago. "I usually walk down to the Sector 55-56 station and take the Metro to work. Each trip costs me less than Rs 40 as opposed to the Rs 150 I would be paying in a cab," she said.

"If the Metro closes down, even briefly, there will naturally be a surge in demand for cabs and autos. Even now, it is difficult to get

one during peak hours," she said.

Some, however, said a flat fare of Rs 20 dissuades them from using the Rapid Metro. A housekeeping staff at a restaurant near Phase 5 on Golf Course Road, who lives in Chakkarpur village, said, "The Metro is a cleaner, safer mode of transportation, but it makes no sense to pay Rs 20 to travel two-three stops. I would much rather take a shared autorickshaw and pay Rs 10."

The project, its troubles

It was in 2009 that Rapid MetroRail Gurgaon Limited (RMGL), a consortium of three companies — IL&FS Transportation & Network Limited (ITNL), Enso Rail Systems Limited and DLF Metro Limited — executed a concession contract with HSVP to execute Phase 1 of the Rapid Metro project.

Even as work on Phase 1 began, HSVP floated another proposal for developing Phase 2 — between Sikanderpur Metro station and Sector 56. Identifying Golf Course Road as "one of the busiest roads", the Authority sought to

"address transportation needs of not only the office complexes" located along the stretch, but of "large residential societies" on the road.

In 2012, Rapid MetroRail Gurgaon South Limited (RMGSL), comprising IL&FS Rail Ltd (IRL) and ITNL, was selected for the purpose.

While Phase 1 was opened to commuters in November 2013, Phase 2 was completed in March 2017.

In July 2018, barely a year after Phase 2 began operations, IL&FS ran into financial trouble, with the company facing issues in making repayments on its bonds.

The same month, RMGL and RMGSL issued a notice to HSVP, alleging "material breaches/defaults" on their part and by the Haryana government. The notice directed them to "cure" the breaches "within a period of 90 days", failing which steps would be taken for termination of agreement.

Although officials from IL&FS refused to comment on the matter on record, sources said the "breaches" were regarding advertisement rights and infrastructure development.

On October 11, 2018, HSVP responded to the notice issued by RMGL and RMGSL, denying allegations of material breaches and instead granting 60 days to the company to cure its own breaches and withdraw the notice. These alleged breaches included failure to pay land lease charges, failure to comply with clauses in the agreement relating to appropriation of non-fare revenue, failure to comply with fare fixation guidelines, and failure to obtain prior consent before creating encumbrances.

When several meetings between the parties, between November 5, 2018, and March 4, 2019, to discuss the "modalities" of taking over the project failed to yield a breakthrough, RMGL and RMGSL, in June 2019, responded to this letter, denying any breach of the agreement. A termination notice was also issued, which would come into effect 90 days later, on September 9, 2019.

On August 19 this year, IL&FS submitted a request to Justice (Retd) D K Jain, appointed by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) to supervise the resolution of matters, seeking permission for hand over of the Rapid Metro project to HSVP. This matter is still before the Tribunal.

Officials from HSVP and IL&FS, when contacted for a response, refused to comment as the matter is sub judice.

Three days before the termination notice was set to come into effect, on September 6, HSVP and the Haryana Mass Rapid Transport Corporation (HMRTC) submitted a civil writ petition in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, seeking "quashing" of the termination order, terming it "illegal", "arbitrary" and "against public interest".

The petition highlights what's at stake. "It is relevant to mention here that as per the figure supplied by the respondent themselves, approximately 59,000 commuters in both the projects are commuting daily and they are earning approximately Rs 4 crore every quarter," states the petition.

It also points out that the hand over of the project "cannot be done overnight", especially considering the "staff and employees" and the "technical aspect" involved, adding that, if this is forced upon them, "there will be no other alternative but to close the Metro line".

BRIEFLY

Man robbed, tasered

Noida: A man was allegedly beaten up and robbed by four men in a Santro, who also tasered him, on September 4. “The victim and the main accused, Vishal, met on dating app Grindr five months ago... The men wanted a party, beer and money but the victim did not have any cash on him. A scuffle followed and the accused beat up the victim, tasered him and withdrew his money. The next day, he filed an FIR,” said Sudha Singh, SP City. Vishal and two others have been arrested.

3,800 kg of plastic seized

New Delhi: The South civic body has seized 3,800 kg of polythene bags from shopkeepers, and issued fines totalling Rs 8 lakh in the last 10 days.

Cong to hold padyatra

New Delhi: The Delhi Congress unit will organise a padyatra from the DPCC office to Rajghat from 9.30 am on October 2 to mark Gandhi Jayanti.

BJP bike rally on single-use plastic

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel flagged off a bike yatra, led by biker Raj Luxmi, to educate people on the perils of single-use plastic. Goel also termed the Delhi government's move to introduce the odd-even scheme in November a “political stunt”. **ENS**

Thieves rob ATM

New Delhi: Thieves allegedly broke open an ATM in Maidan Garhi and fled with money. **PTI**

SISODIA, JAIN, AAP MLAs ALSO VISIT CONSTITUENCIES

Some help to check stagnant water at home — from the CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

CONTINUING THE drive against dengue in the capital, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and several Cabinet ministers Sunday visited various residential colonies to check for signs of mosquito breeding.

As part of the government's '10 Hafte 10 Baje 10 Minute' campaign launched on September 1, Kejriwal has requested people to devote 10 minutes at 10 am every Sunday to drain stagnant water and prevent mosquito breeding. The campaign will conclude mid-November.

On Sunday, the CM visited North Delhi's Tri Nagar and said data so far suggested that the campaign was “successful” as cases of dengue were on the decline. A total of 122 cases have been reported from the city till September 7, with 30 being reported in September and 52 in August.

Last year, 2,798 dengue cases and four deaths were recorded by the South Corporation, which



Kejriwal with Gole Market residents, Sunday. Prem Nath Pandey

tabulates data on vector-borne diseases in the city.

Both the Delhi government and the local municipal bodies have been making efforts to raise awareness among people on precautions that must be taken to ensure there is no breeding of mosquito larvae in and around their houses.

Talking to residents, Kejriwal said: “Several people died due to dengue two-three years ago. In 2015, more than 15,000 cases

were reported... I am happy that we have been able to control cases over the last two years. As per the cycle of the disease, it was expected to recur on a big scale this year. So we started this campaign.”

“The dengue mosquito has a range of 200 metres... so if people check their houses and encourage their neighbours to do the same, Delhi will be saved from the disease,” he added.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish

Sisodia also inspected his house and visited his constituency to ask people to follow suit, while Health Minister Satyendar Jain visited his constituency, Shakurbasti, to spread awareness.

The government is planning to partner with over 3,000 RWAs as part of the campaign for more intensive inspections.

More than 200 events were held across the city by MLAs, councillors and party leaders, AAP said in a statement.

R K Puram MLA Parmila Tokas tweeted pictures of her visit to Raipur Colony, Mohammadpur village, RK Puram Sectors 3 and 12. MLA Girish Soni also shared pictures of him inspecting his home and office, apart from visiting Madipur Assembly constituency.

Wazirpur MLA Rajesh Gupta, along with Neemdi Colony ward councillor Neetu Azad, visited different parts of the constituency. Kalyanpuri ward councillor and president of the AAP's SC-ST Wing Kuldeep Kumar also shared pictures of him checking for mosquito breeding at his home.

Exchange of fire, car chase as Defence Colony slept

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

FOLLOWING AN exchange of gunfire between three men in a black Chevrolet Cruze and police officers in South Delhi's plush Defence Colony locality early Saturday morning, a history shooter — identified as Sonapat-based Mohan — fled with the service revolver of a constable who was chasing their car.

“During patrolling, we received an input around 12.49 am about men travelling in a car with weapons... As a result, several cars were checked. Around 1 am, when officers tried to stop this vehicle, the men fired at the officers and fled,” said DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur. Police gave chase to the ac-



The main accused, Mohan, fled with a cop's revolver

cused in a passerby's car.

“There was a man in a Mahindra XUV who saw the accused shoot and offered to help the police. The officers sat in his car and chased the accused for over a kilometre, and managed to block the accused's car... by then a PCR van too had arrived,”

said an officer.

In the ensuing scuffle, however, main accused Mohan snatched the service revolver of the constable who chased him and fled. “The other two accused Yamin and Anuj Rawat have been arrested, and we are looking for Mohan. Yamin is admitted at AIIMS Trauma Centre after a bullet grazed his leg,” said Thakur.

The DCP said Mohan has 2 cases against him, including murder and attempt to murder. “He got out of prison on June 16 this year,” he said.

Police said that the accused were on their way to Sonapat when their vehicle was intercepted. “Two illegal weapons and one empty cartridge was recovered from them,” said Thakur.

US citizens detained for flying drone in Lutyens' Delhi

MAHENDERSINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

IN A major security breach, a father-son duo from the US were detained Saturday evening for allegedly flying a drone fitted with a video camera in Lutyens' Delhi. Officers from intelligence agencies and the Delhi Police Special Cell are questioning them.

On scanning the video, police found that they had captured footage of Central Secretariat, where the Cabinet Secretariat is housed. The drone was detected when it was flying near Rashtrapati Bhavan, said police.

According to police, the incident came to light around 6.45 pm when personnel stationed in Parakram vans at Vijay Chowk saw something suspicious flying in the air and made a PCR call.

“Senior officers of the New Delhi district rushed to the spot and started to look for the operators. They found two American nationals, Peter James Lynn (65) and his son Guillaume Leadbetter Lynn (31), a senior officer said. Flying of drones has been

banned in the capital after alerts by security agencies. Recently, Delhi Police chief Amulya Patnaik called a meeting with all DCPs at the Delhi Police Headquarters to shared inputs received from intelligence agencies. He said there is a possibility that militant groups may carry out aerial attacks using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) on dignitaries and vital installations, police said.

The duo were taken to a nearby police station for questioning. “Police found that they arrived in India on Saturday and were staying in a five-star hotel at Sardar Patel Marg,” an officer said.

However, the father-son claimed they didn't know flying drones is banned in Delhi. “They said they were making a video for a US-based online platform and came to India on tourist visa. Peter has a visa for a month, while his son has a visa for a year,” the officer said, adding that police has informed the US Embassy in Chanakyaपुर and are checking their details with them.

DCP (New Delhi) Dr Eish Singhal said, “Questioning of the American citizens is on. The matter is being investigated.”

Flight makes emergency landing at IGI airport

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

AN ETHIOPIAN Airlines flight heading to Addis Ababa made an emergency landing in New Delhi Sunday, an hour after it departed from Indira Gandhi International airport. “The flight, ET-687, departed from Delhi at 6.27 am. At 7.30 am, the Air Traffic Control declared local stand-by for ET-687 due to pressurisation failure,” said a source at the IGI Airport.

At 7.43 am, local stand-by for ET-687 was converted to full emergency, said the source, adding, “The flight landed safely on runway 10 at 7.53 am, and was parked at 8.01 am.” The source said the 200 passengers on board were moved to a hotel near the Airport till the next flight to Addis Ababa. “Even before the flight reached Jaipur, it developed a technical problem due to which it returned to Delhi,” said a source.

The emergency landing sparked panic among passengers. An Ethiopian Airlines PR representative said, “It was a precautionary measure taken due to a minor technical problem.”

With essential kits & money, group helps students from Valley

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

AMID THE ongoing clampdown in Kashmir, following the abrogation of Article 370 to revoke the Valley's special status, a group of students from the Jammu & Kashmir Students' Association, in collaboration with Khalsa Aid, are providing essential commodities and money to Kashmiri students across the country. The association, which began its operations five days after the lockdown, has been to UP, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Punjab.

“Due to the complete blackout in the Valley, several Kashmiri students across the country are facing problems. To assist them, we started a helpline number. So far, we have helped hundreds of students,” said Nasir Khuehami, J&K Students' Association founder and spokesperson.

The group is giving 25 kg kits,



The group helping students in Chandigarh last week

including 5 kg rice and 10 kg flour. “From students asking for money to those unable to get rented accommodation due to the clampdown, the association has reached out to many in distress. We are providing kits to every student coming to us. We are also collating data to understand the number of people who have benefitted from this,” Khuehami added.

On Saturday, the group reached Delhi and left for Bathinda.

2 dead in accident on Yamuna Expressway

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

TWO MEN died and 20 persons were injured after a bus travelling from Uttar Pradesh to Delhi collided with a truck on the Yamuna Expressway in the early hours of Sunday, police said. Of the injured, five are stated to be critical.

The incident took place near

the Bajna cut on the expressway around 4.30 am, when the private double-decker bus with around 40 passengers was on its way to Delhi's Anand Vihar from Azamgarh in UP.

Aditya Kumar Shukla, SP (Rural), said, “The bus was moving at a high speed, and a truck ahead of it was moving slowly. Some passengers claim the driver may have fallen asleep, causing the bus to collide with

the truck's rear.”

He added that 20 people — including the driver and the conductor — were injured, and around five are in critical condition at a private hospital in Jewar.

The victims include Danish (22) from Lucknow and Mukesh (25) from Bulandshahr in UP, police said.

“The collision took place with such force that the front portion of the bus was flattened.

The truck driver fled. Efforts were made to trace the vehicle but it was difficult as no one saw the registration plate. The bus driver and conductor will be questioned soon,” Shukla said.

He added that no one has come forward to register an FIR. “Police will take cognizance of the matter if no one comes forward in the next few days,” Shukla said.

SOL students protest over ‘cancelled’ class

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

HUNDREDS OF students enrolled for the BA Programme course at the School of Open Learning (SOL) protested at Gargi College and Bhim Rao Ambedkar College premises, and even blocked the road outside Sunday, after their Personal Contact Programme (PCP) classes were not held for the second week in a row.

According to the protesters, they realised there will be no

class only when they reached the colleges.

Last Sunday too, on the first day of PCP classes, SOL students across streams had faced a lot of problems, including not being given study material and being denied entry to the centres, besides classes being postponed.

Moni Rajput, who went to Gargi College, said, “I reached college at 9.30 am, but was told there is no class. I had come all the way from Uttam Nagar, changing two Metros and then taking an auto,” she said.

Ajay Roy, another student who had his centre at Law Faculty, said: “SOL authorities make no effort to inform students beforehand. We will protest at the SOL building Monday.”

Krantikari Yuva Sangathan (KYS) blamed the “unpreparedness of SOL in implementing CBCS (choice-based credit system) curriculum”. “Till now, teachers' appointment has not been finalised. Political Science (Hons.) classes are conducted at three centres, and teachers for

Environmental Science and Generic Elective subjects have not been appointed. As a result, students were sent home after two classes,” claimed Harish Gautam from KYS.

Director SOL C S Dubey, however, said students did not check the timetable. “We put up the B.Com timetable online, there wasn't any for BA Programme. Students landed up on their own. This week, we had two classes for B.Com, and next week we will have classes for BA Programme,” he said.

FROM DARYA GANJ TO MAHILA HAAT

Sunday book market reopens, amid some protests

ANANYA TIWARI
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE DARYA Ganj book bazaar, which had been shut since early July, opened to the public Sunday at its new address in Mahila Haat near Delhi Gate, amid protests by several book vendors against their eviction from the old spot.

On July 3, the Delhi High Court had ordered the market to be shut, saying that no weekly market would be allowed on Sundays at Netaji Subhash (NS) Marg near Jama Masjid. The order came after Delhi Traffic Police submitted its report and proposed closing NS Marg, citing increasing traffic throughout the day. The North MCD was then ordered to shut all

markets in the area.

According to North MCD commissioner Varsha Joshi, 139 book vendors set up stalls at the new site. When *The Indian Express* visited the market, it found only around 30 shops. As per the terms of the contract, the MCD-owned Mahila Haat will be leased out to the vendors every Sunday for two years, at a rent of Rs 200 per day. It will be renewed after two years.

The protesters, who formed a human chain at Asaf Ali Road, however, want the area on the road between Golcha Cinema and Delite Cinema to be designated as the vending zone.

Rajesh Kumar (31), a vendor, said, “We want Asaf Ali Road for our bazaar. The president of our association made deals for Mahila



At Mahila Haat, Sunday. Gajendra Yadav

Haat without asking all of us.” As per the Street Vendors

(Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act,

2014, vendors can only be evicted after a proper process. Mohit (29), a member of the National Hawker Federation, said, “They did not conduct surveys or give registration certificates... instead, they simply threw people out...”

Vendors also claimed the Sunday Book Bazaar Welfare Association, which represented them, was disbanded September 1, leaving questions hanging on the negotiations done after, including choosing the new space. Joshi denied charges of procedures being ignored: “Anyone who thinks they were left out can approach the DC of City SP Zone.”

Meanwhile, around 30 vendors who set up stalls voiced their support for the new site. Former vice-president of the Sunday

Book Bazaar Welfare Association Asarfilal Verma said, “For two months, we haven't had any money, we need to eat. For the first time in 40 years, we have got registration and ID. We worked really hard to get this site...”

Mohammad Abid (35) said, “I like it here. There is place to sit, for people to roam around, there is parking and bathrooms.”

Many students who frequented the bazaar in the past supported the protesting vendors. Deepshika Sinha (28), a graduate of Urban Design from the School of Planning and Architecture, said, “Minor design changes could have been made on the footpaths or streets to make traffic lesser. Removing the market was not required.”



Vishal Srivastava

‘People now have faith that if I work as per law, I will get security, government will support me’

September 19 is the halfway mark of Yogi Adityanath's term as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Last week, at his residence, he spoke to RAVISH TIWARI and BHUPENDRA PANDEY on the work done — and the task ahead. Excerpts:

Education and health, you said, are your focus areas. But as soon as you came, you stopped the previous government's laptop scheme.

The fact is they started the scheme in 2012 and they failed. To say we ended it is wrong. We have taken several measures to bring a change in education. When I was new, I went to a primary school in a district headquarters. I was told there were only 35 students and the school was on the verge of being closed. I asked the school administration if they had a plan, did I have to transfer them? offer VRS? I asked them if anyone in the staff of three to four can spend Rs 4,000-Rs 5,000 from their salary, sit with the gram panchayat samiti, parents, use the money to paint the school, clean the surroundings. I knew that if locals see the principal working, they will decide to help. Within a year, the school has more than 350 students. The team and infrastructure are the same but now they have arranged for flooring, toilet and drinking water.

That's the basis of our Operation Kayakalp. There are 1.59 lakh primary schools in the state. More than 90,000 of these schools have benefited from this — with very little or no government help, just by public cooperation.

Second, we saw students going to school barefoot. In winter, teachers were coming in coats and sweaters, students were shivering. I announced that with the new session, students will be provided bags, books, sweaters, shoes and socks. We are making these things available to every student.

We are also bringing in the NCERT syllabus. Every district has been asked to bring innovation in education. In Lalitpur, they started Gargi Shikshika Yojana under which an educated girl or woman is hired to teach the students. Parents contribute Rs 10-15 every month per head. Public cooperation with the government is necessary. We are trying to spread this in all districts. In two years, enrolment is up by 50 lakh students, that's an achievement.

Next, we were worried that teachers used to take their full salary from the government and hire someone else to teach. We ended this system of proxy teachers. Wherever a teacher is posted, we ensured his photo is displayed. This enabled students, village heads and panchayat samiti members to make sure that the appointed teacher is coming to the school.

In secondary education, Uttar Pradesh was a hub of cheating. I asked them to prepare four sets of a paper so that in case one set of paper is leaked, we can send another set.

Last year, we found 5 lakh students didn't take the exam. Initially, I was worried but when I asked for data, we found that these

were people who had nothing to do with education. They were people from Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana who only wanted certificates. They used to pay and get registered and ensure marks depending on how much they paid.

We also changed the syllabus of secondary education. I asked them to bring the NCERT syllabus so that it can give students a level-playing field in competitive exams. We compressed the whole process of exams and assessment to just one month — down from five months. Now we have extra four months for classes. I asked officials to end all holidays on birth anniversaries of great men and women and celebrate each in a one-hour period in school. This ended around 50-60 holidays.

In higher education, we brought in an academic calendar. In all universities this year, admission started from July 2.

I was in Vladivostok recently. They have Far Eastern Federal University and in the university, they organised all the programmes. As our delegation was significantly large, we were told not to expect a five-star hotel for our stay as the university is situated in a lesser developed part of the country. The university guesthouses were excellent, they had all the facilities. This was an example of how a university can be part of every activity. This is exactly what I was saying here. Every university has given us ideas and we are trying to implement that. In education, just providing laptops cannot be a symbol of development.

You listed several achievements in education. You mentioned mid-day meal. But the one mid-day meal menu which we got to know about was salt and roti.

Roti and salt is not in the mid-day meal menu here. There is a set menu for every day. This (incident) is a form of journalism which, in reality, puts a question mark on the credibility of journalism. There was another incident in Azamgarh — another reporter from the same media group went to a village and gathered local girls in the village. He gave them a broom each and asked them to sweep so that he could get his video. At the same time, teachers reached there, they protested against and it and handed over that reporter to the police. The same thing happened with the mid-day meal. The job of the media is to present something as it is. If you want to give your views, you have the editorial page. But creating a scene and recording it puts a question mark on the reliability of all journalism.

But isn't this shooting the messenger? Reporters make mistakes but the norm is to rebut the report. How can you justify FIRs and sending

journalists to jail?

Journalists have to decide who is a journalist and who is not. In Noida, some people tried to blackmail Dr Mahesh Sharma and his team in the name of journalism. What will you call it? In the name of journalism, if someone is blackmailing, it should be stopped. With incidents like these, true journalists are affected. It affects their rights, credibility and honour. Wrongdoing by someone who has nothing to do with journalism but does it in the name of journalism — this gives an important pillar of our democracy a bad name.

Your tenure began with the controversy at Gorakhpur's BRD Medical College. In health, we haven't seen a groundbreaking idea

I visited the medical college on August 9, 2017 and a (false) narrative was created over the next two days that how a person named Dr Kafeel is bringing oxygen cylinders in his vehicle to save dying children. There was already a two-tier system for oxygen. First, there was liquid oxygen system in which oxygen reached everywhere. Secondly, there were oxygen cylinders. The small cylinder he (Kafeel) was going with is used for welding purposes. It was drama we are supposed to believe, that this welding cylinder is for the children.

The problem of encephalitis in Gorakhpur started in 1977-1978 and I was the first person to bring that in front of the country. I fought against this from the street to Parliament. On August 9, I went to each and every bed. Later, everything became clear. That no child died due to unavailability of oxygen. The deaths were either due to encephalitis or because of premature birth. It had nothing to do with oxygen.

If you look at the last two-and-a-half

years and compare it with the data of 2016-17, you will find a significant drop in the number of encephalitis cases. Because of the campaigning on the issue I did during my tenure as MP, today international norms are applied at the BRD Medical College for encephalitis. There are ventilators on every bed; the wards are fully air-conditioned and well-equipped. BRD is the first medical college with a viral research centre. Because of this, in his first tenure, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave two things to Gorakhpur: eight new super-specialties in BRD and an AIIMS.

From 1947 to 2016, 12 government medical colleges were built in Uttar Pradesh. From 2016 to 2019, we are building 15. In seven, admission has begun for this session.

The Centre wanted to give life-support ambulances to Uttar Pradesh in two phases under the National Health Mission (NHM) at no cost but the Samajwadi Party government did not accept them. In April 2017, I raised a demand and brought 150 life-support ambulances to the state. I sent two ambulances to each of the 75 districts. Last year, before the election, I was conducting an assessment and found that in one year, these ambulances saved the lives of more than 78,000 people. This year, we have got 100 more ambulances. We have also started mobile medical vans for remote areas. These vans have doctors, paramedical staff, ward boys.

Under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, we have given free treatment of up to Rs 5 lakh to 6 crore people. Around 56 lakh were left so we started a separate scheme for them at the state level.

Before elections, you raised the issue of sugarcane farmers but after elections, it slipped off the radar. Payments of over Rs 6,000 crore are pending.

This is not only for elections. When we came to power in March 2017, sugarcane dues had been pending since 2011. I agree there are arrears of Rs 6,000 crore but we have paid Rs 73,000 crore in two-and-a-half years. That's unprecedented. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of farmers, 2.33 crore registered. This is the first time when farmers are not protesting.

On cattle, it is being said that Yogiji made farmers stay awake in the winter because of stray cows, that they voted for you and you have reduced them to watchmen.

If the farmers were unhappy, (why do you think) they voted for us? The farmers are happy. Maybe there were some issues initially. We shut down illegal slaughterhouses. For years, both the National Green Tribunal and the Supreme Court had clear-cut directions but

no one before us was able to take a decision on this. I knew I would be blamed but the first decision I took was to shut illegal slaughterhouses. All unattended cattle going to illegal slaughterhouses were saved and they came onto the road and in agricultural fields. In June last year, I provided funds to each district to construct big cattle shelters. I had already constructed anti-land mafia task force in 2017 to free government land from the clutches of land mafia and politicians. The anti-land mafia task force has freed 54,000 hectares.

But it is alleged that 'govansh to bahana hai, Musalmaan nishana hai'. That mainly Muslims work at slaughterhouses and this policy was meant to undermine them.

In Uttar Pradesh, cow slaughter is already prohibited under the Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act. In the state, every district was provided funds for cow shelters where cattle were to be brought, fed and taken care of.

In January this year, we started Nirashrit Govansh Samvardhan Yojana under which if a farmer adopts a cattle head, he will be given Rs 900 per month in his account. It has started in some districts. For the funds, we applied a cess on foreign liquor. Today, we have around 3 lakh stray cattle in our shelter houses and even farmers have started to adopt cattle.

Next, we are starting a facility that if there are 150-200 cattle with farmers, then we construct a big gobar gas plant. We are taking the help of IIT Kanpur. Today, there might be one or two complaints or incidents where people try to make this an issue because of political reasons but I believe that this is not an issue in general.

You have spoken about governance in great detail but there are apprehensions among Muslims since you became Chief Minister. That they don't have representation in the government.

Everyone has representation in the government and the government doesn't implement any scheme taking in mind caste, religion or belief of the individual beneficiary. *Hamare yaha sabke saath sabke vikas ki baat hai. Jab sabka saath sabka vikas laagu ho raha hai to mujhe nahi lagta hai ke isme koi ashanka honi chahiye.*

In the last two-and-a-half years, there hasn't been a single riot. All festivals went on smoothly. Compare the last two years with the years before 2017. Take the example of Muharram. Before 2017, there used to be rioting, violence at 400-500 places on this day. People now have a faith that if we do not break any law, then there won't be any kind of problem, that if I work as per law, I will get security and the government will support

I feel that when Uttar Pradesh will need an NRC, we will do so. In the first phase, it has been Assam and the way it is being implemented there can be an example for us. It is important for national security and it will also put a stop on the rights of the poor being taken away by illegal immigration”

me. But if you break the law, no one can provide you security. What is applied to one person is applied equally to everyone else.

The Muzaffarnagar riots took place under the last government but of the 44 cases decided, there has been acquittal in 43 cases. Why isn't your government filing appeals?

The chargesheets in the Muzaffarnagar cases were filed by the previous government. The (riots) were the result of biased policies and failure of that government under which the whole society was differentiated on the basis of caste, belief and religion. There is nothing like that in our government. On the question of appeal, we will do that if needed. If there is no need, why should we unnecessarily intervene in the matter of the court?

You mentioned caste but you started giving SC certificates to 17 castes. A Union minister had to say in Parliament that what the UP government is doing is wrong. Why that gimmick?

It was not a gimmick. A division bench headed by a High Court chief justice gave an order in this regard. Our department sent that order to every district administration as it is. If we would not have done that, it would have been contempt of court. Now the matter has been challenged in the court and the court will take a decision. We just followed what the court said.

What is the one thing which worries you? A challenge?

There is nothing I am worried about. Our Prime Minister says what is a challenge is also an opportunity. I feel that we have to provide clean drinking water to everyone and that's a huge, sacred work. I have already provided funds to Bundelkhand in the first phase. We have evolved a plan and are going to start this from there.

In his Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister spoke about population explosion. The Total Fertility Rate in Uttar Pradesh is higher than the national average. As CM, what are you planning?

We totally agree with what our PM said on this. Somewhere, we have to put a barrier after a limit. In what form it will be, there are proper discussions on the government level and we will apply it phase-wise. We have been working on this.

Another population data set shows that UP is the largest exporter of migrants to other states.

We have a population of 23 crore and when we came to power in 2017, all government jobs were stayed by High Court or Supreme Court. We got the stays vacated. We have given more than 2.25 lakh government jobs to UP youth in different departments. Appointment of 69,000 teachers, 51,000 policemen and 25,000 secondary education teachers is in the final phase.

Riots, *goonda raj* and anarchy were how UP was perceived. That has changed. Today, Uttar Pradesh is getting the best investment. In my term, we brought more than Rs 2 lakh crore. Under the One District One Product policy, we focused on the state's conventional products. The result is that Uttar Pradesh is at the top of exports with exports worth more than Rs 1.14 lakh crore. All these are generating employment.

The decision on Ayodhya is expected in November and if it's not in favour of Ram Lalla, what is Yogi Adityanath going to do?

Everyone has faith in the court. Everyone knows that day-to-day hearings have begun. These hearings are on the basis of merit. We will respect whatever is the verdict of the court. We are going to respect the verdict, you don't need to worry.

As far as giving Ayodhya its due recognition, the government is doing its work on a priority basis by organising Deepotsava and ensuring the inclusive development of Ayodhya.

Another important issue is the National Register of Citizens (NRC). Several BJP Chief Ministers and leaders have demanded an NRC in their respective states. What's your take on the NRC and Uttar Pradesh?

This is an important and a brave decision of implementing the court's order. I believe that we should congratulate the Prime Minister and the Home Minister for this. These things are being implemented phase-wise and I feel that when Uttar Pradesh will need an NRC, we will do so. In the first phase, it has been Assam and the way it is being implemented there can be an example for us. Using their experience, we can start it here phase-wise. It is important for national security and it will also put a stop on the rights of the poor being taken away by illegal immigration.

7 GOVT & POLITICS

NASA lunar probe may shed new light on Vikram lander

Officials give details of PM presence and support to Chandrayaan-2 team

AMITABH SINHA
PUNE, NEW DELHI,
SEPTEMBER 15

AS ISRO figures out what happened to the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-2, after it lost contact with the ground station barely a few hundred metres above the Moon in the early hours of September 7, a NASA probe is expected to reveal new information once it flies over the landing site on Tuesday.

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) is also likely to release the images that it takes of the lander, the US media reported. "NASA will share any before and after fly-over imagery of the area around the targeted Chandrayaan-2 Vikram lander landing site to support analysis by the Indian Space Research Organisation," spaceflightnow.com quoted Noah Petro, the LRO's project scientist, as saying.

At ISRO, meanwhile, a top official told *The Indian Express* that the presence of the Prime Minister at the space mission's command centre in Bengaluru and his promise of unambiguous support will shape the organisation's next step.

In this context, a senior official involved with the PM's visit that night revealed unknown details of what he called were the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi consoles ISRO chief K Sivan a day after the Vikram lander lost contact. PTI file

"transformative" hours leading to "those hundred seconds" when realisation dawned that the soft-landing had gone awry.

Official sources said Modi landed in Delhi early on September 6 from an official trip to Russia, and slotted back-to-back engagements in Maharashtra (September 7) and Haryana (September 8) — but wanted to be at the ISRO centre that night.

On the flight to Bengaluru, sources said, the PM was busy with paperwork that remained or was carried over because of his Russia trip. "The mood was opti-

mistic when the Prime Minister's aircraft touched down at the Air Force Station in Yelahanka at around 9 pm," sources said.

Based in a hotel near the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC), Modi met the children who had won the MyGov Space Quiz, and left for ISRO at around 1 am. A few minutes after 1.50 am, however, it became evident that things were not going to plan, and ISRO chairman K Sivan rushed to inform the Prime Minister in the visitor's gallery.

Modi moved to a lounge adjacent to the viewing station

where he first told Sivan to stay calm and not lose hope, assuring him that the entire nation stood with the scientists, sources said. After this, they said, he moved to the room where the scientists were stationed, and told them to "be courageous".

"I will go back to the scientists tomorrow morning. Call the ISRO chairman and fix the time," the Prime Minister is learnt to have told his aides after returning to the hotel. His aides, meanwhile, alerted the Maharashtra government about the impromptu change in schedule.

Sources said the Prime Minister "kept up a brave face" but "was awake through the night, putting his thoughts down, calling aides". They said he had jotted down in Gujarati and Hindi his message for the scientists the next morning.

Later, on the flight to Mumbai, the Prime Minister is learnt to have told his aides that he had seen the "strength of India, and those who make it" at the control room in Bengaluru.

The Chandrayaan-2 orbiter has since located and taken thermal images of the lander on the Moon but ISRO has so far not provided any details of its condition. "There is no update as of now. As you know, we are still trying to establish contact," an ISRO official said.

WITH ENDS IN PUTS

Fadnavis targets NCP after workers raise slogans at his rally

SHUBHANGI KHAPRE & AJAY JADHAV
PUNE, SATARA, SEPTEMBER 15

A DAY after NCP workers raised slogans at a rally addressed by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis during the Mahajanadesh Yatra on party chief Sharad Pawar's home turf of Baramati, Fadnavis on Sunday hit out at the party, asking how it would feel if BJP workers started disrupting Pawar's public meetings.

"Should BJP workers now go to every public rally of Pawar and raise slogans?" he asked.

"Seven NCP workers were raising slogans at the Mahajanadesh Yatra in Baramati. There was no police action against them. They ran away when police approached them... Will it be okay if seven of our party workers carry out sloganeering in each rally by Pawar? This is not the way to behave," Fadnavis said of the incident that led to a tense situation for a while in Baramati during his roadshow.

He added, "Does this (sloganeering) mean no leader of any other political party should hold rallies in Baramati? Is Article 370 enacted there?"



Devendra Fadnavis

Stating that he would help NCP workers hold a rally in his hometown, Fadnavis added: "This is a democracy. In a democracy, every political party has the right to hold public rallies. It seems as if the ground is slipping under their (NCP) feet and so they don't want the CM to come to their town and address rallies." Flanked by former NCP leader and descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji Udayanraje Bhosale, who resigned as Satara MP to join the BJP, and former Satara MLA Shivendraraje Bhosale who also joined the saffron party, Fadnavis' roadshow passed through Pune and Satara on Sunday.

Speaking at the rally, Udayanraje said, "The Congress and NCP have been finished. It's time they introspected."

"The development plank of the Fadnavis government... is responsible for established leaders quitting the Congress and NCP to join BJP," he said.

Rajya Sabha MP and party national vice president Shivanand Tiwari had gone on to say that RJD could accept Nitish as Grand Alliance leader again, if he would decide to quit the ruling National Democratic Alliance.

An RJD source said: "There are definitely two opinions within the party. Tejashwi perhaps is worried about his political growth if Nitish comes back to the Grand Alliance. But some seniors believe that only Nitish can help revive fortunes of the BJP."

The source added that Tejashwi's "tough stance" might be borne out of the "2015 mandate betrayal by Nitish".

A row over Nitish Kumar's leadership had also recently pitted the JD (U) against the BJP till deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi sought to put the matter to rest by calling Nitish the "NDA captain for 2020 polls".

Keep pressure on leaders to fulfill demands, says Malik

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 15

SAYING THAT the time was ripe for people of Jammu and Kashmir to benefit from the Centre's attention to the region, Governor Satya Pal Malik on Saturday asked people to keep pressuring their leaders to fulfill their demands.

Speaking during the inauguration of a 100-bed cancer institute here, Malik said: "I appeal to people to take advantage of the situation and keep up pressure on leaders. Whenever I hear speeches of Jitendra Singh, there is mostly mention of elections. They are scared of elections. Keep raising your demands."

He then also recited a verse, "*Leney se taj-o-takhat bhi mil jatey hein, mangney se beekh bhi nahi mili*," (While one can get anything by taking it, by asking, you don't even get alms).

Get your demands fulfilled and exert pressure, he exhorted.

Speaking about the Centre's efforts in the state, he said, "The government lives for you. Have you ever heard of a Home Minister sitting with sarpanches and asking them what they want?... Home Minister Amit Shah, whose name makes leaders breathless, is holding meetings with sarpanches from the state and asking them to tell him what needs to be done."

"The doors of Delhi are open for you, take advantage of it," he said. Naming Singh again along with BJP's Jammu-Poonch MP Jugal Kishore and himself, he said, "Pressurise Jitendra Singh, Jugal Kishore and even me as I



Governor Satya Pal Malik was speaking during the inauguration of a hospital

am still here." We will make an all-out effort for the complete development of both Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

Every ministry in Delhi has opened its coffers for the development of Jammu and Kashmir, he said, adding that officials from nearly a dozen ministries had visited Srinagar so far.

"They will be visiting here as well," Malik said. "If we fail to utilise this opportunity, then there is no one more unfortunate than us," he said.

Turning to MoS Singh again, Malik said he "is from a martial community and attacks PoK daily. I will not do the same. But I will tell you that the first day I came here to take charge (of gubernatorial office), the Prime Minister told me to develop J&K so much that people of PoK wish to come to this side."

Undermining Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent statement asking the people of PoK to wait for his signal to cross the LoC, Malik said, "No one will come on his signal. But we need to develop. And seeing the development, people from the other side will want to cross over to this side."

Curfew in Kishtwar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 15

A DAY after it was lifted, a curfew was reimposed in Kishtwar town in Jammu on Sunday following the death of a senior Hurriyat Conference leader Master Ghulam Nabi Gundna after a prolonged illness at a hospital in Ludhiana.

Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner Angrez Singh Rana said restrictions were reimposed as a precautionary measure against the possibility of any trouble during Gundna's Namaz-e-Janaza on Monday.

The curfew had earlier been imposed on Friday after the

weapon of senior PDP leader's PSO was snatched. Gundna, 70, was a retired government school teacher.

Sources said he had considerable influence in the region. He is survived by his wife and five sons, one of whom is in Pakistan and another lodged in jail on charges of indulging in militancy-related activities.

His third son is an assistant professor and the remaining sons operate businesses in Kishtwar. As news of his death reached the district, his supporters started arriving in Kishtwar. While the deputy commissioner reimposed the curfew, police and security personnel were deployed in strength.

Azad's plea among J&K petitions to be heard in SC today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE SUPREME Court will hear on Monday a batch of petitions regarding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the Centre revoking the special status granted to it under Article 370 of the Constitution.

The court has also listed for hearing a petition by Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Asked about his petition on Sunday at a press conference, Azad said: "My petition is non-political. It is my personal petition and not on behalf of the Congress party... It is on humanitarian grounds. I have expressed a concern as a citizen of the state and as an MP from the state."

"I tried to visit the state three times but was sent back, twice from Srinagar and once from Jammu. Approximately one third of our people are labourers. They are daily-wage earners... Nobody has paid attention to them. It has been 42 days (since restrictions have been imposed). Do they have food to eat?... nobody has bothered about their plight. So I am raising a humanitarian issue... it is a humanitarian question for the state government, Central government, media and the en-

tire country..."

On abrogation of the special status, since many of his party colleagues had backed it, he said the matter was no more in the hands of political parties now that a law had been made and the Supreme Court will decide the matter.

Other petitions include one by Executive Editor of *Kashmir Times*, Anuradha Bhasin, who contended there was a "communication blackout" in J&K and that the daily has not been able to publish from Srinagar after restrictions were put in place following the Centre's announcement.

On the last date of hearing, the Centre said many other newspapers were being published from Srinagar, and "our case is she (Bhasin) had consciously chosen not to publish".

The court will also hear Rajya Sabha MP and MDMK general secretary Vaiko's Habeas Corpus plea seeking production of former J&K CM Farooq Abdullah, who he claimed was not being allowed to attend a seminar organised by him in Chennai.

It will also hear CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury's plea regarding the detention of party leader Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami.

The court had directed that he be shifted to AIIMS Delhi.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



GRAND PLANS

WITH EVERY state unit and ministry vying with each other to celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday on September 17 differently, Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has announced that he will donate his salary for the next six months to install dustbins in 1,100 village markets in his state. He has also appealed to all the clubs, social organisations and NGOs to install dustbins in their respective areas. Not just that, he has clubbed Fit India Movement and Poshan Abhiyan too with the birthday celebration programmes.

TIGHTENING NORMS

APPOINTMENTS TO top posts at Central educational institutions, especially Central universities, by the incumbent government have been disappointing. In the last one year alone, two vice-chancellors have resigned over charges of plagiarism and corruption. Although the HRD Ministry, in the last five years, has fired V-Cs for incompetence, the process is long-drawn. The ministry is now trying an arrangement by which if any institution head faces serious allegations of academic and financial corruption, it can remove them without any notice. Recently, the government advertised the post of director for IIT-Mandi and IIT-Indore. With this, the ministry has introduced a new application form in which the applicants will have to give an undertaking that if they provide any false information, they can be removed without notice. Also, the government has asked each candidate to provide vigilance clearance from their respective institutes at the time of application. Vigilance clearance was earlier sought once a panel of finalists was shortlisted by the selection committee.

DOUBLING UP

AMONG THE crucial standing committees, only the committee on Home Affairs has a chairman from the Opposition. However, this committee that will scrutinise the affairs of Home Ministry headed by BJP president Amit Shah has two key BJP general secretaries handpicked by Shah — Bhupender Yadav and Anil Jain. Yadav also has the distinction of being the only chairman of a standing committee who is also a member of another committee. He is the chairman of personnel, public grievances, law and justice panel — and a member of another significant panel. Another leader who has got a double bonanza is party MP Sanjay Jaiswal. In 24 hours, Jaiswal, the chief whip of the BJP in Lok Sabha, has been given the chairmanship of Water Resources committee and leadership of the BJP's Bihar unit.

SPELLING IT OUT

SUPREME COURT judge Justice Rohinton F Nariman, while delivering the keynote address on arbitration laws in Delhi on Saturday, virtually highlighted clause-by-clause problems in the 2018 amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act. Justice Nariman said it was "unfortunate" and "absurd" that the government had made changes to the law contrary to settled case laws of the SC. Incidentally, many of the settled points of law in question were cases that Justice Nariman had argued and won as a lawyer or verdicts he delivered as a judge.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Dearth of quality people in north India, says Gangwar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 15



Santosh Kumar Gangwar

UNION LABOUR Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar has said there is no dearth of employment opportunities in the country, but recruiters visiting north India complain of lack of "quality people" to fill vacancies, drawing flak from Opposition leaders, who accused him of insulting people in the region.

The comments came amid criticism of the government over India's unemployment rate rising to a 45-year high of 6.1 per cent in 2017-18, data for which, was released in May.

"The issue of employment keeps figuring in newspapers these days. I am handling the same ministry for labour and employment and examine the issue daily. I have understood the problem," Gangwar told reporters on Saturday in Bareilly, his Lok Sabha constituency.

"Recruiters who visit north India complain of facing a dearth of quality people for the posts they need to fill," he added.

The minister's comments drew sharp reactions from opposition with Congress leader

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra saying the government was trying to escape blame for the job losses due to economic slowdown by such "insulting" comments.

"Mr Minister, it has been more than five years for your government. There is no job creation. Whatever jobs were there, they have been snatched due to the economic slowdown... You want to escape by insulting North Indians," she said.

"Youths are looking towards the government hoping that it will do something good for them," the Congress general secretary said.

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said, "After the different laughable statements by different Union ministers on the serious issue of economic slowdown, instead of removing unemployment... now it is being said there is no shortage of jobs, but of competence, especially amongst north Indians."

Cong gets Haryana boost: Independent MLA, INLD leaders join ranks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

IN A shot in the arm for the Congress, several leaders of the INLD, including its former Haryana unit president Ashok Arora, on Sunday joined the party. Former Union minister and three-time Lok Sabha MP Jai Parkash also joined the Congress.

Parkash, a former Congress leader, is now an Independent MLA. Welcoming them along with former state minister and INLD leader Subhash Goyal and former INLD MLA Pradeep Chaudhary, AICC general secretary in charge of Haryana

Ghulam Nabi Azad said their joining reflects a growing thinking among leaders of regional parties that the Congress alone can fight and defeat the BJP.

He said most of the regional parties have either weakened or are on the verge of extinction. Flanked by Haryana Congress president Kumari Selja and CLP leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Azad said, "Those who joined the Congress today have realised that time has come to strengthen the Congress so that the BJP can be defeated."

Arora, a former state minister and Speaker, was president of the Haryana unit of the INLD for 15 years.

BIHAR 2020 ASSEMBLY POLLS

Tejashwi plays down senior leaders' feelers to Nitish, dismisses possibility of alliance

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 15

TAKING ON statements by senior RJD leaders on the possibilities of an alliance with the Janata Dal (United) for the 2020 Assembly polls, Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav has dismissed the idea saying "Nitish Kumar is known for betrayal."

Speaking at a party workers meeting on Saturday, the former deputy CM said, "Nitish Kumar has never mustered the courage to contest Assembly elections on his own in the last 15 years. He either went with the BJP, or with us, but betrayed us both. He is known for betrayal and could continue to do so."

He also categorically ruled out any chance of any alliance with JD(U) for the 2020

EXPLAINED

Fears of sidelines impeding alliance

TEJASHWI, DESPITE not being able to impress in the last Lok Sabha polls, sees the 2020 Assembly elections as a big opportunity to advance his political interests and somewhat consolidate his position in the party. If Nitish happens to return to the Grand Alliance, Tejashwi may get relegated to the sidelines again. His personal political ambition and trust deficit with Nitish is holding him back for any possible tieup with the JD(U).

Assembly polls. The RJD has already nominated Tejashwi as the party's CM candidate.

Later, Tejashwi took to Twitter saying, "Nitish Kumar does not have policies, principles and ideology of his own. He had been only eloquent on opposing BJP on Article 370 and triple talaq but ended up only helping BJP during voting in

Parliament. He has always betrayed us, Grand Alliance constituents and BJP. The chair is his first and last idea."

His stance is in contravention to ideas of several senior leaders. Former MP and party national vice president Raghuvansh Prasad Singh had said that RJD should try to rally around non-BJP parties and earlier, former



NORTH

Sexual harassmtent case: BHU prof asked to go on leave

Lucknow: BHU professor Shail Kumar Choubey, who was re-instated recently after being suspended last year over sexual harassment charges, has been asked to go on leave till the university's executive council takes a final decision in the case. "I met some students

who were unhappy with the decision of the council to re-instate him. I have decided to request the council to reconsider its decision. I have also asked Professor Choubey to go on leave till a final decision is taken," said V-C Rakesh Bhatnagar, who also heads the executive council. **ENS**



BJP vice-president Shivraj Singh Chouhan feeds a cow at during Sewa Saptah to mark the birthday of PM Narendra Modi on September 17, in Bhopal Sunday. PTI

WEST

Two Maoists gunned down in Gadchiroli encounter

Nagpur: Gadchiroli police killed two Maoists in an encounter in Gyarapatti Police outpost area under Dhanora tehsil of the district on Sunday, a senior officer said. "The encounter broke out during a search by a police party close to the Chhattisgarh border. We have recovered bodies of a

man and a woman," SP Shailesh Balkawde said. He added, "It was an input-based operation launched on Saturday. The Maoist group was camping at the spot. When we cornered them, they opened fire. We suspect more Maoist cadres were injured." **ENS**

EAST

Former inmate of Patna shelter gangraped, four booked

Patna: A teenaged girl, who was a former inmate of a Patna shelter, was allegedly raped by four persons in West Champaran district late on Friday night, police said. The police lodged a case against the four accused and searches are on to nab them. According to police, the

victim was on her way to a relative's home when the four accused abducted her and later gangraped her.

The in-charge of the local police station said, "We recorded the victim's statement at the hospital. She has identified four persons. We are conducting raids to arrest them." **ENS**

SOUTH

After staying out for 52 days, Nalini surrenders at prison

Vellore: Nalini Sriharan, one of the seven convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, surrendered at a prison here on Sunday, after being out of the jail for 52 days on ordinary leave granted by the Madras High Court. Nalini, who was granted parole to make preparations of her

daughter's marriage, surrendered before the prison authorities here, her legal adviser, P Pugazhenthii, told PTI. On July 25, she was released on a 30-day parole and later she petitioned the Madras High Court again, which extended her leave in August by three weeks. **PTI**

Give student loans on future income: IIT-Delhi

RITIKA CHOPRA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE INDIAN Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi has urged the government to emulate Australia and extend income-contingent loans to students to cover tuition fees and seek repayment only after they have found a job.

The suggestion is part of IIT-Delhi's pitch for more financial autonomy for the country's 23 premier engineering institutes. The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry is currently examining it, *The Indian Express* has learned.

Australia's Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) lends students the cost of their tuition

fees, and repayment begins after they start earning above a fixed threshold. HELP is different from mortgage-style loans in which a debtor has to repay regardless of her income.

IIT-Delhi has suggested that the HRD Ministry should consider setting up an agency similar to the Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) "for directly funding students with full or partial tuition fee based on their needs and put in a process to recover as additional tax/cess once he/she gets employed." HEFA is an agency that extends ten-year loans to government educational institutions for infrastructure development.

"It is important for IITs that our graduates do not always choose high-paying jobs but fol-



The HRD Ministry is examining the proposal. File

low their passion in other fields, including research and public service. Very high loan as a burden eliminates career choices as can be seen even today from the

IIM type loan based education," the proposal states.

The IITs spend close to Rs 6 lakh on educating one undergraduate student every year. The

Demolition deadline nears, Kerala CM calls all-party meet

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 15

A DAY after leaders of political parties extended support to residents of four residential complexes near Kochi, which face demolition as per a Supreme Court order for violating the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Act, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday called an all-party meeting to discuss the issue.

According to a communication from the Chief Minister's Office, the meeting would be held Tuesday evening.

On Saturday, CPM state secretary Kodiyeeri Balakrishnan, Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala and BJP state president P S Sreedharan Pillai came out in support of the residents and flat owners. Balakrishnan, after visiting the flat owners, said the party would stand with them.

Chennithala said that if the court verdict has to be implemented, the owners should be compensated, he said.

However, CPI state secretary Kanam Rajendran said the court verdict should be implemented and compensation should be extracted from the builders.

Following the ultimatum from the Supreme Court that the four apartments should be demolished on or before September 20 and a compliance report be filed in the court on September 23, the Maradu municipality, respondent in the case, had initiated measures to implement the court verdict.

Last week, the officials had served notices on the residents to vacate the flats by Sunday and invited expression of interest from agencies which can pull down the highrises. However, in line with the dominating mood, the CPM and Congress members at Maradu municipal council demanded that the flats should not be demolished.

Flat owners' representative and leader of Save Maradu Homes Shamsudeen Karunagappally said a petition would be moved in the High Court on Monday against the eviction notice. "We should not be punished for mistakes committed by government officials," he said.

Tale of 2 CRZ violation cases, 2 SC rulings

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 15

WHILE THE Supreme Court has ordered the demolition of four apartments near Kochi for being constructed in violation of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules, it had allowed the regularisation of a DLF property in Kochi, also accused of flouting CRZ norms, after imposition of Rs 1 crore as penalty.

On January 10 last year, a bench of RF Nariman and SK Kaul upheld the verdict of the division bench of Kerala High Court, which allowed the regularisation of the DLF apartment project with 185 units after imposing the fine for violation of CRZ norms.

The Supreme Court had then observed that the alleged violations had not emerged with clarity and that if the Kerala Coastal Zone Management Authority (KCZMA) had acted promptly, the picture would have been clear. The findings of CRZ violations made by the high court were set aside, but the builder was asked to pay a fine of Rs 1 crore for having started construction without prior environmental clearance.

Although the DLF project is



At a protest by the residents of a Maradu apartment

under the jurisdiction of Kochi Municipal Corporation and the four apartment projects slated for demolition come under the Maradu municipality, both projects are situated on the banks of Chilavannur lake. So are several other highrises.

In 2012, a single bench of Kerala High Court ordered that the DLF project be demolished after the apartment complex was found to have been constructed in violation of CRZ rules. A division bench in 2014 upheld the finding of the single bench regarding the

CRZ violation, but said, "This court is of the view that causing demolition of the structure will be more detrimental than causing it to be retained; also with a view to lessen the probable additional damages to be caused to the environment in this regard. This in turn persuades this court to save demolition, however, making the builder to pay for the damage caused to the environment."

The division bench had also remarked that the state government or the KCZMA had not taken any action against other builders,

How the two projects came under scanner, what happened next

THE PERMITS

■ The DLF project came up in an area categorised as CRZ -I. The developer got building permit from Kochi Municipal Corporation and other government agencies in October 2007.

■ Maradu, where the four apartments which the SC ordered to be demolished are located, has been under CRZ III category as per the coastal zone management plan of 1996. When building permits were granted in 2005-06, Maradu was a village panchayat, but a fast-developing urban area adjacent to Kochi.

THE CLEARANCE

■ DLF moved application for

environmental clearance a month after building permit was granted. DLF went ahead with the construction, thinking there was deemed clearance as there was no communication from KCZMA or others. In 2011, Centre for Earth Science Studies, which was asked to look into the issue by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, detected a fault. By then, construction had progressed.

■ At Maradu, builders did not approach KCZMA for clearance and went ahead with the construction. The Maradu local body too did not bother.

TROUBLE BEGINS

■ For DLF, trouble began in 2011 when A V Antony, who



One of the four buildings that faces demolition

lives close to the project, complained to revenue department, which issued a stop memo. A KCZMA team

visited the project and a committee was formed to look into it.

■ For builders at Maradu, trouble began in 2007 when the vigilance wing of the town planning department detected anomalies in building permits and asked the panchayat to revoke all permits. KCZMA stepped in following a complaint from activist Cheshire Tarzen.

LEGAL FIGHT

■ Antony moved the high court against DLF in 2012, seeking demolition of the project. After a legal battle, a single bench ordered demolition, but a division bench stayed it and ordered a penalty for DLF. The Supreme Court, which upheld the division bench

order, questioned Antony's motive and KCZMA's delay in taking action. It asked why Antony remained silent for five years and approached the court after the construction was over and why he singled out DLF when the area has several such projects.

■ In the case of Maradu builders, the legal battle started in 2007 when they moved the high court against the panchayat's stop memo. The single bench and division bench favoured the builders. Meanwhile, Maradu panchayat became a municipality and as per the CRZ draft notification of 2011 the area was brought under CRZ-II. But KCZMA moved the Supreme Court, which ordered the demolition.



Rescue work at the site of the mishap on Sunday. PTI

Officials said at least eight bodies were recovered by local fishermen and 24 people were rescued. East Godavari District Collector M Muralidhar Reddy said that apart from two NDRF teams comprising 30 personnel each, a helicopter of Navy was also involved in the rescue operation. Several boats of private agencies were requisitioned to rush rescue personnel to the site of mishap.

This is the third such incident in this section of the Godavari in

the last two years. Officials said that till September 13, 5.5 lakh cusecs of additional water flowed into the river.

Rao said the Kakinada Port Authority is in charge of regulating permits and licences to private agencies to operate tourist boats. "There are very strict rules and guidelines for operating tourist boats. I think this boat did not have a permit but still took tourists. The matter is under investigation and we will initiate action. As of now, we have again issued an order to suspend movement of tourist boats in Godavari," Rao said.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh to the kin of each of the deceased.

Among those missing are at least nine people from Warangal in Telangana. A group of 14 people from Warangal and Kazipet had gone to Rajahmundry and boarded the private boat for sight-seeing. While five of them have been accounted for, nine are reported missing.

CBI search for Rajeev Kumar reaches state secretariat

Kolkata: After former Kolkata police commissioner did not appear before the CBI on Saturday for questioning in the Saradha scam case, a team from the agency reached the state secretariat on Sunday.

The two-member CBI team had letters addressed to the DGP, the state chief secretary and the home secretary, apparently seeking whereabouts of Kumar, currently the ADG of West Bengal CID.

Sources said the CBI officers had four letters, of which two meant for the DGP were received by his office. They, however, were asked to come on Monday to hand over the letters to the chief secretary and home secretary as their offices were closed on Sunday.

"We cannot disclose the contents of the letters. The letters for the chief secretary and home secretary were not accepted. They (Nabanna officials) asked us to come again on Monday," said a CBI officer. **ENS**

Army moots authority to JCOs to write ACRs

MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15

THE ARMY Headquarters has proposed a new system of writing the Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) wherein these would be written by Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) and not the officers, as is being done currently.

A proposal in this regard has been initiated for examination and implementation by the Army Headquarters on the directions of the Chief of Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat.

A present, the ACRs of the NCOs, comprising the ranks of jawans till Havildars, are written by the Company Commanders who are commissioned officers. It is now proposed that the JCOs (ranks of Naib Subedar to Subedar Major) who serve as Platoon Commanders, senior JCOs and Subedar Majors in units should write the ACRs of the NCOs as they serve directly under them. Presently, the JCOs

EXPLAINED

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Step towards giving more power to JCOs

JUNIOR COMMISSIONED Officers (JCOs) have always been the mainstay in any Army unit. Over the years, the average number of commissioned officers in an unit has gone down and there have been calls for giving greater responsibilities to JCOs. Empowering them to write confidential reports of NCOs is a step towards giving them more authority as well as greater say in command and control in the unit.

have no say in the writing of the ACRs.

It has also been proposed that the Company Commanders would be the reviewing officers for the ACRs under the new system.

A letter has been issued by the Adjutant Generals branch of Army Headquarters on September 13 in which it has been pointed out that JCOs are an important part of the command and control structure of the Army. The letter, which has been disseminated throughout

the Army, says that it is imperative that the JCOs are empowered so that they exercise more control over the subordinates who come under their direct command.

The Adjutant Generals branch has sought comments till October 31 on the move which seeks to instill judicious assessment of confidential reports of the NCOs. It has also been added that the Key Result Areas Monitoring Cell of the Chief of Army Staffs Secretariat has approved the implementation of

the move.

There has been a mixed reaction to the proposal. A senior serving officer opined that a large percentage of the JCOs as on today are not able to write well. "It is not understood how they will write the ACRs which require considerable knowledge of language. The JCOs may also be more susceptible to pressures and pulls, being mostly from the same social groups and regions and the troops," an officer said. He also expressed the apprehension that this may result in a chasm between the officers and the troops.

When contacted, a senior officer at Army Headquarters confirmed that this was a move to empower the JCOs by giving them more authority.

"The number of officers in a unit is not going to increase drastically. We have to ensure that the JCOs shoulder more responsibility. The results may not be immediate but in a few years down the line, the JCOs would be able to do this task well once it is institutionalised," he said.

Boat capsizes in Godavari, 8 drown, several still missing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 15

AT LEAST eight people drowned and several others were reported missing after a tourist boat capsized in Godavari River in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday, officials said.

The boat was ferrying at least 50-60 people from the Gandipochamma temple to the Papikondalu hills when the mishap took place, said officials.

According to state Tourism Minister M Srinivasa Rao, the boat was operated by a private agency based in Rajahmundry. "We are trying to find out how this private boat operated today, since Godavari is in spate. The state tourism department has stopped operating boats several days back due to the high water level. We have to investigate why this private boat was allowed to operate. We have deputed NDRF teams and sent several boats with swimmers to help in the rescue work," Rao said.

TELLING NUMBERS

Why twin strikes on Saudi oil facilities matter worldwide



Satellite image shows smoke rising from Aramco's Abqaiq processing facility in Buqyaq, Saudi Arabia. Planet Labs Inc via AP

ON SATURDAY, Houthi rebels from Yemen carried out drone attacks on two major oil facilities in Saudi Arabia, including the world's biggest petroleum processing facility run by state-owned Saudi Aramco. This has impacted Saudi Arabia's oil production and exports, and in turn the global oil market.

5 mn barrels/day

Reuters quoted Aramco as saying the attack has cut output by 5.7 million barrels per day. In another report, Reuters put the figure at 5 million barrels per day. That is close to half of the kingdom's output, and 5% of global oil supply. Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, ships more than 7 million barrels of oil to global destinations every day. Reuters said the output cut was expected to send oil prices up \$3-\$5 per barrel on Monday.

260.2 bn barrels

These are the liquid reserves of Aramco, in oil equivalent, as of 2017. These reserves, Reuters said, are larger than the combined reserves of Exxon

Mobil Corp, Chevron Corp, Royal Dutch Shell Plc, BP Plc and Total SA, and have an estimated reserve life of 54 years.

10.3 mn barrels/day

The quantity of crude produced by Aramco last year. Company documents cited by Reuters said this was produced at \$2.8 a barrel, which the company touted as the lowest cost in the world to produce crude. Aramco also produced 1.1 million barrels of natural gas liquids and 8.9 billion standard cubic feet per day of natural gas.

5.2 mn barrels/day

Quantity of Aramco crude delivered delivered to customers in Asia last year, Reuters said. This was almost three-quarters of Aramco's total crude exports. The company believes demand will grow faster in Asia than elsewhere in the world - Asian buyers include China, India, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. Its crude deliveries to North America reached more than 1 million barrels per day last year; to Europe, 864,000 barrels per day.

THIS WORD MEANS

LOVERS OF MODENA

A pair of skeletons, 1,600 years old, found holding hands in grave. It turns out that both were men.

IN 2009, two 1,600-year-old skeletons were unearthed at the ancient Ciro Menotti cemetery in Modena, Italy. Holding hands when buried, they sparked worldwide interest, and the assumption that they were a pair of lovers - the 'Lovers of Modena' as they came to be known. New analysis has now established that both were men. Researchers from the University of Bologna extracted proteins from dental enamels to complete the skeletons' biological profile, including their sex. Their findings have been published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

Various skeleton pairs in the past have been found holding hands in areas such as Greece, Turkey and Siberia, but none of these so far have been established to be of the same sex. The new finding gives new insight about the funerary and burial practices in Late Antique Italy. The researchers hypothesise that the pair's burial "represents a voluntary expression of commitment between two individuals, rather



Unearthed at an ancient cemetery in Modena, Italy. University of Bologna

than a recurring cult practice of the Late Antiquity". The injuries on some of the other skeletons found in the cemetery suggest that they could have been war casualties and therefore, could have been "comrades" or "friends". Alternatively, they could have been cousins or brothers (given their similar ages) who shared the same grave because of familial bonds.

UDIT MISRA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

ON FRIDAY, the Reserve Bank of India shared the report of an Internal Working Group (IWG), which was set up in February to look at, among other things, the impact of farm loan waivers on state finances. The report has shown how farm loan waivers dented state finances and urged governments — both central and state — to avoid resorting to farm loan waivers.

Since 2014-15, many state governments have announced farm loan waivers. This was done for a variety of reasons including relieving distressed farmers struggling with lower incomes in the wake of repeated droughts and demonetisation. Also crucial in this regard was the timing of elections and several observers of the economy including the RBI warned against the use of farm loan waivers.

The latest report of RBI has concluded: "The IWG recommends that Gol and state governments should undertake a holistic review of the agricultural policies and their implementation, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of current subsidy policies with regard to agri inputs and credit in a manner which will improve the overall viability of agriculture in a sustainable manner. In view of the above stated, loan waivers should be avoided".

What has been the impact on state finances?

Chart 1 from the RBI report details the impact on state finances in successive years. Typically, once announced, farm loans waivers are staggered over three to five years. Between 2014-15 and 2018-19, the total farm loan waiver announced by different state governments was Rs 2.36 trillion. Of this, Rs 1.5 trillion has already been waived. For perspective, the last big farm loan waiver was announced by the UPA government in 2008-09 and it was Rs 0.72 trillion. Of this, actual waivers were only Rs 0.53 trillion — staggered between 2008-09 and 2011-12.

In other words, in the past five years, just a handful of states have already waived three-times the amount waived by the central government in 2008-09. The actual waivers peaked in 2017-18 — in the wake of demonetisation and its adverse impact on farm incomes — and amounted to almost 12 per cent of the states' fiscal deficit.

What is the impact on economic growth, interest rates and job creation ?

In essence, a farm loan waiver by the government implies that the government settles the private debt that a farmer owes to a bank. But doing so eats into the government's resources, which, in turn, leads to one of following two things: either the concerned government's fiscal deficit (or, in other words, total borrowing from the market) goes up or it has to cut down its expenditure.

A higher fiscal deficit, even if it is at the state level, implies that the amount of money available for lending to private businesses — both big and small — will be lower. It also

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

IN OCTOBER 2017, the Haleakala Observatory in Hawaii spotted a strange, spaceship-shaped object passing through the Solar System. Later named 'Oumuamua, it became the subject of speculation whether it was really an alien spaceship, but was eventually declared by scientists to be an interstellar object — the first such known visitor to the Solar System.

Now, it appears that a second interstellar object is paying a visit. On August 30, the MARGO observatory in Crimea spotted a



Anantnag MP Justice (retired) Hasnain Masoodi (right) with Farooq and Omar Abdullah in New Delhi on August 1. The Abdullahs are now under detention; Masoodi has HC's permission to visit them. Renuka Puri

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

How waived loans impact states

In recent years, many state govts have waived farm loans. How did this impact their respective finances? Following a recent RBI report, a look at why state finances matter for India's macroeconomic stability

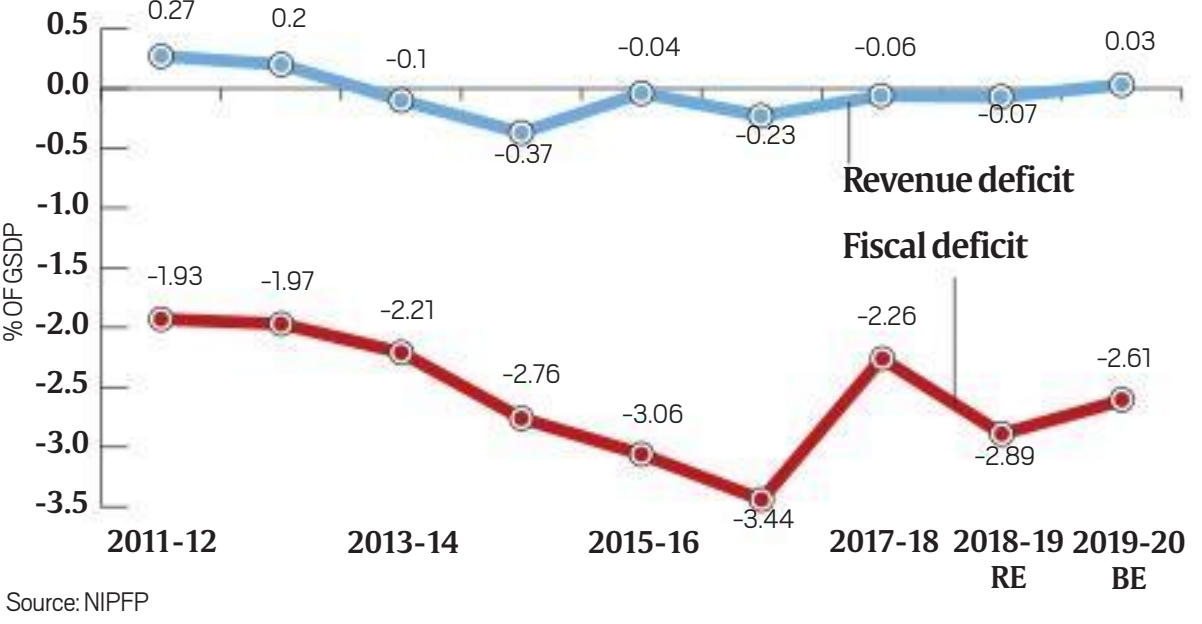
CHART 1: FISCAL IMPACT OF STATES' FARM LOAN WAIVERS (in ₹ billion)

STATE	YEAR OF ANNOUNCEMENT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT ACTUALLY PROVIDED IN THE BUDGET					2018-19*	2019-20**
			2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*		
Andhra	2014-15	240	40	7	35	36	9		1
Telangana	2014-15	170	43	43	30	30			
Tamil Nadu	2016-17	53			17	19	9	8	
Maharashtra	2017-18	340				152	68	35	
Uttar Pradesh	2017-18	364				211	55	6	
Punjab	2017-18	100				4	43	30	
Karnataka	2018-19	440				39	120	126	
Rajasthan	2018-19	180					30	32	
MP	2018-19	365					50	80	
Chhattisgarh	2018-19	61					42		
Total		2,365	83	50	82	490	429	309	
As a percentage of state govt's gross fiscal deficit			2.5	1.2	1.6	11.9	7.7	6.6	

*RE **BE

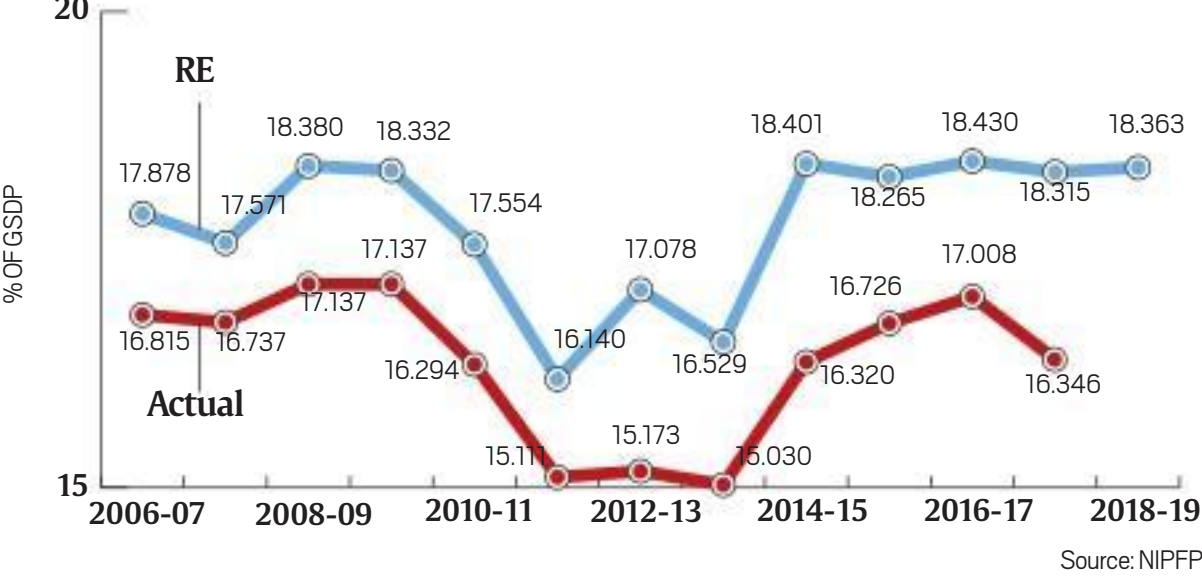
Source: Budget documents of state governments

CHART 2: STATES LARGELY MEET THEIR DEFICIT TARGETS



Source: NIPFP

CHART 3: STATES CUT EXPENDITURE TO MEET DEFICIT TARGETS



Source: NIPFP

CHART 4: NET BORROWINGS FROM THE MARKET (in ₹ billion)



Source: RBI

means the cost at which this money would be lent (or the interest rate) would be higher. If fresh credit is costly, there will be fewer new companies, and less job creation.

If the state government doesn't want to borrow the money from the market and wants to stick to its fiscal deficit target, it will be forced to accommodate by cutting expenditure. More often than not, states choose to cut capital expenditure — that is the kind of expenditure which would have led to the creation of productive assets such as more roads, buildings, schools etc — instead of the revenue expenditure, which is in the form of committed expenditure such as staff salaries and pensions. But cutting capital expenditure also undermines the ability to produce and grow in the future.

As such, farm loan waivers are not considered prudent because they hurt overall economic growth apart from ruining the credit culture in the economy since they incentivise defaulters and penalise those who pay back their loans.

So, are the states increasing their fiscal deficits or cutting capital expenditure?

There is no ready answer about specific states mentioned in *Chart 1*. However, an analysis of the latest state Budgets by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), released last month, shows that, on the whole, notwithstanding farm loan waivers etc., state governments stick to their fiscal deficit targets. In other words, state governments are not as profligate as they are made out to be. As *Chart 2* shows, states barring the episode (in 2015-16) when they had to absorb the losses of state discoms (power distribution companies) under the Ujjwal Discom Assurance Yojana (or UDAY), have stayed true to restricting their revenue deficit to zero and fiscal deficit to three per cent of their GDP.

But this relieving picture has a flip side. The way states meet their deficit targets is not by raising more revenues but by cutting expenditure. *Chart 3* shows how, each year, the actual expenditure is considerably lower than the Revised Estimates (RE) presented in the budget. And within expenditure, as Manish Gupta of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) points out, capital expenditure is cut relatively more than revenue expenditure.

How much do state finances matter for India's macroeconomic stability?

Far too often, analyses of the Indian economy focuses on the Union government's finances alone. But the ground realities are fast changing. The NIPFP study of state finances reveals that all the states, collectively, now spend 30 per cent more than the central government. Moreover, as *Chart 4* shows, since 2014, state governments have increasingly borrowed money from the market. In 2016-17, for instance, total net borrowings by all the states were almost equal (roughly 86 per cent) of the amount that the Centre borrowed.

In other words, state-level finances are just as important as the central government finances for India's macroeconomic stability and future economic growth.

Is a new interstellar object visiting Solar System?

comet which, astronomers believe, is likely to have originated from outside the Solar System, although the official confirmation has not been made yet.

The comet has been designated C/2019 Q4 (Borisov). It is still inbound toward the Sun. It will remain farther from Earth than the orbit of Mars — it will approach no closer to Earth than about 300 million km, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) said in a statement.

After the initial detections of the comet, JPL's Scout system automatically flagged the object as possibly being interstellar. Scientists at NASA's Center for Near-Earth Object Studies at JPL, European Space Agency's

Near-Earth Object Coordination Centre, and the NASA-sponsored Minor Planet Center in Massachusetts estimated the comet's precise trajectory and determine whether it originated within the Solar System or came from elsewhere in the galaxy.

"The comet's current velocity is high, about 150,000 kph, which is well above the typical velocities of objects orbiting the Sun at that distance. The high velocity indicates not only that the object likely originated from outside our Solar System, but also that it will leave and head back to interstellar space," David Farnocchia of NASA's Center for Near-Earth Object Studies said in the JPL statement.

As of Thursday, the comet was 420 million km from the Sun. It is heading toward the inner Solar System. On October 26, it will pass through the ecliptic plane — the plane in which Earth and the other planets orbit the Sun — from above at roughly a 40° angle. The comet will reach its closest point to Earth, or perihelion, on December 8.

C/2019 Q4 can be seen with professional telescopes for months to come. "The object will peak in brightness in mid-December and continue to be observable with moderate-size telescopes until April 2020. After that, it will only be observable with larger professional telescopes through October 2020," Farnocchia said.

Reading the HC order that allows two MPs to meet Abdullahs, with conditions

SOFIAHSAN

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 15

LAST WEEK, the Srinagar Bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir allowed two National Conference MPs to hold separate meetings with their party president Dr Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah, who have been in detention since the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5. However, the single-judge Bench barred the two Lok Sabha MPs — one of whom is a retired judge of the same High Court — from speaking to the media regarding the meeting, and imposed restrictions on the nature of the meeting.

What is the background of the incident, and the details of the case order?

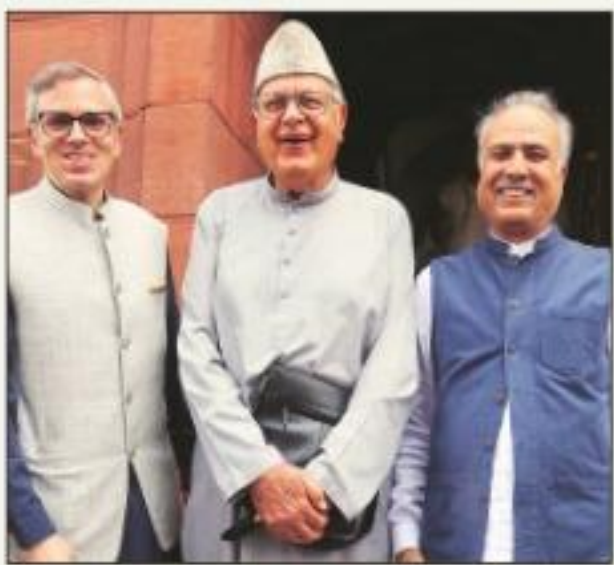
The NC MPs' petition

National Conference MPs Justice (retired) Hasnain Masoodi MP (Anantnag) and

Muhammad Akbar Lone (Baramulla) filed a writ petition on September 4, with a prayer for directions to permit their meeting with the two senior leaders under Article 226, an omnibus constitutional power allowing High Courts to exercise jurisdiction and pass directions in relation to their jurisdictional territory.

The petition, the first attempt by NC leaders for deliberations among themselves in the aftermath of the August 5 decision by the central government and its subsequent approval by Parliament, said the two Abdullahs had been under arrest since that day, and had not been allowed to meet any party workers, and even their relatives. Submitting that they too, were close friends of the leaders, the two MPs pleaded they were interested in knowing their wellbeing.

As per the High Court's order, Justice (retired) Masoodi also "claimed" that being a retired judge and a senior advocate, he was capable of rendering legal advice and assis-



Anantnag MP Justice (retired) Hasnain Masoodi (right) with Farooq and Omar Abdullah in New Delhi on August 1. The Abdullahs are now under detention; Masoodi has HC's permission to visit them. Renuka Puri

tance to the leaders, who were in detention for "undisclosed" reasons.

On September 6, during the initial hearing, Justice Sanjeev Kumar asked a government counsel, who was "incidentally" present in the court, to ascertain whether the two petitioners were "actually" prevented from meeting their party president and, if so, for what reasons. The hearing was adjourned until September 11.

The HC's final order

In the order released on Thursday, Justice Kumar directed the Deputy Commissioner of Srinagar to take steps to facilitate a meeting of Masoodi and Lone with the Abdullahs at the earliest. While Omar has been detained at Hari Niwas, Farooq has been detained at his own house in Srinagar's Gupkar area.

However, the Bench in the same order also directed the two MPs to "ensure" that the meetings were "restricted to a courtesy

call" only, and to know about the wellbeing of the two NC leaders. The Court also made it clear that Masoodi and Lone "shall not go to press/media regarding their meeting and deliberations with the aforesaid persons".

The direction to restrict their meeting to a courtesy call in effect rejected the argument made by Justice Masoodi's counsel that he (Masoodi) could provide legal advice to his party leaders regarding their detention.

In its submissions, the government does not seem to have pleaded for restrictions on the nature of the meetings, or for their contents to not be disclosed publicly. Counsel for the government, in a verbal response, is recorded to have stated that there "is no formal restriction" on the meeting of the two MPs with their party leaders, and that the state was not averse to the meeting. However, the counsel asserted that the MPs must ensure that they would not do anything aimed at "vitiating the peaceful atmosphere".

The Yechury case

In their petition, the two MPs referred to a *habeas corpus* plea filed by CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury in the Supreme Court regarding the whereabouts of J&K party unit leader Mohd Yousuf Tarigami.

On August 28, the Supreme Court had allowed Yechury to travel to Kashmir to meet his colleague, but only to enquire about his health, and "for no other purpose". The court had warned that if Yechury was found "to be indulging in any other act, omission or commission save and except what has been indicated above i.e. to meet his friend and colleague and to enquire about his welfare and health condition, it will be construed to be a violation of this Court's order".

Counsel for Yechury was told that once his client returns to Delhi, he would have to "file a report supported by an affidavit in connection with the purpose of the visit as indicated in this order".



FARMING MIGHT LOOK EASY WHEN YOUR PLOUGH IS A PENCIL AND YOU ARE A THOUSAND MILES FROM THE CORN FIELD. — DWIGHT D EISENHOWER

The IndianEXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

No HALF MEASURES

Government needs to up public spending and investment in stalled projects to beat the slowdown

OVER THE WEEKEND, the government unveiled measures aimed at reviving the country's troubled housing industry and exports. These include a Rs 20,000-crore refund to help the completion of affordable and middle-income housing projects that are Non Performing Assets and are not before the bankruptcy court or the National Company Law Tribunal, and which face last mile funding problems. The government will contribute Rs 10,000 crore to this stress fund and other investors will contribute the rest. A professional team will manage the fund that is estimated to potentially benefit 3.5 lakh housing units across the country. This may seem like the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) in the US in which the government provided funds to help avoid foreclosures by home buyers. In the absence of details on how many projects would qualify and the selection of such projects, considering that there are hundreds of projects promoted by developers in which thousands of crores of money pumped in by home buyers and banks are stuck, this and the package for the export sector appear to be half measures.

In the backdrop of sliding exports — the data for August shows a decline of 6.05 per cent compared to a year ago — the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, announced a new export incentive scheme that will be WTO compliant, full electronic refund of GST to exporters by the end of this month, easier funding and annual mega shopping festivals in four cities by 2020, modelled perhaps on Dubai, and a faster turnaround time in airports and ports. These are not likely to help significantly reverse the trend in the near term given the escalating trade war and the global slowdown. Indeed, better infrastructure and a shift to zero rating of exports or levying of zero rate of tax on exports on the lines of countries which have implemented GST, thus easing the compliance burden, and unlocking capital that is locked up could provide a better boost competitiveness of Indian exports. Ultimately, countering the slowdown may hinge largely on the government stepping up public spending or investment in stalled projects. And at a time when revenue growth is far lower than projected so far this fiscal, it is also important that the GST Council also stand firm in rejecting the growing demand for a cut in GST to arrest the secular decline in auto sales.

Fiscal orthodoxy and the spectre of bond vigilantism may deter the government from stepping up public spending. But it is interesting that in the face of weakening growth, fiscal rules are being overturned in the West. Some days ago, both the European Central Bank President (ECB) Mario Draghi and his successor, Christine Lagarde, pitched for fiscal stimulus by European governments. Monetary policymakers in Europe want governments to ramp up public spending to boost growth with the ECB having stepped up its bond buying programme. These should provide enough cues for the government here too.

LET THE FARMER CHOOSE

State may provide the cultivator with funds, but not incentivise untested technologies like zero budget natural farming

ZERO BUDGET NATURAL Farming (ZBNF) may have received endorsement from the NITI Aayog, the finance minister's budget speech and Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. But that hasn't stopped the country's premier academy of agricultural scientists from coming out against an "unproven technology" that, they say, brings no incremental gain to either farmers or consumers. Since the mid-1960s, India's annual foodgrain output has risen from 80-85 million tonnes (mt) to 280 mt-plus, just as it has from about 20 mt to 176 mt for milk and by similar magnitudes in vegetables, fruits, poultry meat, eggs, sugarcane and cotton. A significant part of these increases have come from crossbreeding or improved varieties/hybrids responsive to chemical fertiliser application, and also crop protection chemicals to ensure that the resultant genetic yield gains aren't eaten away by insects, fungi or weeds. Today's millennials may have little connect with the Bengal Famine or the ship-to-mouth times hardly five decades ago. But they should know that without IR-8 rice, urea, chlorpyrifos or artificial insemination, the nation would simply not have been able to feed itself.

The basic idea of "zero budget" itself rests on very shaky scientific foundations. Its propounder Subhash Palekar Palekar, for instance, claims that nitrogen, the most important nutrient for plant growth, is available "free" from the air. Yes, nitrogen makes up 78 per cent of the atmosphere, but being in a non-reactive diatomic (N2) state, it has to be first "fixed" into a plant-usable form — which is what ammonia or urea are. Even maintaining indigenous cows and collecting their dung and urine — the main ingredients in Palekar's microbial, seed treatment and insect pest management solutions — entails labour cost. Simply put, agriculture can never be zero budget. Also, crop yields cannot go up beyond a point with just cow dung that has only around 3 per cent nitrogen (as against 46 per cent in urea), 2 per cent phosphorous (46 per cent in di-ammonium phosphate) and 1 per cent potassium (60 per cent in muriate of potash).

That said, there is a strong case for promoting techniques such as conservation tillage, trash mulching, green manuring and vermi-composting, apart from reducing use of chemical fertilisers and insecticides through integrated nutrient and pest management. The time has also come for eliminating fertiliser subsidies to encourage their judicious use. The government should give farmers a fixed sum of money per acre, which they can use to buy chemical-based inputs or to engage the extra labour necessary for organic agricultural practices. Discrimination must end; let the farmer choose between non-organic, organic or even ZBNF.

FREEZE FRAME



E P UNNY



Soumya KANTI GHOSH

THERE HAS BEEN an enormous amount of writing on the Indian economy in the past few day. Most of it recommends the simple policy option of aggressive rate cuts to boost demand. But while rate cuts are welcome, they might not suffice in the current context.

First, the current slowdown is mostly consumption led, a by-product of the slow income growth in recent times (rural and urban wages have grown by 1-2 per cent in real terms). However, even though private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) has declined by Rs 1.5 lakh crore in Q1 FY20, it is still higher by Rs 1.65 lakh crore over the same period last year. Thus, while we should be worried, we must not be overtly despondent and write obituaries of the India's growth story just yet. Unfortunately, the markets are currently soaking in trepidation, anticipating an uncertain future that the data still does not suggest.

What could be an ideal policy option in the current context? The high inflation and high interest rates in the 1970s generated a revolution in macroeconomic thinking, policy and institutions. The theory of real business cycles, propounding the ineffectiveness of any policy response and the subsequent theory of market imperfections, opened a new vista in economics literature of how to deal with growth conundrums. In similar vein, the low inflation, interest rate and stagnation of the last decade in the developed economies deserves an equal response.

What could be that response? The contemporary issue for macroeconomists is to kickstart aggregate demand. We believe that monetary policy can only act to some extent — we have been in an era of low interest rates for a decade but that has done little to boost aggregate demand, but increase household debt (household debt in the US has increased from \$12.5 trillion in Q1 FY08 to \$13.9 trillion in Q2 FY19). Rather, fiscal policy needs to be the major focus thrust, especially given what low or negative interest rates mean for the sustainability of deficits.

Let us fast forward to the Indian context. The total financial liabilities of households have jumped by a massive 58 per cent in FY18 to Rs 7.4 lakh crores (there was a 22 per cent jump in FY17) and may have also jumped in FY19. In fact, while household leverage has

Banish the gloom

India's growth story is far from over. But government must incentivise household savings, spur consumption

The argument of huge government borrowings eating up a significant part of household financial savings only tells a part of the story. Incremental claims of government borrowings on households increased by only Rs 60,000 crore for the 2-year period ended FY17. During the same period, the move to incentivise household savings by increasing the ceiling of section 80C resulted in an incremental Rs 1.8 lakh crore of household savings flowing into tax saving instruments.

jumped two times in the last five years, disposable income has jumped by only 1.5 times, thereby putting pressure on savings. Even though the jump is not as much as in FY07 (when it jumped by 2.3 times over FY05), such a large jump is a matter of concern. The good thing is that gross household financial savings have jumped by a sharp 1.5 times over the same period (though it could be largely because of remonetisation).

Given such a large jump in household leverage, monetary policy is unlikely to retain the effectiveness through large rate cuts in the current scenario. Only a counter cyclical fiscal response might address the core of the current problem. But, before we discuss that, let us for a moment digress to some of the common market fallacies for the reasons behind the decline in household savings.

First, since FY12, gross savings (as a percentage of GDP) have declined from 34.6 per cent to 30.5 per cent in FY18. This decline was entirely due to the decline in household savings (by 6.4 percentage points). Interestingly, most of this decline is in physical savings of households, with only a marginal decline in financial savings.

Second, the decline in household savings is because of a change in definition. Unincorporated entities, which were a part of the household sector, now get counted as corporate savings. This is visible in the data since FY12 when private corporate savings jumped by 2.1 per cent.

Third, the decline in household savings also has to do with high real interest rates. Our empirical analysis suggests that the long-run effect of real interest rates on the savings rate is negative and is statistically significant at 1 per cent level.

Coming back to the policy options, data on household savings clearly suggests that the benefits of a fiscal push could be significant in the current context. First, the argument of huge government borrowings eating up a significant part of household financial savings only tells a part of the story. Incremental claims of government borrowings on households increased by only Rs 60,000 crore for the two-year period ended FY17.

During the same period, the move to incentivise household savings by increasing the

ceiling of section 80C resulted in an incremental Rs 1.8 lakh crore of household savings flowing into tax saving instruments. Our estimates show that the savings incentivisation multiplier is at least five times higher than the revenue foregone by the government through such tax incentives.

Capital gains tax can be abolished. The total assets under management (equity) of mutual funds jumped by only two per cent since January 2018, while they had risen by 68 per cent between November 2016 and January 2018. Such measures are stunting household savings in shares and debentures.

Apart from such a push to savings, what could be the other fiscal policy options to spur consumption? To this end, the government must address the demand weakness by front-loading expenditure through the PM-KISAN and MGNREGA. Any attempt to cut back on expenditure, to balance the fiscal deficit at this time, will be severely detrimental to consumption growth. Another option is to continue aggressively with asset sales, pursue capital expenditure and use the additional fiscal space for infrastructure spending.

A consequence of an increase in spending that the government could be wary of is on the bond markets. In this context, the RBI could front-load a large rate cut in the October policy, while keeping liquidity in surplus mode. The government should also go ahead with the sovereign bond issuance. It could partly hedge its borrowings and decide to not bring back the dollar proceeds, instead keeping it at any of designated scheduled commercial banks (ASCBs) outside the country for import payments. This will take care of the problems of sterilisation and hedging.

The government could also introduce a performance linked compensation scheme for the banking sector employees as well as provide them operational flexibility to hire directly from the market. The wage agreement has been delayed for a long time and a quick announcement before the festive season would help improve sentiment significantly. Setting up a development finance institution could be another policy option.

The author is Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India. Views are personal

THIS LAND OF MINE

Land, culture have multiple dimensions that human brain can't easily comprehend



KALYANI BINDU

LAND IS A place that never was, so say its wild incumbents.

Humans barely manage to engage in meaningful dialogues with their niche. They thrive on some autocratic understanding of their niche, instead. They think of land as cycling in and out of seasons, producing fruits and inflorescence they may reap. This utilitarian understanding of nature characterises farmers' perceptions — land running in near-identical cycles. Yet, what would it be like to think like nature (if it had some holistic consciousness)? Would it be as orchestrated as we claim it to be? Do these questions acknowledge the concept that is "land"?

Funnily enough, the concept of land in itself is a human construct. It could be thought of as a semantic human carryover of territoriality, material limits of existence. To animals and birds that defend territories, it is something that "provides" and promotes survival. Humans experience a more mentally palpable version of territoriality, a material emotion affecting perceptions and even designing timelines.

Land, in actuality, is a synthesis of biotic and abiotic factors. Humans would define land in terms of metaphors. Land grows like a twining, sun-fetching climber littered by pheromones of marching ants. It conjures lost ponds, insects and hills in people's dreams, migraines and constipations. Land returns like asthmatic memories. Unlike other creatures, humans download meaning out of land-associations that shape their mindscapes.



Land and culture are multi-dimensional beings. This may make it difficult for the human brain to comprehend their complexity. The human brain may approximate them into patterns. Specifically, the understanding of land may be reduced into its periodicity and culture into an exercise of placing one's individual mental niche into a collective niche of shared themes.

Vishu marks the beginning of a new year in the Malayalam calendar. In the past, farmers sowed seeds and prayed for rain. The climatic cycle brought rain. Vishu marked the cycles of land — the blooming of yellow and golden cassia, migrating birds. To humans, periodicity is land's religion, defining its system of beliefs, feeding into their sense of territoriality.

Land evolves, accumulating changes. This year's Vishu will never be the same as the one before — hilltops give way to spiralling roads, ponds to chasms, peacocks shed feathers on doorsteps and nocturnal foxes barge into moonlit verandahs, cassia grows in brighter bunches, the honeycomb sees a coup led by a new queen. Nature changes sinuously. However, humans condone "trivial" changes that occur in the apparent "backdrop" of nature, due to their inability to understand concepts that traverse the dogma of "form". Human understanding stipulates approximations. Previous year's Vishu was an approximated version of the one before.

Human culture grows just as land grows and loses its incumbents. Our nostalgia of some native culture becomes an amnesiac's approximated picture. This record sets up a linearity that helps derive meaning.

Forging identities, too, is integral to human life. An infant, for instance, is an all-observing human for the first few months of her life; She sees, but sees no more in her mind. There is some unrecorded newness that sprouts but grows no more. This newness metamor-

phoses into matted thoughts as she unwittingly familiarises with her niche — family, cradle, the world around her. The placing of oneself as a participant in this milieu is a prerequisite to adapting to human culture. After this placing, her mind transforms into a highly porous space: And into this space, culture seeps in. However, every human culture is distinct, marked by some "original" form of creative expression. Every culture, then, is a different perception of a niche coloured by some amount of whim, coincidental choice of an abstract and plastic mind.

But perception is only one way of looking at an entity. Singularity of perception, though, reduces the time one spends in processing one's world, before converting decisions into actions. Culture, then, must be some conditioned response to frequently encountered "motifs" discerned from complex situations.

Land and culture are multi-dimensional beings. This may make it difficult for the human brain to comprehend their complexity. The human brain may approximate them into patterns. Specifically, the understanding of land may be reduced into its periodicity and culture into an exercise of placing one's individual mental niche into a collective niche of shared themes. But, they are clearly larger than the sum of their components. It is the human perception that needs to be more flexible to gain a better understanding of these concepts.

The writer is a research assistant at the Indian Institute of Science

SEPTEMBER 16, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

No ONE-DAY POLL

THE CONFERENCE OF chief secretaries decided to request the Election Commission to reconsider its view of holding a one-day poll in the Lok Sabha election. This decision was taken by the conference, convened by the Home Ministry to finalise poll arrangements, since the overwhelming view of the states was it would not be possible to mobilise adequate manpower to ensure a single-day poll all over the country. Deputy PM, Y B Chavan, who inaugurated the conference, which was attended by inspectors-general of states, assured the states that maximum possible assistance would be given by the Centre.

AIADMK-DMK UNITY

THE MOVE FOR unity between the ruling AIADMK and DMK, initiated by the Union Steel Minister, Biju Patnaik, has proved abortive with the AIADMK leader and chief minister, MG Ramachandran, declaring that he would not forsake the separate identity of his party. Ramachandran said the name, flag and principles of the AIADMK would not be sacrificed. On his part, the DMK chief, M Karunanidhi, said the AIADMK which broke away from the DMK in 1972, should return to the parent organisation. The unity move was initiated by George Fernandes, when he met MGR 10 days ago.

CURBING PRICE RISE

STATE GOVERNMENTS AGREED to strengthen the machinery for monitoring of prices of essential commodities and to take remedial action. This was one of the measures on which there was consensus at the meeting of the chief secretaries and IGP's of states and union territories, held in Delhi. States were told to enforce the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, storage control order and prices and stock display order which confer wide powers. Central officials also emphasised that it was important to ensure implementation of all existing laws to curb any price rise.



The Ideas Page

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Will the fractured Muslim world ever wake up to back Palestinians' cause?
— THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

Births of a nation

Linking patriotism to women's bodies is uncalled for



ALAKA M BASU

SOMETIMES ONE NEEDS to reject good advice, even when it comes from a person one admires. This seems to be the right time to reject President John F Kennedy's much repeated instruction to "ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country".

Historically, even today, if there is one large group of persons on whom a disproportionate responsibility to buckle up and do its duty for the country is placed, it is women. In today's India, the accusation of female irresponsibility is implied in the global disappointment that its women are withdrawing from the labour force. While some of this disappointment stems from the consequent loss of female empowerment that it is believed to confer, most of the commentary on this process stresses the loss of national GDP growth that it entails. The IMF, for example, estimates that India's GDP would be 27 per cent higher if women's labour force participation were to rise to male levels. It is unclear, however, whether this infliction of guilt will encourage Indian women to do their patriotic duty.

However, it is in the invocation of women's patriotic reproductive responsibilities that Kennedy's proverbial statement needs to be turned around on its head. The latest firing of this salvo occurred in the Prime Minister's Independence Day speech, in which it was declared that having small families is a form of "patriotism". At least at the policy level, we know from past and present experience that such exhortations primarily target women, women's bodies and women's reproductive autonomy. In India, the rush to sterilise as many women as possible often means sterilisations are performed under shoddy conditions with sometimes awful consequences. The 13 women who died during a sterilisation camp in Chhattisgarh in 2014 belonged to a long chain of such assaults on women's bodies. And yet, in 2016-17, most of the country's family planning budget continues to go towards female sterilisations.

There are, of course, technical problems with this hurry to address India's population "explosion" — for example, thanks to the population momentum, even if the total fertility rate declines by as much as 0.5 births more than currently projected by the UN, the population will still be around 1.5 billion in 2050, compared to the 1.6 billion if birth rates continue their current expected steady decline.

Apart from that, women's bodies and reproductive needs will be much better served by greater state investments in so many things other than advice on patriotic duty. In the last National Family Health Survey, about half of Indian women were anaemic, some 22 per cent had a below normal body mass index, only 21 per cent of

women had the full regimen of antenatal care during their last pregnancy, just 60 per cent of children aged 12-23 months had received the full recommended regime of vaccinations, and as many as 17 per cent of women had their last births delivered by C-section. Predictably, but ominously, this last figure was 40 per cent for births in private hospitals compared to 12 per cent for births in public health facilities — given WHO's indication that under usual circumstances about 10-15 per cent of births should end up needing a Caesarian delivery, we know where the money-making is happening.

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that our Maternal Mortality Ratio is as high as 174 maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births (as an embarrassing point of comparison, it is 30 in Sri Lanka) and our under-five child mortality rate is 50 per 1,000 live births (nine in Sri Lanka). Within India, the child mortality rate goes from a low of seven in Kerala to a high of 78 in Uttar Pradesh. With what kind of righteous self-confidence can we ask the patriotic UP mother to cut down her births, when the chances of losing some of these births to early death are so high?

Even when she does feel her national duty more acutely than her fertility demonstrates, it is worth noting that there is what is called the "unmet need" for family planning — the percentage of women who do not want another birth ever or right now, but who are nevertheless not using any contraception. This figure is 13 per cent for India, 6 per cent for Andhra Pradesh, 18 per cent for UP and 21 per cent in Bihar. If more of this unmet need can be understood, and sympathetically (not with aggressively offered female sterilisation) met, maybe we will discover that most women in the country are already very patriotic.

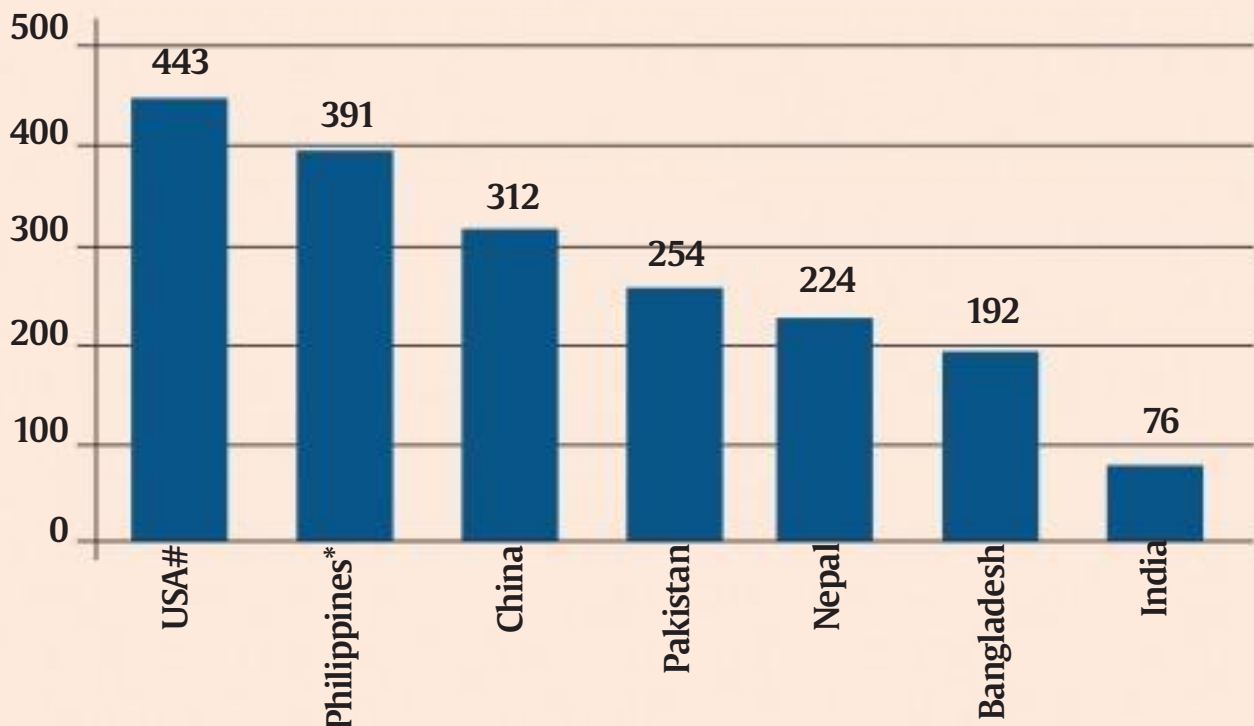
To be fair, urging women to have or not have children for the sake of the nation is hardly an Indian invention. It underlay Nazi Germany's denial of contraception and abortion to non-Jewish women (unless the sexual partner was Jewish) so that the master race could increase its numbers, the glorification of motherhood in Fascist Italy and in the 1930s Soviet Union. In many of these cases (including France in the 1920s), bronze, silver and gold medals were awarded to patriotic mothers depending on how many children they gave birth to. As an amusing aside, in Nazi Germany women with more than five children were allowed to name a famous person as godfather, but that programme was suspended after it was found that Hindenburg was more popular than Hitler for this.

In contemporary times, a lawmaker in South Korea has just urged a female economics professor, nominated to head the country's trade commission, to do her national duty and get married — contribute a child to the country before selfishly worrying about her career advancement.

So, there you have it. Whether it is to tell women to have babies or not have babies, it seems that the men doing this telling are only doing it for the nation's good — not out of any masculine impositions of control on female bodies and female lives.

The writer is professor at Cornell University, Department of Development Sociology

RETAIL PRICES OF UREA IN SELECTED COUNTRIES (OCTOBER 2018)*



*= September 2018 (Dealers' Price), #= Price in Illinois, **USD/metric tonne



CR Sasikumar

The right to choose

Government could give fertiliser subsidy directly to farmers and let them decide if they want to practise zero budget natural farming or use chemical-fertilisers



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH
BY ASHOK GULATI

THE NARENDRA MODI government completed 100 days of its second term (Modi 2.0) last week. On this occasion, most cabinet ministers spoke of the achievements of their ministries. The headlines in newspapers were, however, about the abrogation of Article 370, or the biggest slump in auto sales in the last two decades, or the slowing down of GDP growth. I tried to search for bold moves in agriculture as it affects the largest number of people. But I couldn't find any. Some already-announced schemes were tweaked and a few new ideas were offered but without solid scientific and financial backing.

The PM-Kisan Yojana (PMKY) — an income support of Rs 6,000 per year to small and marginal farmer households — was announced before the parliamentary elections. Modi 2.0 has extended the scheme to the families of all farmers. The 2019-20 Union budget has provisioned Rs 75,000 crore for this scheme. This is the first step towards direct cash (income) transfer to farmers' accounts. As I have argued earlier, this scheme will be meaningful if other subsidies — such as those on food, fertiliser, power and irrigation, and agri-credit — are clubbed with the PMKY and given directly to farmers. The move should be complemented by allowing market forces to set prices. Else, PMKY may come at the cost of investments in agriculture, which have fallen from a peak of 18.2 per cent of the agri-GDP in 2011-12 to 13.7 per cent of the agri-GDP 2017-18. With such a fall in investments, the dream of doubling farmers' incomes by 2022 cannot be fulfilled. In this article, I want to focus on some-

thing new and interesting that the prime minister talked about in his Independence Day speech. He repeated the same in his address to the 14th Conference of Parties of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Greater Noida. The PM's key message was to reduce consumption of chemical fertilisers and promote zero budget natural farming (ZBNF). The concept, fathered by Subhash Palekar, uses dung from desi black cows, their urine, adds jaggery and pulses' flour in certain proportions and deploys that, as *jeevamrit*, to augment microbial activity in soil. This is supposed to make our soils healthier and augment productivity in a sustainable manner. Incidentally, ZBNF was also mentioned as the future of Indian agriculture by Nirmala Sitharaman in her maiden budget speech.

At the very outset, let me say that I am a supporter of adding organic matter — be it dung or farm yard manure (FYM) — that can improve carbon in our soils. It is well known that chemical fertilisers are not used rationally by our farmers. Although the optimal ratio of using nitrogen (N), phosphate (P) and potash (K), differs from plot to plot, at the all India level, it is generally agreed that the optimal combination of N, P and K should be in the ratio of 4:2:1. In 2009-10, this ratio was 4.3:2:1 — quite close to the desired level. But in 2010, the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme was introduced. It almost freed prices of P and K from government control and provided some fixed subsidy on these fertilisers on a per tonne basis. However, N (urea) was excluded from this scheme. As a result while DAP (di-ammonium phosphate) and MOP (muriate of potash) carry a subsidy of about 25-30 per cent of their cost of production, urea has a subsidy of more than 75 per cent on its cost of production. The Indian urea prices are perhaps lowest in the world, and certainly lowest amongst the major countries (see graph).

No wonder, there is overuse of urea in relation to DAP and MOP. Normally, whenever chemical fertilisers are used, a good dosage of FYM is recommended. So FYM, or something akin to *jeevamrit*, is conceived as a supple-

Has the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) studied the possible impact of ZBNF on yields of major crops like wheat and rice in comparison to chemical fertiliser-based farming? It needs to do large scale testing in different regions to see the nationwide implications of ZBNF on the overall production of major crops. I understand that such studies have not been conducted. In fact, the limited information that is available suggests a 30 to 50 per cent drop in yields. That could puncture a big hole in India's food security basket.

ment, not a substitute of chemical fertilisers.

But there could be serious questions if the government's intention is to completely jettison chemical fertilisers — PM talked of halving fertiliser consumption in his "Mann ki Baat" speech of November 26, 2017. First, has the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) studied the possible impact of ZBNF on yields of major crops like wheat and rice in comparison to chemical fertiliser-based farming? It needs to do large scale testing in different regions to see the nationwide implications of ZBNF on the overall production of major crops. I understand that such studies have not been conducted. In fact, the limited information that is available suggests a 30 to 50 per cent drop in yields. That could puncture a big hole in India's food security basket. Do we want to go back to the "ship-to-mouth" situation of the mid-1960s?

Second, if the PM wants to cut fertiliser consumption by half by 2022, why is the government investing in new urea plants of 1.27 million tonne, each under the public sector — at Gorakhpur in UP, Barauni in Bihar, Ramagundam in AP, Sindri in Jharkhand and Talcher in Odisha. The combined capacity of these plants is likely to be about 6.35 million tonne and the production cost more than \$400 per tonne. One wonders whether there is any coordination between what the PM says and what his government is doing? It seems a typical case of left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing.

My humble submission is that the fertiliser subsidy, which is budgeted at Rs 80,000 crore for 2019-20, be given directly to farmers on a per hectare basis and allow them to decide whether they want to do ZBNF or chemical-fertiliser based farming. The fertiliser prices will then be market determined, ensuring their efficient usage, stopping their diversion to non-agri-uses as well as to neighbouring countries. It will be a win-win situation from several perspectives. Can the Modi government do that in the next 100 days?

The writer is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture at ICRIR

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



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

TRAGEDY FORETOLD

MUHAMMAD ZAMIR, A former Bangladeshi diplomat and now an analyst, makes one thing clear: "India is making its own people stateless. Bangladesh shouldn't have to pay the price." Zamir's article in *The Dhaka Tribune* on September 15 expresses a view that has become increasingly common in the Bangladesh media. It establishes first the flaws, both administrative and moral, in the NRC process in Assam and then clarifies the role Bangladesh is (un)willing to play in the scenario.

Zamir states that "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has long rallied against illegal immigration into India, and has been using this also as a political weapon for the last three years in particular." He goes on to point out some of the most glaring exclusions from the final NRC list, for example, of an Indian army veteran spending 11 days in a detention camp. The article also points out Home Minister Amit Shah's past statements, of "infiltrators" being "termites" and the fears such talk engenders. In addition, there are several problems with the appeals process, accuracy of the list.

But the nub of the article is this: One thing needs to be understood by the Assam administration presently in control of the BJP is that, "Densely populated Bangladesh is already

suffering from having to look after more than a million illegal Rohingya immigrants from the Rakhine state of Myanmar. Consequently, there is no question of Bangladesh being forced to receive more alleged infiltrators. Such a measure could seriously affect bilateral relations. It might also encourage insecurity and possibly generate unfortunate clouds of communalism. This is an internal matter of India and that matrix needs to be understood. Consequently, India and the state government of Assam, instead of generating more despair, anxiety, and anger, might consider giving those designated as stateless people participatory presence within the Indian paradigm after their release from detention centres."

SILENT VALLEY

Moonis Ahmar, former dean of social sciences at Karachi University, takes the Amnesty India report on the "crackdown" and "blockade on communications" in the Kashmir Valley as the starting point of his article in *The Express Tribune* on September 13. He writes that "After more than five weeks of crackdown and communications blackout, voices of dissent are being raised by various human rights organisations and civil society groups in India". "Let Kashmir speak," according to Ahmar, is the essence of this

movement.

"It is not only Arundhati Roy and other renowned Indian writers who have expressed their chagrin against India's treatment of Kashmiris, but saner voices of students, teachers, political workers, and their leaders are also condemning the serious human rights violations," the article notes.

Ahmar then asks, why despite domestic and international opprobrium, has New Delhi not lifted the blockade? He answers: "First, the narrative held by BJP stalwarts that relaxation in the occupied state cannot be given unless the alleged cross-border interference stops... Second, India also knows the fact that it will be Pakistan's last intention to allow Pakistani Kashmiris to cross the Line of Control (LoC)."

Ahmar argues that Pakistan will not provoke an escalation of the conflict at this time. He ends with a simple appeal: "Letting the Kashmiris speak and decide their own destiny is the need of the hour. If saner voices against New Delhi's brutal crackdown in the Valley are raised in India today, a time will come when one can expect a major reversal of the Indian policy of neglect, indifference, and cruelty."

STICKY WICKET

Last week, the Sri Lankan cricket team pulled

out of a scheduled limited overs' series in Pakistan, citing security concerns. "Clearly," says the September 14 editorial in *Dawn*, "the memories of the terrorist incident of 2009, when the Sri Lankan team's bus was attacked in Lahore, are still fresh in their minds."

According to the editorial, these fears are now exaggerated, if not misplaced. It argues that the security situation has improved significantly, and perhaps the Sri Lankan cricket board did not do enough to convince its players to visit Pakistan. But the editorial gives the other side of the picture too: "Meanwhile, there is a feeling among many former cricketers that the PCB did not play its cards right either, and that the board should have set its own conditions instead of agreeing to a depleted touring team." "Whether or not one agrees with that view, it is hoped that when the touring side returns to Sri Lanka, it is able to convince those who chose to stay away that they made the wrong decision" it says.

The editorial then marks the change in Pakistan cricket: "Though major foreign teams have shunned tours to this country in the past decade, Pakistan's status as a major cricketing nation has not been altered in any way. Pakistan Super League, which ranked as the second most popular T20 league after the Indian Premier League, has attracted leading foreign players to the country in the past two years."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LISTEN TO THE PM

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Let's talk safety' (IE, September 13). The road transport and highways minister's statement on the amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act betrays an authoritarian outlook. The Act is well-intentioned, but its enforcement should be on reasonable terms.

SK Balasubramanian, Pune

ABOUT TEACHERS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'It begins in school', (IE, September 13). The Draft NEP 2019 acknowledged the importance of foundational learning by giving special focus to five years of early childhood care and education. But the proposed pedagogical model remains teacher-centric. The quality of teachers is bound have a profound impact on the learning outcomes. Technology can be a great equaliser; standard recorded video modules can aid the activity-based learning and trained educators can improvise lessons to make the learning experience interactive.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

PUBLIC MONEY ISSUES

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Andhra spectres' (IE, September 13). The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is on a demolition spree of the state's infrastructure. Can the state and the country afford such whimsical acts? Such infrastructure may have been commissioned by his political rival, Chandrababu Naidu. But the infrastructure was built using public money.

Deepak Singhal, Noida

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

PAK'S HYPOCRISY

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Pakistan takes hard line on Jadhav' (IE, September 13). Pakistan reached the UNHRC with its agenda of violation of human rights of Kashmiris. But by denying Kulbushan Jadhav consular access, it has gone against the International Court of Justice's verdict. The country's economy has fallen to such an extent that it has levied charges on the Sikh pilgrims to the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara. These are desperate times for Pakistan and it is using the Kashmir issue to divert public attention.

Sumit Chaudhary, Chandigarh



12 THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

RAJASTHAN REBOOTS THE RTI ACT

Jan Soochna Portal to provide Rajasthan govt information at the click of a button

Citizens can access data about 23 flagship schemes and services of 13 departments on their mobiles

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 15

ON SEPTEMBER 13, Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot launched a “Jan Soochna Portal” aimed at easing the access to information for the beneficiaries of welfare schemes. The portal has been created by the Department of Information Technology and Communication (DoIT&C) in collaboration with civil society. It realises the true intent behind Section 4(2) of the Right to Information (RTI) Act of 2005. In essence, this section requires public authorities to proactively — that is, suo moto — disclose information so that beneficiaries do not have to run from pillar to post trying to figure out what went wrong and how to set it right.

No wonder, 60-year-old Balulal Gurjar, a resident of Thana village in Bhilwara district, is enthused to hear of this portal. For the past few years, Gurjar has accompanied many fellow villagers to government offices, inquiring about their old-age pension entitlement that hadn't been credited in their accounts. In recent years, thousands of pension beneficiaries of Rajasthan have protested after their names were struck off from the government list on account of their “death” even though they were alive. “For many months, we were kept in dark as there was no way to know what had really happened. Had there been a Jan Soochna Portal back then, it would have been easy for us to know what had gone wrong,” says Gurjar.

At present, the portal has information about 23 government schemes and services from 13 departments which the public can access with just one click on their computers, mobiles or kiosks installed in villages.

Activist Nikhil Dey from the Soochna Evam Rozgar Abhiyan and Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) says that before this initiative the provisions of Section 4(2) of the RTI Act were not implemented properly. “We realised that the government is gathering a lot of information and hiding them behind admin laws. We wanted to build a janta information system where reports are generated useful to people. Governance has to be a joint effort,” says Dey, who has consulted and collaborated with (DoIT&C) officials on the various features of the portal.

The portal aims to create a streamlined system for public information to prevent anomalies and corruption. Information about several schemes such as Ayushman



Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot, deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot, activist Aruna Roy along with other delegates during the launch of the Jan Soochna Portal on Friday. Express

EXPLAINED

How Rajasthan improved RTI

SINCE THE 1990s, Rajasthan has always played a central role in improving public access to information. The latest initiative requires the government to disclose a lot of information related to government schemes on its own, thus making it easy for the common man. By streamlining and centralising information, the portal also prevents anomalies and corruption.

KEY INFORMATION PROVIDED UNDER JAN SOOCHNA PORTAL

- Public distribution and ration system
- Social security pension beneficiary information
- MGNREGA workers
- Sanitation beneficiaries
- Govt-run free medicine scheme
- Govt-run health insurance schemes
- Farm loan waiver
- Labour card holders
- Procurement of food grains on minimum support price
- Mining and district mineral foundation trust data
- Land ownership details

Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Rajasthan Swasthya Bima Yojana, which provides free health insurance to beneficiaries has been uploaded to ensure that there is no mismatch between the amount listed as an expense by a hospital while treating a patient and the money it actually charges. Earlier, the previous government's flagship scheme Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojana had wit-

nessed many cases where higher expenses were falsely shown by hospitals.

The effort to create a centralised information database for the public in Rajasthan started last year when civil society members interacted with the government and gave their suggestions on policy issues as part of an initiative known as Digital Dialogue. “We told the government that whatever informa-

tion you have you give it to the public without any hindrance. We also asked them to organise it in a way so that it is useful for people. This initiative converts a culture of secrecy into a culture of openness,” says Dey.

The launch of the portal is likely to result in centralising information about government schemes on one website and prove beneficial to the public by obviating the need to go through a tedious RTI application process to know more.

One can get land records and documents from the portal that earlier could only have been accessed through patwaris. Under the new process, one has to enter village and district details to know who owns a piece of land. Similarly, for mining, a sector where widespread corruption has been unearthed in past instances such as the Rajasthan mining scam of 2015, the flow of information in the public domain has been made more transparent.

The state currently has a network of around 68,500 e-mitra kiosks in villages that connect villagers to a number of state-run beneficiary schemes. The government has announced that it is also developing a mobile app and will install self-service portals in villages so that people can access the Jan Soochna Portal easily and get the information they require. “This portal will play a very big role in serving the people in villages. Information should be provided even before it is asked for and that is what this portal aims to do. The government will provide complete encouragement for this,” said Gehlot.

‘Forests can be saved by honouring tribal rights vested in the Forest Rights Act’

UNION TRIBAL Affairs Minister ARJUN MUNDA believes that money is not the only thing when focusing on tribal development; he says the psychology of tribals needs to be understood for effectively integrating them in the mainstream. In an interview with ABHISHEK ANGAD, he also elaborated on the government's stand on of Forest Rights Act. Edited excerpts.



THE POLICY INTERVIEW

ARJUN MUNDA
Union Tribal Affairs Minister

But the Tribal Affairs Ministry has a limited budget while various other ministries and state governments have large chunks of money for tribal development. Is coordination an issue?

There are a lot of things which are being done which was not there in the past few years. We are monitoring it aggressively.

In a recent survey on maternity benefits showed that around 75% women did not receive cash benefits, despite applying for it? Tribals form most of this populace.

This is a state government issue and they have to pay more attention to it. After the state formation, Jharkhand has been growing but has to strive to make it better.

Forest Rights Act (FRA) was brought because the “historical injustice needed correction”. Recently a controversy has erupted. Where do you stand?

All those people who are saying various things would be have been not in contact with the forest area. The matter is sub-judice and I will not go into the merits of this case. Forests can be saved through tribal rights vested in the FRA. Our Ministry is monitoring it continuously and we want to increase the forest area and the people who stay there. We worry so much about forest biodiversity, why should not we worry about the people staying there? Communities living in the forest areas for ages cannot be evicted from the forest.

Full interview on indianexpress.com

FROM STATES REFORMS TRACKER

ANDHRA PRADESH

New sand policy to curb black marketing

THE JAGANMOHAN Reddy-led state government has scrapped the existing sand policy and unveiled a new one that aims to curb hoarding and black marketing. The government view was that the older policy allowed unsustainable exploitation of rivers systems and only served to line the pockets of the middlemen. The state has rivers like Krishna, Godavari, Tungabhadra and Penna as well as a coastline of close to 1000 kilometres – all of which were being abused by the sand mining mafia, according to the government. The new policy regulates the amount and places where mining can happen.

UTTAR PRADESH

Boosting agricultural exports

TO BOOST farmers' income, the state government last week announced its first-ever agriculture export policy. The decision was taken in a cabinet meeting chaired by the chief minister and the policy aims at doubling the export of agricultural commodities by 2024. To this end, the government hopes to rope in farmer producer organisations as well as incentivise start-ups in this sector.

ODISHA

Expanding tele-medicine network

THE STATE government has announced that it will soon introduce a new tele-medicine policy aimed at expanding the Odisha Tele-medicine Network to district headquarter hospitals and wellness centres functioning under medical colleges. “Patients from remote corners of the state can avail consultation and health services from specialist doctors,” said Health Secretary Dr Pramod Meherda. The government announced that it will also start e-classroom facility with the help of tele-medicine technology.

A centre for women entrepreneurs in Kerala

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 15

THE SOCIAL Justice Department of Kerala government has proposed an international women's trade centre (IWTC) in line with the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.

The proposed trade centre would be the first of its kind facility in the country. Its initial phase is expected to become operational in January 2021. The centre would be constructed in the Social Justice Department's Gender Park (see photo), which is a platform for bringing together gender policy, research, education and social initiatives. The centre would come up in the Gender Park's main campus in Kozhikode. In the initial stage, the project would give a special focus on providing opportunities for women in the flood-affected areas.

According to the Minister for Health and Social Justice, K K Shailaja, “As more women foray into entrepreneurship and explore other self-employment options in Kerala, there is a need for providing a platform to help them overcome various barriers imposed by society. The IWTC hopes to get potential women entrepreneurs would come



Gender Park, Kozhikode, will house international women's trade centre

forward and participate in international trade, enjoy greater economic benefits, and enhance their competitiveness to tap market opportunities”.

She said the centre would give special focus on hand-holding and bringing economically-weaker women, marginalised groups, and women with disabilities to the forefront by helping to nurture their entrepreneurial capabilities.

Gender Park's Chief Executive Officer, Dr PT Mohammed Sunish, said: “Women start-ups can be incubated in a high-tech space

that will offer fully automated private and shared office spaces, virtual workspaces, common secretarial services, communication facilities, and business guidance centres”. He said the centre would engage local women entrepreneurs and connect them to world markets using the latest technology to build their businesses. It would be the hub that would bring together entrepreneurs, small business owners, industry leaders, business mentors, industry experts, and investors on to a single platform.

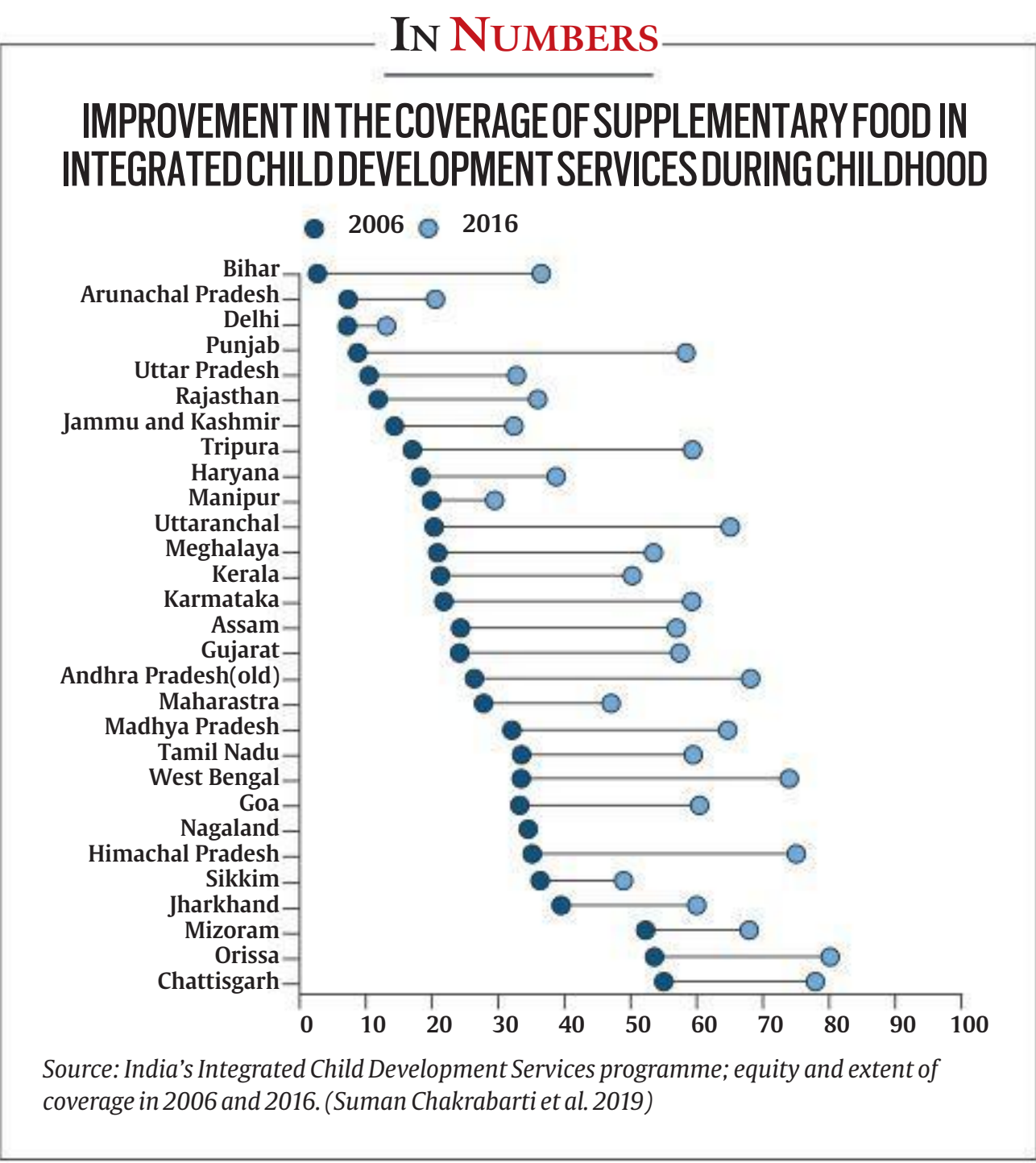
The centre is planned as a safe space away from home for women to set up their businesses. It would have creche and day-care centres for kids and adult/senior community centres for the elderly so that women can focus on their jobs and not have to worry about their children and/or aged parents who will be within close proximity.

It would also be a shopping destination catering to the needs of women – from retail fashion and technology outlets to health and wellness centres. This space will be the artery connecting the trade centre to the residential and commercial community of North Kerala.

Apart from having facilities for business and trade, the centre would also include space to promote and showcase performing arts and culture such as dance, music, theatre, and other cultural forms to foster creative self-expression for women.



Shekhar Gaikwad (left) with the then Chief Minister Narayan Rane at the release of his book about land mutation in Maharashtra. Express



MAHARASHTRA/SIMPLIFYING LAWS

A bureaucrat demystifies legal jargon for the common man

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS,
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 15

SUGAR COMMISSIONER of Maharashtra Shekhar Gaikwad wears multiples hats. When he is not busy trying to get sugar mills to pay the farmers their dues, Gaikwad tries to untangle the complex land laws of the state. In fact, over the years, his books have become the Bible for the farmers in the state. It is not uncommon to see farmers taking the help of Gaikwad's book while arguing their cases in the revenue courts.

Gaikwad's interest in land laws dates back to the late 1980s when he was a young Sub Divisional Officer (SDO) of Kagal taluka of Kolhapur district. He came across a dispute that had been going on for 80 years. The case — in which two farmers were fighting for the legal ownership of 1.46 acres of land — had

even reached the Supreme Court on two occasions. “As a young officer, I was stumped. Why would these farmers fight for so long over a piece of land,” he recounts. So he asked both the parties. The answers were an eye-opener for Gaikwad and made him decide to take up the onerous task of trying to unravel and simplify the tangled world of land rights.

“It was a case of encroachment — the party that was defending its right freely admitted that it had encroached on the land and was growing sugarcane on it. From the annual yield of 80 tonnes, this farmer paid half to his lawyer and kept the case going even as the original owner of the land continued to fight the case as he had promised his father on the latter's death bed,” explains Gaikwad. It was a deadlock and the only ones making money were the lawyers. The case made Gaikwad want to simplify land laws. His books, which have gone into multi-

ple editions, both in English and Marathi, have over the years become the ready reckoner for farmers, litigants and even revenue officers of the state. What differentiates Gaikwad's books from the tomes on land laws is that they are presented in a very different manner. “Interaction with farmers showed me that instead of an academic approach, they would prefer a situational approach to their problems,” he says. Thus the books present situations and their legal solutions in a simple storytelling format. Other than the 25 major land laws of Maharashtra, the books draw information from various government resolutions and judgments with regards to land laws.

Of his 18 books, the one titled *Shetiche Khaidiya* (Land laws) is the most popular. First published in 2005, the book till date has seen 5 editions. It simplifies various laws related to land and also answers the various ques-

tions related to land deals. Ignorance of land laws, Gaikwad says, often leads to farmer asking for advice from lawyers who charge hefty fees.

The most common problem that farmers face is about the mutation of their land. As the name suggests, change in ownership has to be “mutated” in the land records. Easy as it might sound, this simple act becomes the single biggest source of litigation and often leads to corrupt practices at various levels of government. Gaikwad's book Land Rights and Mutations in Maharashtra delves deep into this problem and presents numerous scenarios that farmers face. “Farmers now carry this book if the village level talathi (official) creates obstacles in their land dealings,” he said.

At present Gaikwad is working on his next book, which, he says, aims to help sugarcane farmers fight for their rights.

13 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Netanyahu faces a tough challenge in Tuesday's vote

ISRAEL

Govt approves new settlement days before polls

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government approved a new settlement in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, his office said, just two days ahead of closely fought general elections. Netanyahu's cabinet agreed to turn the wildcat settlement of Mevoot Yericho in the Jordan Valley into an official settlement, the premier's office said. All settlements are viewed as illegal under international law, but Israel distinguishes between those it has approved and those it has not. Sunday's approval follows Netanyahu's pledge last week to annex the Jordan Valley.

IRELAND

Flight diverted as coffee melts button in cockpit

WHEN THE pilot of an international flight spilled a cup of coffee on the cockpit controls midway over the Atlantic Ocean, it melted one of the buttons and the plane was diverted to Ireland, an investigation concluded on Thursday. The Condor airlines flight had been carrying 337 people, including 11 crew members, from Frankfurt to Cancún, Mexico, when the episode occurred aboard the Airbus A330, according to the United Kingdom's aviation authority.

THAILAND

Tigers rescued from temple found dead

Bangkok: More than half of the tigers that Thai authorities confiscated in 2016 from an infamous Tiger Temple tourist attraction have died from a viral disease because their immune systems were weakened by inbreeding, media reported. The Buddhist temple west of Bangkok was a tourist destination where visitors took selfies with tigers and bottled-fed cubs until authorities removed its nearly 150 tigers in 2016 in response to global pressure over wildlife trafficking.



A protester catches fire after throwing a Molotov cocktail during a demonstration near Central Government Complex in Hong Kong on Sunday. *Reuters*

Hong Kong returns to violence with teargas and Molotovs

AGENCIES

HONG KONG, SEPTEMBER 15

HONG KONG riot police fired teargas and water cannons at hardcore pro-democracy protesters hurling rocks and petrol bombs on Sunday, tipping the violence-plagued city back into chaos after a brief lull in clashes. Tens of thousands of people defied authorities to march through the streets of the city in an unsanctioned rally on Sunday, the latest expression of a popular revolt that has raged for the last 99 days.

But the rally descended into violence when small groups of hardcore activists — known within the movement as “braves” — tried to attack the city's main government complex.

Police fired repeated volleys of teargas and deployed water

EXPLAINED

Protests remain intense despite govt concession

EARLIER THIS month, Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam had promised protesters that the controversial extradition Bill, which sparked protests, would be withdrawn. The Bill would have allowed those undergoing trial to be sent to mainland China. However, the protests have moved beyond just calls for revocation of the Bill. Protesters now demand direct elections to the city's government and an independent probe into police actions. The government has said it would not accept these demands. So, despite the immediate trigger for the protests having been resolved, the protesters, who feel Hong Kong's autonomy is eroding, have maintained the intensity of their struggle.

cannon trucks after Molotov cocktails and rocks were thrown over security barriers surrounding the complex, which has become a frequent flashpoint in the

ongoing protests.

Protesters also tore down a banner celebrating the upcoming 70th anniversary of the founding of communist China.

Taliban revoke ban on Red Cross Afghan, US forces kill 2 senior insurgent leaders, 38 fighters

REUTERS

KABUL, SEPTEMBER 15

THE TALIBAN on Sunday revoked their ban on the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Afghanistan and gave a guarantee of security for its staff doing humanitarian work in ar-

eas under their control.

Taliban leaders imposed a ban on the ICRC and the World Health Organisation in April saying the organisations were carrying out “suspicious” activities during vaccination campaigns and not sticking to their declared missions.

Meanwhile, Afghan forces

backed by US forces killed two senior Taliban leaders and at least 38 fighters of the headline insurgent group in joint airstrikes conducted in northern and western regions of Afghanistan, officials said on Sunday. The operations, launched on Saturday night, were aimed at foiling attacks planned by the Taliban, a security official said.

Like Hulk, UK will overcome obstacles to exit EU: Boris

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 15

PRIME MINISTER Boris Johnson insisted Sunday that “huge” progress was being made in Brexit talks and declared Britain would break out of the European Union just like the comicbook hero Hulk.

The Conservative leader made the comments ahead of



meetings with European Commission chief Jean-Claude

Juncker and EU negotiator Michel Barnier in Luxembourg on Monday.

In an interview with the Mail on Sunday newspaper, Johnson said he was “very confident” of getting a divorce deal at an EU summit on October 17, in time for Brexit on October 31.

In an odd analogy, he compared Britain to the comic book character Hulk. “The madder

Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets and he always escaped, no matter how tightly bound in he seemed to be — and that is the case for this country,” he said.

On Saturday night, one of his Conservative MPs defected to the pro-European Liberal Democrats. Former universities minister Sam Gyimah condemned Johnson for “veering towards populism”.

Meanwhile former PM David Cameron, who led the failed campaign to stay in the EU in 2016, accused Johnson in his memoirs of only pursuing Brexit out of political ambition.

The turmoil comes ahead of another crucial week, as the Supreme Court considers the legality of Johnson's decision to suspend Parliament earlier this month until October 14.

Calls for Kavanaugh's impeachment after new allegations

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 15

AT LEAST two Democratic presidential candidates are calling for the impeachment of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh in the face of a new, uninvestigated, allegation of sexual impropriety when he was in college.

Kavanaugh was confirmed last October after emotional hearings in the Senate over a sexual assault allegation from his high school years. The *New York Times* now reports that Kavanaugh faced a separate allegation from his time at Yale University and that the FBI did not investigate the claim. The latest claim mirrors one offered during his confirmation process



Kavanaugh has a life-time seat in the Supreme Court

by Deborah Ramirez, a Yale classmate who claimed Kavanaugh exposed himself to her during a drunken party.

When he testified before the Senate last year, Kavanaugh denied all allegations of impropriety. Senator Kamala Harris said after the new report that “Brett Kavanaugh lied to the US Senate and most importantly to the American people.” She tweeted,

“He must be impeached.”

Her comments followed similar ones from Julian Castro, a former US housing secretary, on Saturday night. “It's more clear than ever that Brett Kavanaugh lied under oath,” he tweeted. “He should be impeached and Congress should review the failure of the Department of Justice to properly investigate the matter.” **AP**

GERMANY

PROTESTERS BLOCK ENTRANCE TO AUTO SHOW

Activists blocked the main entrance to the Frankfurt Motor Show on Sunday in a protest against what they call the “climate and environment destroyers” produced by the auto industry. Hundreds of people wearing white protective suits sat or stood in front of the grounds where the auto show is being held.



ATTACK ON SAUDI OIL PLANTS

Iran rejects US allegations, warns it is ready for war

US assets within range of Iranian missiles: Revolutionary Guards commander

LANIA EL GAMAL & PARISA HAFEZI
DUBAI, SEPTEMBER 15

IRAN DISMISSED accusations by the United States that it was behind attacks on Saudi oil plants that disrupted world oil production and warned on Sunday that US bases and aircraft carriers in the region were in range of its missiles.

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi group claimed responsibility for Saturday's attacks that knocked out more than half of Saudi oil output. But US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said there was no evidence the attacks came from Yemen and accused Iran of “an unprecedented attack on the world's energy supply.”

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi, speaking on state TV, dismissed the US claim as “pointless”. A senior Revolutionary Guards commander warned that the Islamic Republic was ready for “full-fledged” war and that US military assets were within range of Iranian missiles.

“Everybody should know that all American bases and their aircraft carriers in a distance of up to 2,000 kilometres around Iran are within the range of our missiles,” the head of the Revolutionary Guards Corps Aerospace Force Amirali Hajizadeh was quoted as saying by the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

State-run oil company Saudi Aramco said the strikes would cut output by 5.7 million barrels per day, or more than five per cent of global crude supply, at a time when Aramco is gearing up for a stock market listing.

Aramco gave no timeline for when output would resume but said early Sunday it would give a progress update in around 48 hours. The kingdom, the world's top oil exporter, ships more than 7 million barrels of oil to global destinations every day, and for years has served as the supplier of last resort to markets. **REUTERS**



Smoke rises from an Aramco facility in Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia, Saturday. *Reuters*

Trump-Rouhani meeting not ruled out: White House

DOINA CHIACU

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 15

THE WHITE House on Sunday did not rule out a potential meeting between President Donald Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, even after Washington accused Iran of being behind drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities.

White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said the attacks on Saturday “did not help” prospects for a meeting between the two leaders during the United Nations General Assembly this month but she left open the possibility it could happen.

“I'll allow the President (Trump) to announce a meeting or a non-meeting,” Conway told “Fox News Sunday.”

The Trump administration's sanctions and “maximum pres-



Trump has said he is willing to meet Rouhani



sure” campaign on Iran over its nuclear and ballistic missile program will continue whether or not the two leaders meet, she added.

However, Conway said, “You're not helping your case much,” by attacking Saudi Arabia, civilian areas and critical infrastructure that affects global energy markets.

Iran has denied US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's allegations that it was behind the attacks on plants in the heartland of Saudi Arabia's oil industry. **REUTERS**

INCREASING ATTACKS ON SAUDI OIL INFRA

There have been multiple attacks on Saudi Arabian oil facilities since May

MAY 12: Four ships, including two Saudi oil tankers, are attacked in the Gulf just outside the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil shipping route. US officials pin the blame on Iran, a charge Tehran denies.

MAY 14: Saudi Arabia said armed Houthi drones struck two oil pumping stations in the kingdom.

JUNE 13: Two tankers are attacked south of Hormuz on June 13.

SEPT 14: The Houthis claim responsibility for drone attacks on Saudi Aramco plants in Abqaiq and Khurais.

Riots break out in Pak's Sindh after principal booked for blasphemy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LAHORE, SEPTEMBER 15

RIOTS BROKE out in Pakistan's Sindh province on Sunday after a school principal from the minority Hindu community was booked on charges of blasphemy, according to a media report.

Widespread protests erupted in Ghotki district after an FIR was filed against the principal of Sindh Public School on the complaint of Abdul Aziz Rajput, a student's father who claimed that the teacher had committed blasphemy.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan shared a video of protesters breaking the infrastructure of the school and expressed concern over the situation.

“Alarming reports of accusations of blasphemy in Ghotki and

the outbreak of mob violence,” the rights organisation said in a tweet.

Videos of stick-wielding protesters were shared on social media in which they were seen damaging the school where the incident took place, the *Dawn* newspaper reported.

Activists and journalists took to Twitter to share videos and images of the rioting and appealed to the Sindh government to protect the minority Hindu community, the report said.

Ghotki Senior Superintendent of Police Farrukh Lanjar, while talking to reporters, said that police were controlling the law and order situation in the area.

Sukkur Additional IGP Jamil Ahmed confirmed the developments in a tweet, saying that police were “trying to deal with a serious situation”.

AUTHORITIES REFUSE TO FULLY DISCLOSE RESULTS OF THEIR TESTS

Notre Dame's toxic fallout: Paris exposed to alarming amounts of lead

JAMES GLANZ, JEREMY WHITE, ELIAN PELTIER & WEIYI CAI
PARIS, SEPTEMBER 15

THE APRIL fire that engulfed Notre Dame contaminated the cathedral site with clouds of toxic dust and exposed nearby schools, day care centres, public parks and other parts of Paris to alarming levels of lead.

The lead dust came from the cathedral's incinerated roof and spire, which contained about 460 tonnes of the dangerous metal.

Five months after the fire, French authorities have refused to fully disclose the results of their testing for lead contamination,

sowing public confusion, while issuing reassuring statements intended to play down the risks.

Their delays and denials have opened authorities to accusations that they put reconstruction of the cathedral — which President Emmanuel Macron has pledged to complete in five years — ahead of the health of thousands of people.

A comprehensive investigation by the *New York Times* has helped fill out an emerging picture of a failed official response. It found significant lapses by French authorities in alerting the public to health risks, even as their understanding of the danger became clearer.

The April 15 blaze nearly de-

stroyed the 850-year-old cathedral and brought immediate scrutiny to whether adequate fire protections had been in place to safeguard a gem of Gothic architecture visited by 13 million people a year.

The cathedral's roof and spire succumbed to the flames that night and collapsed. But the billowing smoke carried its own perils. It contained massive quantities of lead, according to test results in confidential reports and others released by the government.

The *Times*' investigation drew from confidential documents, including warnings by labor inspectors, a police report and previously undisclosed lead measurements



Workers wear masks on the roof of Notre Dame cathedral. *NYT*

by the Culture Ministry.

The documents, as well as scores of interviews, make clear that French authorities had indi-

cations that lead exposure could be a grave problem within 48 hours of the fire.

But it took a month before

city officials conducted the first lead tests at a school close to Notre Dame. Even today, city and regional health officials have not tested every school in proximity to the cathedral.

The tests showed levels of lead dust above the French regulatory standard for buildings hosting children in at least 18 day care centres, preschools and primary schools.

In dozens of other public spaces, like plazas and streets, authorities found lead levels up to 60 times over the safety standard.

The highest contamination levels, revealed in confidential Culture Ministry documents obtained by the *Times*, were at different spots in, or near, the cathe-

dral site. Authorities failed to clean the area in the immediate aftermath of the fire and waited four months to finish a full decontamination of the neighbourhood.

The Culture Ministry, which is responsible for cleaning the site and rebuilding Notre Dame, also failed or refused to enforce safety procedures for workers, leaving them exposed to lead levels more than a thousand times the accepted standard.

“These are astronomical levels, and the attitude of health authorities is inexplicable,” said Annie Thébaud-Mony, a prominent public health expert in France, who has been leading public calls for more transparency in the aftermath of the fire.

Some French officials and lead experts have cautioned against “paranoia” and argued that the test results may in part reflect broader underlying problems with lead contamination in Paris.

Lead exposure poses the greatest risk to children as well as pregnant women and nursing mothers, who can pass lead on to their children.

If ingested, lead interferes with the normal development of the nervous system and can leave young children with permanent cognitive damage.

Even so, hundreds of children attended schools near Notre Dame for weeks before authorities began in mid-May to test for lead levels, or to clean the buildings. **NYT**

14ECONOMY

\$1.69 BN IN JULY 2019; \$45 BN SINCE NDA CAME TO POWER IN MAY 2014

Resident Indians remitted out more money than ever in July under LRS

SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

AMID THE government's efforts to attract foreign direct investors as well as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), the country witnessed its highest ever monthly outflow of \$1.69 billion under the liberalised remittance scheme (LRS) by resident Indians in the month of July.

With this, the outflow of money under the LRS scheme has hit \$5.8 billion in the first four months of FY20 and aggregated to over \$45 billion (Rs 3.15 lakh crore at exchange rate of 70 to a dollar) since the Narendra Modi-led NDA first came to power in May 2014.

By comparison, in the five year period of UPA II, between April 2009 and March 2014, the aggregate outward remittance under LRS amounted to \$5.45 billion.

Under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) LRS, resident individuals are allowed to remit up to \$250,000 in a financial year under various heads including current account transactions such as going overseas on employment, studies overseas, emigration, maintenance of close relatives, medical treatment among others.

The residents can also transfer money for capital account transactions under LRS includ-

EXPLAINEDFlight of capital could weaken investment activity

A SHARP rise in outward remittance under LRS indicates that India is witnessing flight of capital by residents amidst weak private investment climate and declining GDP growth rates.

If businesses shift their base, it not only hurts investment and job creation in India but also makes rupee volatile against dollar.

ing opening of foreign currency account overseas with a bank, purchase of property and making investments in units of mutual funds, venture capital funds among others.

RBI data shows that over the last five years, while outward remittance under LRS on account of travel amounted to over \$14 billion, almost \$10.5 billion was on account of maintenance of close relatives and \$10 billion was sent for studies. Another \$4.8 billion was remitted under the head of gifts and \$1.9 billion for overseas investment in equity and debt.

By comparison, in the previous five-year period between FY10 and FY14, the amount remitted by Indians abroad on account of travel amounted to mere \$129 million and that for

maintenance of close relatives stood at \$992 million. Similarly, for the purpose of gift, resident Indians remitted \$1.17 billion in the five-year period.

The outflow of funds by resident Indians under LRS over the last five years has almost negated the inflow of funds by FPIs in the same period.

While FPI's have invested a net of Rs 176,212 crore into Indian equities since April 2014, they have invested a net of Rs 260,017 crore into the debt market in the same period.

Investment experts and those in the business of fund management say that the sharp rise in outflow of funds under LRS scheme over the last five years indicates the flight of capital and small- and mid-sized businessmen from India.

RISE IN OUTWARD REMITTANCE UNDER LRS	
Year	Amount (USD Bn)
2014-15	1.325
2015-16	4.642
2016-17	8.17
2017-18	11.333
2018-19	13.787
2019-20*	5.871

Source: RBI; *till July

"Small businessmen and entrepreneurs who are relatively affluent are looking to shift their base out of the country," said the chief executive officer of an investment firm.

The head of a financial services company said that there is growing concern among people over social harmony and peace in the country, along with worries pertaining to harassment by tax officials, which is leading many individuals (who belong to relatively affluent class) to shift their base.

"It is a worrying trend. Had even 50 per cent of this money stayed back in India and got invested in businesses, it would have resulted into a big multiplier effect in terms of job creation and growth of the economy," the person said.

'Discoms' outstanding dues to gencos up 57% in Jul'

The outstanding dues of distribution utilities from power producers have risen by more than 57 per cent to Rs 73,748 crore in July 2019 compared to the same month last year, according to data on the PRAAPTI portal

₹ 46,779 cr

Amount owed by distribution companies (discoms) to power generation companies (gencos) in July 2018

₹ 54,342 cr

Total overdue amount, which was not cleared even after 60 days of grace period offered by gencos, as of July this year; as against Rs 30,331 crore in July 2018.

60 days

Time given by gencos to discoms for paying bills for supply of electricity, after which, the outstanding becomes overdue and generators charge penal interest on that in most cases



₹ 69,905 cr

Total outstanding dues on discoms as of June 2019; revised from the provisional Rs 46,412 crore

₹ 51,748 cr

Total overdue amount as of June 2019; revised from the provisional Rs 30,552 crore

OVERDUES OF CENTRAL PUBLIC SECTOR GENCOS ON DISCOMS:

NTPC: ₹ 7,778.38 crore
NLC INDIA: ₹ 4,693.48 crore
THDC INDIA: ₹ 1,954.24 crore
NHPC: ₹ 1,613.84 crore
Damodar Valley Corporation: ₹ 786.69 crore

STATES WITH LONGEST DURATION FOR DISCOMS TO MAKE PAYMENTS:

■ Rajasthan and Bihar: 820 days
■ Haryana: 818 days
■ Andhra Pradesh: 818 days
■ Madhya Pradesh: 805 days
■ Telangana: 798 days
■ Karnataka: 792 days
■ Tamil Nadu: 791 days

23.57%

Share of overdue of independent power producers in total overdue of Rs 54,342 crore on discoms

BRIEFLY

STC's financial health: 'Steps' being explored

New Delhi: The government is considering measures to improve the financial health of State Trading Corporation (STC), a public sector unit under the commerce ministry, according to sources. The measures, which are under consideration, include provision of adequate time for STC to repay bank loans and sale of immovable assets. "The steps have been discussed among commerce ministry, finance ministry and banks," the sources said. As per the proposal, STC could be given a five-year time for repayment of Rs 500 crore.

'MSI's PV market share falls in Apr-Aug'

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) and Tata Motors' domestic passenger vehicle (PV) market share declined in April-August this year, while Hyundai and M&M witnessed gain in the same period, as per data compiled by industry body SIAM. MSI, India's largest carmaker, saw its market share dip by over 2 percentage points during the period under review and slip below 50 per cent in the domestic PV segment in April-August. The company sold 5,55,064 units this fiscal as compared with 7,57,289 units during April-August previous year. Its market share has come down from 52.16 per cent last year to 49.83 per cent in April-August this fiscal. **PTI**

737 MAX return in UAE unlikely this yr

Dubai: The head of the UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority said on Sunday that he was not optimistic that the Boeing 737 MAX would return to operations this year and that the first quarter of 2020 was more likely. Boeing's flagship 737 MAX has been grounded since March while Boeing updates flight control software at the centre of two fatal crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia that together killed 346 people. **REUTERS**

MARKET WATCH

FPIs INFUSE ₹1.8 CR IN SEPT 1ST HALF

New Delhi: Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) turned net buyers in the first half of September, according to available data, pumping in Rs 1,841 crore into the capital markets, after remaining sellers for the previous two months. **PTI**

Will seek clarification from RBI on fixed-floating rate home-loans: SBI Chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LEH, SEPTEMBER 15

THE COUNTRY'S largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) will be seeking clarifications from the Reserve Bank whether it can offer long-term home loans with fixed rates in the beginning and convert the same into floating rates later, chairman Rajnish Kumar has said.

The move comes after the Reserve Bank has mandated banks to shift all retail lending to floating rates that will be determined by external benchmarks like the repo rate.

Kumar said there is a lack of clarity on how it can go ahead with the fixed rate products, after the RBI's new regulations on floating rates.

Hinting at the volatility in the repo rate, he said some home buyers may want their loan rates to be fixed.

For such buyers, it can offer a 'fixed-floating' product, wherein the rates are locked in for an initial period of say five to ten years, and then turns floating.

The need for making the product floating in the latter part arises out of the bank's inability to project the liability movements in the future, he said, adding typically, home loans are for about 30 years.

It can be noted that the repo rate at which the central bank lends to the system is at a nine-year low of 5.40 per cent.

Speaking to reporters here

No more IPO plan for general insurance arm

Leh: SBI has dropped its plan to take its general insurance arm public as there is no need for additional capital now, chairman Rajnish Kumar has said.

Investor interest for its cards business is very high, and SBI Card listing will happen in the March quarter, he said.

The bank was earlier looking for an initial public offering (IPO) for SBI General Insurance in fiscal 2020-21. **PTI**

over the weekend, Kumar said the central bank's recent guidelines on floating rate products for the retail segment has necessitated the need for the clarity.

Kumar has clarified that from an asset liability management perspective, it is difficult to have a fixed rate product for a long term like 30 years, the maximum tenor of a home loan now from the bank now. Some private sector peers offer up to 35 years of home loans depending on in the age of the borrower, though.

At present, SBI has a floating rate home loan product linked to its marginal cost of funds-based lending rate and it recently withdrew one linked to the repo rate.

Stake sale of 7 large CPSEs could help govt meet divestment target

PRASANTA SAHU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

WITH ITS tepid revenue growth resulting in higher reliance on non-tax revenue, the Centre has drawn up a plan to bring down its stakes in a clutch of large central public sector undertakings (CPSEs) to below 51 per cent in FY20. Stake sales in the Maharatna firms — namely IOC, NTPC, BPCL and GAIL — could happen either through the offer for sale (OFS) or exchange traded fund (ETF) route; strategic sale of at least one of them is also on the radar. In all these CPSEs, the government's stake is now below 55 per cent.

Other CPSEs in which the government might reduce stakes as per the policy laid out in the Budget FY20 are Engineers India (EIL), Container Corporation (ConCor) and NALCO.

The Centre's disinvestment

4 OF 7 CPSEs ARE MAHARATNA FIRMS

■ Stake sales in the Maharatna firms — IOC, NTPC, BPCL and GAIL — could happen either via OFS or ETF route

■ Other CPSEs where the government might reduce stakes are EIL, ConCor and NALCO

target for the current fiscal is Rs 1.05 lakh crore. So far, it has raised only Rs 12,357 crore or 12 per cent of the annual target.

Faced with a lack of headroom to garner non-tax revenues from stake sales in listed CPSEs, the Centre announced in the Budget to bring down its direct holding in non-financial firms to below 51

per cent. In many of these firms, the Centre can still can retain a majority stake, inclusive of the stakes held by government-controlled institutions such as LIC in them and CPSE cross holdings.

The Centre mobilised a record Rs 1 lakh crore in FY18 and Rs 85,000 crore in FY19 from disinvestment of its stake in various companies, but some of its been taken away by the fact that CPSE-CPSE deals (ONGC-HPCL and PFC-REC) and stake purchases by LIC played a major role in boosting the receipts.

It is estimated that if the government brings down its stake to 26 per cent in the aforementioned seven large CPSEs, it could garner about Rs 1.2 lakh crore at current market prices.

The options are not limited to strategic sales alone as other modes such as ETFs are also an effective tool for the government to dilute its stake in the firms. **FE**

FIGHT TO STOP CLOSING OF OHIO & MICHIGAN PLANTS

UAW calls first nationwide strike against GM since 2007

NICK CAREY & BEN KLAYMAN
DETROIT, SEPTEMBER 15

THE UNITED Auto Workers (UAW) said on Sunday that its roughly 48,000 hourly workers at General Motors Co facilities would go on strike as of midnight Sunday after US labor contract talks reached an impasse, the first nationwide strike at GM in 12 years.

"We do not take this lightly," Terry Dittes, the UAW vice president in charge of the union's relationship with GM, said at a press conference in downtown Detroit. "This is our last resort."

GM said in a statement that its offer to the UAW during talks included more than \$7 billion in new investments, 5,400 jobs — a majority of which would be new — pay increases, improved benefits and a contract ratification bonus of \$8,000.

"We have negotiated in good faith and with a sense of urgency," the automaker said.

A strike will very quickly shut down GM's operations across North America and could hurt the broader US economy. A prolonged industrial action would also cause hardship for GM hourly workers on greatly reduced strike pay.

GM's workers last went out on



UAW vice president Terry Dittes (second from right) and National Bargaining Committee chair Ted Krumm (right) in Detroit, Michigan, US, on Saturday. Reuters

a brief two-day strike in 2007 during contract talks.

A more painful strike occurred in Flint, Michigan, in 1998, lasting 54 days and costing the number on automaker in the United States more than \$2 billion.

The union has been fighting to stop GM from closing auto assembly plants in Ohio and Michigan and arguing workers deserve higher pay after years of record profits for GM in North America.

GM argues the plant shutdowns are necessary responses to market shifts, and that UAW wages and benefits are expensive compared with competing non-union auto plants in southern US

states. In its statement, the automaker said its offer to the union included solutions for the Michigan and Ohio assembly plants currently lacking products.

A person familiar with GM's offer said that could include producing a future electric vehicle in Detroit.

It could also include turning a plant in Lordstown, Ohio, into an electric vehicle battery plant or going through with the proposed sale of the plant to a group affiliated with electric vehicle start-up Workhorse Group Inc. A new battery plant could give some UAW workers at Lordstown the chance to remain with GM. **REUTERS**

'Sebi plans new whistle-blower mechanism for auditors to report frauds'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

WITH AN aim to unearth financial irregularities and other fraudulent transactions at listed companies, Sebi is planning to set up a new whistle-blower mechanism for auditors and other 'gate-keepers' to report such cases.

The proposed move assumes significance in the wake of several auditors in the recent past decided to exit from their audit mandate after certain listed companies failed to take remedial actions despite financial wrongdoings having been flagged in their auditors' observations.

Officials said most of these auditor exits have taken place at a much later stage, but a 'confidentiality mechanism' can help in cases of financial frauds being reported at an early stage by auditors, independent directors and others considered to be 'gate-keepers' or 'conscience keepers'.

Regulators and enforcement agencies have often stressed that auditors, independent directors, investment bankers, valuers and other such entities have a greater responsibility to ensure compliance to regulations and safeguard the interest by minority shareholders.

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Talking chop

America will have to resume negotiations with the Taliban eventually



US troops at their base in Logar province, Afghanistan, in August 2018. An abrupt American pull-out would make matters worse, dooming Afghanistan to an even bloodier civil war and possibly to an eventual Taliban victory. *Reuters*

FOR MONTHS America and the Taliban had been haggling over an agreement to end their 18-year war in Afghanistan. A deal was in sight. But then President Donald Trump learned that a Taliban bomber in Kabul had killed an American soldier, as well as 11 other people. “I immediately...called off peace negotiations,” he fumed on Twitter.

The decision came as a relief to many, who had feared that Mr Trump was ready to sign any deal with the Taliban, no matter how humiliating for America or catastrophic for Afghanistan, just to keep a campaign promise to stop America’s “endless wars” and bring the troops home. As he called off the talks, the president revealed that he had been on the verge of hosting Taliban negotiators at Camp David, his rural retreat, in the hope of sealing a deal there.

Many Americans would have been shocked by the spectacle of their president welcoming the group that once sheltered Osama bin Laden, just days before the anniversary of the attacks of September 11th 2001. Instead, after Mr Trump put his foot down, the American commander in Afghanistan said he was increasing the tempo of attacks on the Taliban. Negotiations were “dead”, Mr Trump reiterated.

The deal America was on the verge of striking looked lopsided. It was one of the sources of disagreement between Mr Trump and John Bolton, his national security adviser, who left his job last week, removing the administration’s chief hawk. It involved America withdrawing 5,000 troops without the Taliban even agreeing to a ceasefire. That is not quite as abject as it sounds. America

would still have had enough manpower to carry on training the Afghan army and giving it air support. In the meantime, the Taliban in effect agreed to negotiate directly with the Afghan government, although this was dressed up as part of a national dialogue. That is something the Taliban had until now tenaciously resisted.

The problem is that the Taliban have no incentive to make big concessions, such as accepting a ceasefire or moderating their de-

mand for a theocracy, if they believe that time is on their side. Some suspect that Mr Trump just wants to declare victory before the next election and leave Afghanistan to its fate come what may. To forge a durable peace, Mr Trump must convince them they are wrong and that he will stay if needs be. It will not be easy.

The war cannot be won by arms alone. Even when America had 100,000 troops in Afghanistan, seven times more than today, it could not stamp out the Taliban. With rel-

atively few troops, America suffers just a dozen or so deaths a year, and still stops the Taliban from overrunning the country. Yet thousands of Afghans perish, and life is made miserable for the remainder.

An abrupt American pull-out would make matters worse, dooming Afghanistan to an even bloodier civil war and possibly to an eventual Taliban victory. That would destabilise the region, create another potential haven for terrorists and leave Afghans at the mercy of a group that murders girls for going to school. It is hard to imagine a worse outcome from 18 years of war.

If military victory is unattainable and surrender unpalatable, that leaves only one option: more negotiation. The Taliban say they are still open to dialogue. Fine, let them talk with the elected government of Afghanistan.

America should use all its muscle to bring both sides to the table. And it should make clear that it will support the regime in Kabul until it is no longer in danger of being overthrown by jihadists. Everyone will have to make galling compromises. The Taliban will once again have to be allowed a prominent role in government, because that is the way to give them a stake in the peace.

Such a deal is a long way off. It will not be settled in time for anyone to brag about it on the campaign trail in 2020. So be it. Mr Trump was right not to rush into a bad deal. Afghanistan’s future and America’s credibility will depend on him, or a future president, having the patience and resolve to strike a better one.

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ROBERT MUGABE

Rule by the whip

The nationalist hero who destroyed Zimbabwe was 95

BOOKS HE trusted. One was usually in his hand in those first, mostly happy, years as Zimbabwe’s leader. He would be home at State House by 5.30pm, slamming doors so that his beloved wife Sally would know to come rushing. They crumpled together on a low armchair, almost on each other’s laps, she eating custard as he sipped tea. Then he would drape a long arm round her while turning with the other the pages of a favourite novel, usually British, often a Graham Greene.

Written words Robert Mugabe could love. It was real live people who proved difficult. A shy, surly boy, he sought no friends in Kutama, his village. Later he admitted it frankly: “I lived in my mind a lot. I liked talking to myself, reciting little poems and so on; reading things aloud to myself.” A loner, he hated scrapping with sticks, running, boys’ boisterous games, communal life. A brother, Donato, thought him “lazy, just reading all the time”. Even at chores, in the shade of the bush while snaring birds or tramping in the dust to herd cattle, he would read. “He held the book in one hand and the whip in the other. It was a strange thing for all of us to see,” recalled Donato.

The Irish priest at the Catholic mission in Kutama thought he had “unusual gravitas” and would “be an important somebody”. He was at mass daily, most dutifully after his brother, Michael, was poisoned. Years of teaching study followed: first in Southern Rhodesia, then at Fort Hare, South Africa, the crucible for so many African nationalist lead-

ers, and lastly in Ghana, where he met Sally.

As an African nationalist in Rhodesia, ruled by Ian Smith in the name of white supremacy, jail was inevitable. His 11 years behind bars he recalled as a chunk of life pointlessly stolen away. Again, books sustained him. He acquired seven degrees. As it did for Mandela, Nkrumah and Kenyatta, prison also earned him political credibility. Outdoor activity was harder. In Mozambique after his release, as his fellow liberation fighters strutted in fatigues, he sweltered in a suit.

Throughout his life, rivals somehow met timely deaths. Cars were flattened by lorries on remote roads; flames devoured a farmhouse; opponents learned to fear high open windows. Few loved him. The British sometimes sneered. At Lancaster House in London, amid talk of independence and elections, the British foreign secretary found him “reptilian”, “not human”. At home, voters thought otherwise. He swept to glorious, genuine victory in the first free elections in 1980. To the shock and relief of Smith and the white farmers, he let them stay on, keeping their land if they abstained from politics. Though he had declared himself a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, he now preached reconciliation. And the teacher flourished. Zimbabweans were among the best educated people in Africa, and evenings at State House saw the prime minister personally tutoring his staff.

He blamed Britain for all ills, including his country’s complete economic collapse in the first decade of this century. Inflation soared to 500trn%; a generation of people fled. The

British, he claimed, had broken their word on paying for land reform. Yet he hankered for England, London shopping, Savile Row, cricket and high tea with “Johnny” Major. He was fonder still of royalty, telling with a twinkle of the queen’s happiness on visits to Zimbabwe.

For all his literary habits, the whip was never far away. In the early 1980s he turned to North Korea to train soldiers to crush the main minority tribe, the Ndebele. He admitted his security men had committed some “excesses” when entire village communities were burnt in their huts. He denied talk of 20,000 victims and called himself forgiving—“otherwise I would have slaughtered lots of people”. The rest of the world did not much notice, or care to bring him to book. Yet his fear of prosecution for crimes against humanity may have encouraged him to cling to office, despite his conviction that only God could remove him.

His rule grew darker, possibly because Sally had died and been replaced by Grace, an ex-secretary 40 years younger than he was, even fonder of shops and more ambitious for political power. His opponents had once been co-opted; now he crushed them. Young thugs, egged on by him, punished white farmers by taking their land away. It was given to his friends, “war veterans” like himself, whether or not they had any idea how to work it. As a farming economy, Zimbabwe collapsed.

Frugality, brutality

He never saw tragedy in his country’s im-



Robert Mugabe died on September 6. *Reuters*

miseration, only meddling by outsiders or vicious threats by rivals. The army and his Central Intelligence Organisation ensured his grip on power, rigging elections, killing opponents, closing newspapers and wiping away a generation of bright and tolerant Zimbabweans who could have led Africa. His people succumbed to hunger, aids, cholera and despair. Each year he held a more lavish public birthday party, beaming with delight as he cut a massive cake.

In the end it was the dismissal and flight abroad of his most trusted lieutenant,

Emmerson Mnangagwa, that led to his downfall in 2017. Grace had overplayed her hand in having him sacked, and the army rolled into Harare. The generals glibly insisted this was not a coup, saying they were dealing with “traitors”. By this, they did not seem to mean him. But they duly installed Mr Mnangagwa as president.

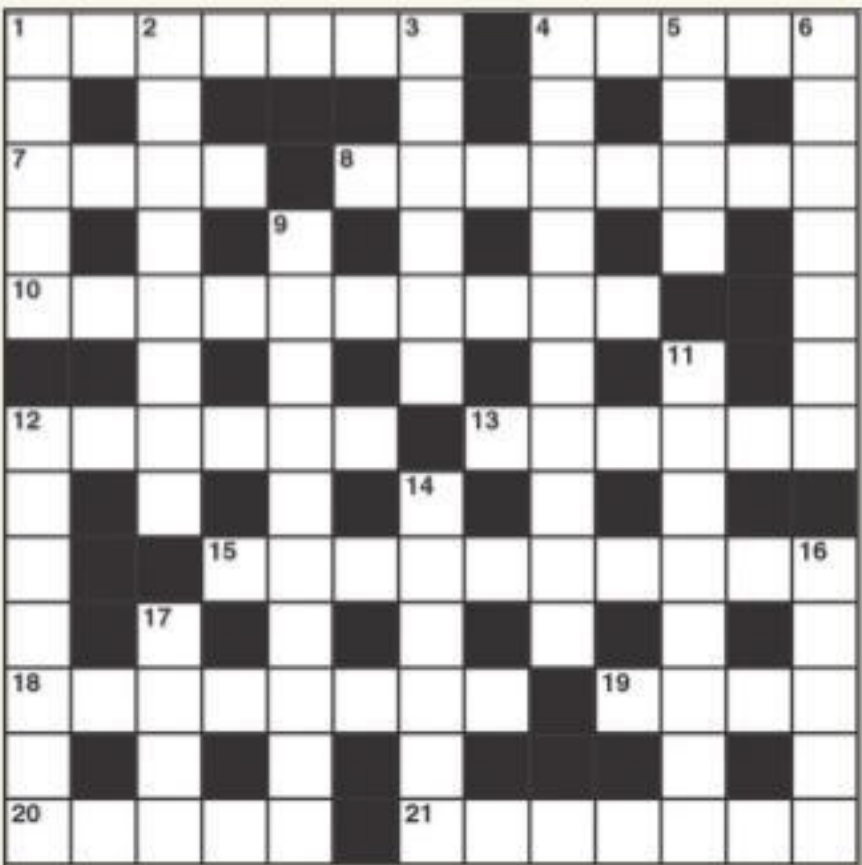
Asked why people feared him, he said he thought it was “perhaps because I’m quiet, and also because I believe in what I say.” His life was mostly frugal: rising early to practise yoga; working daily at his desk,

in his mustard-yellow chair beside a huge map of the world; nibbling rice and cornmeal by hand, the African way. He showed few of the vices—women, booze, feasts—associated with the caricature of an African dictator. But he had the usual vanity. Asked by The Economist, well into his 80s, when he would retire, he laughed that he would rule until he was “a hundred years old”. The tragedy for Zimbabwe was how close he got to keeping his word.

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CROSSWORD 3911



- ACROSS**

 - Men said to be not men at all (7)
 - White or green plant put outside (5)
 - I was first out, but refused to admit it (4)
 - Mislaid one's watch and was held up? (4,4)
 - He likes people looking in at his window (10)
 - Fancy becoming a tenor maybe (6)
 - Had a lean time? (6)
 - One who enters the services (10)
 - In distribution of income the company is thrifty (8)
 - Freedom of movement on the stage (4)
 - Honest man (5)
 - New apron's about right to be worn in Scotland (7)
- DOWN**

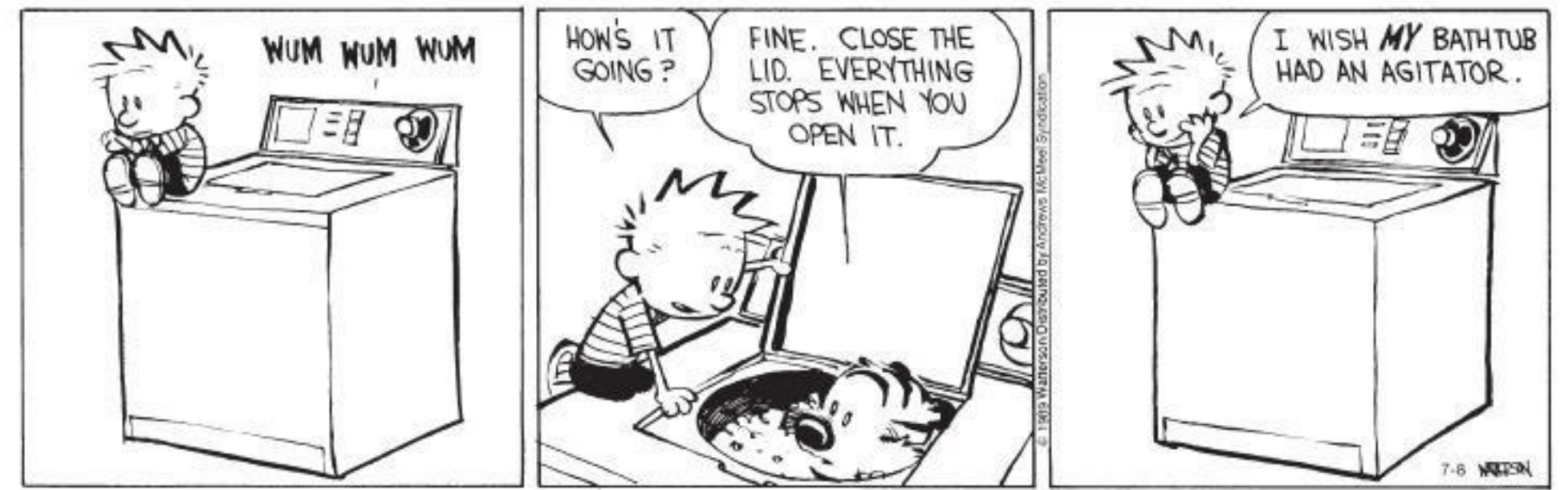
 - Sports workers in the dark (5)
 - Heading for the frozen wastes - or stuck in them (8)
 - Somehow lost on points - or was robbed (6)
 - Justified in changing their night (2,3,5)
 - Putting party back in power in old Scandinavia (4)
 - Produced admitted superiority? (7)
 - In which to find an artist's early work? (10)
 - Is he in no hurry to act? (8)
 - A very personal description of royalty (7)
 - Characteristics of an artist stage (6)
 - Material that's light to put on (5)
 - Notes seating is provided (4)

Solutions Crossword 3910: Across: 1 Alternative, 9 Aircrew, 10 Calia, 11 Aids, 12 Coconuts, 14 Answer, 16 Lessee, 18 Quarters, 19 Cant, 22 Ennui, 23 Deadpan, 24 Bright ideas. Down: 2 Lurid, 3 Earn, 4 Newton, 5 Tick over, 6 Velours, 7 Catafalques, 8 Mass meeting, 13 Settling, 15 Spanner, 17 Credit, 20 Alpha, 21 Hand.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

The _____ is a resolute determination. - Napoleon (6,6)

CMEOR

EEPTTU

AOISS

IITDMW

SOLUTION: CMEOR: COME, AOISS: PUTTIE, DMMWT Answer: The truest wisdom is a resolute determination. - Napoleon

Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SUDOKU 3971

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 3970

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

Classifieds

PERSONAL

- I, Vinay Kumar Mittal S/o Sunder Lal Mittal R/o Pocket-B6, Plot No-77, Sector-5, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Vinay Mittal for all purposes. 0040512466-1

I, Sunaina Kumari W/O Ashok Kumar Jha R/O-B-5/43, II-Floor, Shree Krishna Enclave, Sector-17, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Changed my Name to Sunayna Jha. 0040512454-7

I, Pooja Chawla W/o Sunil Anand R/o D-4/21, Vijay Enclave, Vinod Puri, Palam Road, New Delhi-110045, have changed my name to Tripti Anand for all purposes. 0040512452-1

I, Shyam Lal Sachdeva S/o Hari Chand, R/o House No-538, Ward No-10, Near Mata Darwaja, Gopal Colony, Rohtrak, Haryana-124001, name of mine has been wrongly written as Shayamial Sachdeva in my daughter Mamta Sachdeva School Certificate of 10th Class. The actual name of mine is Shyam Lal Sachdeva. 0070674377-1

I, Santvir Singh S/o Ramdas Singh R/o Village-Uncha Amirpur, NTPC, Vidhut Nagar, Dadri GautamBudh Nagar, U.P., have changed my name Santveer Singh for all Purposes. 0040512424-1

I, Sajeeda Parween W/O Mohmmad Rafi R/O-P-4/27, Sultanpuri, Delhi-110086. Have Changed My Name To Sajeeda Praween. 0040512454-9

I, Sachin S/O, Tilak Raj R/o Vill. Jehru (834), Ward No.-2, Po. Hared, Teh. Baijnath, Dist. Kangra, Himachal Pradesh-176115. Have changed my name to Sachin Chauhan for all purposes. 0040512457-1

I, Ranjana Kaur W/O, Gurbaksh Singh Kamboj R/o 955 A/8, Govind Puri, Kalkaji, New Delhi 110019 have changed my name to Ranjana Kamboj for all purposes. 0040512458-1

I, Rajesh S/o Ishwar Singh Bhadana R/o-H.No.182, Village Anangpur, Mohalla Domka, P.O-Amar Nagar, Faridabad have Changed my name to Rajesh Bhadana for all purposes. 0040512485-8

I, Mukesh Kumar S/O Nanak Chand R/O Hno.17/15, Near Kacchay-Quarter, Municipal-Colony, Sonipat-131001. Changed my Name To Mukesh Kumar Chandna. 040512454-6
- I, Kamaljeet Kaur W/O Manish Kumar R/O-A-314/2, II-Floor, Derawal Nagar, Delhi-110009. Have Changed My Name To Kamal Sethi. 0040512454-8

I, Gopi Bahl D/o Kuldeep Bahl and Ex. Wife of Lokesh Singh, R/o Villa No.-103, 2nd Floor, Block-5, Eros Garden, Charnwood Village, Surajkund, Faridabad, Haryana-121009, declare that I got divorce from my husband Lokesh Singh vide court decree HUD-FM-0209-1411-09, Dated 24.02.2009. Further I have changed the name of my minor daughter Shagun Singh aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as Shagun Bahl. 0070674360-1

I, Sunil Prem alias Sunil Massey S/o Prem Masih R/o 1093/7, Ward No-1, Church Compound, Mehrauli, Delhi-110030, have changed my name to Sunil Massey. 0070674358-1

I, Siddhartha Kumar S/o Hemant Kumar, R/o L2D61B 4th Floor, Lal Bahadur Shastri Computer Institute, DK Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059. I am changing my name Siddarth to Siddhartha Kumar for all future purpose. 0040512417-1

I, Siddiqui Owais Aftab S/o Aftab Ahmad R/o 115-A, Pocket-A, DDA Flats, Sukhdev Vihar, New Delhi-110025, have changed my name to Owais Aftab for all purposes. 0040512462-1

I, Mohammad Rafi S/O Nabi Hussain R/O-P-4/27, Sultanpuri, Delhi-110086. Have Changed My Name To Mohammad Rafi. 040512454-10

LOST & FOUND

I, pankaj kumar have lost migration certificate of serial no 0267416/ roll no 2606197. finder please contact 9871212027 0050155281-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Public at large is hereby informed that the property bearing no. 317/2, 2nd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 is the sole and exclusive property of, Mrs Madhu Rai w/o Mr Satya Bhushan Rai and Mr. Satya Rai Nagaula s/o Mr Satya Bhushan Rai, who have come into sole ownership and possession of the same vide will dated, 5th April, 1996, executed by, Mrs Vidya Rani Bhasin, mother of Mrs Madhu Rai. The Public at large is informed that the abovementioned property is being alienated by the said exclusive owners by registered sale deed. The said property is being sold and Public at large is hereby informed that any person having any claim against the said property can contact the undersigned within 15 days after the said claim shall be treated as null and void.

Sd/-
Mayank Mikhal Mukherjee
Advocate for the owners
myankmukherjee@gmail.com
A-33, Nizamuddin East
New Delhi-110013

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NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER (Open Tender Two Packet System)

No.: IRCON /2048/NFR-SRRP-e-Tender/Vehicle Hiring /19/152/05 Date: 16.09.2019

Sub: "Hiring of Commercial Vehicles for officers and staff working in the office of General Manager Sivok- Rangpo Rail Project, Siliguri office, Package-I and Package-II

Estimated Cost	Package - I: ₹. 51,34,883/-; Package - II: ₹. 53,84,148/-
Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Package - I: ₹. 1,02,700/-; Package - II: ₹. 1,07,700/-
Completion Period	24 (Twenty Four) Months for both the Packages
Cost of Tender Document	₹ 5,000.00
Last Date & Time of Submission of Bid	09.10.2019 upto 15:00 hrs.

Note: Tenderers should note that only one Package can be awarded to Single Bidder / Tenderer (Ref. Clause No. 19.0 of Special Conditions of Contract).

For further details and updates, please visit e-procurement website <https://tenders.mstce.com> or <https://eprocure.gov.in/> or mstce.com. Amendments /Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted on the website only.

General Manager/PH
IRCON International Limited
Sivok Road, Siliguri-734001
Contact Nos.: 9002511650, 0353 2541011

For All Advertisement Booking

Call : 0120-6651214

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

Tirunelveli (Construction and Maintenance) Circle

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.10 /2019-20/D1/Dated.13.09.2019

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 23.10.2019 At 15.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer, (H), C&M, Tirunelveli Circle, for CRIDP. 2019-20 Works, (Package No.46) pertaining Nagercoil (H) (C&M) Division.

Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 20.09.2019 onwards in the Government website <https://tntenders.gov.in>. If any Changes/Corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer(H), C&M, Tirunelveli Circle.

RAJKOT RAJPATH LTD. (RRL)
(A Wholly Owned Subsidiary of Rajkot Municipal Corporation)

3rd Floor, Multi Activity Center, Nana Maja Chowk, 150 Ft Ring Road, Rajkot. 360005 (Gujarat)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR SELECTION OF BUS OPERATOR FOR PROCUREMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF 50 NOS. OF MIDI AC FULLY BUILT PURE ELECTRIC BUSES ON GROSS COST CONTRACT BASIS (UNDER FAME-II)

RRL invites Bids from duly qualified interested parties for Procurement, Operation and Maintenance of Operator owned -50 nos of Midi, 900 mm floor height Electric AC Buses for BRTS & RMTS Operations in Rajkot City. Interested parties may download RFP from website <https://rmc.nprocure.com>. Pre-bid queries to be submitted on or before dt 03/10/2019 at 11.00 AM. Last date of online submission of technical and price bids shall be 18/10/2019 by 6:00 PM. Offline submissions of Technical Bid, RFP Fee and EMD shall be made up to dt 19/10/2019 by 6:00 PM. Technical Bids shall be opened on dt 21/10/2019 at 11:00 AM at above address.

(Sd/-) Chairman, Rajkot Rajpath Ltd & Commissioner, Rajkot Municipal Corporation

NMDC Limited
(A Government of India Enterprise)

Donimalai Complex, Post: Donimalai, PIN-583118
Taluk: Sandur, Dist: Ballari-Karnataka

OPEN TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender Enquiry No. DN/MS/KIOM/ILLUM-NHR/2019-23/OTE Date 16/09/2019

Sealed tenders in two bid system are inviting from the competent and experienced bidder for the work of "ILLUMINATION OF NEW HAUL ROAD FROM DYNAMIC STOCKPILE TO 1030 MRL AT KIOM, NMDC LTD, DONIMALAI COMPLEX, SANDUR TALUKU, BALLARI DIST, KARNATAKA- 583118" at an estimated cost of ₹ 29.98 Lakhs with EMD of ₹30,000/-, Tender document cost of ₹3,540/- and Commencement of sale of tender document 16.09.2019. Last date of sale and submission of Tender document 16.10.2019. The detailed NIT and tender document can be viewed /downloaded from NMDC's website <https://www.nmdc.co.in> after user registration or Central Public Procurement Portal www.eprocurement.gov.in. Further, for any amendment, corrigendum, clarification may please follow the above website.

For and on behalf of the NMDC Limited
DGM (Elect) Services

Date: 16/09/2019

Uttarakhand Metro Rail, Urban Infrastructure and Building Construction Corporation Limited (UKMRC)
(A Government of Uttarakhand Undertaking)
CIN: 45309UR 2017 SGC007687

NIT No. : 04/UKMRC/2019/109/Civil/Consultancy Dt. 16-09-19

Notice Inviting Tender

UKMRC invites Open Tender in sealed cover for the Work: Consultancy Services to UKMRC for Planning and Implementation of various urban transport Projects in Uttarakhand

(i) Method of Selection : Open tenders "Quality cum Cost Based Selection" basis (QCBS).

(ii) EMD : 40,000/- (Forty Thousand Only) which will be accompanied with "Technical Bid"

(iii) Estimated Cost : 39,82,860/-

Full tender details can be downloaded from the website of UKMRC i.e. www.ukmrc.org **MD (UKMRC)**

DAY TODAY BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Today's Mercury-Uranus pattern is one of those supremely magical planetary alignments that favours dreams and imagination, but lays out banana skins for those who allow confusion to creep in. Poetic aspirations come first and practical goals may have to wait.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

If the past few weeks for you have been free from disagreements then you're lucky. However, although, the nature of the game is changing, I don't think any of you will be unaware of the turbulent undercurrents building up this week. Keep your eye on the ball, Libra.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Venus, your ruling planet, is teaming up with Saturn in a pattern which gives all sentimental, self-indulgent and creative Taurians a welcome shove in the right direction. But you may have to voluntarily renounce one commitment, if you are to make the space for a much better one.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

We'll start off with the good news: your stars are extremely prosperous. But here's the downside: romantic chaos and inspired confusion may be great fun but could result in costly mistakes. That's precisely why your main priority should be extra self-control.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

The typical Cancerian is a peace-loving creature, but you can still be easily provoked. Looking at the week as a whole, you may move from an idyllic illusion of perpetual harmony towards a realisation that a battle must be joined. And, when it comes, the struggle will be one of ideas rather than emotions.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Sometimes life is just not what it seems. Yet you have a huge amount going for you. This might be more obvious to other people than it is to you. That's why you have to trust in the future and have faith that you are indeed on the right track.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

Everything that takes place this week will be encouraged by the fact that Mercury, your ruling planet, is now in an increasingly lively condition. Your smart ideas will help you pick your way through a rapidly approaching emotional minefield.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

You'll soon have a new and brighter perspective on the immediate future. In fact, if you're a typical mainstream Scorpio, you may rub your hands with glee at what is just around the corner. If you've spoken out against certain practical arrangements and restrictive obligations, you may soon be vindicated.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

You have little understanding of other people's intense feelings. You may even be rather bemused by this week's emotional events and general air of hysteria. Unless, that is, you have been here, done that and got the tee shirt. Experience counts for a lot.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Your emotional and romantic stars could not be better, so, if you're in difficulties, the key lies in your own complicated expectations and too high standards. Take other people at face value and assume that they are being straight with you, at least for now.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

The winds of change will be blowing, gently at first but then with great force. By all means relax, but retain a guarded approach to all developments, not just those which are obviously dodgy. If other people do end up putting pressure on you, then it's probably because you need them to give you a shove in the right direction.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

You should be in your element this week, at least until Thursday or Friday. A series of major planetary patterns decrees that this is a week when Piscean qualities – imagination, intuition, romance and compassion – are dominant for everyone. And especially, of course, for you.

SBI

Payments & Special Projects Department, Corporate Centre, 1st Floor, C-Wing, Mittal Towers, Mumbai - 400 021.

CORRIGENDUM

Please refer RFP for Procuring, Processing and Personalisation of Cards and Services, No.P&SP/PS/SN/RFP/2019-20/001 dated 28.08.2019, published on 28.08.2019 in this newspaper. Bank's Response to Pre-Bid Queries and Corrigendum details are uploaded and can be accessed on our website: <https://etender.sbi>. Sd/- Dy. General Manager (CFPT-Cards)

Place: Mumbai Date: 16/09/2019

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The last date for submission of filled-in tender documents:

For Sl. No. 2, 3 : 15/10/2019 at 11.30 hrs, For Sl. No. 4 : 18/10/2019 at 11.30 hrs. & for Sl. No. 5: 22/10/2019 at 11.00 hrs. and For Sl. No. 1: 05/11/2019 at 11.00 hrs.

For further details of individual tenders including amendments, if any; as well as downloading the tender documents, please visit our website <https://www.brbtnmpl.co.in>.

General Manager

17 TALK

ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

WEEK AHEAD



The Modern World

ART-CRITIC AND curator Geeta Kapur will give the fifth V S Gaitonde Memorial Lecture “Our Moderns”, presented by The Raza Foundation in collaboration with India Habitat Centre. On September 17 at Gulmohar, Habitat World, India Habitat Centre, Gate no. 3, Vardhaman Marg, 7 pm onwards. Entry is free.



Cat and Mouse

L'AFFAIRE SK1 is a French film by Frédéric Tellier that tells the true story of inspector Franck Magne. He is on a relentless search for a serial killer for eight years, who everybody thinks is dead. At Alliance Francaise de Delhi, on September 19, 6.30 pm.



Street Life

AT ITS outlets across Delhi-NCR, SodaBottleOpenerWala is hosting a special Chaat Pakodas menu, with mouth-watering delicacies hand-picked from the streets of Indian cities. Indulge in Palak Patta Pakoda Chaat, Juhu Chowpatty Pani Puri, Chutney Paneer Pakoda and Mangaloren Prawns. Cost for two is Rs 500.



Etched in Metal

SOME OF the prominent names from the contemporary art world, from Subodh Gupta and Riyas Komu to Ravinder Reddy, Vibha Galhotra (pictured work) and Tayeba Begum Lipi, will showcase their creativity on metal in the exhibition “Burnish/Tarnish” at Palette Art Gallery. Curated by art critic Girish Shahane, the exhibition is on view from September 19, at 14, Golf Links, Monday-Saturday, 11 am-7 pm.

Child prodigy Lydian Nadhaswaram on being the ‘world’s best’ and setting his sights on a journey to the moon to play Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata*

SUANSHU KHURANA

A FEW months ago, Elon Musk, SpaceX founder and tech entrepreneur, had claimed that his company’s Starship spacecraft could take humans to the surface of the moon by 2023. He also committed to take eight artists aboard this spacecraft. When the plan is in place Chennai-based Lydian Nadhaswaram wants to be one of them. “I have always been fascinated by everything to do with space. When the mission is possible, I want to pack my piano, take it up there and play *Moonlight Sonata*,” says 14-year-old Lydian, about the famed Beethoven piece in a phone conversation from Chennai.

Beethoven may not have given the sobriquet — *Moonlight Sonata* (He called it Piano Sonata No 14 in C Minor, Quasi una Fantasia or almost a fantasy). The term came from German music critic and poet Ludwig Rellstab, who compared the first movement to the moonlight shining over Lake Lucerne. But he would’ve been proud at the thought of Lydian’s moon sojourn.

When Lydian performs it, he takes the brisk arpeggios and turns one of the most well-known piano pieces and a distinct melody into an enduring piece. He even attempts to pair his recording of the *Sonata* and pound some drums alongside. It was also the performance that won him the championship on the CBS show, *The World’s Best*, earlier this year. There were contestants from 195 countries competing for the coveted spot. The show has actor and producer Drew Barrymore, TV personality Ru Paul and singer and producer Faith Hill as its judges. On Saturday, also Mumbai Piano Day, Lydian performed at the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Mumbai. Later this month, he will perform alongside The Symphony Orchestra of India, which, this year, will feature performances by renowned artistes such as Alexander Lazarev, one of Russia’s foremost conductors; Simon O’Neill, one of the finest tenors on the international stage; well-known pianists Barry Douglas and Roberto Prosseda, among others.

When Lydian was born to music composer Varshan Sathish and his wife Jhansi, there was the significant matter of the name. The couple’s favourite raga was Kalyani (also known as Yaman) and they wanted the name to have something to do with the hep-tatonic evening raga. But Kalyani was feminine, so they chose its western equivalent — Lydian — taken from the Lydian mode, one of the seven modes of music. Nadhaswaram is a Carnatic classical wind instrument, the literal meaning of which is the feeling created by a musical note. The combination made sense to the couple and Lydian Nadhaswaram was born.

The boy figured the notes early on. His older sister spotted him tap in perfect rhythm on the plastic toy drums when he was two. She told their parents who began taking keen interest in Lydian’s musical talents. “My older sister was learning how to play the flute. So I heard a lot of that at home. Then there were a lot of Ilayaraja songs always playing in the house. There was all this music and many musical instruments. So I tried out whatever I could lay my hands on,” says Lydian, who can play 14 musical instruments including drums, tabla, bass guitar, harmonica and piano. Lydian initially learned scales from his father and sister and some techniques from YouTube videos. Soon videos of him performing Chopin were floating around on YouTube and Facebook.

When Lydian was eight, Sathish decided to send him for tabla training at AR Rahman’s KM Conservatory in Chennai. After a few days of learning, Lydian, one day, was roaming the halls of the Conservatory when he passed by Professor Surojeet Chatterjee’s Russian piano studio and could not forget the



(Top) Lydian Nadhaswaram; on the CBS show, *The World’s Best*

sound of the piano. Russian piano lessons are quite different from the more well-known British piano systems. The former transforms the otherwise percussive piano sound into a fluid flow, somewhat like the sound of the voice or strings. Lydian was hooked as he saw a student attempt *Flight of the Bumblebee*, an orchestral interlude written by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov for his opera *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* in 1899. That practise session was enough for Lydian to memorise the rendition and he enrolled in the class. The piece, for years, has been known for its frantic pace and mastering it is a task. In his appearance on *The World’s Best*, Lydian performed the piece three times — at an average speed, at double the speed and twice the average speed. There was a standing ovation besides awe and applause. “It’s all to do with the practise. I, without fail, practise for about five-six hours a day. There is no TV in the house. So

there isn’t any distraction either,” says Lydian, who is homeschooled by his parents.

As for music, he is not limiting himself to western classical only and is also attempting to learn jazz and regularly plays tabla and mridangam. “I want to compose for Hollywood in the future besides being a concert pianist,” he says.

Even before he won the CBS show, Lydian had begun to find a flurry of concert invitations from world over based on talks in the music circles. In 2017, Lydian was invited to participate in NBC’s Spanish-language TV show *Siempre Niños* in Miami. When he went to New York, he met John and Tina Novogratz, patrons of a thriving art city in New York. A performance on a Steinway, the big daddy of the piano world, at their home had Lydian super excited. A Steinway grand piano is a brilliant but expensive possession. When John’s brother Michael heard Lydian play, he announced, “When I come to Chennai, I’ll gift you a Steinway.” Michael kept his word. On Lydian’s birthday last year, a Steinway Model L reached Chennai airport. This is the piano that Lydian now uses for practise. “The tonal quality, the tone and the return of the keys is what makes Steinway special as compared to any other piano in the world,” says Lydian.

On the phone, Lydian sounds quite different from the way he did on *The World’s Best* and in the interview with Ellen DeGeneras that followed. The voice is now deeper as Lydian leaves boyhood behind. Lydian likes to sing but the change in the voice has suddenly come to trouble him. “I will work on it, practise, and turn it into a singing voice,” he says. We are listening.

ON THE LOOSE

Tears For Fears

The case for the occasional meltdown



LEHER KALA

IT WAS, undoubtedly, a traumatic moment for everyone watching when ISRO chief K Sivan wept inconsolably, buried against the Prime Minister’s shoulders. It was not the time to dwell, cynically, on questions of politically-motivated PR stunts, but to wonder at the sheer audacity of this unassuming scientist’s dream. One would have to be an evil sort of person to grudge him a few tears after the Vikram lander lost contact, the anticlimax too difficult to bear in the immediate aftermath. Though the world is largely in agreement that crying is a normal response to tough situations, Sivan’s open distress was viewed with some surprise because a display of intense emotion is still unusual in India.

I have been thinking a lot about crying lately, albeit for entirely different reasons. Among the small, niggling issues that come up in the business of living, a blocked tear gland calcified behind my left eye, causing a growth and obstructing my vision. My very skilled ophthalmologist said she had to take it out, and patiently answered when I asked whether if I had been brought to tears more often, it wouldn’t have happened. Maybe if I had wept everyday, she conceded reluctantly, no lump would have formed.

There’s a metaphor there somewhere that tears have value, to give us a greater understanding of ourselves and our roles on earth, especially when we’re bogged down by failure. (Other than the fact that after clearing noxious irritants from our eyes, tears reduce stress.) How idiotic then that so much of humanity perseveres towards hiding tears, choosing instead to project a false

peace via the time honoured alternative of denial.

The myth of the stiff upper lip, inflicted on the world when Britain ruled over most of it, has been rubbished by the most British of them all, Prince Harry, who says the mental health epidemic in his country — and ours no doubt — stems from the expectation that people should bottle up emotions rather than express them. It’s true, remaining resolute when faced with adversity makes no sense. Our species didn’t evolve to be calm and content; the early homo sapiens would have gotten eaten before passing on their genes if they hadn’t embraced the whole spectrum of human emotions with all its rage, sadness and violence. Over millennia, we’ve conquered our emotions well enough to hide distress, which is also crucial to get on with life. Things would get infinitely more complicated if self restraint wasn’t a big part of modern manners. Nothing could get done if everyone was bursting into tears all the time. Yet, when interior drama surfaces occasionally for good reason like Sivan’s, it’s not a sign of weakness, just a well-deserved expression of frustration.

It is interesting to note the contradiction in India currently, that the leaders of the ruling party project a deep macho aggression, yet the PM has been choked with emotion, in Parliament, several times. Male heroes in Indian films these days have no qualms about shedding tears. Aamir Khan wept copiously in *Three Idiots* and I don’t think I’ve seen one movie starring Ranbir Kapoor where he isn’t crying profusely (the cringe-y *Ae Dil Hai Mushkil* comes to mind).

Male and female babies cry exactly the same amount until boys begin processing from their environment that they’re not supposed to, in that hideous quest for masculine pride. When famous men don’t shy away from showing their authentic selves, it’s a worthwhile reminder that we’ll all be stoic when we’re dead; right now it’s perfectly fine to embrace our tears as a privilege of being alive.

hutkayfilms@gmail.com

International Award for Raghu Rai



Express archive

DELHI-BASED VETERAN photographer Raghu Rai (pictured) has been given the first Académie des beaux-arts Photography Award - William Klein. The prize, carrying a cash reward of 1,20,000 euros, acknowledges a photographer’s undying commitment to photography throughout his career and will be presented to Rai at the Palais de l’Institut de France on October 30.

Rai, a Padma Shri-winner, has an expanse of more than 18 books to his credit, including *Raghu Rai’s Delhi*, *The Sikhs*, *Calcutta*, *Khajuraho*, *Taj Mahal*, *Tibet in Exile*,

and *Mother Teresa*.

Rai, who has served as a jury member for the World Press Photo from 1990 to 1997, was nominated to Magnum Photos by renowned French photographer Henri Cartier Bresson. An exhibition honouring the photojournalist’s photographs will also be on view at Palais de l’Institut de France for a month, beginning October 24.

The prize has been created this year by Académie des beaux-arts with the help of the Chengdu Contemporary Image Museum.



From Sharmila addressing her followers

in 2009. Coincidentally, he stumbled upon the 1528 case files of alleged fake encounters carried out by the armed forces in Manipur between 1979 and 2012, housed in their office’s cupboard. With Human Rights Alert as collaborators, this stood as proof of the organisation demanding an investigation into the 1528 cases from the Supreme Court, of which only 42 were picked, merely 13 investigations were finished and the CBI issued charges of

murder in nine cases. His book, resembling the look of an investigation file, reveals chilling details from EEVFAM’s archives, containing photographic documentation of identity cards, post-mortem reports, newspaper clippings and police records.

With very little text to act as guiding tools, the book includes the experiences of activist Neena Ningombam, EEVFAM’s first petitioner, whose husband Michael had gone

missing in the afternoon when he went to meet his friends in Imphal in 2008. Michael called back to inform about being picked up by commandos but became untraceable thereafter. Nigombam worst’s nightmare came true, of waking up to footage of her husband lying dead in the street on television, and being declared a ‘militant’. In July 2012, following her efforts to prove her husband’s innocence, the District Judge concluded that Michael was not a terrorist and was wrongfully killed by police commandos, before handing her a compensation of Rs 5 lakh.

In rough, unpolished and broken English, the book reveals details of the victims’ families, names of the perpetrators, action taken against them and when the victims were last seen. Saha reads few of his discoveries: “The information contained a woman’s confession of how her husband left the room around 8.30 pm to get *paan*, only to find his body at the morgue the next day. Another spoke of how her eldest son went to an uncle’s house with money (Rs 20,000) and his dead body was found the following day. He was then called an extortionist.” Saha says that the psychological impact of such an environment on the children is immense, who often play the ‘militant vs army’ game instead of India’s famous *chor sipahi*, evident in a photo where they hold fake guns in an empty street.

When the River Weeps

Artist Rohit Saha’s photobook *1528* captures Manipur’s encounters with violence

PALLAVICHATTOPADHYAY

A BLACK-AND-WHITE photograph of human rights activist Irom Sharmila, with no tubes sucking into her body, surrounded by only a handful of followers when she launched her party, Peoples’ Resurgence and Justice Alliance in 2016, mushrooms in visual artist Rohit Saha’s book *1528*. Saha’s photobook, which was on view at Art Heritage Gallery, Delhi, contains a heart-rending image of a young boy crying during his father’s funeral in Manipur, after losing him to police cross firing. Next to it is a frame full of Manipuri child soldiers, aged between 12 and 15, picked up by insurgent groups, standing tall with pride and displaying unflinching emotion. Passport-sized photos of 10 civilians allegedly gunned down by the 8th Assam Rifles in Malom in 2000, who prompted Sharmila to undertake her 16-year hunger strike, stand as ghostly reminders of the state’s turbulent past in the last 33 years.

The psychological impact of such an environment on children is immense, who often play ‘militant vs army’ game instead of *chor sipahi*

Winner of the Alkazi Foundation Photobook grant in 2017, Saha’s book *1528* was launched in Delhi last month. Published by Alkazi Foundation, it’s the result of a three-year research into Sharmila’s journey, the Malom massacre and victims of alleged fake encounters in Manipur. Hailing from Kolkata, Saha’s gaze was struck by political activist Sharmila in 2016, when she broke her hunger strike against the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) by tasting a drop of honey, after years of being force-fed through nasal tubes. When pursuing a masters in photography at National Institute in

Design in Gandhinagar, the Mumbai-based photographer decided to base his research project around Sharmila’s plans after the fast, her crushing defeat with merely 90 votes in the assembly elections despite sacrificing years for the people of her land, and the changes in Manipur from 16 years ago to present day. He says, “Irom believed she was fighting for the same cause but through a different path. This had upset her followers, including her own brother — her closest aide — who once considered her their hero, because of the normal notion of a politician in the public’s head.” The research led Saha, who won Magnum Foundation’s Social Justice Fellowship in 2018, to concentrate on Manipur’s extra-judicial killings and document the lives of those whose family members have disappeared.

Saha volunteered for Extra Judicial Execution Victim Families Association (EEVFAM), an organisation formed by the widows and families of those who lost their husbands or close ones in alleged extrajudicial killings

T20 TRI-SERIES
AFGHANISTAN BEAT BANGLADESH
 Mohammad Nabi's 54-ball 84* was complemented by offie Mujeeb Ur Rahman's career-best 4-15 as Afghanistan beat Bangladesh by 25 runs. Afghanistan recovered from 40-4 to compile a respectable 164-6 after which Rahman's bowling helped dismiss Bangladesh for 139.

All square at Oval

After failing to regain the urn, England get consolation win in the last Test of a hard-fought series, make the final scoreline 2-2

REUTERS
 LONDON, SEPTEMBER 15

MATTHEW WADE'S defiant century proved in vain as England bowled Australia out for 263 to win the final Test at The Oval by 135 runs on Sunday and ensure the first drawn Ashes series since 1972. Wade had looked set to take the match into the final day but he was dismissed for 117 and England grabbed the last two wickets in quick succession to level the series at 2-2.

England had appeared to be on course for a comfortable triumph when they dismissed Steve Smith for 23 just after lunch but Wade dug in to post his fourth Test century and Australia, who have retained the Ashes, fell short in their bid for a first Test series win in England since 2001.

Australia, chasing a stiff target of 399, lost the wickets of Marcus Harris, David Warner and Marnus Labuschagne in the morning after England had added 16 runs to their overnight score of 313 for eight. Harris was bowled by Stuart Broad for nine and Warner's miserable series was completed when he edged Broad to Rory Burns at third slip for 11. The in-form Labuschagne, on 14, was drawn forward by a flighted delivery from spinner Jack Leach and wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow whipped off the bails with the right-hander narrowly out of his crease.

A rare failure

Australia took lunch on 68 for three and their victory chances plummeted further with Smith's dismissal. The prolific right-hander was caught by Ben Stokes at leg slip off Broad, the first time in 11 test innings against England that he had failed to score a half-century.

Smith left the field to a standing ovation from the crowd in recognition of an extraordinary run of form which brought him 774 runs in the series including a double century and two hundreds in seven innings. The 30-year-old missed the third Test because he was suffering from concussion symptoms after being struck on the neck by a Jofra Archer bouncer in the second match at Lord's.

Wade reached his fifty before Mitchell Marsh perished for 24, caught by Jos Buttler at short leg off the part-time spin of England captain Joe Root.

Australia captain Tim Paine, on 21, was trapped lbw by Leach but Wade, shaken up by a fiery spell from Archer, maintained his concentration and punched the air with delight after reaching his second century of the series.

Pat Cummins departed for nine, edging Broad to Bairstow, and Wade's resistance was finally broken when he was deceived by Root and Bairstow completed his second stumping.

Nathan Lyon swept Leach low to Root at square leg and Josh Hazlewood chipped his first ball to mid-wicket where Root took a brilliant single-handed catch to spark wild celebrations among the England players.



EVEN STEVENS

Steve Smith and Ben Stokes, two players who had an unforgettable summer, shake hands after England's win in the fifth Test at The Oval on Sunday. *Reuters*

Only 3 batters certain for Aussie summer as Ponting eyes shake-up

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
 SYDNEY, SEPTEMBER 15

ONLY THREE Australian batsmen are certain to start the summer Test series against Pakistan, according to former skipper Ricky Ponting, with David Warner among them. Ponting, who has been a sounding board for coach Justin Langer in recent months, unsurprisingly nominated the in-form Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne as the other two.

That leaves holes to fill and Australia's greatest run scorer said he would like to see young prospect Will Pucovski, who has battled mental health issues, given a debut in the first Test at the Gabba on November 12.

"Warner's going to be a lock," Ponting told

cricket.com.au, despite the opener having a miserable Ashes tour where he has struggled to get into double digits. "I don't care if he gets another duck in the second innings of this Test match (at the Oval), he's going to be a lock for the Australian summer," Ponting said before Australia's second innings at The Oval. Warner went on to make only 11. "Marnus is an absolute lock. Smith's a lock (There are) still question marks around the guys in the middle, (Matthew) Wade and (Travis) Head," he added. Wade, however, scored a defiant 117 in the second innings to bolster his case.

Australia have chopped and changed their top and middle order against England, with Usman Khawaja and Cameron Bancroft among those dropped after failing to fire.

'Warner's going to be a lock. Marnus is an absolute lock. Smith's a lock. (There are) still question marks around the guys in the middle.'

Their lack of form could open the door to Joe Burns and Kurtis Patterson, who were controversially left out of the squad for England despite making centuries in their last home Test against Sri Lanka.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Alex Carey could also get a look in, although Ponting said Tim Paine should continue as captain during the

summer Tests against Pakistan and New Zealand.

"With so many gaps like that, I'd like to see somebody like Pucovski get an opportunity," he added. "Everyone's talked about him for a long time. A couple of years before the next Ashes series you want to try and blood someone in that No.6 role and he'd be the obvious candidate."

The 21-year-old smashed a superb 243 for Victoria against Western Australia last season, which saw him parachuted into the national setup for two Tests against Sri Lanka. He was overlooked for the first one in Brisbane and again missed out on selection for the second in Canberra before being released to deal with mental health issues. He had suffered similar problems in the past.

There will be rap on the knuckles: Shastri on Pant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 DHARAMSHALA, SEPTEMBER 15

INDIA HEAD coach Ravi Shastri has made it clear that Rishabh Pant will be "rapped on the knuckles" if he keeps on playing rash shots like the one he did against the West Indies recently. Shastri did not mince words as he pointed out that the young wicketkeeper-batsman has let the team down during India's recent tour of the West Indies where he was dismissed first ball in an ODI game.

"We'll let him be, but at times when you see a shot, like the first-ball dismissal in Trinidad, if he repeats that, then he will be told. There will be a rap on the knuckles, talent or no talent," the head coach said. "As simple as that. Because you are letting the team down, forget letting yourselves down. In a situation where you have the captain at the other end, a target to chase, the need of the hour is sensible cricket," Shastri was quoted as saying in an interview with Star Sports.

Shastri said Pant has unquestionable talent but if he can sort out his shot-selection and decision-making, he will be unstoppable.

"No one will even think of changing his style. Like Virat said, reading the situation, match-awareness and shot-selection becomes crucial. If he can fathom that, he could be unstoppable. It could take one game, it could take four games. He has played so much IPL cricket, he will learn. It's time now for him to step up and show how devastating he can be," said Shastri, with captain Kohli by his side.

Kohli, on his part, said he wants Pant to play according to situations.

"The only expectation from Rishabh is that he read situations well," Kohli said. We don't expect him to play the way you might be thinking. It is about analysing a situation and dealing with it in your own way."

The captain said he expects a swashbuckling player like Pant to keep it simple.

"Someone like Rishabh will hit five boundaries in a difficult situation compared to me, who likes to take a singles or twos and get out

We'll let him be, but at times when you see a shot, like the first-ball dismissal in Trinidad, if he repeats that, then he will be told.

RAVI SHASTRI

of it. Everyone has their own game but reading the situation and decision-making is an expectation from everyone in the team, not just Rishabh," Kohli said.

However, Kohli went on to add that youngsters shouldn't expect a long rope. Giving his own example, Kohli, who made his India debut in 2008, said he never expected to get a bagful of opportunities in his early days as an international cricketer.

"We have 30 odd games (before T20 World Cup). From team's point of view, it is very clear. Even when I got into the team it is not like I was expecting 15 opportunities. You get four to five opportunities and you have to make the most of it. That is the level we are playing at," Kohli said.

"I think individuals coming in need to have the mindset (of limited opportunities) because team definitely has that mindset. Guys who grab the opportunity quickly, they grab the opportunity. It is a delicate balance to strike but it is important because you only have 30 games (to figure it out)."

Besides the T20 World Cup in Australia next year, the team is also focussing on the World Test Championship. For the last two T20 International series, including against the West Indies and the ongoing one against South Africa, India have left out spinners Kuldeep Chahal and Yuzvendra Chahal who have made way for Rahul Chahar and Washington Sundar. The selectors have also brought in batsmen Shreyas Iyer and Manish Pandey.

"Before we reach the World Cup, focus is on T20s and Tests. Youngsters are being pushed in from time to time. It is very important to settle the team combination and you will have to figure out the players who will take the team forward," added Kohli

VISHAL MENON
 DHARAMSHALA, SEPTEMBER 15

"I THINK the most important thing is to find out the safest way possible to score runs in all formats. So, if you can think of that rather than go into the game thinking 'I am going to sweep a fast bowler' then I will look stupid, so I try to mould my game according to my strengths and that's been my strategy and strength over the years."

This was Virat Kohli's response when asked what a player needs to do to achieve success across formats. The India captain is the ideal player to answer this question considering the ease with which he has managed to find a template that serves him well in Tests, ODIs and T20s. However, it's not easy replicating his mantra, especially in the shortest format. Kohli does not rely on brute force, neither does he play those fancy paddle shots. By his own admission, he looks at the 'safest possible way to score his runs'.

Now, try telling Rishabh Pant to play like that. In his limited international appearances so far, the 21-year-old has made a habit of attempting sweeps off fast bowlers. If Kohli epitomises finesse, Pant is outlandish. Over the years, T20 teams have given preference to such out-of-the box innovators over solid batsmen. However, exceptionally talented players such as Kohli, Kane Williamson and Steve Smith still find ways to score runs and remain relevant in this format.

The T20 World Cup in Australia is 13 months away, and teams have begun experiments to settle on suitable combinations. India are scheduled to play 26 T20s till October 2020, after the first of the three matches against South Africa was washed out without a ball being bowled. The series now moves to Mohali on Wednesday before the final one in Bangalore on Sunday.

The selectors and the think tank will use these games to try out the candidates and also zero in on the chosen ones in time for them to be given a suitable run.

India's top 3 in T20s mirrors their ODI setup. Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan,



The first T20I between India and South Africa at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamshala was abandoned on Sunday due to heavy rain. The focus now shifts to Mohali where the two teams are scheduled to play on Wednesday. *PTI*

India are scheduled to play 26 T20s till October 2020. The selectors and the think tank will use these games to try out the candidates.

alongside the captain, select themselves. Their strike rates hover around 135 runs per 100 balls. They give the team stability, not explosion. However, if the asking rate is more than 12 runs per over, they would

need a bit of firepower.

That would come from the likes of Hardik Pandya, Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey and even Ravindra Jadeja. These players have the ability to clear the fence almost at will and can bludgeon a 20-ball 50. In essence, batsmen from No.4 to No.8 will form the fulcrum of India's T20 squad, because they can take the game away from the opposition in quick time.

This surfeit of batting talent in the middle order bodes well for India, if utilised smartly. While Pandya, Pant and Jadeja are

outlandish, Iyer and Pandey offer stability but can also tee off when required. It takes all styles of players to form an effective batting order.

Going forward, the team management could even be tempted to try these contenders in the Top 3. The constant chopping and changing in the batting order proved to be a bane in the run-up to the 50-over World Cup as the team failed to settle on a proven middle-order setup, but don't expect this to end anytime soon, at least in T20s as we move closer to Australia 2020.



Catch 22 for Advani in world c’ship billiards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANDALAY (MYANMAR), SEPTEMBER 15

ONE OF India’s most consistent sports-persons, Pankaj Advani, on Sunday increased his tally of world titles to 22 by winning a fourth straight final in the 150-up format at the IBSF World Billiards Championship here. The 34-year-old has brought home a world trophy every year ever since returning from a professional stint in the UK in 2014.

In the short format of billiards, this is Advani’s fifth title in the last six years. “It’s such a touch-and-go format and so unpredictable that winning this four years on the trot and five out of the last six is extremely special,” said the champion athlete.

In a repeat of last year’s final against local favourite Nay Thway Oo, Advani re-enacted the one-sided match with the same eventual outcome as well as identical scorelines of 6-2. “This is the 150 points format in Billiards which is a shorter format and it is unpredictable because anybody can win on that particular day and to maintain consistency in this short format is an incredible feeling (after winning title) for last four years,” he said.

From the word go, Advani was in full flow. The gifted Indian was leading 3-0 at the halfway mark with the help of fluent breaks comprising of 145, 89 and 127, while Nay Thway Oo was yet to open his account. After pulling one back with breaks of 63 and 62, Oo was forced to watch Advani continue to extend the lead. He executed with flair as his sheer brilliance was on display, wowing the Myanmar crowd as they couldn’t help but appreciate his brilliant billiards.

Advani secured the next two frames which included a 150 unfinished break. He scored a 74 break and shortly after that closed out the match. Oo was completely subdued by his accomplished opponent and had to settle for a silver medal for the second time in a row.

With another trophy in the bag, Advani extends his remarkable run of winning a global crown since 2003. The Bengaluru-based cueist has won more world titles in his sport than anyone else. Advani said winning trophies early in his career did wonders for his mindset.

“Sport is psychological in nature and it helped that I started winning at an early age, and that instilled tremendous amount of self belief in me and I guess that is the reason why I have been able to win that much. I feel the opposition has been great and will be better in years to come with a lot more younger players coming, so to be able to maintain this position and repeat this feats is going to be a but then that’s what excites me and that is what the sport is all about,” he said.

On winning a staggering 22nd world title, Advani added, “Every time I participate in a world championship, one thing is clear - my motivation to excel has not diminished. This win a testament to the fact that my hunger and fire are both well and truly alive.” Advani have to adjust to snooker in less than 24 hours as he competes in the IBSF World Six-Red Snooker and the World Team Snooker Championships.

RESULTS: Pankaj Advani (India) defeated Nay Thway Oo (Myanmar) 6-2; 150(145)-4, 151(89)-66, 150(127)-50(50), 7-150(63,62), 151(50)-69(50), 150(150)-0, 133(64)-150(105), 150(74)-75(63).

It’s such a touch-and-go format and so unpredictable that winning this four years on the trot and five out of the last six is extremely special.

PANKAJ ADVANI

Sourabh rises over Sun

Smashing past financial aches, lack of support staff and tough adversary, Verma nails Vietnam Super 100



Sourabh Verma recovered from a mid-game slump to beat Sun Fei Xiang of China 21-12 17-21 21-14 in the summit clash of the Vietnam Super 100 title, which lasted an hour and 12 minutes. This was his third title this year. File

SHIVANI NAIK
SEPTEMBER 15

SOURABH VERMA had his first non-badminton-focused meal in 14 days, at an Indian restaurant to celebrate his Vietnam Super 100 title beating Chinese Sun Fei Xiang 21-12, 17-21, 21-14 in 72 minutes. Now accustomed to using his phone for everything from flight bookings to cheap AirBnB stays in far-flung places from Slovenia and Spain to Chinese Taipei and Vietnam, finding an Indian restaurant to treat himself to a familiar palate, was easy. Otherwise, food was budgeted in—top priority but strictly affordable - on playing days, like it has been all of this year.

“When I started travelling for tournaments on my own without any funding as part of the Indian team, I learnt to plan. Food is very important to keep up strength, so that had to be good quality. I’d figure a good chicken-rice staple whichever part of the world I was playing in, and stick to it everyday. Nothing more, nothing fancy,” he says, talking of days on end when he wouldn’t glance into the menu lying in front from fear of being tempted.

“After food, for flight tickets and accommodation, I’d look for the cheapest deals not really bothering about anything beyond keeping things within budget. No 3-star hotels, calculating costs to balance travel distance,” he adds.

Except in Slovenia, when a dodgy neighbourhood of a hotel he’d considered booking gave him second thoughts and he decided to play it safe and checked into a more secure shared accommodation, but slightly more expensive. “I was relieved I won that tournament,” he laughs, adding that the safe hotel was a luxury and the prize money cancelled out the guilt of “splurging on safety.”

Sourabh has now won three titles this year - Slovenia, Hyderabad a fortnight back

‘Sun committed too many unforced errors’

New Delhi: Sourabh Verma said he was thoroughly satisfied with the way he clinched the men’s singles title, in Vietnam “I am very happy with the way, I played this week. I played three Japanese and these players have similar kind of style. Most like to attack and the little differences in their style is something you have to figure out on the court. So it was nice to beat them,” Sourabh said.

He beat three Japanese shuttlers—Kodai Naraoka, Yu Igarashi and Minoru Koga—on his way to his title win. “The final was a tough match but I am happy I could play my game and come out victorious. This title will give a boost to my confidence,” the Indian said. It was a third career meeting between Sourabh and Sun. The duo has faced off twice this year at Canada and Hyderabad with the Indian coming up trumps on both the occasions.

Talking about the final match, the world no 38 Indian said: “In the first game, I waited for his weak returns. I realised his defence was a little weak, so I looked to ex-



It was Sourabh’s third win over Sun.

plot that. He committed too many unforced errors and it helped me.

“In the second game, I was troubled by the drift from one side and he jumped into a huge lead. But after the change of side in the decider, I went back to the strategy that worked for me and I am happy I could win,” added the National champion. **PTI**

and now Vietnam, both Super 100s, a lower notch than the BWF circuit. He also won the Senior Nationals in Guwahati earlier, from where he had flown to Spain for a tournament, with no funding and no coach.

Funding woes

Funding for the Indian squad is available only to the top 25 in men’s singles, and Sourabh, Shubhankar Dey, Parupalli Kashyap and HS Prannoy—India’s second string - need to fend for themselves.

“I’m No. 38 now and might go up to No. 28. I’m no one to decide what BAI’s policy of funding should be. But yes, a bunch of us are in touching distance and need support.

It’ll be good to be funded because it gets difficult at times to manage everything and then think about winning,” Sourabh says, a tad overwhelmed.

Funding for the second string and the juniors has been a prickly issue, muddled further by a curious call taken last year when a few India ranking tournaments were arranged, and even pre-quarterfinalists in women’s doubles leapfrogged the men’s singles bunch to stake claim on the funding. A little out-of-depth internationally, they would struggle to make headway in even the International Series, a lower level, but the dilemma remains - whether to jettison the singles second-rung in favour of rank outsiders in

Sourabh has now won three titles this year - Slovenia, Hyderabad a fortnight back and now Vietnam, both Super 100s, a lower notch on the circuit.

doubles, simply to promote them.

Sourabh says he’ll do as told: play the Nationals just before the All England, even if his niggling knee sends up shooting pain, because it’s mandatory, win the title to stay in contention, and carry on playing in Canada, US, and lately Taipei and Vietnam, pushing his ranking up. What rankles though is the absence of support staff.

Wanted: support staff

“In the US Open, I felt it most that a coach was needed while playing a Top- 20 Thai. You need coaches before matches for warm-ups and mental preparation and to strategise against opponents. Or you need a physio after a long gruelling match to fix the shoulder and back. But this year I’ve travelled to meets without a coach or physio,” he says.

Playing on one’s own can set one back by lakhs - US/Canada sojourn came to nearly INR 3 lakh, Thailand was another 50K, Europe was around INR 2.8 lakh, and Taipei-Vietnam INR 1.2 lakh. “You need around Rs 5-10 lakh in your bank account to be able to play tournaments everywhere. My sponsors and my ONGC job help, but I have almost zero savings. Winning a tournament helps in funding the next one,” Sourabh says.

Funding himself has made him responsible though. “You cut out the extras, and the visa of course we do it ourselves. I’ll ask the association again to consider me for funding. Let’s see,” he says, adding he’s ready for all eventualities now. “Fast shuttles, slow shuttles. No funding, yes funding.”

Bisht, Sanjeet advance; Brijesh crashes out

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS ROUND-UP

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
EKATERINBURG (RUSSIA), SEPTEMBER 15

ASIAN SILVER-MEDALLIST Asian silver-medalist Kavinder Singh Bisht (57kg) and Sanjeet (91kg) advanced to the pre-quarterfinals with hard-fought wins in the World Men’s Boxing Championships here on Sunday. While fifth-seeded Bisht edged past China’s Chena Zhihao 3-2, Sanjeet defeated Scotland’s Scott Forrest in an equally draining contest for a 4-1 verdict in his favour.

However, there was a disappointment as well with Brijesh Yadav (81kg) bowing out in a split 1-4 verdict against Turkey’s Bayram Malkan. The lack of aggressive intent in the first two rounds cost Yadav as his fine comeback in the final round proved too little too late. Bisht left his rival with a bloodied face before the judges ruled in his favour after an exhausting bout during which both the boxers managed to connect very few impactful punches.

Bisht will square off against Finland’s Arslan Khataev in the round of 16. Sanjeet, on the other hand, managed to salvage his position after a poor start against Forrest. The Indian, who was guilty of taking blows on counter-attack got his act together in the second and third rounds to nose ahead against the confident Scot.

The India Open gold-medallist is competing in his maiden World Championship. Bisht, a 26-year-old Indian Air Force man, was a quarterfinalist in the 2017 Hamburg edition. However, he has entered the ongoing edition as one of the strongest contenders for a medal. On Sunday, he stood out for his pace and endurance indicating a strong run in the marquee event. Earlier, second seed and Asian champion Amit Panghal (52kg) and Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Manish Kaushik (63kg) advanced to the pre-quarterfinals after claiming dominating wins in their respective second-round bouts. The World Championship was meant to be an Olympic qualifier and features the revised eight weight categories (52kg, 57kg, 63kg, 69kg, 75kg, 81kg, 91kg, +91kg) earmarked for Tokyo 2020, instead of the traditional 10 divisions.

Wrestlers continue struggle

Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan): Ravi won India’s first bout at the World Championships before suffering a defeat by fall as the country’s Greco-Roman wrestlers continued their disappointing show on Sunday here. The Olympic qualification was at stake in three categories but all three Indians cut a sorry figure as Manish (67kg), Sunil Kumar (87kg) and Ravi (97kg) exited without a fight.

The four wrestlers in action on the opening day had not won a single bout and three of them did not even score a point but Ravi managed to win a bout against Chinese Taipei’s Cheng Hao Chen. “The standard of competition here is too high for our boys. It’s very tough out there. The results are on expected lines,” said India’s national coach Hargobind Singh.

Ravi opened up a 2-0 lead with a take-down move and remained defensive until the end of the period. In the second period, the Taipei wrestler lost a point due to passivity and Ravi took advantage by employing a gut-wrench from the ground position.

There was not much action in the bout as the Indian won 5-0. In the next bout against Czech Republic’s Artur Omarov, Ravi lost two points for fleeing the mat and then conceded a passivity point. Omarov finished the bout in a jiffy as he made the score 7-0 with two gut-wrench moves and then pinned his opponent, 27 seconds before the end of the first period.

Barring Ravi, the four wrestlers in action on the opening day had not won a single bout and three of them did not even score a point.



National trials: Anjum wins 50m Rifle 3P title

World championship silver medalist Anjum Moudgil swept the women’s 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) national trials, winning the T7 trial at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi on Sunday. Anjum, thus, added to the T6 title she won in the same event on Saturday. With this, the Punjab girl has won four trials in all in this outing, claiming both the T6 and T7 Rifle Prone events before landing both the women’s 3P titles. Anjum shot 460.2 in the T7 final to improve upon her 456, which she shot to win the T6 on Saturday. Prasiddhi of Madhya Pradesh also won her second trials title on the trot, winning the junior women’s 3P T7 to add to her T6 title in the same event. Vijayveer Sidhu also won both the senior and junior men’s 25m Standard Pistol T7 trials.

Meghalaya, Bangladesh in Subroto Cup final

Hopewell Elias Secondary School of Meghalaya and Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan will face each other in the summit clash of the U-17 boys Subroto Cup international football tournament after they won their respective semifinals in New Delhi on Sunday. In the first semi-final, Hopewell Elias Secondary School beat BSL +2 High School of Jharkhand 3-2 to reach the final. In the second semi-final, Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan defeated Gorkha Rifles Regimental Centre 5-4 on penalty shoot-out to make it to the final. The final will be played on September 17 at the Ambedkar Stadium.

Junior shuttlers win 3 gold medals in Dubai

Indian junior shuttlers shone bright as they bagged a rich haul of six medals, including three golds at the Dubai Junior International Series on Sunday. Tasnim Mir won the girls’ singles title, while the mixed doubles pair of Ayan Rashid and Tasnim and the girls’ doubles duo of Tanisha Crasto and Aditi Bhatt also clinched gold medals. In addition, the junior brigade added three silver medals to their tally. The only disappointment for India was in boys’ singles, where top seed Varun Kapur had to settle for a silver after losing to second seed Prince Dahal of Nepal 19-21 19-21.



Sergio Garcia finished at 18-under to win the KLM Open by a single stroke.

Garcia seals one-shot victory at KLM Open

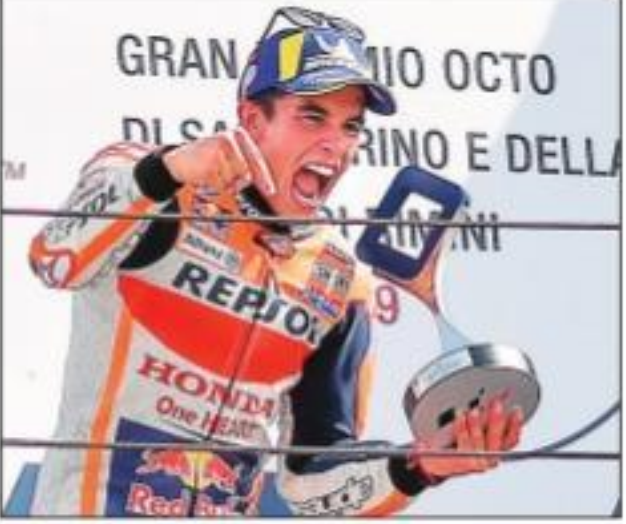
Spain’s Sergio Garcia shot a final-round three-under par 69 and finished at 18-under overall to win the 100th edition of the KLM Open in Amsterdam by a single stroke on Sunday. The win was Garcia’s 16th on the European Tour and the 2017 Masters champion’s first title in the Netherlands, which he happily celebrated with his one-year-old daughter Azalea on the green at the 18th hole. Danish 18-year-old Nicolai Hojgaard, who was two strokes behind the Spaniard after the third round, nearly tied for the lead but missed an eagle putt on the 18th and finished with a birdie to sign for a four-under 68 and second place. A cautious Garcia, who bogeyed the 17th, played it safe on the par-five 18th, sinking a one-foot putt to clinch the title. “Great week, amazing,” Garcia said. “We had a great week and it’s great to win again. It was nice I only needed a five on the last.” Garcia’s final round was far from ideal. He sank seven birdies — including four on the front nine — but they were offset by four bogeys. However, he successfully held a 54-hole lead for the ninth time in his European Tour career as others struggled.

Kamworor smashes half marathon WR

Kenya’s Geoffrey Kamworor sliced 17 seconds off the world record at the Copenhagen Half Marathon on Sunday as he won in 58min 01sec. Kamworor improved on the 58:18 set in Valencia last year by his compatriot Abraham Kiptum. Kamworor broke away from the pack and raced alone for the final 11 kilometres, defying the heavy rain that fell briefly with 37 minutes on the clock. He covered the next five kilometres segment in a swift 13:31, reaching 15 kilometres in 41:03, 11 seconds inside sub-58-minute pace.

Rory pips Rashid to win golf CGCC title

A bogey on the 15th tee cost Rashid Khan the Classic Golf & Country Club International Championship title as Indonesia’s Rory Hie claimed the honours in Gurugram on Sunday. The title enabled Rory, who first played in India at the same club 10 years ago, end his long winless streak. Rory, once the world’s no. 6 amateur, carded a final round of 68 to total 21-under 267 while Rashid, who last won on the Asian Tour in 2014, carded 69 to finish at 19-under 269 alongside little known Korean Byungjun Kim (67). It was a start to finish win for Rory, who becomes the first Indonesian winner on the Asian Tour.



Marquez wins San Marino MotoGP

Spaniard Marc Marquez snatched victory on the final lap at the San Marino Grand Prix on Sunday to close in on a sixth world title. The Honda rider, starting on the second row, took a third MotoGP win in Misano ahead of France’s Fabio Quartararo, on a Yamaha-SRT, who had the lead for most of the race. “At the end I just decided to go for it,” said Marquez, who had been pipped at the line at the last two races in Silverstone and the Dutch GP. Five-time world champion Marquez won the 77th Grand Prix of his career in all categories to overtake British legend Mike ‘the bike’ Hailwood. The 26-year-old has won 51 MotoGP races, 16 Moto2 and ten Moto3. Marquez now has a 93-point lead on Italian Ducati rider Andrea Dovizioso with six races left this season. Dovizioso finished sixth on Sunday on front of his home crowd.



Gasol completes historic double, Spain wins World Cup

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING, SEPTEMBER 15

SPAIN HAS captured its second World Cup championship, defeating Argentina 95-75 on Sunday to give Marc Gasol a rare double-title year. Ricky Rubio scored 20 points and Sergio Llull added 15 for Spain (8-0), the ninth team to make it through a World Cup or world championship unbeaten. Gasol scored 14 for the winners, who never trailed and added this crown to the one it claimed in 2006.

For Gasol, it was historic. The Toronto Raptors center becomes the second player to win an NBA title and a FIBA world gold medal in the same year, joining Lamar Odom — who did it for the Los Angeles Lakers and USA Basketball in 2010.

Gasol is also the 19th to win either an NBA or WNBA crown along with a gold medal, either of the Olympic or World Cup variety, in the same year. And he's the first to accomplish that feat while representing a nation other than the U.S.

When Spain won its first title in 2006, it was Pau Gasol — Marc's older brother — leading the way. This time, it was the not-so-little brother who led his nation to gold, hoisting the World Cup trophy three months after getting his hands on the NBA's Larry O'Brien Trophy for the first time.

Gabriel Deck scored 24 points for Argentina (8-1), which got off to a slow start and played uphill the rest of the way. Luis Scola was held to eight points, shooting 1 for 10 from the floor.

Spain led 43-31 at the half, riding the strength of two big runs.

Spain ran out to a quick 14-2 lead, only to have Argentina answer with an 11-0 spurt. But when that ended, Spain came back with a 17-1 run and took what was then its biggest lead at 31-14.

Scola, even at 39 years old still Argentina's best player throughout the tournament, didn't get on the scoresheet until he made a pair of free throws with 2:57 left in the third. But they only cut the Spain lead to 19, and by then the Argentinian fans — who stood in the stands a few rows from their team's bench, singing and chanting for much of the game — were relatively quiet.

They probably had a good idea what was coming. There was one last gasp from Argentina, an 11-4 run to open the fourth quarter and cut Spain's lead to 12 with 6:30 left. But Llull's three-point play on the next Spain possession pushed the lead back to 15.

Jeered by PSG fans, Neymar scores winner on return

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS, SEPTEMBER 15

NEYMAR SHRUGGED off a hostile reception as he marked his return to action for Paris Saint-Germain with a stunning injury-time winner, and then insisted it was time to move on from the saga of his aborted return to Barcelona.

The world's most expensive player was booed and insulted by sections of the PSG support in the Ligue 1 match against Strasbourg at the Parc des Princes.

That seemed set to be the only story of the afternoon until the second minute of added time when, with the game still goalless, the Brazilian met Abdou Diallo's cross with an acrobatic effort that sent the ball arcing back over his own head and in off the post, sealing a 1-0 win.

It was a remarkable goal and a reminder of why PSG paid a world record 222 million euros (\$264 million at the time) to sign Neymar in 2017. It also leaves them two

points clear of Rennes at the top of Ligue 1.

"I made it clear that I have nothing against the fans, nothing against Paris Saint-Germain as a club. Everyone knows I wanted to leave. I am not going to get into the details of what happened," he said after the game.

"It is time to turn the page. Today I am a Paris Saint-Germain player and I am going to give everything on the field."

He had not played for his club since May and had been left on the sidelines in their first four league games of the campaign because of the uncertainty surrounding his future. However, having been resigned to a third season in France, he was handed a start by coach Thomas Tuchel here, and loud jeers greeted his name as the teams were read out. He was also regularly whistled by fans when he touched the ball.

"It is not the first time I have been booed by everyone," Neymar admitted.

"I played in Brazil away from home, I was widely booed. I have played in finals and been booed, I have played here in France, away from home, and also been booed.

Unstoppable Ansu

Barcelona's youngest La Liga scorer orchestrates win against Valencia; Leaders Atletico lose to Sociedad

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BARCELONA, SEPTEMBER 15

A TEENAGE sensation led Barcelona to a commanding victory over Valencia in the Spanish league on Saturday, while Eden Hazard made his long-awaited debut for Real Madrid before both rivals face tough Champions League openers. Barcelona visits German side Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday with Lionel Messi a doubt, and a day later Madrid plays at the Paris Saint-Germain of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

Spanish league leader Atletico Madrid lost its first game of the season, three days before it also has a difficult visit to Juventus, which eliminated it from the European tournament last season. Barcelona youth Ansu Fati took over a starring role from the injured Messi with a goal and an assist to lead a 5-2 rout of Valencia. His second-minute goal made him the youngest player to score at Camp Nou at the age of 16 years, 318 days. It was his third appearance since his Aug. 25 debut. He established a milestone in his second match as the youngest player to score in la Liga in the club's history in a 2-2 draw at Osasuna.

"(Fati) is a player that has something special," Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde said. "He is a striker who is mature beyond his years."

Hazard hurt a thigh in preseason, and the club-record signing from Chelsea missed Madrid's first three league matches. By the time he stepped onto the field with half an hour left at the Santiago Bernabeu, Karim Benzema's double and another goal from Casemiro had given Madrid the advantage it needed to end a run of two straight draws and beat Levante 3-2.

"When he touches the ball he has his aim set on the goal, but what he needs now is to train more. He has only had four practice sessions with the team," Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said of Hazard.

Atletico won the first three rounds until its attack failed at Real Sociedad, which dictated the game, the playmaking, and scored the opening goal through Norway midfielder Martin Odegaard in the 2-0 victory.

Atletico leads Madrid and Athletic Bilbao by one point. Barcelona is two points behind. Fati, officially a player on Barcelona's third team for 16-18 year olds, needed only two minutes to write his name into the club's history a second time. With his second touch of the ball, the player born in Guinea-Bissau rifled in a pass from Frenkie de Jong who found him arriving to the center of the area. He returned the assist to de Jong five minutes later after he sped down the left flank, juked past a defender, and set up for the Netherlands mid-



Barcelona's 16-year-old forward Ansu Fati continued his explosive start to life in the first team by scoring and providing an assist as the La Liga champions thrashed Valencia 5-2 on Saturday. AP

fielder. Gerard Pique netted Barcelona's third after Kevin Gameiro had pulled one back.

Luis Suarez, who hadn't played in a month due to injury, netted Barcelona's fourth and fifth goals after replacing Fati with half an hour remaining. Maxi Gomez scored late for Valencia, which was playing its first match under Albert Celades since he replaced Marcelino Garcia Toral on Wednesday.

Outplayed Atletico

Odegaard, who is on loan from Real Madrid, put Sociedad ahead in the 58th when he culminated a quick buildup by cutting across the area before firing a shot that deflected off an Atletico defender and left goalkeeper Jan Oblak without a chance.

Usually so sure in goal, Oblak was at fault three minutes later when he fumbled a ball in the box and Nacho Monreal blasted it home in his debut with the Basque club. The ball smacked Oblak in the face before going in, leaving him in need of medical assistance. Oblak was substituted even though he appeared to tell team doctors he was feeling fine.

Arsenal squander two-goal lead at Watford

London: Arsenal squandered a two-goal lead as Watford hit back to draw 2-2 in new manager Quique Sanchez Flores's first game of his second stint in charge at Vicarage Road on Sunday. Flores's return following the dismissal of Javi Gracia after four games of the Premier League season seemed to be going flat as Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang struck twice in the first half.

But Tom Cleverley halved the deficit in the 53rd minute after some dreadful Arsenal carelessness and Watford were rewarded for a much-improved display when substitute Roberto Pereyra converted an 81st-minute penalty awarded after he was brought down by David Luiz.

Watford came agonisingly close to winning it with Gerard Deulofeu curling just wide and then Abdoulaye Doucoure having stoppage-time shot saved by Bernd Leno after a counter-attack. Victory would

have put Arsenal into third place but they ended the day seventh in a cluster of clubs on eight points. Watford are still seeking a first win of the season and remain bottom but they doubled their points tally to two.

Callum Wilson scored twice for Bournemouth as they enjoyed a 3-1 home victory over a defensively fragile Everton side to move into mid-table in the Premier League on Sunday.

Wilson nodded the hosts into the lead from a corner in the 23rd minute only for Dominic Calvert-Lewin to level it up with a header just before the break — Everton's first away goal in the league this season.

Ryan Fraser's dangerous ball into the area flicked off Everton's Fabian Delph in the 67th minute to restore Bournemouth's lead before Wilson exploited some dreadful defending five minutes later. REUTERS



Neymar was booed by sections of the PSG support against Strasbourg. AP

BLOODIED, NOT BEATEN

Fury overcomes wound and Wallin to retain lineal heavyweight title



Tyson Fury defeated Otto Wallin 116-112, 117-111 and 118-110, but there were moments when he faced danger of stoppage. AP

TIM DAHLBERG
LAS VEGAS, SEPTEMBER 15

BLOOD WAS flowing down Tyson Fury's right cheek, and Otto Wallin was in his face. His scheduled rematch with Deontay Wilder suddenly in jeopardy, Fury needed to dig deep in a fight that wasn't supposed to be this hard.

Fury did just that on Saturday night, overcoming a bloody cut over his right eye to pound out a unanimous decision over his Swedish opponent and set up a lucrative heavyweight rematch with Deontay Wilder. Fury remained unbeaten in 29 fights and retained his claim to the lineal heavyweight title against a fighter who was little known but gave the big Englishman all he could handle.

"I couldn't see out of my eye," Fury said. "I got cut over my eye and it changed the fight completely."

With blood streaming down his face, Fury dominated from the middle rounds on in what was supposed to be little more than a tune-up fight for his scheduled February rematch with Wilder. He was a 30-1 favourite at fight time, but after being cut in

the third round, had to reach deep to pull out the win.

The three ringside judges had Fury winning by scores of 118-110, 117-111 and 116-112.

"It's all heart and determination," Fury said. "If I can keep going, I keep going. Otto is a great Swede, a Viking warrior."

Fury was cut over his right eye in the third round, and it clearly bothered him as the fight went on. Blood flowed down the right side of his face and stained his trunks, and Fury kept wiping at the cut to try and keep the blood out of his eye.

Referee Tony Weeks stopped the fight briefly in the sixth round for the ringside doctor to look at the eye. When the fight resumed, Fury fought at a quicker pace, seemingly realising he might be running out of time.

With renewed determination, he kept the pressure on Wallin the rest of the way to cement a huge payday against Wilder, who he fought to a draw in December.

"Deontay Wilder, I want you next," Fury said. "Now I'm going to go home and relax with the family."

Wallin was still fighting hard in the final round, stunning Fury with a right to the head

and chasing him around the ring in search of a knockdown that never came. Wallin, fighting for only the second time in the US, suffered his first defeat to fall to 20-1.

"I did everything I could, I tried my best," Wallin said. "Tyson is a great fighter."

Much of the fight was fought at close range, as the two men brawled on the inside. That was particularly true in the later rounds, as Fury (29-0-1) tried to land uppercuts and Wallin kept punching at Fury's bloody right eye.

Rematch incoming

Fury earned a reported \$12 million for the fight, part of a deal with promoter Bob Arum, who scooped him up after the Wilder fight. He will earn a lot more against Wilder, who still must beat Luis Ortiz in November to make the February rematch happen.

Arum said Fury stepped up the pace after the cut over his eye was ruled to be from a punch. Had the fight been stopped early because of the cut, Wallin would have won.

"It was a courageous performance, a terrific fight," Arum said. "We knew the Swede wasn't a quitter. But Tyson's a real warrior. That's why they call him the Gypsy King."

Inter Milan top Serie A as Juventus held at Fiorentina

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MILAN, SEPTEMBER 15

INTER MILAN reclaimed top spot in Serie A after a 1-0 win over 10-man Udinese on Saturday as Juventus lost three players to injury in a painful goalless draw at Fiorentina to complicate preparations for next week's Champions League opener.

Stefano Sensi's diving header was enough to seal a maximum nine points for Antonio Conte's Inter ahead of their European opener against Slavia Prague in the San Siro next Tuesday. But as Maurizio Sarri made his debut on the Juventus bench after recovering from pneumonia, the Italian champions showed signs of weakness four days before their trip to Atletico Madrid.

Juventus are trailing two points behind Inter Milan after three games and could be overtaken by city rivals Torino who host promoted Lecce on Monday.

Napoli meanwhile warmed up for European holders Liverpool on Tuesday with a Dries Mertens double sealing a 2-0 win over crisis club Sampdoria, to move up to fourth in the table.

"We wouldn't have deserved to win this game," said Sarri as Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo and his teammates lacked inspiration and struggled physically.

The reigning eight-time Serie A champions are already missing injured captain Giorgio Chiellini, Mattia De Sciglio and Marko Pjaca. And Brazilian Douglas Costa pulled up with a hamstring problem minutes into the game in Florence, followed by Miralem Pjanic with a muscular issue with Danilo later suffering cramps in the heat.

They nevertheless held on despite pressure with former French international Franck Ribery impressive on his first start for the hosts. "It was a very complicated situation as we used all our substitutions for injuries, and had no fresh players to introduce at key moments," said Sarri.

Midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur added: "We got an important point, today we saw a bad Juventus. We suffered on the wings, they were very good. We still have to get used to Sarri's game, but we are on the right track. Now we want to win in Madrid."

'Better than Ronaldo'

Ribery, 36, went off to a standing ovation from the crowd at the Artemio Franchi Stadium after an hour as his team earned their first point this season.

Ribery "played better than Ronaldo," insisted Fiorentina's new owner Rocco Commisso, as the former Bayern Munich midfielder did well to neutralise Ronaldo, who had scored four goals for Portugal in European qualifiers this week.

Ronaldo failed to add to his tally with an acrobatic bicycle kick in the 85th minute flying over the bar.

In the San Siro, Udinese played an hour a man down after Rodrigo de Paul saw red for slapping Antonio Candreva.

Sensi broke through just before the break getting his head to a cross from fellow newcomer Diego Godin. Former Manchester United forward Alexis Sanchez came on for the final ten minutes, and was denied his first goal by Udinese goalkeeper Juan Musso.

Napoli played their first home game after renovations carried out to their San Paolo Stadium.

Giovanni Di Lorenzo provided the cross for Mertens to tap in after 13 minutes.

New signing Fernando Llorente made his debut and the former Tottenham player had an immediate impact, sending the ball back to Mertens who finished off for a 67th minute goal which took a slight deflection off Sampdoria defender Alex Ferrari.