

**THE EDITORIAL PAGE****UPHOLDING THE  
LAW IN HONG KONG**  
BY SUN WEIDONG  
PAGE 12**Substandard  
mid-day meal:  
UP files FIR  
against reporter****AVANEESH MISHRA**  
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 2

THE UTTAR Pradesh government has booked a journalist with a Hindi newspaper along with two others, including the Seur village pradhan pratinidhi (representative of the village head) on charges of criminal conspiracy and fraud.

The FIR was filed ten days after a video showing students of the Seur government primary school in Mirzapur being served only roti and salt under the midday meal scheme surfaced on social media. The video was shot by Pawan Jaiswal, a correspondent of local daily *Jansandesh Times*. Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi said that Jaiswal was called to make this video which was stage-managed by the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2****Lander bids goodbye  
to Chandrayaan-2 in  
countdown to descent****AMITABH SINHA**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

VIKRAM, THE lander module of Chandrayaan-2, has detached itself from the main spacecraft and started orbiting the moon independently, preparing itself for the descent to the lunar surface in the early hours of Saturday.

The separation, one of the major milestones in the journey of Chandrayaan-2, took place at 1.15 pm Monday, according to ISRO.

The Vikram lander, which

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2****Chidambaram says don't  
send me to Tihar, SC tells  
CBI court to extend custody****ANANTHAKRISHNAN G**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

GRANTING PARTIAL relief to arrested Congress leader and former Union Minister P Chidambaram, the Supreme Court Monday directed the trial court, which has been hearing

**EXPLAINED****E. Key to  
landing**

THE SEPARATION of the lander module starts the most critical phase. While making the final descent, the speed of the lander will have to be brought down from a few thousand kilometres per hour to roughly about 2 km/hour or less to enable it to make a soft landing.

**JAISHANKAR SPEAKS TO HIS MOTHER****Jadhav under pressure  
to back Pak narrative:  
India after first meeting**

Next step after detailed report from Indian envoy: Govt

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

IN THE first instance of consular access granted to Kulbhushan Jadhav in three years, India's Acting High Commissioner in Islamabad Gaurav Ahluwalia met the detained Indian national Monday in the presence of Pakistani officials.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said the meeting was recorded, but there was no restriction on the "language of communication" between Jadhav and Ahluwalia. In December 2017, when Jadhav's mother and wife had met him in Islamabad, they were prevented by Pakistani

**Has been  
sentenced  
to death  
by Pak**

officials from speaking in Marathi, their mother tongue. It appears that India yielded to Pakistan's terms for Monday's meeting, although it had earlier asked for "full access" and raised concerns about privacy. After the meeting, New Delhi said Jadhav



Meanwhile, IAF chief BS Dhanoa and Wg Cdr Abhinandan flew a MiG-21 trainer in Pathankot, Monday. *ANI*

officials from speaking in Marathi, their mother tongue.

It appears that India yielded to Pakistan's terms for Monday's meeting, although it had earlier asked for "full access" and raised concerns about privacy. After the meeting, New Delhi said Jadhav

appeared to be under "extreme pressure" to support Islamabad's "false narrative" in his case.

India's assertion came after Ahluwalia met Jadhav at 12.30 pm IST for "two hours", a day after Pakistan granted consular

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2****Investor summit on  
cards, Valley business  
leaders in detention****NAVEED IQBAL**  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 2

IT'S NOT just politicians, at least eight business leaders from the Kashmir Valley have been placed under detention by the J&K administration following the removal of special status to the state under Article 370 and its bifurcation into two UTs. Ironically, their detention comes when the administration is preparing to host a Global Investment Summit in the state, with an official saying they expect investments worth Rs 10,000 crore. The summit was



In Srinagar, traffic was visible Monday. *Shuaib Masoodi*

expected to be held from October 12-14 but the dates are

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2****MORE REPORTS****PAGE 9****BUSINESS AS USUAL**

By UNNY

**Garbage dump to  
Nature Park in 2 yrs****NxtGen**  
Infinite Possibilities  
presents**PAGE 7**



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## HELPING SCHOOLS IN CONFLICT-RIDDEN AREAS OF MANIPUR TEACH NEW LESSONS IN PEACE

A retired Army colonel and his trusted team are building a network of schools and hostels to promote peace and education in the remote, strife-torn parts of Northeast India.

## VIDEO OF THE DAY

THESE ARE THE SAFEST  
CITIES IN THE WORLDNew Delhi and Mumbai  
left far behind on  
the list

## FULL COVERAGE

INX MEDIA CASE: SC TO  
HEAR CHIDAMBARAM PLEAChidambaram to plea  
against the non-  
bailable warrant

EXPRESS AUDIO

Behind the mega bank  
sector merger

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

On this episode of 3 Things, we unpack what has led up to the move to merge banks and if there are any downsides to it, and explain what the GDP growth rate slump means

## In Odisha, BJP slams BJD membership drive for seeking Aadhaar details

SAMPAD PATNAIK

BHUBANESWAR, SEPTEMBER 2

ODISHA'S RULING BJD'S membership drive in the state ran into controversy on its first day on Monday as the party said it will ask new members to submit their Aadhaar details in an apparent bid to weed out "fictitious people".

Opposition BJP, which is making its own serious push to expand membership in the state, with leaders claiming that they are on course to achieve a target of 50 lakh members in Odisha, criticised the BJD's move to seek Aadhaar details, while the ruling party said it is meant for "verification purpose".

State BJP vice-president Sameer Mohanty said, "This (asking for Aadhaar details) may be a conspiracy by BJD to make a database of its members, and they (members) will be made beneficiaries (of various state welfare schemes). The BJP will oppose this."

Pinaki Misra, BJD's Lok Sabha MP from Puri, explained: "The party is asking for Aadhaar details for purely verification purposes. Sometimes, many fictitious people enter the

membership list during these mobilisation drives. We want to ensure that we are adding only genuine members."

Accusing the opposition parties of giving out inflated number of their members, Misra said: "The BJP and Congress do not even get the number of votes that they claim are active members of their parties. In many constituencies (of Odisha), their active membership is 10 times (over) the votes they actually get. They are thriving on fake membership."

On Monday, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik re-enrolled as BJD member from Bhubaneswar-Ekamra Assembly constituency. He was given the membership number 00000001.

Patnaik said, "The BJD is a party of the people of Odisha. It has been blessed in every town, village and household (in the state). We will meet mothers, farmers, youth and strengthen the party."

A party member said, "Today, the CM and a few top leaders renewed their membership. Starting tomorrow (Tuesday), public outreach programme will begin from places such as Dhenakana and Baleswar."

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Valley business

likely to change.

Among those detained are prominent business leaders: Mubeen Shah, former chairman of the J&K Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Yaseen Khan, president of Kashmir Economic Alliance; and, Shakeel Qalandar, former president of Federation of Chamber of Industries Kashmir.

Shah and Khan have been detained in Agra and Qalandar in Srinagar. *The Indian Express* tracked down their families to find "shock" and a sense of bewilderment at the detentions — two of them said they plan to challenge the move legally.

## MUBEEN SHAH, 63

EX-CHAIRMAN, J&K JOINT CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Shah is in detention along with Khan and J&K High Court Bar Council president Mian Qayoom. According to a family member, when Shah was arrested from their residence at 1 am on August 5, he had a catheter fixed to his body — he has chronic diabetes.

Shah's family has since left for Delhi to be closer to him. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Shah's wife Asifa said: "The police said there was no arrest warrant but had orders to take him to the police station."

The family says it was not able to meet Shah despite going to Agra last Wednesday. After it sought visitation rights, the J&K Home Department sent a letter to the UP Police on August 28 to allow a meeting according to "provisions of the jail manual".

"But Agra jail authorities didn't allow us to meet. They have put them in a small 10ftx10 ft cell," a family member said.

According to Asifa, the family urged authorities to let them provide clothes, medicines and articles of daily use, such as toothbrush and soap, which they allowed. Asifa said the family is preparing paperwork to secure his release and will file a plea soon.

Shah is a medical doctor who belongs to one of Kashmir's oldest business families. He is the chief executive of the Alson Group and the Kohimaran Group.

The family's interests range from automobiles and cement to marble and matches. It also has business interests abroad, including handicraft showrooms and restaurants in Dubai and Malaysia. Shah's company had finalised various civic projects with the J&K government.

## YASEEN KHAN, 60

PRESIDENT, KASHMIR ECONOMIC  
ALLIANCE

Khan's wife said police knocked on their door about 30 minutes after midnight on August 4-5 and took Khan away without providing any documentation. "We have been told that he is in Agra but we have not been able to meet him," she said.

Khan's wife said their youngest 11-year-old son has been distressed since his father's arrest. "He had to be hospitalised a few days ago. The children are not even going to school," she said.

The family claims that police told them Khan would be released the next morning or in a day or two. "It's been almost a month now, he did not even have a change of clothes," his wife said. Khan's mother is concerned about his health. "They should at least be allowed to meet him," she said. The family is planning to move court to seek his release.

Khan, whose primary business is readymade garments, became president of the traders and manufacturers federation in 2010, and was actively involved in helping traders during the floods of 2014. In 2017, Khan was summoned by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to depose and allowed to return after questioning in Delhi. At the time, traders in the Valley had observed

access in line with a ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Pakistan has accused Jadhav, a former Indian Navy officer, of espionage while India has maintained that he was running a business in Iran from where he was abducted and illegally taken to Pakistan.

Officials said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to Jadhav's mother and briefed her about Monday's meeting.

"Jadhav appeared to be under extreme pressure to parrot a false narrative to bolster Pakistan's untenable claims," Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.

He said the government will decide the next step after getting a "detailed report" about the meeting from Ahluwalia. According to Dawn, Pakistan's leading newspaper, Ahluwalia met Jadhav at a "sub-jail".

In a statement, Pakistan's

a shutdown in protest. In April this year, he was called for questioning again by the NIA and allowed to return.

## SHAKEEL QALANDER, 58

EX-PRESIDENT, FEDERATION OF  
CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES, KASHMIR

Qalandar's daughter Sumra says he was taken from his home at about 2 am on August 5. "My father and I were following the news on TV when we heard a knock on the door. We were completely taken aback. He had never been detained before," she said.

Qalandar's family deals primarily in furnishing and interiors. He had served on the C Rangarajan committee, which was set up in 2010 by the then PM Manmohan Singh to formulate a plan for creation of jobs in J&K. He has also regularly taken up public interest issues in J&K.

"Political leaders are stakeholders in the workings of the state so they are perhaps prepared for these things. But for us, it is helplessness and an exercise in patience," said Sumra's brother Ehtasham (26), who works in Delhi. Qalandar has been detained at the Srinagar Central Jail and the family has been able to meet him. "We have heard that they might be released soon, so we are going to wait it out," Ehtasham said.

Meanwhile, speaking to *The Indian Express*, J&K government spokesperson Rohit Kansal said the state is expecting investments worth Rs 10,000 crore from the summit. "When you are expecting such high investments, we have to prepare the ground and make arrangements. So keeping that in mind, we are reworking the dates, but as of now it is on," he said.

According to a concept note prepared for the event by the administration, the summit will help the government in "thoroughly engaging with the business community to create a business friendly atmosphere in Jammu & Kashmir by augmenting ease of doing business".

However, prominent businessmen in Kashmir told *The Indian Express* that the atmosphere was far from conducive for such a summit. "How can anybody do business when you don't have any means to communicate?," said a businessman who is a member of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Another businessman, who runs a wholesale operation in Srinagar, said: "I had to send people with letters to Jammu and Delhi. We are unable to do normal business because of the lockdown and they are talking of an investor

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said that pursuant to the ICJ decision, "Consular access was provided at 1200 hours and lasted for two (02) hours, in the presence of officials of the Government of Pakistan. On Indian request, there was no restriction on the language of communication. In order to ensure transparency and in line with standard operating procedures, and as conveyed to the Indian side in advance, the access was recorded."

The spokesperson said that Pakistan "provided unimpeded, uninterrupted consular access to India to Jadhav". In a statement, MEA spokesperson Kumar said: "The Charge d' Affaires, High Commission of India in Islamabad, met Kulbhushan Jadhav today. This meeting was held in the light of unanimous judgement of the International Court of Justice delivered on 17 July 2019, which found Pakistan

in egregious violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 on many counts and ordered Pakistan to provide Indian consular officers access to Jadhav."

It said: "While we await a comprehensive report, it was clear that Jadhav appeared to be under extreme pressure to parrot a false narrative to bolster Pakistan's untenable claims. We will decide a further course of action after receiving a detailed report from our Cd'A and determining the extent of conformity to the ICJ directives."

It added: "Today's consular access is a part of the binding obligations of Pakistan, as ordered by the ICJ, to ensure effective review and reconsideration of the conviction and sentence awarded to Jadhav through a farcical process."

The spokesperson reiterated that the government remains committed to ensuring that Jadhav "receives justice at the earliest and returns safely to India".

## Chidambaram

senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Chidambaram, pleaded that he should not be sent to Tihar jail. His CBI custody was ending Monday and if the trial court had sent him to judicial custody, he would have been moved to Tihar jail.

The bench of Justices R Banumathi and AS Bopanna said: "Having regard to the submission made at the Bar, the petitioner is permitted to move the concerned Court seeking appropriate relief including the prayer for interim bail/extension of police custody and other remedies if any available in accordance with law. The concerned court shall consider the prayer for interim bail/extension of police custody of the petitioner and pass order today itself.

In case request for prayer for interim bail/extension of police custody is rejected, the court concerned shall extend the interim police custody of the petitioner for three days in view of the pendency of this petition(s)."

Sibal told the bench that Chidambaram was willing to remain in CBI custody or under house arrest, if he was not granted interim bail Monday by the trial court, till the top court heard his plea challenging the "correctness of the "order of arrest" and the subsequent "remand order".

But the matter didn't end there. Shortly after the order, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta rushed to the Supreme Court and said "there may be jurisdictional difficulties in implementing the orders of this Court" and requested "that the matter be listed tomorrow".

Allowing the request, the bench said the CBI "is at liberty to move the CBI Court to seek police custody of the petitioner till tomorrow".

Seeking relief for Chidambaram, Sibal told the bench that the "non-bailable warrant against the latter was illegally issued. He should not go to Tihar today".

"I am 74. Please protect me... If I am sent to Tihar, my plea will become infructuous... Why should you send me to Tihar in this fashion?" Sibal pleaded before the bench which initially did not appear inclined to grant his prayer.

"Please grant me interim bail," he said.

The bench told him: "That's for the competent court to decide".

"Why should we step into the regular jurisdiction of the trial court and High Court," asked Justice Banumathi.

Sibal said it was about

in egregious violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 on many counts and ordered Pakistan to provide Indian consular officers access to Jadhav."

It said: "While we await a comprehensive report, it was clear that Jadhav appeared to be under extreme pressure to parrot a false narrative to bolster Pakistan's untenable claims. We will decide a further course of action after receiving a detailed report from our Cd'A and determining the extent of conformity to the ICJ directives."

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The spokesperson reiterated that the government remains committed to ensuring that Jadhav "receives justice at the

Chidambaram's remand. "They gave just two hours," he said, referring to the CBI pasting notices outside the Congress leader's house at night, and added "this is the basis of their non-bailable warrant".

"How can that be justified. Under which provision of law?" asked Sibal. He said the CBI should file their counter to his petition. "I will go to Tihar. Please protect me." He said the court could even order house arrest for Chidambaram till it took up the matter.

Justice Banumathi again said that these were questions for the competent court to consider. Not willing to give up, Sibal said there was a recent order of the apex court setting aside a remand order.

The bench said it has fixed his plea for September 5 on which day the court will also pass orders on his plea against the High Court order denying him anticipatory bail in a money laundering case registered by the Enforcement Directorate.

"Then let him be under house arrest. I am a 74-year-old," Sibal said. Appearing for CBI, Additional Solicitor General KM Nataraj said it was for the competent court and not the accused to decide.

But Sibal continued, "If your lordships find the remand order illegal on September 5, then what? My plea would already have become infructuous."

The ASG said it would be setting a bad precedent. Sibal told him: "You are setting a bad precedent by giving just two hours notice."

Justice Banumathi asked "why can't you make the request to the trial court?" "Because it will reject it," Sibal said.

The ASG objected, saying Sibal was casting aspersions on the trial court. "How can he say what the court will do?" asked Nataraj.

With Sibal unrelenting, the bench then pointed out to the ASG that the prosecution had on September 30 agreed that it will accede to Chidambaram's plea to remain in CBI custody for three more days. The ASG replied that "it was only for till today".

## Chandrayaan

carries the Pragyan rover module inside it, is currently moving in the same orbit as the main spacecraft which had descended to a near circular orbit Sunday. This orbit is 119 km from the moon's surface at its nearest and 127 km at the farthest.

On Tuesday, the Vikram lander will move to a lower orbit — it will be 109 km at its nearest point from the moon and 120 km at the

earliest and returns safely to India".

Before the meeting Monday, government sources said India had been seeking consular access to Jadhav for the last three years, ultimately winning a favourable ruling from the ICJ.

Announcing the decision to grant consular access, Pakistan spokesperson Faisal tweeted Sunday that consular access for Jadhav "is being provided on Monday 2 September 2019, in line with Vienna Convention on Consular relations, ICJ judgement & the laws of Pakistan... Jadhav remains in Pakistan's custody, for espionage, terrorism and sabotage".

This was the second time that Pakistan offered consular access to Jadhav. India had rejected a previous offer in August saying that "full consular access" should be granted at the earliest in full compliance and conformity with the ICJ judgment and Vienna Convention.

farthest.

"The health of the Orbiter and Lander is being monitored from the Missions Operations Complex (MOX) at ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru with support from Indian Deep Space Network (IDSN) antennas at Bylalu, near Bengaluru. All the systems of Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter and Lander are healthy," ISRO said in a statement.

After another orbit-lowering manoeuvre Thursday, Vikram will get an orbit from where it will make the final descent to the moon's surface in the early hours of Saturday. This orbit will bring Vikram within 35 km from the moon's surface at its nearest point.

Within three hours of landing, the Pragyan rover is scheduled to move out of Vikram and start moving around on the moon's surface, collecting data and carrying out experiments.

Both Vikram and Pragyan are supposed to function for 14 days. The main spacecraft will continue to move around the moon in its orbit for the next one year.

## Mid-day meal

pradhan's "so called representative".

On Monday, even as the Editors Guild of India condemned the FIR against the reporter, Basic Education Minister Satish Dwivedi was quoted by PTI as saying that the action against the journalist for "merely exposing corruption and highlighting reality should not have been taken". "I will ask the SP (superintendent of police) on what basis the police have acted," Dwivedi said.

While Rajkumar Pal has been arrested, Jaiswal denied the allegations and said he was just doing his job as a journalist and was booked by a government trying to hide its own flaws.

The FIR was registered at the Ahraura police station in Mirzapur based on a complaint by Block Education Officer (BEO) Prem Shankar Rai. It charges Jaiswal and the pradhan pratinidhi Rajkumar Pal with criminal conspiracy for making the video and "maligning the image of the state government".

According to ACS Aswathi, "there also was enmity between a temporary teacher at the school and Rajkumar". "The journalist fell prey to that. This whole video was made so that the teacher would get suspended and the administration took action against him... Also, only that particular journalist was called because he was known to Rajkumar," he said.

"If the journalist reached there

and salt-roti was served, then he should have informed others. His intention behind making the video viral was wrong and it was not fair reporting. The image of the education department was maligned and so, we went to the basics of the incident and talked to everyone connected. So many FIRs have been registered against politicians, MLAs, officers and people were suspended. And if this happens against a few journalists then what is wrong."

After the video surfaced on social media, BSA Praveen Tiwari was transferred and BEO Brijesh Singh suspended. In-charge headmaster of the Seur school Murai Lal and Nyay Panchayat Samanvayak (NPS) Arvind Tripathi was also suspended. The salary of shikshamitra Shanti Devi has been stopped until further orders.

According to the FIR, Pal had information that only rotis were prepared in the school and vegetables were unavailable. However, instead of informing the pradhan, he allegedly conspired with local journalist Pawan Jaiswal by asking him to make a video of the students being served "roti and salt" in the midday meal, which was later forwarded to a TV reporter for further circulation.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Jaiswal said that he had received frequent reports about bad quality food being served at the school and when he got similar information on August 22 from Rajkumar, he rushed there and made the video. He said that he gave the video to an ANI journalist and posted it later in the day on a local media WhatsApp group.

Jansandesh Times Editor Vijay Vineet said that this was an attempt by the administration to shut the voices of those raising matters related to public welfare. He said that they would support their correspondent at any cost. The newspaper, Vineet said, is published from Lucknow, Kanpur, Gorakhpur, Allahabad and Varanasi.

Condemning the UP government's action, the Editors Guild of India emphasised that such reports display the value of fearless journalists. "It is a cruel and classic case of shooting the messenger. It is precisely exposés such as these that show how valuable free and fearless journalists are to a democratic society. It is shocking that instead of taking action to fix what is wrong on the ground, the government has filed criminal cases against the journalist. Using the IPC and police is no way to respond to this," the Guild said.

According to the FIR, action was taken following an inquiry by the Chief Development Officer (CDO), Additional DM and Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Chunar. "After taking statements from the in-charge headmaster, an assistant teacher and a vegetable seller, it was found that on August 22 only rotis were made in the school and by 12 noon, no food was served to the students," it stated.

"Journalist Pawan Jaiswal stated that pradhan pratinidhi Rajkumar Pal called him at 10.53 am, asking him to come to the school and he reached at 12 noon. There, in the presence of Rajkumar, students were served salt and roti and Jaiswal made a video of it at 12.07 pm."

"Vegetable vendor Munna Lal said that in-charge headmaster Murari Lal had given him advance money for vegetables but no cook came to him to take the vegetables. Murari Lal said that he was informed by the pradhan pratinidhi at 10.47 am that there are no food items available in the school and so he rushed there with a bag of rice and wheat each," stated the FIR.

"By the time he reached, the students were eating salt and roti," stated the FIR, adding that Rajkumar put pressure on Jaiswal to circulate the video on electronic media.



New Delhi







0-50 Good

Moderate



Poor



Moderate



Poor



## BRIEFLY

### Four Gurgaon buildings face sealing

**Gurgaon:** Four buildings in Gurgaon face sealing for failing to comply with the Haryana Fire Service Act, 2009. Civic body officials said the buildings — Qutub Plaza Condominium in DLF Phase 1, Ultra Home Construction Private Limited in Sector 2 of IMT Manesar, Scottish Mall on Sohna Road, and SVK Traders Private Limited in Sushant Lok — will be issued a final notice soon.

### Truck driver robbed, 3 held

**Noida:** Three people were arrested by Ghaziabad police for allegedly looting a truck driver and his helper, who were transporting equipment belonging to the Armed forces, near the PWD Guest House in Ghaziabad Saturday.

### Restore Yamuna riverfront in 2 years: L-G

**New Delhi:** Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal Monday asked the Delhi Development Authority to complete its project to restore and rejuvenate the Yamuna riverfront in two years. The DDA plans to develop 1,476 hectares of riverfront on the flood-plains and has divided the area in 10 packages, Bajjal was told by officials Monday.

### Child lifting: Two more arrested

**New Delhi:** Police arrested two more persons Monday for allegedly beating up a pregnant woman, who is also hearing and speech impaired, on suspicion of kidnapping a child in North East Delhi. **ENS**

### Woman jumps before train

**New Delhi:** A 45-year-old woman died after she allegedly jumped in front of a train at Jhandewalan Metro station Monday. Services were briefly disrupted on the Blue Line, police said. **PTI**

## GURGAON: DRIVER YET TO BE ARRESTED

# Speeding SUV mows down street vendor, brother-in-law

SAKSHI DAYAL

GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 2

A 19-YEAR-OLD street vendor and his 14-year-old brother-in-law, who had come from Uttar Pradesh to visit him, were killed Sunday night after a speeding Range Rover ran over them while they were walking along Gurgaon's Golf Course Extension road around 10.30 pm. The driver of the vehicle abandoned it at the spot and fled, said police, adding that investigation is underway to identify and arrest him.

According to police, the incident took place in front of Unitech Business Park, near Vatika Chowk.

The dead have been identified as Mordhaj Kumar, who hailed from Guretha village in UP's Badaun, and his brother-in-law Anil Yadav, who hailed from Hamupur village in the same district.

The FIR has been registered on the basis of the complaint by Kumar's brother Devendra, a food vendor in the city, who was walking a few metres behind the two at the time.

"Mordhaj used to sell golgap-



**The driver abandoned the vehicle before fleeing. Police said the vehicle seemed new and did not even have registration plates installed at the time of the accident. *Express***

pas on Golf Course Extension road, and was heading back to our rented accommodation in Tikri village with his food cart after finishing work for the day. Anil was accompanying him, and I was walking with my cart around 200 metres behind them when a red car came speeding and rammed them from behind," said Devendra.

Devendra said the cart was thrown into the air while the two men were run over. "The car dragged both of them along the side of the road for at least 100 metres before coming to a stop," he said.

Both men were rushed to the Government Hospital by ambulance, where they were declared dead on arrival.

Their post-mortem, conducted Monday afternoon, revealed "multiple crushed injuries".

"The pelvis and abdomen of both men were completely crushed, leading to massive internal injuries. They would both have died within a few minutes," said Dr Deepak Mathur, who conducted the autopsy.

Police said the FIR has been registered at the Sector 65 police station, under IPC sections 279 (rash driving) and 304A (death by negligence). Dinesh Kumar, SHO of the Sector 65 police station, said: "There was no number plate on the vehicle, so we are trying to trace the owner through the engine number."

Although Devendra claimed the driver of the vehicle removed the number plates and took them with him, the SHO said: "We have not been told anything to this effect by the complainant or any other eyewitness. The car appears to be new and no registration plate seems to have been installed on it at the time of the accident at all... However, we will only have complete clarity on this after the accused has been arrested."



**The victims, Mordhaj (top) and his brother-in-law Anil**

our families. My earnings will have to see us all through until I can teach our younger brother this work."

From Anil's family, an uncle arrived at the post-mortem house in Gurgaon to take the teenager's body home. "His parents and sisters are back in the village... in complete shock. He was their only son and was supposed to be returning home in the next few days," said the uncle.

# Police get 6 more days to quiz Kaushal, plumber who became feared gangster

SAKSHI DAYAL

GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 2

SEVEN DAYS after Kaushal, a gangster notorious in Haryana for crimes including murder and extortion, was arrested and taken into remand by the Special Task Force, he was produced in court Monday and taken into police remand by Faridabad Police.

"The seven-day remand period for STF came to an end today, and Kaushal was produced in court once again. He has been taken into six-day remand by Faridabad Police," said Sube Singh, PRO of Faridabad Police.

It was on August 26 that Kaushal, who has "150-200 cases" registered against him, was arrested by a joint team of the STF and Faridabad Police — four years after he jumped parole while serving a sentence of life imprisonment in relation with a murder case.

#### On the radar

The crime was also among the first that brought him on the police radar. Son of a property dealer in Gurgaon's Naharpur Rupa vil-

lage, Kaushal, now 38, initially worked with his father before branching out into plumbing, and earning by repairing pumps.

Although two cases of "voluntarily causing hurt" were registered against him at Sadar police station as early as 2002, it wasn't until 2006 that he started committing heinous crimes. The first murder he committed was of another gangster, Chhelu, with whom his family was involved in a land dispute. Kaushal was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

During trial, however, other FIRs continued to be registered against him, including at least five murder cases at Sadar police station. Police records indicate he has since been acquitted in all.

Imprisoned in the 2006 murder, Kaushal managed to escape in 2015 while he was out on parole for six weeks. The FIR regarding his escape states that he had been released on parole on April 10, 2015, and "directed to surrender at jail gate on April 23 before noon", but did not.

While he remained absconding, police said cases against him continued to pile up.



**Kaushal was arrested on August 26**

Among murders he is suspected to have plotted is that of the mother of a man who "roamed around" with his rival Manjeet Mahal, while he was lodged in Bhondsi prison.

#### Money matters

Several of the FIRs registered against Kaushal and his gang accuse him of extortion, with complainants stating that his accomplices would venture into their places of business and hand a chit with a phone number to an employee, before opening fire in the air to intimidate them.

Such attempts were made, for example, at Om Sweets in Gurgaon in 2018, and later that year at Pushpanjali Hospital in

## Bawana to have model sectors under DDA policy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE FIRST model sectors under Delhi Development Authority's (DDA) land pooling policy will come up near Bawana and Alipur in Outer Delhi, senior officials said Monday.

The sectors will be have open spaces and pedestrian pathways, and will be spread around 200 hectares each, added officials.

Under land pooling policy, owners or groups of owners can pool land parcels of any size for development, and a minimum of 70% contiguous land is required before development can start off.

DDA had launched a web-enabled, single-window portal for inviting entries for land pooling on February 5, 2019.

The portal was scheduled to be open for six months till August 4, but the DDA extended the date to September 6.

"The response has been encouraging. There has been an increase in the area of land pooled in the last two months, and it is expected that Sectors in Zone N (near Bawana) and P-II (near Alipur) will soon become eligible for development under the policy," a DDA spokesperson said.



**Extra security deployed outside Parliament's gate number 1. *Praveen Khanna***

# Brandishing knife, 26-yr-old man tries to enter Parliament, arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

DELHI POLICE arrested a 26-year-man for allegedly trying to enter Parliament complex Monday morning.

According to police, the man whipped out a knife while entering the complex and shouted slogans in favour of Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, the Dera

Sacha Sauda chief convicted of rape and murder.

Police said an FIR will be registered against him.

DCP (New Delhi district) Eish Singhal said the man has been identified as Sagar Insa, a resident of Laxmi Nagar. "He is a class X dropout and works with his parents who run an eatery. He is associated with a religious organization," a police officer said.

Police said the incident took

place around 10.45 am at gate number 1.

"He whipped out a knife. He was stopped by security personnel and taken into custody. He also raised slogans for Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh," an officer said.

Sagar was taken to Parliament Street police station. "He claimed that he wants a complete ban on liquor and non-vegetarian food," the officer said.

# Man runs vehicle through crowded street, 1 injured

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

A 35-YEAR-OLD man was injured after a car drove into a crowd near Old Gupta Colony in North West Delhi's Model Town Sunday night, said police.

In a purported video that surfaced online, a black sedan is seen speeding through the crowd. As people start shouting at the driver, he reverses at high speed. A man can be seen climbing on top of the car and kicking the windshield to stop the driver.

The driver, however, doesn't stop and accelerates, following which the man falls down. He then drives away.

Police said the accused has not been identified yet.

"A case has been registered against an unknown person under sections 279 (rash driving) and 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Indian Penal Code. The driver is absconding, and we are looking at CCTV footage to identify him and the car. The incident took place around 9 pm and one man was injured," said Vijayanta Arya, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North West).



**The incident took place in Model town Sunday night**

The injured man, Kamal Arora, told police that there were two people inside the car.

"They were having an argument with some of the people on the road, following which the driver drove the car in a rash manner. The car then hit me," said Arora.

He was rushed to hospital and discharged after primary treatment.

Police said that they are contacting car dealers in nearby areas to identify the vehicle and its occupants.

# AAP's Singh reaches Goel's home: Want to seek answers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE WAR of words between Rajya Sabha MPs of the BJP and AAP, Vijay Goel and Sanjay Singh, continued Monday with the AAP leader staging a protest outside the former union minister's house.

Singh asked Goel to clear his stand on the BJP's CM candidate and his take on subsidised electricity and free water supply in the capital.

Hours later, Goel, holding a press conference along with Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta, claimed that Singh is "desperate" as he wants to be "number two in the party by pleasing (CM Arvind) Kejriwal and replacing deputy CM Manish Sisodia".

Singh, along with AAP leader Dilip Pandey, MLA Jamail Singh and party workers, reached Goel's residence Monday morning when the BJP leader was not home.

"The BJP must clear its stand on who is their chief ministerial candidate. People are getting confused; some leader says something in the morning and some other leader says something else in the evening," he said.

"I had asked Goel ji what his

stand is on Delhi getting subsidised electricity. Secondly, I asked about his stand on free water and, thirdly, I had asked who would be the chief ministerial face of the BJP against Arvind Kejriwal. I have come here to seek answers," Singh said.

Goel hit back and said the AAP should first put its house in order. "More than 10 senior members of AAP, including most people who fought the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, have left the party. They have lost the faith of people, so they could not even come second (in Lok Sabha polls). There are at least 12 to 14 MLAs

of AAP who want to come to the BJP," he claimed.

He also said he is not against AAP waiving water bills but demanded that the party should return the money of those people who paid their water bills honestly.

"Why is it done during polls and why not four years earlier," he added.

Senior BJP leaders claimed the AAP is pushing them to declare a CM candidate, by throwing around names and protesting outside leaders' houses, because they want to create factions in the party.



# Accused in Akhlaq lynching arrested in robbery case

*Noida:* A co-accused in the 2015 lynching of Mohammad Akhlaq was arrested by Noida Police after an encounter late Sunday night. The accused, Hari Om, who was out on bail, was wanted for

several robberies in Ghaziabad. “He had served jail time and was out on bail. While in jail, he formed a gang which would execute several robberies. We intercepted his movement last night

and he was arrested,” said Anil Kumar, SHO Jarcha police station. A resident of Bisada, Hari Om had seven cases pending against him, including the FIR filed in Jarcha police station in connec-

tion with Akhlaq’s murder. Hari Om was granted bail 22 months after Akhlaq’s murder, by the Allahabad High Court. Police suspect that while out on bail, he would execute rob-

beries that had been planned in custody. During night patrolling in Jarcha, Hari Om was stopped by police near Samana Canal. A country-made pistol was recovered from him. **ENS**

# Notify parking policy by Sept 30: SC to govt

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

DELHI’S PARKING policy, stuck in a limbo for over a year, will have to be notified by September 30, the Supreme Court said Monday. Proper parking policies, the court said, will ensure less pollution, less crime and a “more dignified life which every citizen is entitled to under Article 21 of the Constitution of India”.

The SC, however, did not pass any ruling on the Delhi government’s decision to allow free parking in residential areas, a stand contested by the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority.

A bench of Justice Arun Mishra and Justice Deepak Gupta also directed the EPCA to prepare pilot projects to be implemented in East Delhi’s Krishna Nagar and North Delhi’s Kamla Nagar within two weeks. The EPCA, in association with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, is already running a pilot in Lajpat Nagar-III

## MAKING SPACE

■ The pilot project expects a demand for parking of 3,510 cars in Lajpat Nagar-III. But with only 1,830 demarcated parking spots, there is a shortfall of 1,680 spots

■ To accommodate this gap, EPCA identified alternate parking spaces and shared parking with hospitals and educational institutions, which do not require parking space after working hours

■ The owners of such institutions are given monetary compensation

to ease the problem of parking.

The parking policy envisages similar area-specific plans within four months of its notification. Under the plan, areas are to be demarcated, and parking charges

will vary between peak and off-peak hours and also be linked with pollution levels.

The apex court also came down heavily on the tendency of vehicle owners to “monopolise” public infrastructure, and directed the civic bodies to remove all kinds of encroachments from footpaths and explore the option of disconnecting water and power connections of repeat offenders. It further directed issuing 15 days notice to “persons who have encroached upon pavements”.

The court also touched upon the “abject failure” on part of the authorities to provide adequate public transport. “Individual vehicles are owned by about 2% of the population. However, this 2% of the population wants to monopolise all resources and infrastructure with regard to transportation,” stated the court.

However, the court conceded that in certain areas, parking of some vehicles will have to be permitted on the roads because of the number of vehicles.



# JNU seeks attendance records of poll candidates, they say it violates HC order

ARANYA SHANKAR  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

IN A first, the Jawaharlal Nehru University administration Monday sent a letter to Deans and Chairpersons as well as the Election Committee asking them to furnish attendance records of all candidates contesting the students' union elections this year.

Sources said a majority of candidates have written to the EC against the move, saying it was a violation of the Delhi HC order of July 16, 2018, in the "Kavita Singh vs JNU" case on mandatory attendance, which said, "No coercive steps be taken against students, in pursuance to the attendance requirements, now introduced on behalf of JNU, dur-



The JNUSU polls will be held on September 6. *Archive*

ing pendency of writ petition..." The letter signed by Dean of Students and Head of the Grievance Redressal Cell Umesh Kadam states that the record be submitted latest by 5.30 pm the same day (Monday). "In compliance with Lyngdoh Committee Report and guidelines of Supreme Court, it is requested to

kindly provide attendance records of student(s) concerned, contesting JNUSU Election 2019-20, of your School/Special Centre," it read. The details have to be given in a particular format including their name, centre, programme of study, and attendance record of the monsoon semester till August 27. This includes details of total courses opted, total classes held, total classes attended and percentage of attendance.

The LCR says "candidates should have attained minimum percentage of attendance as prescribed by the university or 75% attendance, whichever is higher".

"In JNU, LCR has never been applicable in toto because of it being a research university and because we never had attendance in BA and MA courses too.

The administration is trying to curb the election process..., " said an EC member.

The Left Unity Panel and the Chhatra Rashtriya Janata Dal (CRJD) are among others who complained to the EC. Saket Moon from the Democratic Students' Federation, who is standing for the post of vice-president from the Left Unity Panel, said, "The administration is misusing its powers to subvert the democratic nature of the JNUSU polls."

CRJD presidential candidate Priyanka Bharti said, "Court directions are very clear on the whole matter. So on what basis are they asking for our attendance? We have refused to submit our attendance records."

Kadam did not respond to calls and texts seeking a comment.

## GREATER KAILASH-II: FIVE MEN ARRESTED

# 91-yr-old dead as help drugs and forces him inside fridge

Police say accused plotted kidnapping of former UN official for over a month

JIGNASA SINHA  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

DISGRUNTLED WITH his 91-year-old employer, a domestic help in South Delhi's GK-II allegedly drugged him and his wife and stuffed his body inside a fridge, which he then loaded into a tempo parked downstairs. But the alleged plan — to kidnap him for ransom — took a fatal turn when the accused opened the fridge after a while and realised that the victim, a former United Nations official, had suffocated to death.

According to police, the 28-year-old domestic help, Kishan, and four of his accomplices have been arrested. "During questioning, Kishan told police he was fed up with the man's 'taunting and abuses', and began plotting his kidnapping a month and a half ago," said a police officer.

While the domestic help drugged Kishan Dev Khosla and his wife Saroj on Saturday evening by serving them spiked tea, Saroj only woke up around 5 am on Sunday, and realised that her husband was missing, said police. She also noticed that their fridge was gone.

Police said that during questioning, Kishan claimed that his plan was to just kidnap Khosla and demand ransom from his family. Among those arrested is Pradeep, the tempo driver.

"After Khosla lost consciousness, Kishan put him in a fridge and carried it to Pradeep's vehicle with the help of his accomplices.



The victim, Kishan Dev Khosla, lived with his wife in South Delhi's Greater Kailash II; (top) the tempo in which the fridge was transported. *Express*

They drove the tempo a few kilometres and when they opened the refrigerator, they realised that Khosla had suffocated. They then buried him at a vacant plot in Sangam Vihar," an officer said.

Shami, the guard posted outside the couple's house, said, "I saw Kishan walk out of the house with a refrigerator which he then loaded inside a tempo... I thought it was an old refrigerator he was taking for repair."

Pradeep's brother Brijpal Upadhyay claimed he wasn't aware the fridge had a body inside. The tempo was recovered

from outside Pradeep's residence. Khosla is survived by his wife and two sons — one lives in Australia, the other at another block in GK-II. Khosla used to work in the UN and travelled extensively to the Middle East for projects, an officer said.

A neighbour said that the couple moved to the rented house two years ago. "Uncle used to go out for a walk every morning but for the last two months, he had stopped as he had been unwell. I believe he had faith in Kishan, and even trusted him with his ATM card," he said.

Joint CP (Southern Range) Devesh Srivastava said: "On Sunday morning, a PCR call was received from his family and a team rushed to the spot. The accused are leading us to the location of the body." Police are probing the family's claims that the help owed them money.

Additional DCP (South) Parvinder Singh said, "The accused had rented a one-room set with a courtyard in Tigri, Sangam Vihar, where they took the victim. After discovering he died inside the refrigerator, they buried his body in the courtyard."

SUKRITA BARUAH  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

AFTER WINNING three out of four posts in last year's Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) polls, the ABVP is looking to fortify its organisational and mobilisation strength at the level of individual classrooms.

The elections are scheduled for September 12, and the walls of the campuses are plastered with posters, flyers and hoardings urging students to join the ABVP or NSUI. ABVP's presence, however, is visibly dominating.

"Our structure is organised and our mobilisation follows a decentralised process. We already have a unit in every college



At an ABVP rally in North Campus last week. *Express*

participating in the elections. Each such unit comprises a 10-member leadership — a president, secretary, four vice-presidents and four joint secretaries. This year, we are trying to go deeper and appoint a 'class election-in-charge' for every class. They can identify those who are ABVP supporters or of other or-

ganisations... and mobilise at the grassroot level. This will help us understand the demography of each classroom," said Delhi state ABVP secretary Sidharth Yadav.

Yadav said the organisation is likely to be successful in making these appointments in 60% of classrooms: "It will be put in place this year and made functional in its full capacity from next year."

The ABVP also finds support from the Yuva Morcha, with the campaign spilling out of the university to students' homes. "...As a helping hand to the ABVP, booth-level workers see if there are any students living in their area — each one may be able to reach out to 5-10 students and ask them to vote for ABVP," said Sunil Yadav, state president of

Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha.

The other two major players are the Left-affiliated All India Students' Association and NSUI. "Since we don't have money and muscle power, we mobilise by going class to class, distributing the manifesto and talking about it. We are also focusing on online campaigning — sending out messages on WhatsApp broadcast lists and so on," said AISA state president Kawalpreet Kaur.

NSUI national in-charge Ruchi Gupta said, "We have our campaign, 'Awaaz Uthao, Seeti Bajao' to talk about inequality between campuses, colleges and students. We are linking university issues with larger ones... The ABVP's campaign is riding on the BJP's coat-tails."

# NSA against accused in guard's murder

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NOIDA, SEPTEMBER 2

NOIDA ADMINISTRATION has initiated proceedings under the National Security Act (NSA) against one of the 10 accused allegedly involved in the murder of a guard at an Oppo factory unit in Greater Noida in January. The accused, Arun, had allegedly attacked the victim with 10 others to pressure the company into contracting their supplies.

The administration has claimed the move will avert public disorder and create a better climate for foreign investment.

"Oppo has employed 30,000 Indians and invested over Rs 2,000 crore. The unit was in the process of acquiring building material, and the accused wanted the contract. We believe if the accused comes out, he will create public disorder," said B N Singh, DM, Gautam Budh Nagar.

Arun is the third person to come under the ambit of the NSA in connection with the incident.

A group of 10 people had fired several rounds at the guard, Dheeraj Kumar, stationed at the factory in Luksar road. After Kumar died during trial, IPC section 302 (murder) was added alongside section 307 (attempt to murder). Two accused, Mohit and Rohit, carrying a bounty of Rs 10,000, were earlier arrested for the shooting and were allegedly working at the behest of gangster Sunder Bhati.

According to the administration, following the shooting, several industrialists had approached police citing fear: "The incident has negatively impacted the resolve to protect industries," said BN Singh.

The administration said that invoking the NSA was a move towards preventive detention to counter Arun's bail plea, which is currently pending in the Allahabad High Court.



# 6 GOVT & POLITICS



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### MAKING IT EASY

LAWYERS APPEARING in the court of the Chief Justice of India on Monday had a pleasant surprise in the form of new 'presentation desks'. While the old model was more like a stool, the new version has facility for microphone as well as to keep the brief of the arguing lawyers. CJI Ranjan Gogoi said the model was borrowed from the Nagpur bench of Bombay High Court. It is learnt to be a joint idea of the CJI and Justice S A Bobde, who is in line to succeed him, to borrow the Nagpur model since it is more convenient for the lawyers. While it has been introduced only in the CJI's court now, existing models in other courtrooms will also be replaced in due course.

### PEDALING HEALTH

FITNESS SEEMS to be the mantra at the WHO SEARO (Southeast Asia Region) Health Ministers' meet. While the official agenda includes a stretching break of three minutes, at 6 am on Tuesday Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan will cycle from his residence to the venue, with the Chef de Cabinet, HQ, Geneva. Bhutan's Health Minister, Dechen Wangmo, will also accompany Vardhan on the cycle trip. They will then attend the 6.30 am yoga session.

### EXCUSE ME?

THE INTERVENTION of a lawyer unrelated to the P Chidambaram case when the matter was being argued had Solicitor General Tushar Mehta fuming on Monday. Advocate Shobha Gupta was waiting for the hearing of the law student harassment case when Mehta rushed to the court seeking modification in its earlier order. Senior Counsel Kapil Sibal, representing Chidambaram, had already left the court by then. Mehta said he had notified Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi about his appearance. Intervening, Advocate Gupta said although she was not in the matter, it would be better if it was taken up when the other side was also present. A furious Mehta asked, "Who is she? This is seriously objectionable."

## Patkar ends fast as MP shows steps being taken

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 2

NARMADA BACHAO Andolan (NBA) leader Medha Patkar ended her fast late on Monday after the Madhya Pradesh government sent former Chief Secretary SC Behar to inform her about the steps being taken by the Congress-led state government.

Patkar had begun her fast at a village on the banks of the Narmada in Badwani district on August 25 to protest the decision to fill Sardar Sarovar Dam up to a level of 138.68 metres. She contends that 192 villages, which are yet to be rehabilitated, and one town will be submerged at that level, affecting 32,000 families.

She is expected to go to Bhopal on September 9 and hold a meeting with officials of the Narmada Valley Development Authority. If dissatisfied with the outcome, she will take a call on resuming her dharna in the state capital, it was informed.

Earlier on Monday, Chief Minister Kamal Nath said that his government is in constant touch with the NBA to know and solve grievances of the affected people. He said the Sardar Sarovar Project is an inter-state

scheme and no single state can take a unilateral decision.

The NBA has urged the MP government to force Gujarat government and the Centre to reduce the water level and complete rehabilitation. State Home Minister Bala Bachchan had visited the protest site a few days ago to request Patkar and others to call off their agitation, but they did not budge.

Nath said his government has issued orders to district collectors to reexamine the previously rejected claims about resettlement and rehabilitation, and that the government found 115 families eligible for Rs 60 lakh compensation each. MP, he said, is still waiting for the money from Gujarat.

Accusing the Narmada Control Authority (NCA) of not being impartial, Nath said MP is opposing Gujarat's decision to store water. He said an official letter was sent to the NCA on May 27 demanding a meeting to discuss the schedule to fill water in the dam but the Authority did not take it seriously.

Nath also said camps will be organised in villages of the Narmada valley to examine resettlement and rehabilitation claims of the affected.

## MP minister to Sonia: Digvijaya trying to destabilise Nath govt

MILIND GHATWAI  
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 2

ACCUSING FORMER Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijaya Singh of trying to establish himself as a power centre in the state, Forest minister Umang Singhar has written to Congress president Sonia Gandhi, alleging that the party veteran was trying to destabilise the Kamal Nath government.

The allegations by Singhar, whose aunt Jamuna Devi was deputy chief minister in Digvijaya Singh's government, come in the wake of differences within the ruling Congress that returned to power in the state after 15 years.

"I am pained to inform you that Digvijaya Singh is trying to establish himself as a power centre by destabilising the Kamal



Digvijaya Singh, Kamal Nath



Nath government. He is writing letters to ministers and releasing them on social media giving a handle to the Opposition to target CM Kamal Nath and his government," Singhar wrote.

The minister was referring to Singh's letters to all ministers seeking audience with them to know the progress of transfers and works he had recommended to them between January and August. He alleged that the senior leader was running the government by proxy and there was no



### DEFENCE DIALOGUE

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Japanese counterpart Takeshi Iwaya in Tokyo on Monday. The two sides discussed ways to strengthen defence cooperation and resolved to adopt new initiatives for peace and security in the region. *Reuters*

## Shah to visit Guwahati for NEC meet, likely to discuss NRC

Persons left out of NRC list won't be detained till they exhaust all remedies: MHA

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

AMID UNCERTAINTY over the fate of more than 19 lakh people excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the BJP's Assam unit expressing displeasure over the results of the long-drawn process, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to visit Guwahati on September 8 to chair the meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC).

The NEC is the nodal agency for economic and social development of the region.

As part of the meeting, Shah is scheduled to hold discussions with Governors and Chief Ministers of the eight states in the Northeast on a range of issues.

Although NRC is not among the agenda, the issue of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh will be discussed, sources said.

Other issues on the agenda



Amit Shah in Mumbai on Monday. *Nirmal Harindran*

include implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord, repatriation of Bru tribals from Tripura to Mizoram, and issues associated with various development projects in the region.

Sources in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said Shah will review the progress of various development projects at the NEC meeting, besides taking stock of the security situation in the region. Governors and Chief

Ministers of the eight states are members of NEC.

Ahead of the Home Minister's visit, the MHA on Monday reiterated its earlier statement assuaging fears among those excluded from the NRC. Ministry spokesperson Vasudha Gupta tweeted, "Persons left out of #NRCFinalList NOT to be detained under any circumstance till they exhaust all remedies avl [available] under law. Such persons to continue to enjoy all rights as earlier, like any other citizen, eg. right to employment, education, property etc."

She also stated that the Assam government has made necessary arrangements to provide legal aid to the needy amongst those excluded from the NRC's final list, made public on Saturday. These would be provided through the district legal services authorities, Gupta said.

She said adequate judicial

process is available to those left out of the final NRC to appeal to the Foreigners' Tribunal within 120 days from August 31. "To facilitate appeal, 200 new FTs to be functional from today, in addition to 100 already existing," she tweeted.

The NRC results have left most people dissatisfied in Assam, and there is much discomfort within the state BJP, which has openly claimed that many genuine citizens have been left out and many foreigners have been included. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal had earlier said that the option of bringing in a legislation was open to the government if questions are raised over the NRC.

Although the NEC is largely focused on development issues concerning the states in the Northeast, sources said issues related to the situation arising out of the final NRC list are likely to be discussed during the visit.

### TMC to protest against NRC across Bengal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 2

THE TRINAMOOL Congress, which has slammed the BJP for making citizens refugees through National Register of Citizens (NRC) list in Assam, has decided to hit the streets over the exclusion of over 19 lakh people from the NRC list in the neighbouring state.

At a meeting of party MPs and MLAs at the Kalighat residence of Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, it was decided that the party would hold protests on September 7 and 8 in every district of the state against the NRC. The protests will culminate with a mega rally in Kolkata — from Chirra More to Shyambazar five-point crossing in North Kolkata — on September 12, which will be led by Mamata herself.

TMC sources said that senior party leader Firhad Hakim has been given responsibility to coordinate with Northeast states.

education. She then took up a job here, he says, adding that she had submitted a 1967 certificate from a school in Nagaon she started teaching at and her BED certificate from 1969.

"Everyone in my family is in, except my wife. It seems the process was aimed at excluding the maximum number of people. I have no faith in this process anymore," says Parimal.

In Bengali-majority Barak valley, Jaba Namashudro (35), a resident of Udharbond in Cachar district, is out whereas her three children and husband are in. What makes her case noteworthy is that she won a case at a Foreigners' Tribunal in 2017 and was declared an Indian.

According to rules, a person whose case is pending at a tribunal cannot be included in NRC.

"We had submitted the tribunal order but probably it was not updated into the system. TV channels are saying we have to go to a tribunal. Does she need to go to the tribunal again?" asks Surendra, her husband.

cial work and implement welfare schemes?" Singhar wrote.

The minister also accused Singh of being partial to his son Jaivardhan Singh, who holds the urban development portfolio. He said Jaivardhan, in a written reply in Assembly, had said that there was no scam in the Simhashta Kumbh while the Congress had made the alleged scam a major poll issue while in Opposition.

In February, Singh had questioned the clean chit given to the previous BJP government in the Mandsaur firing case and tree plantation scam — the latter involved a reply given by Singhar in the Assembly. Singh, however, had kept quiet on the clean chit given by his son in the alleged Simhashta Kumbh scam.

Singh did not respond to Singhar's charge.

Jaivardhan Singh told *The*

## Ties in oil, gas sector to be focus of PM's Russia trip

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

INDIA AND Russia are set to roll out a five-year roadmap for stronger cooperation in the oil and gas sector, apart from pacts on skills development, mining, medicine, education and agriculture as Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Russia's far-eastern city of Vladivostok where he will meet Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Briefing the media on the Prime Minister's visit, Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said the possibility of opening a maritime route connecting Chennai with Vladivostok will be explored as it could link Europe as well through the Arctic route. Gokhale said India is also looking at cooperation in the farming sector and exploring the possibility of sending skilled manpower to Russia.

In Vladivostok, Modi and Putin will hold the 20th India-Russia annual summit on September 4. During his stay, Modi and the Russian President will visit one of Russia's major shipbuilding yards.

On September 5, Modi will attend the Eastern Economic Forum as chief guest and hold bilateral talks with several leaders on the sidelines. He and Putin will also visit an international judo championship in Vladivostok in which a six-member

Indian team is participating, Gokhale said. He said a number of agreements, including in the coal mining and power sectors, are expected to be firmed up during Modi's visit.

Replying to a question, the foreign secretary said Russia fully supports India on the Kashmir issue and on its concerns on cross-border terrorism.

He said both sides are expected to firm up a five-year roadmap laying out possibilities of cooperation in oil and gas sector. At present, India relies heavily on the Gulf region for its energy requirement. Gokhale said India is looking at Russia as a major source of hydrocarbons.

He said some letters of intent will also be signed between Ind-ian public sector companies and Russian entities for development of oil and gas fields in Russia.

Gokhale said India may announce investment in new oil fields in Russia and something concrete may come up on import of LNG from Russia.

In the summit talks, the two leaders are expected to discuss a number of key regional issues, including the Afghan peace process and situation in the Gulf region. They are also expected to explore ways to enhance cooperation while working in multilateral organisations like Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS.



PM Narendra Modi with Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, CM Vijay Rupani and Deputy CM Nitin Patel at inauguration of Garvi Gujarat Bhawan in New Delhi on Monday. *Anil Sharma*

## Chidambaram's CBI custody in INX Media case extended by a day

PRITAM PAL SINGH  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

A LOCAL court on Monday extended CBI custody of former Union minister and Congress's Rajya Sabha member P Chidambaram by a day in the INX Media case.

Special CBI Judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar issued notice to CBI and sought the agency's response by Tuesday, when it will hear Chidambaram's interim bail plea.

The case relates to alleged financial irregularities in clearances granted when Chidambaram was the Union Finance minister in the Congress-led UPA government.

The CBI has opposed Chidambaram's bail, as he is a "very powerful and influential person in public life and has been a former Home and Finance Minister of the country". Appearing for the agency, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta contended that Chidambaram "wields substantial and pervasive influence over the witnesses and has substantial potential of tampering with evidence".

Meanwhile, in the separate Aircel-Maxis case, being heard in the court of Special Judge O P Saini, the CBI and ED submitted that the court should allow custodial interrogation of Chidambaram and son Karti, as their questioning could not be carried out effectively in the past.

The agencies claimed that Chidambaram, as the then Union Finance Minister, granted approval to the Aircel-Maxis deal beyond his capacity, which allegedly benefited certain people and for which he allegedly received kickbacks.

Opposing Chidambaram and Karti's protection from arrest, the agencies argued that the two have committed serious economic offences, which are a threat to the national economy and is a white colour crime.

Judge Saini reserved order on



Chidambaram in New Delhi on Monday. *PTI*

the anticipatory bail for September 5.

The CBI submitted that the offence was committed "systematically with connivance out of larger conspiracy against public and national interest. Such economic offences have to be dealt with iron hands."

In the INX Media case in the court of Special Judge Kuhar, Solicitor General Mehta argued that the CBI needs 10 days' notice to respond to Chidambaram's interim bail application, as this is not a special case and personal liberty of every citizen is equal. He urged the court to send the accused to police custody until Tuesday, when the Supreme Court will hear his application challenging the trial court's remand orders, as also the non-bailable warrant issued against him.

Appearing for Chidambaram, senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Singhvi, Dayan Krishnan and advocate Arshdeep Singh requested the court it should hear the interim bail application on Monday itself and pass the order. The court posted hearing for 3.30 pm Wednesday when senior advocate Dayan Krishnan and Arshdeep Singh, while referring to the SC order, said there is a clear order to hear the interim bail application and pass the order. Krishnan suggested that since Sibal and Mehta had left the courtroom, the interim bail plea may be taken up on Wednesday.



**MSCB SCAM**

SC rejects plea to quash probe against Ajit Pawar, others

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

SAYING THAT it is “not going to interfere with the High Court order”, the Supreme Court on Monday rejected a petition to quash the probe against NCP leader Ajit Pawar and others in connection with the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and MR Shah was hearing a plea challenging the August 22 Bombay High Court order asking the police to register an FIR against Pawar and others in connection with the scam which allegedly caused an estimated Rs 1,000 crore loss to the bank between 2007 and 2011. The court said the probe will proceed uninfluenced by any observation made by the High Court.

Acting on the HC direction, the Economic Offences Wing of the Mumbai Police had registered an FIR against Pawar and 70 former functionaries on charges of cheating and forgery.

Ajit Pawar and others had moved Supreme Court challenging the HC order. The petitioners contended that all of them were not heard by the HC but the court did not accept the argument.

The HC said that police had not filed an FIR despite an inspection report of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development for the year 2009-10 and chargesheet filed by a quasi-judicial inquiry commission under the Maharashtra Cooperative Societies (MCS) Act showing “glaring irregularities”.

Odisha announces package for those affected by Puri eviction drive

*Bhubaneswar:* In view of the resentment among citizens over eviction around the Shri Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday announced a rehabilitation and resettlement package for the affected people.

The administration had launched an eviction drive on August 19 to remove all the structures within a 75-metre radius of the temple to ensure safety and security of the 12th century structure.

The affected families will be given compensation for houses located in the cleared area. They will be provided with an immediate assistance of Rs 50,000 for transportation and allied expenses. A monthly assistance of Rs 10,000 towards rent will also be paid to the displaced families till they are provided with dwelling houses or land.

PTI

# SC asks UP govt to form SIT, address grievances raised by law student

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday asked the Uttar Pradesh government to constitute a special investigation team (SIT) to “address the grievances” raised by the law student who had gone missing last month from her college in Shahjahanpur, alleging harassment by the college authorities. She was subsequently found in Rajasthan.

A bench of Justices R Banumathi and AS Bopanna ordered that the SIT will be headed by an officer of the rank of Inspector General of Police and assisted by an officer of Superintendent of Police rank.

**BARRACKPORE MP INJURED IN CLASH**

## BJP MP led mob attack on police, says Bengal ADG

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 2

TOP OFFICIALS of West Bengal Police on Monday defended Barrackpore Police Commissioner Manoj Verma over Sunday's violence in Barrackpore, saying that he had done a “remarkable” job, and accused BJP MP Arjun Singh of leading a “planned attack” on the police.

The BJP MP from Barrackpore had sustained head injuries during a clash with police in Jagaddal area of the district on Sunday. Singh had accused Verma of “nearly assassinating” him by beating him with a baton. But the police had rejected the charge, saying that the BJP MP was “injured by bricks thrown by his supporters”.

Addressing a press conference at the State Secretariat on Monday, ADG (Law & Order) Gyanwant Singh said, “The protest cannot be spontaneous. It was planned. The way the police and Commissioner Manoj Verma were attacked, it shows it was planned... Verma himself was leading the force and the mob was being led by BJP MP Arjun Singh.”

“Instead of withdrawing the protest, the mob hurled bombs and pelted stones at the police team. Initially, the police tried to stay calm but later they used mild force to disperse the mob... Verma requested him (Singh) to pacify the mob... They assembled there with a certain motive, and it cannot be spontaneous. Police started chasing the mob. People kept throwing bricks and stones from rooftops targeting the Police Commissioner and his

It also asked the Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court to constitute a bench to monitor the investigation.

The apex court said it had interacted with the woman and her parents in-camera, and she had “certain grievances against the institution (where she was studying), and also against the management”. The “parents” also have “certain apprehensions on her safety”, the court said.

“We are not expressing any opinion. All that we are inclined to say is that correctness of grievance has to be addressed,” the bench added.

Additional Solicitor General Vikranjit Banerjee, appearing for the State of UP, informed the court that besides the FIR registered on

her father's complaint, the institution has registered a cross-FIR. The bench clarified that the SIT will take note of both FIRs and proceed with the investigation.

The court said the matter will henceforth be considered by Allahabad HC.

The court, which had taken suo motu cognizance of the matter, said this was only for the purpose of ensuring that the woman's education is not disturbed.

The woman had said that she does not want to continue in the same institution and had suggested a different college under the same university, the court said.

It asked ASG Banerjee to verify whether she can be admitted

## Suggestions invited for Bill to check assault on doctors

*New Delhi:* The Health Ministry has invited comments and suggestions within 30 days on the draft Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of violence and damage to property) Bill, which seeks to address the issue of doctors in hospitals being assaulted.

The Bill provides for a jail term of up to 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh for such assaults. The provisions of the draft law are stringent — it categorises both mental and physical abuse as violence against doctors, and covers not just hospitals and a radius of 50 metres around them, but also home visits. Such violence, it says, will constitute an offence that is cognizable, non-bailable, non-compoundable and fit for trial by a court of the Judicial Magistrate of First Class.

ENS

to the college. “Tell them it's a Supreme Court direction,” Justice Banumathi observed.

The court also ordered that her stay in the short-stay home in New Delhi be continued until September 12.

The court said her younger brother also studies in the same college and she had expressed the desire whether he can also be shifted.

The bench asked the ASG whether the boy can also be accommodated in the new institution.

Advocate Shobha Gupta, appearing as amicus curiae in the matter, urged the court to pass orders to record her statement under Section 164 CrPc before a Magistrate but the bench re-

fused to do so. “No, we are not monitoring,” Justice Banumathi said.

The woman was produced before the court on Friday after being traced to Rajasthan.

She had told the judges that she had left Shahjahanpur along with her three college mates, who are also family friends, before Raksha Bandhan “in order to protect herself”.

After she went missing, her father had accused former BJP MP Swami Chinmayanand, head of the law college's management, of harassing her and other students. Acting on his complaint, the police had booked Chinmayanand on charges of abduction and intimidation — charges he denied.



## MEETING RAMAPHOSA

Congress Working Committee member Anand Sharma with South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa at African National Congress Headquarters in Johannesburg on Monday. Sharma and Ramaphosa discussed the political developments following national elections in India and South Africa. *Express*

# Military Police: Training for 100 women likely to start in Dec

**KRISHN KAUSHIK**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

TAKING ANOTHER step towards induction of women as soldiers in Military Police, the Colonel Commandant of the Military Police, Lieutenant General Ashwani, interviewed Lieutenant Colonel Nandini in Srinagar on Monday over the “role of instructor of the first batch of women soldiers for the Army”, an Army statement said.

“First set of instructors is most important to us as it will lay down the foundation for generations to come,” Lt Gen Ashwani said, ac-

cording to the statement, and added that “there will be more women officers as instructors, including Maj Julie who was instructor to the first batch of women constables in Assam Rifles”.

It is the first time that the Army will recruit women as soldiers.

In the first batch, 100 women will be selected and trained and this is likely to start by December. Same as the training for men, it will last for 61 weeks, in the spirit that they are “soldiers first”, the Army statement said.

The strength of women in the Corps of Military Police will be increased by 100 every year,

till they reach a cadre strength of 1,700.

As Defence Minister in the previous term of the Narendra Modi government, Nirmala Sitharaman had cleared the decision to induct women into the Army in January this year.

But the current process is only restricted to Military Police, which, as per the Army's website, is mandated to “preserve good order and discipline and to prevent breaches of the same by persons serving in or attached to the regular Army”, provide “close protection” to the Army Chief and handle prisoners of war.

**COUNSEL FOR MOSQUE SIDE**

# There was no massive structure, Hindu motifs at site, SC told

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

REJECTING THE Archeological Survey of India's report that there was a “massive structure” at the disputed site in Ayodhya and Hindu motifs inside the Babri Masjid, the counsel for the mosque side on Monday told the Supreme Court that there was no need to delve into distant history and what was relevant was who had the title to the site when the sovereignty of the area passed on to the British.

“There was no massive structure at the site and no Hindu motifs, just because there is a peacock or lotus does not mean they are Hindu,” Senior Advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for the main appellant M Siddiq, told a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi. The bench, also comprising Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and SA Nazeer, is hearing appeals against the September 30, 2010 verdict of the Allahabad High court which ordered a three-way division of the disputed 2.77 acres.

Dhavan was referring to the arguments of the temple side that the recovery of lotus and peacock motifs discounted the claim that it was a mosque. “The Roman empire had every possible animal,” he said. Denying that there was a massive structure at the site, the counsel pointed to flaws in the methodology adopted by the ASI.

He also sought to contradict the claim that the presence of a well at the site reinforced the temple's case, saying “there were



no wells in the Vedic period”. Disputing the argument that a “parikrama route” around the structure could be considered as proof of a temple in the middle, Dhavan said, “Parikrama is only a form of worship, it is not a form of evidence”.

“The important question is with whom was the title of the place when the sovereignty of this part of the country passed on to the British,” the senior counsel said, adding there is proof that it was a mosque. He contended that as far as a civil suit was concerned, there was no question of relevance of historical facts, and if they were relied on, it would lead to erroneous conclusions.

Dhavan argued that the judgment of Justice Sudhir Agarwal of the Allahabad HC was based on “conjectures or preponderance of probability”.

Contending that Muslims were the aggrieved parties, Dhavan said, “In 1934, you break the mosque. In 1949, you commit trespass. Where in the law of relief will your lordships put these facts?... After all the demolition, you say that Hindu side must be protected... Where do we lose sense of this contemporary history which stares us in the face?”

**FULL REPORT ON**  
[www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

# JD(U) coins new slogan, RJD calls it defeatist

**SANTOSH SINGH**  
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 2

WITH ASSEMBLY elections in Bihar a little more than a year away, the JD(U) has come up with a new slogan — “*Kyun karen vichar, thihke to hai Nitish Kumar* (why should we consider others, Nitish Kumar is just fine)”.

The slogan — keeping the JD(U)'s national president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at the centre — has been displayed on hoarding with an image of a smiling and reflective Nitish.

During the 2015 Assembly elections, then JD(U) poll strategist and now the party's national vice-president Prashant Kishor had come up with the slogan “*Bihar me bahaar hai, Nitish Kumar hai* (Bihar is blooming because of Nitish Kumar)”.

While the JD(U) justified its new slogan saying there was a need for a catchline because of



Nitish Kumar

organisational elections, the RJD called it “defeatist”.

Bihar BJP spokesperson Nikhil Anand said: “The NDA is a united force in Bihar. The poster is a message to the Grand Alliance, which is disunited and cannot say who its CM nominee is.”

Senior RJD leader and former minister Vijay Prakash took a dig at JD(U): “*Thihke* means ‘*kam-chalau*’ (just doable). JD(U) has accepted that Nitish is just okay. The slogan is defeatist.”

Senior JD(U) leader and minister Shyam Rajak, however, said: “We are simply saying that when everything is going so well under Nitish, what is the need to consider anyone else in 2020 elections?”

**RAKESH KANWAR, KULLU DEPUTY COMMISSIONER**  
**AWARD CATEGORY: SOCIAL WELFARE**

# Garbage dump to Nature Park in two years: A Kullu success story

**SUKHBIR SIWACH**  
BABELI (KULLU), SEPTEMBER 2

AN OPEN ground at Babeli village of Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district that used to be a drinking hole and garbage dump for villages around till two years ago, has been converted into a Nature Park, earning the Forest Department around Rs 15 lakh a year.

While a majority of the Rs 1.5 crore funds for the project came from the Forest Department, a crucial role was played by then Kullu Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kanwar, who authorised Rs 40 lakh to develop the park. Kanwar, who is now Director, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, was one of the recipients at The Indian Express Excellent in Governance Awards, winning in the category of 'Social Welfare'.

Kullu's Divisional Forest Officer Neeraj Chadha said it was the villagers who first approached them with the idea in 2015, inspired by a similar Nature Park in neighbouring Mohal village. Located 7 km from Kullu, on the banks of the



river Beas, at a height of 1,260 metres above sea level, the Babeli Nature Park was inaugurated on July 14, 2017, by then chief minister Virbhadra Singh.

Talking about how they turned the ground around,



Renuka Puri

Kullu Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kanwar receives the award from Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan; (right) The Nature Park at Babeli village in Kullu.



Sukhbir Siwach



Deputy Range Officer, Forest Department, Prashant Sharma, who has been associated with the project since the beginning, said, “We utilised the dumped beer bottles to make basements for seating platforms. The garbage was buried beneath the ground, and covered with soil brought from 5 km away.” Water flowing down from the hills was diverted to create a small channel that passes through the park, on which a pico (small) hydro system has been put up to explain power generation to visitors.

Sharma added, “Now we earn Rs 15 lakh a year just through ticket sales for entry, while spending around Rs 6 lakh on the park's upkeep, including salaries of eight workers and electricity charges. At the peak of the tourism season in May-June this year, we earned up to Rs 18,000 a day.”

Forty per cent of the money generated goes for development works in villages under Jindore and Nahlach panchayats that provided land for the park. The residents of these villages are also exempted from tickets for entry. A restaurant and boating

services are planned on a lake in the park next. Sharma said they expected Rs 5 lakh earnings annually from this.

Kanwar said the park had helped generate revenue, provide jobs, as well as served as a playing ground for children. Calling the award a “great recognition”, he added, “It will motivate young people to carry out innovative plans.”

Ganga Ram, 46, the pradhan of one of the 14 villages under the Jindore panchayat, remembers the time the ground was strewn with liquor bottles. “People would throw garbage here, use it to relieve themselves.”

Shashank Upadhyay, who runs a shop-cum-dhaba in front of the park, said their earnings have increased “significantly” since the park came up. He also welcomed the fact that a corner of the park had been designated as a cremation space, rather than people carrying out last rites all over the ground.

The administration is planning more parks now, including a second one in Manali and another near Rohtang Pass.



## Khattar waives interest on co-op bank crop loans

*Chandigarh:* Ahead of the Assembly elections due next month, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday announced waiving interest and penalty on crop loans of farmers from cooperative banks — to the tune of Rs 4,750 crore — under the one-time settlement scheme. “This decision would benefit about 10 lakh farmers in the state,” he said.

Khattar, speaking in Bhiwani on Monday, said, “Those farmers

whose bank accounts were declared Non Performing Assets (NPA) and were unable to renew their loans, would now be able to change cycle of their crop loan accounts.” He said that the farmers would have to deposit their principal amount only.

Meanwhile, Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Bains termed the move as insufficient. “The entire farm loan should be waived off,” he demanded.

## UNNAO RAPE-ACCIDENT

# CBI records rape victim’s statement

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE CBI has recorded the statement of the Unnao woman who has accused Uttar Pradesh MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar of sexual assault, after she was shifted from the AIIMS ICU to a ward.

The woman was shifted to Delhi from a Lucknow hospital days after the car in which she was travelling in was hit by a truck that was speeding on the wrong side of the road near Gurubakshganj in Rae Bareilly district on July 28. Her two aunts were killed in the accident and the woman and her lawyer were critically injured.

Sources said that her statement on the collision was recorded after doctors gave the go-ahead that she was well enough to be spoken to. Sengar, who has been booked for allegedly orchestrating the accident, is currently in jail.

CBI sources said they were waiting for the condition of her lawyer to improve to record his statement as well. Last month, the woman’s relative stated that she had revealed that the truck had deliberately sped towards her car in Bareilly. Sources did not confirm or deny if the sur-

**UP government has drawn severe criticism for failing to provide security to the 19-year-old, who was allegedly raped by MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in 2017**

vivor had reiterated this in her statement to the CBI.

The UP government has drawn severe criticism for failing to provide security to the 19-year-old woman, who was allegedly raped by the BJP MLA in 2017.

Her uncle, who is lodged in a Rae Bareilly prison, has alleged that false cases were slapped against him by people close to Sengar for not yielding to the pressure after his niece accused the MLA of sexual assault. Her uncle, whose wife died in the accident, has also alleged that police did not pay heed to complaints by the woman’s family.

The UP Police on July 29 filed a murder case against Sengar and nine others after the woman’s family filed a complaint, alleging “conspiracy” behind the car crash. The case was later transferred to the CBI.

## Over 1 crore Rajasthan families to benefit from merged health scheme

**DEEP MUKHERJEE**

JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 2

MORE THAN 1.1 crore families in Rajasthan can now avail free health insurance following the launch of the Ayushman Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Rajasthan Swasthya Bima Yojana on Sunday.

The Congress government in Rajasthan has come up with this scheme after merging the previous BJP government’s flagship Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojana with the Central govern-

ment’s Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

The Ayushman Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Rajasthan Swasthya Bima Yojana, launched on Sunday, will be functional in its current form till December 12 this year and covers 1,401 disease packages related to 21 health specialisations.

With the merger of the two schemes, 10 lakh more beneficiaries will now be able to avail benefits. The insurance cover of families under the scheme is Rs 30,000 for general illnesses and Rs 3 lakh for serious illnesses. However, activists working in the health sector say that the government will have to ensure that there is no scope for fraudulent practices.

“The merged scheme is not that different from the Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojana, launched by the previous government, and many cases of fraudulent practices were unearthed during the functioning of that scheme, including instances where higher expenses were falsely shown,” said Dr Narendra Gupta from the Prayas and Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, Rajasthan.

“It is yet to be seen what measures the government is taking to ensure that such fraudulent practices don’t take place in the new scheme. For this purpose, a more transparent mechanism has to be in place,” said Gupta.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had recently said that ‘serious corruption’ took place in the Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojana, and many private hospitals indulged in fraudulent practices which led to unnecessary spending by the government.





NORTH

## Man shoots wife dead, then commits suicide: Police

**Meerut:** A 45-year-old man allegedly shot his wife dead and then killed himself with his licensed revolver in Laadpur village in Muzaffarnagar on Monday. Their only son, who is pursuing BTech at a private institute in Chennai, has been informed about the incident, the police said.

The police said that the deceased, Manoj Singh and his wife, Seema (42) used to

have frequent arguments. “The bodies were sent for post-mortem examination,” said Santosh Kumar Tyagi, the in-charge of Khatauli police station.

“Santosh owned a pesticide shop in the village while Seema was also running a boutique there,” said Ashish Pratap Singh, Deputy SP, Khatauli.

ENS



Devotees gather on the occasion of Teej at Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga and Yamuna in Prayagraj, on Monday.*AP*

EAST

## Suspected JMB operative arrested in Kolkata

**Kolkata:** Acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force (STF) of Kolkata Police on Monday arrested another suspected member of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), a banned outfit, from the city. Mohammad Abul Kashem alias Kashem (22) was produced in a local court, which remanded him in police custody till September 16. According to police sources,

Kashem, who is based at Mangalkote in Bardhaman, was arrested on Monday. “Several incriminating articles, including a phone and some handwritten documents, were seized from his possession,” said the source. Subhankar Sinha Sarkar, DC (STF), said Kashem disclosed that he and other members of the JMB had planned to meet in Kolkata.

ENS

WEST

## Tigress which killed a farmer captured in Amravati

**Nagpur:** Tigress E1, which killed a man three days ago in Melghat, was captured on Monday. She has been remanded in Gorewada Rescue Centre at Nagpur. The tigress killed farmer Shobharam Chavan at Dadra village outside Melghat Tiger Reserve (MTR) in Amravati district Friday night. Another man, Dilip Chavan, was attacked by the tigress when he had

gone to the spot after the incident. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Nitin Kakodkar had issued an order to capture the tigress. A Rapid Rescue Unit Sunday managed to tranquilise the radio-collared tigress. E1 was shifted to MTR core area after she was found responsible for a death in Brahmapuri forest in Chandrapur.

ENS

SOUTH

## Coast Guard rescues 13 crew members of dredger

**Mangaluru:** The Coast Guard on Monday rescued 13 crew members of a dredger trapped in high waves in the sea just off the coast here using a lifeboat of New Mangalore Port Trust and launched a search for seven missing personnel. The ship ‘Tridevi Prem’, got stuck in violent waves around 2.30 am on Monday, a Coast Guard press release said. The vessel captain contacted the Coast Guard and NMPT, following

which, ICG ship ‘Amartya’ in the vicinity rescued 13 crew and launched a search for the seven others. Owned by Mumbai-based Mercator Limited, the dredger was anchored on a contractual agreement with the port. A repair team supervised rescue operations. DIG SS Dasila, commandant, Coast Guard, said authorities have been asked de-fuel to dredger to prevent an oil spill.

PTI

# ‘Political mainstream faces existential question in J&K’

AAKASH JOSHI

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

SRINAGAR MAYOR Junaid Mattu was granted the status of a minister of state (along with his Jammu counterpart) on August 21, three weeks after the government decided to scrap Jammu and Kashmir’s special status and bifurcate the state into two Union Territories.

But Mattu, speaking to *The Indian Express* on the phone and over email, sees the developments since August 5, “exactly as an overwhelming majority of Kashmiris do — as deeply disturbing and anguishing. The arbitrary disavowal of constitutional guarantees promised to the people of J&K and the break-up of the state has been one of the darkest days in its chequered history.”

Mattu’s party, the People’s Conference (PC), and its leader Sajjad Lone were the most visible allies of the BJP in the Valley. But with the state’s status now changed, Mattu asserts that “the mainstream as a whole is faced with a larger, more existential question at this juncture and should strive for the restoration of the state’s eroded constitutional rights and seek reversal of these moves.” He adds that his party has petitioned the Supreme Court to challenge the decision on J&K.

Mattu, in Delhi for treatment for a chronic ailment, says the Centre’s claims that the situation is “normal” and a large section of the Valley’s population is happy,



Srinagar Mayor Junaid Mattu

does not hold water. “The media and administrative narrative seems to be content in defining ‘normalcy’ in a purely operational context — in the ability of the clampdown to contain the immediate repercussions of what was done. If the absence of dead bodies is the new definition of ‘normalcy’ — what can one possibly say,” he says.

Mattu, and his party, also appear wary of the talk of delimitation in J&K. “The J&K Representation of the People Act, 1957, and Section 47(3) of the Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir were both amended in 2002 to freeze delimitation in the state till 2026. This was done by an elected representative, legislative forum,” he says.

Mattu says that any delimitation exercise now will appear “politically motivated”. “Academically speaking, the Governor could have toyed with the idea — and this is what was being contemplated in all probability — amended Section 47 of the J&K Constitution or Section 3 of the People’s Representation

Act of J&K and lifted the delimitation freeze, and paved the way for the establishment of a Delimitation Commission for the state before the 2026 freeze. But, now that Article 370 has been made inoperable, any move to conduct a delimitation exercise exclusively in J&K would be a Constitutional contradiction,” he adds.

Mattu combats the perception that Lone and PC, as allies of the BJP till the state had a government and fully-functioning legislature, may still be close to the party. “The PC,” he says “has fiercely and unambiguously defended the state’s special status and has always opposed any erosions”. He also claims that the “traditional mainstream parties” — the NC and PDP — “in a lot of ways are complicit in the past erosions in the state’s autonomy and special status,” and the “PC has no such skeletons to hide”.

Asked if he was taken into confidence by the government, and hence granted relative freedom compared to other Valley-based politicians, Mattu is forceful in his reply: “I was allowed to come to Delhi on August 13 to attend a pre-scheduled invasive medical procedure as part of a treatment regimen for a chronic ailment... I wonder if that amounts to ‘relative freedom’ — but you are entitled to your interpretations. No, the Centre has not kept me in its confidence and perhaps it was the nature of my illness that made my continued detention unsustainable — given that a missed monthly treatment could quite possibly be fatal...”

“The PC,” he says “has fiercely and unambiguously defended the state’s special status and has always opposed any erosions”. He also claims that the “traditional mainstream parties” — the NC and PDP — “in a lot of ways are complicit in the past erosions in the state’s autonomy and special status,” and the “PC has no such skeletons to hide”.

## Yechury files report in SC on J&K visit

**New Delhi:** In keeping with the directions of the Supreme Court, CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury on Monday filed a report of his visit to J&K to meet party colleague Mohd Yousuf Tarigami.

On August 28, an SC bench comprising CJI Ranjan Gogoi and Justices S A Bobde and S Abdul Nazeer had allowed Yechury, who had moved a writ of habeas corpus petition, to visit J&K only to enquire about his health and “for no other purpose”. The court made it clear that if Yechury was “found to be indulging in any other act, omission or commission”, it will be construed “a violation of this Court’s order”.

It also asked Yechury to “file a report supported by an affidavit in connection with the purpose of the visit...” once he returns to Delhi.

ENS

# Male Declaration overlooks Pak claim on Kashmir issue

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

A DAY after India stalled Pakistan’s attempt to rake up the Kashmir issue at the South Asian Speakers’ Summit in the Maldives, the Male Declaration, adopted at the meeting on Monday, ignored all assertions made by Islamabad on the matter.

“The South Asian Speakers’ Summit, while adopting the Male Declaration, overlooked all assertions made by the Pakistani parliamentary delegation,” sources in the Lok Sabha Secretariat said. The summit “unanimously” felt Kashmir was India’s “internal matter”, they said.

Before finalising the declaration, speakers held a roundtable on Monday on the concluding day. All efforts of the Pakistan delegation to get even a passing reference to Kashmir issue finding a mention in the declaration drew a nought, said sources. Besides Kashmir, Pakistan’s reference to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) also could not find a place in Male Declaration, sources said.

The meeting, held in the Maldivian Parliament, Majlis, had witnessed a heated exchange between representatives of India and Pakistan. Qasim Suri,

Deputy Speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly, tried to raise the Kashmir issue during a discussion on Sustainable Development Goals. India immediately raised a point of order and the presiding officer asked Suri to let the Indian representative, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh, speak. However, Suri did not yield, leading to a commotion.

Harivansh then hit out at Pakistan for raising India’s “internal matter” at the forum and criticised Islamabad for its “bid to politicise the multi-lateral forum”. Sources said that India’s position was prominently reflected in the declaration, which resolved to work collectively for the promotion of equality at work, equal remuneration and creation of jobs for youths. The declaration also accepted India’s views regarding food safety, nutrition and maternal, child and adolescent health in the Asia Pacific region.

On the sidelines of the summit, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla held bilateral talks with his Bhutanese counterpart Wangchuk Namgyel.

The Indian delegation also held detailed deliberations with the Parliamentary delegations from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka on matters of bilateral interest.

## FACIAL RECOGNITION ATTENDANCE SYSTEM IN GUJARAT

# Days ahead of launch, teachers’ body forbids app downloads

RITU SHARMA

AHMEDABAD, SEPTEMBER 2

DAYS BEFORE the launch of a facial recognition attendance system on Teachers’ Day, the Gujarat State Teachers’ Association passed a resolution forbidding teachers from downloading the Microsoft-based Kaizala application on their mobile phones, which would bring them under the system.

Teachers’ association president Digvijaysinh Jadeja and secretary Satishbhai Patel passed the order after a six-hour meeting in Gandhinagar on Sunday.

Sources in the education department said the government is working on another plan. “If not Kaizala, then another system to capture biometric online attendance system will be launched on September 5,” a senior officer said.

“The education department has directed all teachers to download the app and send their location-based attendance by taking a selfie. Thus, taking online attendance through Kaizala is like not trusting its

EXPLAINED

## Govt says foolproof , teachers raise privacy

THE GUJARAT government says the facial-recognition attendance system it proposes to launch addresses problems raised about an existing attendance system. The government says the new system, which combines facial recognition with geo-fencing, is foolproof and leaves no room for manipulation by education department officials and prevents proxy attendance. However, teachers raise concerns about privacy, as well as data security.

own teachers,” the order reads.

To implement the new system, teachers were asked to install the Kaizala app and mark attendance. Enabled with geo-fencing, the app would provide the exact location at which the selfie was clicked. The existing online attendance system could be manipulated, the state government says.

However, the teachers’ association has expressed concerns about downloading the app on personal phones. Gujarat State Primary Teachers’ Association president Jadeja said, “Due to security concerns, expressed espe-

## Human action will restore environment: Javadekar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

IF HUMAN actions have caused damage to the environment, human action can restore it, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said at the inauguration of the 12-day Conference of Parties (COP14) deliberations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on Monday.

“If human actions caused damage like climate change, degradation of land, and biodiversity destruction, (then) further human action, intelligence, intent and technology can also restore the land, ecology and environment,” Javadekar said.

India assumed the presidency of the COP14, taking the baton from China, which held the position for two years.

Javadekar said India would do whatever is needed to achieve sustainable development goals as well as the “focused vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s agenda of doubling farmers’ income by 2022”.

Javadekar and UNCCD Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw jointly inaugurated the COP14. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the conference and inaugurate the High Level Segment on September 9.



# Tension in UP village after 20-yr-old held for minor’s rape

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 2

TENSION PREVAILED in a village in Kasganj district after a seven-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her 20-year-old neighbour on Sunday afternoon.

The accused, who is unemployed, was arrested and produced in a court which sent him to judicial custody, said the SHO

of the police station where a case was registered.

Police said the incident took place when the minor was playing in a field where her parents were working. The accused allegedly took her to a nearby field and raped her, they said.

“The girl’s parents heard her screams and saw the accused running away. They took her to a hospital. The police were in-

formed later,” said another police officer.

Following a complaint by the girl’s father, an FIR for rape has been lodged under the relevant IPC section and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. The SHO said the medical examination report is awaited.

Police forces have been deployed in the village to avoid any law and order situation.

## UTTAR PRADESH

# Mentally challenged woman, youth lynched in separate incidents

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 2

A mentally-challenged woman and a youth were lynched in separate mob attacks in Sultanpur and Amethi districts of Uttar Pradesh on Saturday night.

According to sources, local residents in both cases have claimed that the assaults were triggered by the suspicion that the victims were child-lifters. Senior police officers have denied this.

In the Sultanpur incident, a 35-year-old unidentified mentally challenged woman was beaten up at Pero Sariya village in the early hours of Sunday.

While senior police officers said villagers assaulted the woman on the suspicion that she was a thief, it is learnt that local residents told the policemen who had gone to the spot that the mob suspected her to be a child-lifter.

Circle Officer Dalveer Singh said the woman reached Pero Sariya village on Saturday night and approached Mohammad Kayam’s residence. Kayam and with his family members, including his 10-year-old son, were sleeping outside. One of them saw the woman and raised an alarm. Others woke up and they started beating her up, said the CO.

Local residents, he said, joined in and assaulted the woman with sticks. By the time police reached, the woman had lost consciousness and was seriously injured. She was taken to the district hospital where she died Sunday evening, the CO said. A case of murder was lodged against 10 people.

Four persons, including Kayam, have been arrested, said

Sultanpur SP Himanshu Kumar. He said the local residents mistook the woman for a thief.

In Amethi, residents of Haripur village gathered after hearing rumours that a gang of child-lifters was trying to abduct a youth after he confronted them.

Villagers beat up the group with sticks, leaving one dead and seven others injured. Police resorted to lathicharge to bring the situation under control.

The deceased has been identified as Siyaram. Those injured were rushed to the district hospital. Among them, Ram Vachan and Raj Kumar, who were seriously injured, were referred to the Lucknow KGMU trauma centre.

SHO, Piparpur police station, Shyam Sunder, said a group of people were consuming liquor at a shop at Haripur around 5.30 pm on Sunday. They had been repairing electric poles nearby.

“At the liquor shop, one of them entered into an argument with a local youth Rakesh Singh over some issue. Rakesh hit the person and the latter’s colleagues hit him back,” said the SHO.

He said the group then dragged Rakesh into the three-wheeler in which they had arrived. “When villagers came to know about this, they chased the three-wheeler. They managed to intercept the vehicle at the neighbouring Amasi village and attacked all the eight people in the group. One of them, identified as Siyaram, died following the assault,” said Shyam Sunder.

Nine people have been arrested in connection with the case, said Amethi SP Khyati Garg. The SP denied claims that the assault was triggered by child-lifting rumours.

# Gujarat: SC/ST staff allege discrimination, I-T dept denies

*Ahmedabad:* Several Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) employees in the Income Tax Department in Gujarat have alleged discrimination, especially regarding transfers and postings.

The issue was raised at a press conference held in Ahmedabad Saturday by the SC/ST Uplift Union, where several aggrieved employees were present.

Hansaben Kuchara, who was transferred to Bhavnagar from Ahmedabad as per an order dated July 2, said that in the Saurashtra region, only Rajkot has the department’s official residential quarters. “If posted to any other place, we have to look for rented accommodation. This is a problem because the owner asks for our caste and when they realise we’re not upper caste, they refuse to rent out.. I’m still house-hunting (in Bhavnagar).”

The transfer and posting policy of grade B officer in Gujarat states, “Women officers generally shall be posted in the nearby stations or retained at the same station upon completion of their tenure... subject to administrative convenience.”

Another Ahmedabad-based employee, who did not wish to be identified, said, “In 2017, more than 15 women employees were due for a transfer. All were posted within a 50-km radius of their station, or were sent to a maximum distance of up to say Ahmedabad to Vadodara. This year, there was one SC/ST woman employee up for a transfer and she ended up being transferred to Bhavnagar.”

Denying the allegations, a top income tax official in Ahmedabad said on condition of anonymity, “She (Hansaben) had been orally asked if she would prefer Patan or Bhavnagar and she opted for the latter.. We definitely don’t look at the caste of our employees.” **ENS**

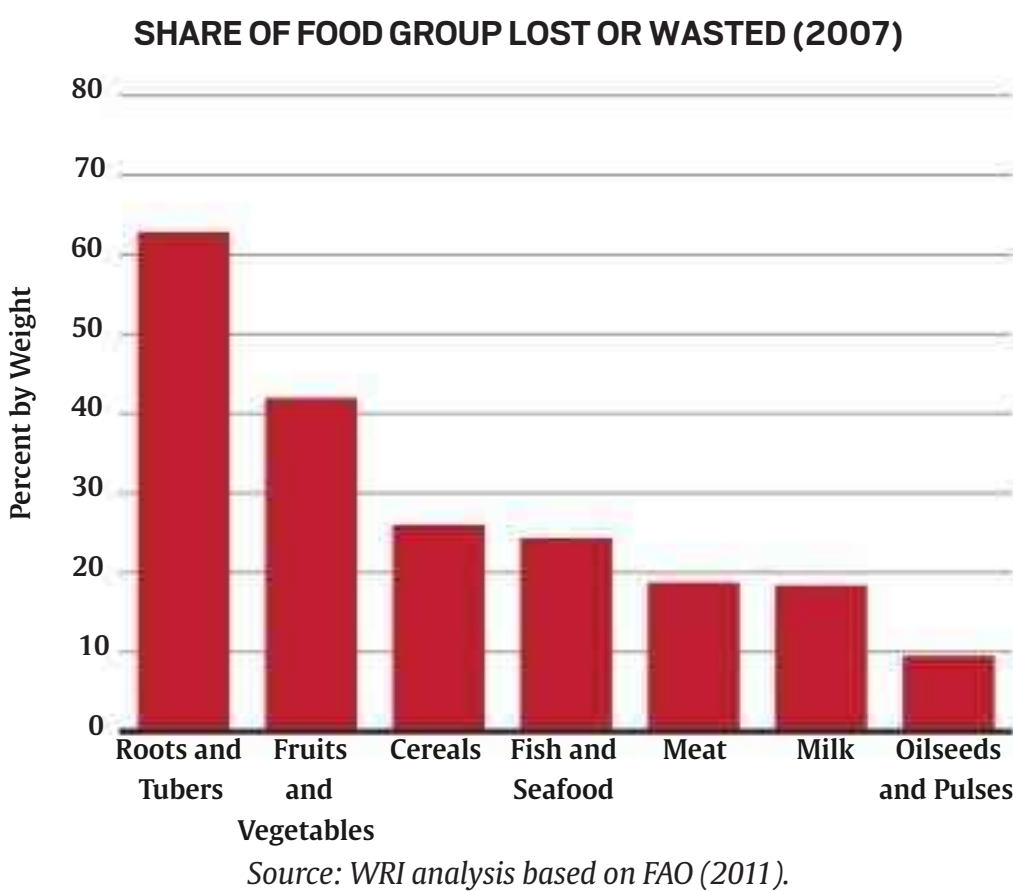
**FULL REPORT ON**  
**www.indianexpress.com**





## TELLING NUMBERS

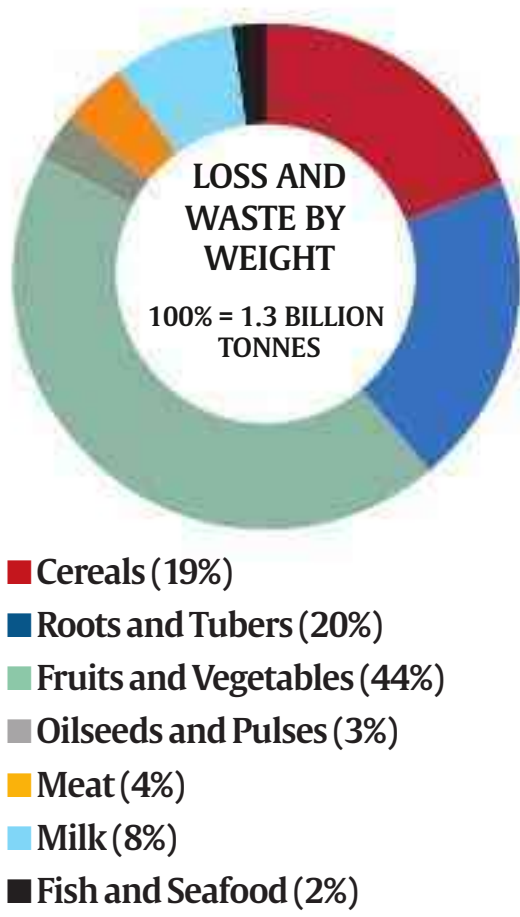
## The food we waste, and what it costs the global economy



A NEW report by the World Resources Institute (WRI) with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation has quantified global food wastage — nearly one-third of the food that is produced each year goes uneaten, costing the global economy over \$940 billion. The uneaten food is responsible for emitting about 8 per cent of planet-warming greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, said the report, “Reducing Food Loss and Waste”. It put forward a Global Action Agenda that calls on governments, companies, farmers and consumers to collectively overcome “the world’s food loss and waste problem.” Some of these actions include developing national strategies for food loss and waste reduction, creating national public-private partnerships, launch supply chain initiatives, reducing small-holder losses and shifting consumer social norms.

Referencing “numerous studies”, the report said most of the food loss happens “near the farm” predominantly in lower-income countries and most of the food waste happens “near the plate” predominantly in higher-income countries. Using data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, the report concluded that roots and tubers are the food group that face

SHARE OF GLOBAL FOOD LOSS



the maximum wastage, at over 62% for 2007. Fruits and vegetables follow, with over 41%. When viewed as a proportion, by weight, of all the food estimated to be lost and wasted globally, fruits and vegetables make up the largest share of total annual food loss and waste.

## THIS WORD MEANS

## CATEGORY 5 HURRICANE

Hurricane Dorian is one. How does US classify storms?

HURRICANE DORIAN struck the northern Bahamas on Monday, and is forecast to head for the Florida coast. One of the strongest Atlantic storms ever recorded, it has been classified as Category 5, the highest level in the classification system followed by the US National Hurricane Center. Category 5 involves wind speeds of 252 km/h or higher. The scale used to classify hurricanes is on the basis of wind speed (see chart). Called Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale, this is different from the “T scale” used in India to classify cyclonic storms.

While hurricanes and cyclones are both tropical storms, they get their names based on the location of their formation.

### THE CLASSIFICATION

Category 1	119-153 km/h
Category 2	164-177 km/h
Category 3	178-208 km/h
Category 4	209-251 km/h
Category 5	252 km/h or more

Hurricanes are essentially tropical cyclones that originate in the Atlantic basin, the eastern North Pacific Ocean and less frequently in the Central North Pacific, while cyclones are formed over the South Pacific and Indian Ocean. There is another name, typhoons, which is used for storms formed over the Northwest Pacific Ocean.

### UDIT MISRA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE CENTRAL Statistics Office (CSO) on Friday released the economic growth data for the first quarter (Q1, or April to June) of the current financial year (2019-20, or FY20). A disappointing number was widely expected, especially after the 5.8% growth in Q4 of FY19, and the wave of bad news such as falling sales of automobiles and everyday consumables — even so, the official GDP data of just 5% came as a shock to many.

### Real vs Nominal Growth

At 5%, the real GDP growth rate has hit a six-year low (see Chart 1). Real GDP growth rate is a derived figure — it is arrived at by subtracting the inflation rate from the nominal GDP growth rate, that is growth rate calculated at current prices. What is more worrying is the deceleration in the nominal GDP growth, which has been pegged at 8% for Q1. For perspective, it should be noted that the Union Budget, presented on July 5, had expected a nominal growth of 12%. The idea was that with a 12% nominal growth and 4% inflation rate, real GDP would be 8%.

At 8% nominal growth, all calculations — real GDP and tax revenues etc. — go haywire. An 8% nominal growth is unusually low; just once has nominal growth fallen to this level in both the current GDP series (with a base year of 2011-12) and the past GDP series (with the base year of 2004-05). And that was in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2009.

### GVA vs GDP

There are two main ways in which the CSO estimates economic growth. One is from the supply side — that is, by mapping the value-added (in rupee terms) by the various sectors in the economy. The sectors are broadly divided into Agriculture, Industry and Services, and all workers in the economy fall into one or the other category.

There are sub-categories too — Industry, for example, has Manufacturing, Construction, Mining & Quarrying, etc. When all the value-added is totalled, we get the Gross Value Added (GVA) in the economy. In other words, GVA tracks the income generated for all the workers in the economy.

The GDP is arrived at from the demand side. It is calculated by mapping the expenditure made by different categories of spenders. Broadly speaking, there are four sources of expenditure in an economy — namely, private consumption, government consumption, business investments, and net exports (exports minus imports). Because the GDP maps

### GDP GROWTH FALLS TO A SIX-YEAR LOW

Chart 1: GDP growth slowed for the fifth consecutive quarter

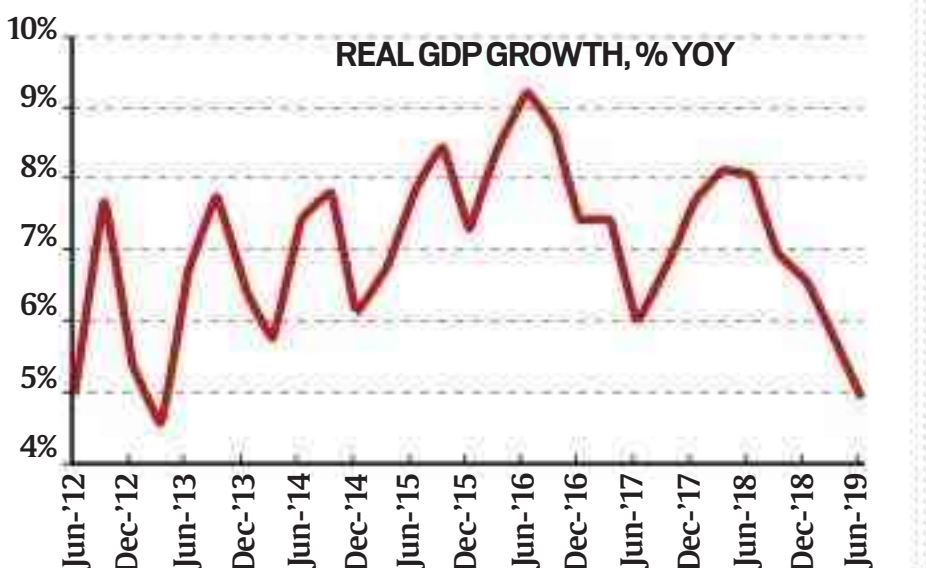


Chart 3: Private consumption and business investment demand have decelerated

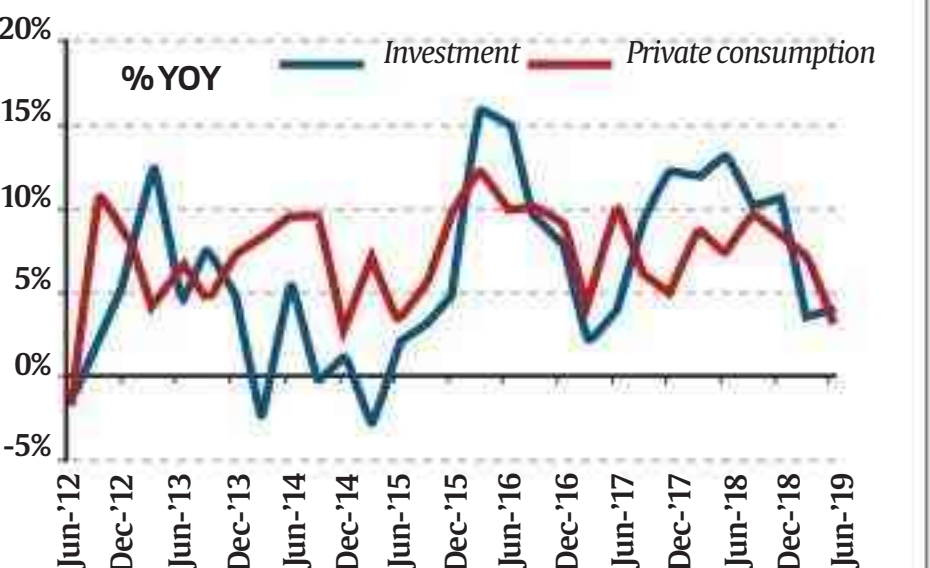


Chart 2: GVA Growth Rate by Economic Activity (%)

Sectors	FY19				FY20 Q1
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Agriculture	5.1	4.9	2.8	-0.1	2
Industry	9.8	6.7	7	4.2	2.7
Manufacturing	12.1	6.9	6.4	3.1	0.6
Services	7.1	7.3	7.2	8.4	6.9
Total GVA at Basic Price	7.7	6.9	6.3	5.7	4.9

Sources: ICICI Securities, SBI Research

final expenditure, it includes both taxes and subsidies that the government receives and gives. This component, net taxes, is the difference between GVA and GDP.

Typically, GDP is a good measure when you want to compare India with another economy, while GVA is better to compare different sectors within the economy. GVA is more important when looking at quarterly growth data, because quarterly GDP is arrived at by apportioning the observed GVA data into different spender categories.

### The supply-side story

The GVA in Q1 is pegged at 4.9%. Such a low level of GVA suggests that producers are not adding enough value — in other words, their income growth is low.

As Chart 2 shows, growth in all three sectors has declined, but most of the decline is in Agriculture and Industry. Within Industry, Manufacturing has seen a spectacular collapse. Other sub-sectors of Industry such as Mining & Quarrying and Construction too, have slumped over the past five quarters.

These two sectors — Agriculture and Industry — not only employ the largest number of people, but also have the maximum potential to create new jobs. Stagnant Agriculture and Industry imply that a bulk India’s poorest and less educated workforce is either not getting jobs, or not seeing their incomes grow. And they can’t shift to the better-paying Services sector because of the deficiency in skills.

### The demand-side story

The GVA weakness shows up on the demand side (Chart 3). Private consumption, which accounts for over 55% of GDP, has grown by just 3.14%. The reason why private demand has collapsed is that the bulk of India’s labour force is not earning enough to spend more.

The other big GDP component — business investments (which accounts for 32% of GDP) — has grown by just 4.04%. Businesses are not investing because they are either in the process of deleveraging (getting rid of excess loans) or stuck with unsold inventories.

The only spender that has grown better than expected is the government.

# Why probe ordered against Ajit Pawar, others

### PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS

PUNE, SEPTEMBER 2

ON AUGUST 22, a two-judge Bench of Justices S C Dharmadhikari and Sandeep K Shinde of the Bombay High Court ordered the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai Police to register an FIR against the 44 erstwhile directors of the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank for their alleged role in the various irregularities in sanctioning of loans and financial dealings. The list includes political leaders including former Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar of the NCP and Jayant Patil (PWP).

The order came on a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Mumbai resident Surinder Arora in 2015. Arora had cited a 2009-10 annual inspection report by NABARD, an inquiry report of the Commissioner of Cooperation and the internal audit report of the bank, all of which talked of irregularities and connivance of the then board of directors in extending loans to cooperative sugar mills, spinning mills and

other agri based businesses.

### Why the bank is important

MSC Bank is the state’s apex cooperative bank. Its primary function is to re-finance district central cooperative banks (DCCBs) that extend agricultural credit to farmers. It also extends capital to the agri- processing units like sugar mills, spinning mills, food processing units etc. The RBI is the bank’s regulator with NABARD conducting yearly financial inspection.

Before it was dismissed, the bank was run by a board of directors who were elected from district-level cooperative bodies. The last board had 44 directors and a majority of them were elected representatives from the then ruling NCP-Congress. Leaders from other parties also had representation on the board. Since 2011, the bank is run by a board of administrator appointed by the state government.



Ajit Pawar

As of March 31, 2019, the net worth of the bank is pegged at Rs 2,689.89 crore and it has savings worth Rs 15,839.87 crore. The total loan portfolio in the last financial year stood Rs 19,599.54 crore, and the bank reported a net profit of Rs 251.35 crore.

### The alleged irregularities

On May 4, 2011 the RBI suspended the then board of directors and appoint administrators instead. This decision was taken in view of the inadequacies observed by NABARD during its 2009-10 annual inspection report and the abnormally high nonperforming assets of 31.2 per cent. The board of directors had denied all allegations of wrongdoing, and the dismissal started a war of words between NCP and Congress with each accusing the other.

In their 84-page judgment, the judges quoted from the NABARD report on shortfall

in provisioning for NPAs, and high level of NPAs. The report had accused the board of directors of not taking discernible action for recovery in 86 cases worth Rs 2806.9 crore registered under the SARFAESI Act, 2002. It talked about the bank continuing to violate norms for providing loans, and said loans worth Rs 297.14 crore were sanctioned to eight cooperative sugar mills without securing collateral and government guarantee.

Following Arora’s PIL, the court asked the EOW to look into the complaint. On August 22, the court pulled up the EOW deputy commissioner for failure to file an FIR.

### Why it matters politically

The FIR comes at a time when the state gears up to elect a new Assembly. For the NCP, the order is yet another blow as Pawar is one of its senior-most leaders. The BJP and Shiv Sena are likely to target the NCP-Congress over alleged corruption. In fact, some NCP leaders named in the FIR, such as Vijayasingh Mohite Patil, have since joined BJP, while others such as Dilip Sopal have joined the Shiv Sena.

# Was Enid Blyton racist and sexist? Royal Mint thinks so, scholars debate

### NEHA BANKA

KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 2

THE UK Royal Mint has blocked plans for unveiling a 50-pence coin commemorating children’s author Enid Blyton, British media reported. The Mint reportedly felt that featuring her on the coin would result in a backlash due to her “racist, sexist and homophobic views”, and that she was “not a well-regarded writer”.

### What is the coin about?

The coin had been scheduled for a November release to mark 50 years since the death of Blyton, whose books include ‘The Famous Five’, ‘Noddy’ and other series and have been popular with children in the Commonwealth countries.

A spokesperson for the Royal Mint, who did not wish to be named, told *The Indian*

*Express* that events, anniversaries and themes are commemorated each year. “To create a fair shortlist each proposal is subject to a rigorous planning and design selection process governed by an independent panel known as the Royal Mint Advisory Committee (RMAC),” the spokesperson said.

### What led to its decision not to do so?

The spokesperson said the final decision is taken not by the Royal Mint itself but by the Committee, which includes experts in various fields. *The Mail on Sunday* reported that the Committee’s remarks on Blyton were the result of a request under the Freedom of Information Act to see minutes from the committee meetings. *The Mint* spokesperson declined to make additional comments on the decision.

### Why has Blyton faced criticism?

Blyton (1897-1968) wrote over 700



Enid Blyton (1897-1968), [enidblyton.co.uk](http://enidblyton.co.uk)

books and 4,500 short stories and faced very little criticism during her early years. It was only after World War II that she began

facing adverse criticism.

British researcher David Rudd wrote in a 1997 thesis that a lot of the criticism against Blyton has been misplaced because “popular books are meant to be popular because they have the qualities that are liked by children at a certain age”. Andrew Maunders, professor at the University of Hertfordshire, who is currently researching Blyton’s work, told *The Indian Express*: “Adults and children do read her books differently but that doesn’t mean her books are any better. (The criticism) pops up because Enid Blyton was a woman of her time and people were casually and thoughtlessly racist in Britain in the 1940s and 1950s — and later. She is one of them.”

### What was racist about her writings?

One of the characters that commonly feature in Blyton’s works is the ‘golliwog’. A 1984 op-ed in *The Guardian* said: “There is not much doubt in my mind that the

golliwog...with its goggle eyes, spiky hair, and banana lips is in fact a distorted representation of a black person.” Maunders said: “The use of the golliwog is racist now and I think it was then. Blyton was a supporter of the British Empire and her representations of non-white people is coloured by that. It’s impossible to get away from it.”

In later editions of Blyton’s books, the golliwogs were replaced with goblins.

### What was homophobic and sexist about her writings?

Not everyone agrees with accusations of homophobia and sexism. George (given name Georgina) from ‘The Famous Five’ series shuns traditional gender constructs — from the way she chooses to dress to how she views her abilities in comparison with the boys in the group. “I don’t think (Blyton) can be described as sexist. George in ‘The Famous Five’ and the girls at ‘Malory

Towers’ were very sparky and some of the boys seemed feeble by comparison. I also don’t get homophobic,” literary biographer Laura Thompson told *The Mail on Sunday*.

In his paper, Rudd writes that Blyton’s characters and their relationships are often misinterpreted in a haste to denounce the author. Rudd notes that Noddy’s relationship with others in Toyland is given sexual connotations when it isn’t necessarily so, or even perceived to be so by children.

### Why did the Royal Mint feel she is not a ‘very well-regarded’ author?

Despite the sale of 600 million books and international recognition, she did not have much standing as an author in English literature. “Blyton seems to have been very popular overseas... For many children she seems to have presented an attractive vision of England — picnics and adventures,” Maunders said.

Longer report: [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)





# THE PAK MUDDLE

On Kashmir, Islamabad blows hot and cold. New Delhi must keep watch, its responses are still evolving

EVER SINCE THE government took the decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, the plethora of responses from the Pakistani leadership has shown up the confusion at the top in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Pakistan's effort has been to "internationalise" the Kashmir issue, and to an extent, it has succeeded. In four short weeks, Kashmir has been the subject of a "closed door" discussion at the UN Security Council and drawn renewed interest from the international press. It has caught the attention of US President Donald Trump and lawmakers in the US, UK and EU. This month, there is every likelihood of a discussion in other UN fora such as the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. But the problem for Pakistan and PM Imran Khan is that most foreign governments still seem to take Delhi's side when they say it is a bilateral issue — there seems to be no pressure on the Modi government from any foreign capital to talk to Pakistan, nor has any government challenged India's position that the August 5 decisions are "internal". Except for Turkey, no OIC member has rushed to support Pakistan. Even the Taliban were cut to the quick when Pakistan linked the developments in Kashmir to the Afghan talks. The spectre of a nuclear holocaust, drawn by the Pakistan PM in an oped in a venerable US newspaper, has neither shaken nor stirred world leaders. His exhortation to all Pakistanis to stand still for 30 minutes every Friday in support of Kashmiris has only provided comic relief.

In fact, Pakistan's responses appear aimed more at the domestic audience, three generations of which have been nurtured on the rhetoric of Kashmir as the country's "jugular vein". Imran Khan is desperate to show his voters that he is doing something, that his government has not abandoned the issue. But for all the sabre rattling, both the civilian and military leadership of that country know only too well that confrontation over Kashmir is not an option. Pakistan's economy is tanking and its only hope is life support from the IMF. It is only too aware of the possible consequences of unleashing the jihadi *tanzeem* from its side — not just the international retribution it might attract, but also, post-Balakot, the unpredictability of India's response.

A realistic assessment of its situation may be one reason why Pakistan has blown cold after blowing hot. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi rushed to clarify that war with India was not an option, and declared Pakistan ready for conditional talks with India. Pakistan also overcame its hostility enough to provide, as directed by the International Court of Justice, unconditional consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav, the former Indian Navy officer in its custody. But it would be a mistake to read these as signs of Pakistan's acceptance of the "new normal" set by India in Kashmir. Pakistan's responses are still evolving, and much will depend on how the situation develops in Kashmir over the coming weeks.

# UNDUE PROCESS

JNU's pettifoggery over Romila Thapar's fitness to remain professor emerita makes its administration a laughing stock

THE AUTHORITIES OF Jawaharlal Nehru University have caught the withering gaze of the academic community by calling for the CV of Romila Thapar, professor emerita, premier historian of ancient India and a student of AL Basham, to evaluate if she is competent to retain the honour. There are two absurdities here. First, Thapar's CV is on the university's own website and if the administration were to lose its way online, Google would be an infallible friend. And second, it is unlikely that anyone in the administration has the credentials to evaluate Thapar.

This exercise is apparently in pursuance of a 2018 ordinance which specified periodic revaluations. But that is illogical, and betrays the administration's ignorance about the term "emeritus", whose meaning in academic use has been clear from 1794 — the conferment of an honour for past achievements. These, being in the past, cannot have changed — unless the university has acquired the capacity to warp time by science fiction — and therefore revaluation would be a pointless exercise. Besides, such positions are seen as recognition of status, and no obligations adhere either to the university conferring it, or the recipient. Revaluation would have meaning in examining a contract, under which service levels may be gauged. However, in the case of professors emeritus, no such contract exists. Apart from such absurdities, in the matter of the supposed revaluation of Thapar, the change in the rules made last year is being imposed retrospectively.

The university has argued that it is simply following due process. How egregiously diligent of them, when due process is getting short shrift in so many vital matters in the public sphere, in JNU and outside it. Romila Thapar may be right in assuming that while her relations with the university may remain unaffected at the end of the process, the process itself would be the punishment, inflicting "dishonour" upon one of the leading lights of the institution who has been vocally critical of its functioning in recent years. She is also correct in assuming that even if she were declared unfit by JNU, it would in no way harm her standing. On the contrary, one of India's most prestigious institutions would stand much diminished in the eyes of the world. With its administration's stunted understanding of academics and its willingness to play petty politics, it would be the laughing stock of the world of learning.

# TO BAWA SIR, WITH LOVE

Marzban Patel has helped many players to fall head over heels in love with hockey

THERE IS A short, charming video, from five years ago, of a straight-shooting Marzban Patel, lovingly called "Bawa sir", who is also this year's recipient of the Dronacharya award for coaching young hockey players and producing at least 30 internationals and six Olympians. Asked about his record, a nonplussed Patel says, "normal feeling hai. If four players played for India, there are more who don't make it. No need to be happy or to celebrate. It's part of training." He goes on to lament the lack of focus at the grassroots, and talks about how the education system in the country is "bakwaas", useless, as teachers and parents don't encourage children to play.

It is in this milieu, where hockey is seen as an endangered sport, that Patel has spotted, nurtured and produced quality players with his labour of love. His tribe is fading in the soulless world of academies where some sportstars lend their names to establishments for money but hardly ever invest their own time, labour and commitment to them. No wonder, gratitude-filled tributes have poured in from the likes of Viren Rasquinha to Valmiki for Patel. Memories abound, of how he convinced everyone involved to let a 14-year old Viren Rasquinha play with the adults — a move that changed his career. How he changed the minds of the initially-reluctant parents of Suraj Karkera, currently playing for India.

Not many who have trained with him remember him wielding a hockey stick. His speciality was in spotting talent and in conveying the love of the game to the young players and ensuring they engaged with it long enough for them to fall head over heels in love with the sport. He believes coaching can't be restricted to just imparting game skills, but its success lies in how a coach can affect the sporting ecosystem itself. He has built relationships with parents, convincing the stubborn ones to let their kids play. His philosophy is of total commitment, of a kind rarely seen nowadays. He would cajole, scold, inspire the players and somewhere down the line, their awe and respect would be replaced with love and gratitude.



SUN WEIDONG

RECENTLY, THE SITUATION in China's Hong Kong has drawn much attention. What happened in Hong Kong? Who caused the current situation there? What is China's position and attitude? I would like to take this opportunity to share the truth and China's views.

First, as protests in Hong Kong have descended into violent acts, the top priority is to stop the violence and chaos, and restore order in accordance with law. Over the past two months, Hong Kong saw continued illegal protests, which have become more and more aggressive and descended into extreme violence. This is by no means a matter of democracy or freedom. The aggressiveness and destructiveness of these acts are shocking.

Radical protesters attacked official institutions. They stormed the Hong Kong Legislative Council building, tore up copies of the Basic Law and defaced the regional emblem of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). They besieged the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in HKSAR and defaced China's national emblem. They repeatedly removed China's national flag from the flagpole and threw it into the sea. Radicals have staged multiple violent assaults against the police. They attacked police with toxic liquids and powders and bit off one officer's finger. They hurled petrol bombs at police at various locations. A dozen police officers were injured and sent to hospital. What is even more horrifying is that on the evening of August 30, three masked men hacked a Hong Kong police officer with a knife, leaving him with bone-deep wounds. Radical protesters have assaulted citizens, bound up and attacked one reporter from the mainland, vandalised shops and hurled petrol bombs. These atrocities, which are still escalating with extreme hazards and cruelty, defy laws both human and divine, and cannot be tolerated by any civilised society.

Second, behind the demonstrations is the interference and instigation by some countries. External meddling in Hong Kong must cease. If one looks for the source of the violent acts, it can be found that rushing at the front are radical protesters, behind the scenes

China has strong resolve and confidence to maintain Hong Kong's prosperity and stability

In the 22 years since its return to China, and with the support of the central government, Hong Kong's economic output has doubled and its global rule of law ranking jumped from below 60th to 16th. Hong Kong's status as international financial, shipping and trade centre has been consolidated. It has been recognised by many international institutions as one of the world's most free economies and most competitive regions. Maintaining the rule of law, stability and prosperity of Hong Kong is in line with the common interests of all parties. I believe that all our fair-minded Indian friends would like to see Hong Kong put an end to violence.

are "anti-China" forces inside and outside Hong Kong who scheme to destabilise the city. These people colluded with each other in an organised and premeditated attempt to create social unrest in Hong Kong. Some external forces have played a very disgraceful role in this regard. Instead of condemning the recent violent crimes in Hong Kong, some Western politicians criticised the HKSAR government for stopping the violence and chaos and restoring order in accordance with the law, defaming China's social system and internal and external policies.

The diplomatic agencies of some countries in Hong Kong support radicals by providing guidance and funding to them secretly or in public. Some Western media follow suit — they distort facts and paper over violence, advocating that "violence is the only solution to problems". They blame the Hong Kong police, who uphold public order, for "excessive law enforcement", but turn a blind eye to the atrocities committed by radicals against the police. With such double standards, how could equity and justice be upheld?

Third, what's happening in Hong Kong is purely China's internal affair. Any attempt to endanger China's sovereignty and security is absolutely impermissible. On July 1, 1997, China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong and Hong Kong returned to the embrace of the motherland. Hong Kong is a part of China. The Chinese government exercises jurisdiction over Hong Kong according to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of the HKSAR. Hong Kong affairs are purely China's internal affairs. This is a fact recognised internationally. All governments in the world recognise China's sovereignty over Hong Kong. There is no sovereignty issue over Hong Kong at all.

Hong Kong implements the policy of "One country, Two systems". What needs to be highlighted is that "One country, Two systems" should be understood and implemented as a whole. When talking about "Two systems", one must not forget that "One country" is the fundamental premise. In implementing "One country, Two systems", any attempt to endanger China's sovereignty and security, to challenge the power of the cen-

tral government and the authority of the Basic Law, or to use Hong Kong to carry out infiltration and sabotage activities against the mainland is absolutely impermissible.

Fourth, the central government of China has the strong resolve and confidence to maintain Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. Hong Kong is known for its openness, prosperity and law and order. In the 22 years since its return to China, and with the support of the central government, Hong Kong's economic output has doubled and its global rule of law ranking jumped from below 60th to 16th. Hong Kong's status as an international financial, shipping and trade centre has been consolidated. It has been recognised by many international institutions as one of the world's most free economies and most competitive regions. Maintaining the rule of law, stability and prosperity of Hong Kong is in line with the common interests of all parties. I believe that all our fair-minded Indian friends would like to see Hong Kong put an end to violence, curb chaos and restore order.

Lessons from history tell us that so-called democracy and freedom without rule of law and order only lead to anarchism and social disorder. The people of Hong Kong can no longer bear the current grim situation and have spoken with righteous voices "anti-violence, seeking stability". What Hong Kong needs most today is to stop the violence and chaos, advocate the rule of law, restore order and punish violent activities.

The central government of China will continue to firmly support Chief Executive Carrie Lam in leading the Hong Kong government's administration according to the law, firmly support the Hong Kong police in strictly enforcing the law, and firmly support Hong Kong's prosperity and development. I hope and believe that the people of Hong Kong and the HKSAR government can work together to stop violence and chaos, resolutely resist foreign interference and restore and maintain the rule of law in Hong Kong as soon as possible.

The writer is the Chinese Ambassador to India



SHIVANI NAIK

HAD PV SINDHU — or Saina Nehwal before her — settled for merely equalling the stupendous feats of Prakash Padukone (1980) and Pullela Gopichand (2001) at All England, India would never have had three silvers (2015, 2017, 2018) and one precious gold (2019) at the Badminton World Championships. Keeping men as the benchmark has its obvious limitations in sport, as in life: Sometimes, when the moon is there for the taking, why go chasing after twinkling stars?

The All England still has its charm — the Chinese still covet it and both these Indian women are yet to win it. However, both Saina and Sindhu were prodded, by the same two gentlemen in fact, to aim for what is now considered the pinnacle in the sport, the World Championships.

Of course, that was well after the women themselves had made up their minds to let their ambition be unfettered and limitless. After all, why restrict your career goals to just bettering the best from India — which happened to be the two men in singles?

And so, they aimed obsessively for the biggest crowns, this grand pursuit giving India some rousing sporting memories: Saina scything through the game of Danish All England champ Tine Baun on way to her Olympic bronze at London 2012. Sindhu scuttling every Chinese attempt that came in her path, and her glorious final matches at the World Championships — one won, some lost — since 2016 and Saina's defiance against

# SMASHING GENDER BIAS

PV Sindhu, Saina Nehwal are tracing their own paths, not chasing male records

Sindhu and Saina had to swim in uncharted waters when they played those big finals. They had to control their fraying nerves and maintain their poise in order to win big: And Sindhu did it marvellously last week, becoming the World Champion. But neither she, nor Saina who won India's first Worlds silver in 2015 — nor the doubles pair of Jwala Gutta-Ashwini Ponappa who won bronze in 2011 — allowed the occasion to get to their heads.

younger opponents while making the finals of the All England and World's in 2015.

None of these forays (into World Championship finals) had any precedent amongst Indian men. Padukone, who won a Worlds bronze in 1983, was a trailblazer in figuring out the first steps internationally for Indian men. And Gopichand fought against his rotten luck with injuries, putting in a massive effort into winning his All England crown before the knee gave out.

Sindhu and Saina had this past to turn to but they still had to swim in uncharted waters when they played those big finals. They had to control their fraying nerves and maintain their poise in order to win big: And Sindhu did it marvellously last week, becoming the World Champion.

But neither she, nor Saina who won India's first World's silver in 2015 — nor the doubles pair of Jwala Gutta-Ashwini Ponappa who won bronze in 2011 — allowed the occasion to get to their heads. They have eight of India's 10 World Championship medals to show for their incredible tenacity.

As a sport, badminton is equitable. Equal pay has existed for as long as one remembers in the sport — the prize money is always equally distributed between men and women. This isn't just a function of how both men and women play the best of three punishing sets. Badminton's equal pay is also a function of a distinctly Asian value system, given the sport's predominance in the eastern hemisphere: Pay is proportional to hard

labour. There is minimal interference of the markets or popularity when it comes to determining one's earnings.

At their sporting zenith, first Indonesia and then, China, had iconic female champions — Susi Susanti and Zhang Ning — matching the feats of their male compatriots effortlessly. The first challenge to the Chinese juggernaut a decade ago in women's singles was mounted by Mew Choo Wong from Malaysia. Women like Mia Audina and now, Carolina Marin, have been pioneers for the sport in their respective countries as well.

At a starry gathering of legends — Lin Dan, Lee Chong Wei, Peter Gade and Taufik Hidayat — in a Mumbai five-star hotel a few years back, the quartet were left fielding questions on whether men's singles had become too uni-dimensional and... umm... boring, when compared to the burst of talent and sheer variety in styles in women's singles.

In the context of these developments worldwide, it is little wonder that Sindhu and Saina have become badminton's biggest names in India. One can go on about when this duo will bring back the All England crown. With Sindhu's form and game, such a prospect seems inevitable. But, Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu have always known better than to measure their sporting arcs against male achievements. Why trot towards equality with men when you can gallop away to further greatness?

shivani.naik@expressindia.com

# SEPTEMBER 3, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

## HAVANA SUMMIT STARTS

HAVANA IS THE scene of frenetic activity, welcome signs and rousing slogans as the non-aligned summit, which has grown to 96 nations with the admission of Pakistan, Iran, Nicaragua and others, gets under way. Foreign ministers are struggling to hammer out consensus that will satisfy conflicting views, interests and orientations. Fifty to 60 heads of state are expected to attend. India, which played a major role since NAM's inception as founder member is handicapped because while the rest of the Subcontinent is represented by heads of government, it is represented at only the foreign ministerial level, and that too by a government whose

future is uncertain.

## NO FREE LUNCH

DID RAJ NARAIN seek a golden railway pass for himself to be able to travel anywhere in the country, first-class or air-conditioned? "The newspaper that has started that slander is a liar", Narain retorted angrily in response to a reporter's query. But did he seek such a pass for a well-known tantra expert, P N Kapur? Narain did not reply directly but clearly implied that he had, in fact, helped Kapur in having the pass renewed. "The pass was first issued to this person during Mrs Gandhi's rule, by the then railway minister, Kamalapati Tripathi", Narain clarified.

## THE RSS QUESTION

THE RSS ISSUE, which continues to be a point of contention between top leaders of the Janata Party, dominated the second day's debate at the Janata national executive with the former commerce minister, Mohan Dharia, insisting on resolving the issue "here and now". The executive, however, did not reject out of hand the suggestion of Jagjivan Ram that the party president, Chandra Shekhar, should be allowed to handle the issue. Ram, in his opening remarks at the executive, said that the party had gained public sympathy after the President's refusal to let it form the government. This was in sharp contrast to the public criticism of the party in July.







CR Sasikumar

# Centre must loosen purse strings

Direct stimulus is needed, measures announced by government are unlikely to prop up growth immediately



MADAN SABNAVIS

THERE IS A sense of déjà vu with a difference, with the government going in for a series of announcements to reinvigorate the economy over the last couple of weeks. The first set of announcements came against the backdrop of mis-governance of the earlier regime. This time around, it is an acknowledgment that something is amiss in the economy with GDP growth for the first quarter of 2019-20 slipping to a six-year low of 5 per cent. While economists are debating whether the current slowdown is cyclical or structural, the fact is that jobs are not being created. Consumption is not picking up and companies are not investing like they used to. This has been the trend since demonetisation in 2016.

Growth, across sectors, barring electricity and the government, has been less than 8 per cent, and less than last year. Manufacturing, in particular, has grown by just 0.6 per cent in the first quarter, and while the high base effect of 12.1 per cent last year provides some comfort, the fact is that there is evidence of a washout in the auto segment with large job losses reported and with India Inc's sales at around 4-5 per cent in the first quarter. In 2017, low growth was attributed to GST, which led to destocking and hence, lower production. This time, it is structural in nature, with the demand side dominating.

The trade and transport as well as finance and real estate sectors have also witnessed lower growth in the first quarter at 7.1 per cent and 5.9 per cent respectively. In the case of the former, lower economic activity has resulted in slower growth, while the latter still hides the major restructuring that is required. While public sector banks appear to be out of the NPA conundrum, the NBFCs, which have been a major financier of small and medium enterprises, infrastructure and housing sectors, have witnessed a setback. This has been a work in progress for almost a year now with banks not so willing to lend.

Growth in construction has also slowed down from 9.6 per cent in the first quarter last year to 5.7 per cent this year with limited ac-

tivity seen only in segments such as roads, where the central government is involved. The private sector is still cautious in investing, as evident in the slight dip in the gross fixed capital formation ratio from 30 per cent of GDP in Q1 2018-19 to 29.7 per cent in Q1 2019-20.

The reason for the slowdown is more on the demand side. Households are not spending as employment generation has been limited and incomes have not been rising. The rural economy has been buffeted in the last three years by demonetisation and lower price realisation due to good harvests. It remains to be seen whether prices will firm up at the time of the kharif harvest. The auto and consumer durable segments have been affected the most on this score as the propensity to spend tends to be higher in rural areas, especially during the harvest season which coincides with the festival season. The sectors that have been doing relatively better are cement and steel, where expenditure is government linked, and segments such as housing, e-commerce and retail. However, the real estate segment has been under pressure with the NBFC route of financing being severed.

In this situation, there has been little incentive for industry to invest as reflected in the dip in fixed capital formation. Investment has been scattered and concentrated more in sectors like power, natural resources and metals — a part of which is coming from public sector enterprises.

The solution so far has been for the government to nudge the RBI to lower interest rates. But the impact has been limited as companies don't borrow just because rates come down. There needs to be a reason for fresh investment in terms of prospects, and more importantly, there has to be demand. The housing segment has benefited to an extent as home buyers are better off. However, even a 50 bps reduction in home loan costs cannot on its own prop up demand as the repayment capacity of the borrower has to be there, which is dependent on growth in incomes.

It is only appropriate that the government, in the last fortnight or so, has come up with a series of policy announcements and there are indications of another round of reforms in the coming weeks, probably pertaining to the real estate sector. From more general announcements involving the reversal of some financially onerous measures announced during the budget and an attempt to revive the auto sector, the policies have focused on foreign direct investment and the banking sector.

How is one to read all these steps? The first package was more in terms of fostering oper-

The solution so far has been for the government to nudge the RBI to keep lowering interest rates. But the impact has been limited as companies don't borrow just because rates come down. There needs to be a reason for fresh investment in terms of prospects and more importantly there has to be demand. The housing segment has benefited to an extent as home buyers are better off. However, even a 50 bps reduction in home loan cost cannot on its own prop up demand as the repayment capacity of the borrower has to be there which is dependent on growth in incomes.

ational convenience — reversal of the surcharge on FPIs and revisiting the clause relating to angel investors. SME payments are to be streamlined with a one-time settlement plan in place and the government is to ensure that it makes its payments on time for projects (over Rs 40,000 crore is stuck in the pipeline). Banks have been given Rs 70,000 crore through recapitalisation (this was already in the budget through recap bonds which was anyway fiscal neutral), and structures have been created for the corporate bond market. While the auto sector is to get some relief on depreciation on vehicles and the government has clarified on the validity of registration on Bharat IV vehicles, the government will now be buying new vehicles, which was barred earlier. But, the question is whether the government has more money to spend given its tight budget. The stocks of auto companies have not been enthused.

The FDI rules now give single brand more breathing space in terms of local procurement and setting up of physical structures. Also, 100 per cent FDI through the automatic route in coal mining and related activities has been permitted as has 26 per cent FDI under the government route for uploading/streaming of news and current affairs in digital media. However, these rules take time to work out and one does not expect to see a flurry of capital flows.

Lastly, the big bank-merger plan announced on August 30 is progressive. But, it may not really add much on the credit side as the amount of capital to be provided remains unchanged and only the bank names would change. While governance standards will change, there will still be a reluctance to lend to risky projects. Therefore, while there will be fewer public sector banks, the mindset will not change. Besides, in the present environment, liquidity is less of an issue compared to the willingness to lend, given the credit risk profile of India Inc.

What is definitely missing from the policies announced so far is a direct stimulus in terms of financial outlays from the Centre. This is critical, as the problem is deep on the demand side. Making "doing business" easier is a positive, and creating mega PSBs a progressive step. But this cannot change the 5 per cent growth number immediately. Money has to be spent and a fiscal compromise is required. Or else, we will continue to walk the path of gradual upward movement.

The writer is chief economist, CARE Ratings. Views are personal

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Boris Johnson's experience as the face of Vote Leave has taught him how to turn outrage into political energy. Since taking office, his administration has leaked the idea that it is prepared to do the constitutionally shocking to deliver Brexit."

— THE GUARDIAN

# Reaching out to Europe

New Delhi's diplomacy in the last week indicates its break from the past and willingness for a more productive engagement with Brussels



RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's visit to Biarritz on the Atlantic coast of France late last month to join the G-7 leaders as a special guest of President Emmanuel Macron and his travels to Vladivostok on Russia's Pacific coast for a meeting with the Russian President Vladimir Putin this week helps frame the growing importance of Eurasia for India's changing geopolitics. The Modi government is unwilling to buy the proposition that the tension between the concepts of Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific is real. Russians and Chinese establishments see the "Indo-Pacific" as an effort to contain China. The Americans believe the promotion of "Eurasia" is about a Sino-Russian design to marginalise the US in the continental space.

Located at the crossroads of Asia and at the heart of the Indian Ocean, India sees itself as a maritime power in the Indo-Pacific with big interests in continental Eurasia. Delhi may find Europe is the right partner in overcoming the presumed tension between the two concepts. In his bilateral talks with Macron last month, Modi highlighted the importance of India's new alliance with France, by coining a characteristic acronym, IN-FRA, that might be critical for India in both the maritime and continental domains.

Meanwhile, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Moscow, Budapest, Warsaw and Brussels in the last few days may have laid the basis for thinking more strategically about Europe. Jaishankar's visit should also elevate Central Europe in the list of India's diplomatic priorities.

In deepening its partnership with Europe, Delhi can overcome some of the recent challenges that have emerged in the conduct of its foreign policy. First is the Russian question. If the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the integration of Russia into the global order opened up enormous geopolitical space for India after 1991, renewed tensions between Russia and the West have begun to shrink Delhi's room for manoeuvre.

Macron is leading a new effort, very welcome in Delhi, to ease the conflict between Russia and the West. He has the strong backing of US President Donald Trump, who has made the public case for bringing Russia back into the collective "Western" forums such as the G-7. Russia was suspended from the G8 forum after its intervention in Ukraine in 2014. France and Germany are planning to make a fresh bid to resolve the European stand-off with Russia on Ukraine.

Paris is not the only one eager for a reconciliation with Russia; Tokyo is even more enthusiastic. When he arrives at the annual summit of the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok this week, Modi will run into his friend and partner, Shinzo Abe. The Japanese prime minister has attended the

Forum since it was launched in 2015. Abe has consistently sought to resolve the long-standing territorial dispute with Russia and make Moscow a partner in the Japanese strategy for the Indo-Pacific. No country has a higher stake than India in seeing a rapprochement between Russia and its European neighbours in the west and Japan in the east.

Second, as it seeks to address the current contradictions in Eurasia, France is eager to work with India in developing new coalitions to stabilise the Indo-Pacific. France, a resident power in the Indo-Pacific, is eager work with India, Japan, Australia and other nations to prevent the littoral from becoming a hostage to the vagaries of US-China relations.

Third is the problem of US-China tensions over trade that is affecting all major nations, including India. Delhi has good reasons to support the initiative by France, Japan and others to save the global trading system through much needed reforms to make it work for all nations. In the past, India's preference was to forge coalitions like the G-77 that have long ceased to be effective. Working with Europe and Japan, however, might lend greater weight and credence to India's trade diplomacy.

Fourth, India has a strong interest in joining the so-called "Alliance for Multilateralism" — a German initiative backed by France — that calls for modernising international institutions, strengthening the rules-based order and promoting global, rather than national, solutions to global challenges. It does not include the US, Russia and China, but is drawing many middle powers like Japan and Canada in the developed world and South Africa in the developing world.

The alliance is set to be launched later this month on the margins of the annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York. India, which is already working with France in promoting the International Solar Alliance, may find the Alliance for Multilateralism useful in reinforcing its new international initiatives such as cooperation on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief that Modi is expected to announce in his address to the UN.

Last, but not least, there is room for expansive cooperation between India and the Central European states. In sticking to its traditional method of engaging Europe through big powers, India has neglected the enormous possibilities for mutual enrichment with other European states as well as the European Union. Jaishankar's visit to Brussels, hopefully, renews the momentum in the partnership with the EU.

That no prime minister has visited Hungary since Rajiv Gandhi in 1988 and Poland since Morarji Desai in 1979, underlines India's strategic neglect of Central Europe all these decades. As the region's weight grows within Europe, Eurasia and the world, Jaishankar's visit has hopefully created the basis for a more productive engagement with the region. It could begin with an early summit meeting between the PM and the leaders of the Visegrad group — the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

The writer is director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### NATIONS & BORDERS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Nation's orphans' (IE, September 2). The editorial argues that the idea of NRC itself is flawed for "modern societies are shaped by migration". It adds that citizenship should be interpreted in a more "liberal spirit of the Constitution". These points are well-taken. However, nations do have boundaries. The NRC serves to account for refugees who may have entered India during the Bangladesh Liberation War and for any documentation error that might have occurred in the initial NRC.

Rohan Goswami via e-mail

### BREXIT WOES

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'People vs Boris Johnson' (IE, September 2). Brexit has divided Britons like no issue in recent times. Amidst all that, Britain's prime minister, Boris Johnson, has shocked the country by announcing the suspension of parliament. Since the October 31 deadline is less than 60 days away, the best option for Britain would be to stay in the EU.

Bal Govind, Noida

### WORLD POWER

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Pakistan's UN fantasy' (IE, Sep 02). India's hyper-

The writer taught history at JNU



HARBANS MUKHIA

A SUBMISSION WAS made to the Supreme Court on August 28, 2019 by one party to the dispute that Babur never visited Ayodhya and makes no reference to Ram temple.

Well, Babur did visit the place in 1528 and records it twice in *Babur Nama*: "...stayed a few days... in order to settle the affairs of Aud" (medieval Persian texts' synonym for Ayodhya) and went out for a hunt. However, the submission is right on the second point. Babur makes no mention of a Ram, or any other temple there, nor that he had commissioned the construction of a mosque.

The first and primary evidence of the construction was inscribed on the outer and the inner walls of the mosque in a verse. Mir Baqi, Babur's noble, affirms in this verse that the mosque ("the alighting place of angels") was constructed by him under the express command of his master, the emperor. But he makes no mention of a temple, much less a Ram temple, having been made to yield the place for it. Babur himself makes no mention of either the mosque or of his command to the Mir.

The next bit of evidence comes from Abu'l Fazl, Akbar's courtier-historian, in his *Ain-i Akbari*, where he records the length and breadth of Ayodhya and that "it is esteemed one of holiest places of antiquity... It is the residence of Ramchandra who in the treta

# Babur and the masjid

The first reference to Ram temple in Ayodhya comes as late as 1822

age combined in his own person both the spiritual supremacy and kingly office". But he does not identify any site as his place of birth nor mention any temple dedicated to him, nor the existence of a mosque there.

If Babur as emperor and Abu'l Fazl as historian do not record the erection of a mosque at the site of a temple, they are not alone in their silence. None of Babur's descendants down to "the last Mughal" Bahadurshah Zafar, ever reminisces about it, not even the bigoted Aurangzeb, himself responsible for the demolition of Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath and Mathura's Krishna temples and building of mosques in their place. Memory of his great ancestor's deed at Ayodhya should have filled him with joy, if he could locate it. Silence is all we hear. Silence also from the massive list of historians from the Mughal period — Muslims and Hindus, dogmatic and liberal. Silence also in enormous numbers of Hindi literary compositions, most astonishing being the silence of Goswami Tulsi Das. The great poet was a resident of Ayodhya and perhaps the greatest ever devotee of Ram, writing within five or six decades of the construction of the mosque; anger at the construction at the site of his Lord's birth itself and after destroying a temple dedicated to him would have driven him hopping mad. Not a word from him. Nor

from anyone else.

The first concrete evidence of the identification of the site with Ram and the erection of Babari masjid comes from an 1822 document in the Persian language submitted to the Faizabad court by daroghah-i adalat, Hafizullah. It says "Jama masjid, constructed by Emperor Babur at the janma asthan, that is at the site of birth of Ram, son of Raja Dasrat and is adjacent to the rasoi (kitchen) of Sita, wife of the aforesaid Ram"; it does not mention the existence of any temple at the site demolished to make way for the masjid. It is clear that the monument neither invited great celebration nor great lamentation nor even commemoration in any quarter.

In the 19th century, events took a fast turn and in some versions, a Ram temple came to be located at the site of the mosque, even as occasional violence began to erupt. But the version was still shaky enough in the 1860s when P Carnegie, writing about the Faizabad district, accepted it at one place attributing it to "locally affirmed sources", ie popular tradition and wondering whether the temple was dedicated to Ram or to Buddha at another in the same book. By 1905, the tradition that the masjid had replaced a temple had found its way to the Fyzabad District Gazetteer of H R Neville, though it still spoke

vaguely of "an ancient temple". In 1922, A S Beveridge, translator of *Babur Nama*, among other books, had firmly asserted that "presumably the order for building the mosque was given during Babur's stay in Aud (Ayodhya) in 934 A.H.", and leaves none in doubt that it had "displaced at least in part an ancient Hindu shrine" though even she does not mention Ram. This is not part of the translation of the text but an Appendix U, she has added. It is a guess she has made and not a factual statement.

We can infer from the above that the first concrete historical evidence about the association of Lord Ram with the site under dispute comes nearly 300 years after the construction of the masjid. And as the discipline of history goes, the authenticity of evidence is greatly dependent on its proximity to the event it narrates. The later the evidence, the lower its reliability. How reliable would a statement first made in 2019 about an incident in 1719 be? There are other relevant variables too, but the chronology of the evidence is primary. Popular traditions are good subjects of study of the evolution of cultural norms; but these are poor testimony for judging the authenticity of a specific event in history.

The writer taught history at JNU



TOP OF THE WORLD



SCOTT MORRISON  
Australian PM

AUSTRALIA  
PM: Won't block deportation of family to Lanka

Melbourne: Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Monday refused to intervene to stop a Tamil family from being deported to Sri Lanka, saying an "exception here or there" would only could increase people-smuggling trade. His comments came amidst a mounting public and political pressure on the government to let the Tamil couple, Priya and Nadesalingam, and their two Australian-born toddlers to stay in the country. The family is fighting to remain in Australia because they fear persecution in Sri Lanka. "I know what happens when people think it's okay to make an exception here or there," he said in Sydney.

JAPAN

Nuke plants told to prepare for decommissioning

Tokyo: Japan's nuclear policy-setting body adopted a report Monday saying the country is entering an era of massive nuclear plant decommissioning, urging plant operators to plan ahead to lower safety risks and costs requiring decades and billions of dollars. Twenty-four commercial reactors — or 40 per cent of Japan's total — are designated for or are being decommissioned. Among them are four reactors at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant that were severely damaged by the massive 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck north-eastern Japan.

SOUTH KOREA

Lawmaker berates official nominee for not giving birth

Seoul: A South Korean lawmaker provoked outrage Monday when he berated a female economics professor nominated as the country's antitrust chief for not "fulfilling her duty to the nation" by having a child. Despite its economic advances, South Korean society remains highly patriarchal and is facing a demographic crisis with women increasingly reluctant to have babies for reasons ranging from the expense of child-rearing to career setbacks. The government has spent billions of dollars since 2005 to try to boost the birth rate — one of the world's lowest.

BORIS JOHNSON MAY SEEK POLLS IF MPs VOTE TO AVOID NO-DEAL EXIT

Election speculation mounts on eve of 'last chance' Brexit battle

GUY FAULCONBRIDGE, ELIZABETH PIPER & KATE HOLTON  
LONDON, SEPTEMBER 2

PRIME MINISTER Boris Johnson was due to make a statement in Downing Street on Monday amid speculation he would call an election if Parliament defeats him over a Brexit plan opponents fear could push the United Kingdom into a ruinous no-deal exit.

Johnson's promise to take the country out of the European Union on October 31 with or without a divorce deal has propelled the United Kingdom towards a constitutional crisis and a battle with the 27 other members of the bloc.

An alliance of opposition lawmakers are plotting with rebels in Johnson's Conservative Party to take control of Parliament and tie the government's hands with legislation that would block a no-deal exit.

Just 24 hours until Parliament returns on Tuesday from its summer break, Johnson's enforcers warned rebels that if they voted against the government they would be kicked out of his Conservative Party.



Johnson's promise to take the country out of the European Union on October 31 with or without a divorce deal has propelled the United Kingdom towards a constitutional crisis

An alliance of opposition MPs are plotting with rebels in Johnson's Conservative Party to take control of Parliament and tie the govt's hands with legislation that would block a no-deal exit.

With little clarity on whether the deadlocked British Parliament might be able to come up with a resolution to the three-year Brexit crisis, talk turned to a possible election.

"We want a general election," opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn said, to oust

Johnson's "phony, populist cabal".

He added: "We must come together to stop no deal — this week could be our last chance."

However, former Labour leader Tony Blair warned Corbyn, a veteran socialist, to avoid what he cast as an election "elephant trap" Johnson had laid

DOWNING STREET GETS A NEW PUPPY



BRITISH PM Boris Johnson and his girlfriend, Carrie Symonds, revealed Monday that they had adopted a rescued Jack Russell puppy. The 15-week-old puppy, named Dilyn, was later

brought to Johnson's Downing Street office. It was unclear what relationship Dilyn might have with Larry, the cat that lives at Number 10 Downing Street. Reuters

for Labour.

"Boris Johnson knows that if no-deal Brexit stands on its own as a proposition it might well fail, but if he mixes it up with the Corbyn question in a general election he could succeed despite a majority being against a no-deal Brexit because some

may fear a Corbyn premiership more," Blair said.

Johnson held an impromptu cabinet meeting on Monday.

The Sun newspaper said Johnson was planning a snap election in five weeks' time — before Brexit — if lawmakers defeat him. REUTERS



A 75-foot vessel burns off Santa Cruz Island, California, on Monday. Reuters

Boat sinks in flames off California, 34 missing, many feared dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LOS ANGELES, SEPTEMBER 2

A COMMERCIAL scuba-dive boat sank amid intense flames early Monday off the coast of Southern California and 34 passengers were unaccounted for, the US Coast Guard said.

Many were feared dead. Fire crews in helicopters, small boats and a Coast Guard cutter spent hours desperately battling the fierce pre-dawn fire on the 75-foot *Conception*, which had been on a diving excursion around Santa Cruz Island.

But the blaze and intense heat prevented them from breaching the vessel's hull to search for survivors before the craft sank, the Coast Guard said.

Five *Conception* crew members were awake and jumped into the water when flames burst

Five crew members, who were awake when the boat went up in flames, jumped into the water and were rescued

out around 3.15 am, Coast Guard Captain Monica Rochester told reporters in a televised briefing.

The five were rescued by people on a pleasure craft called the Grape Escape, Rochester said. She said it was unclear whether the *Conception's* crew had been able to try to rescue any passengers, all of whom were believed to have been sleeping in a bunk cabin below decks.

She said 34 people — not the 33 reported earlier by the Coast Guard — were unaccounted for when the *Conception* sank 20

yards offshore, leaving only its bow exposed.

"I'm unaware of any survivors at this time," Coast Guard Petty Officer Aaron Bemis told CNN earlier, adding that it was too soon to confirm casualties.

Rochester said the Coast Guard was still in "response phase" — meaning search and rescue efforts were continuing, primarily through a shoreline search for possible survivors.

She said the *Conception*, which was launched in 1981 by a Santa Barbara-based company called Truth Aquatics, "has been in full compliance" with safety regulations, and that its owner was co-operating with investigators.

Asked whether there had been an explosion on board or a slow-developing fire, Rochester said that "the only Mayday call we received was the vessel was engulfed in flames".



Afghan security personnel near a poster of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in Kabul Tuesday. Reuters

US envoy shows draft deal with Taliban to Ghani

REUTERS  
KABUL, SEPTEMBER 2

THE US special representative for Afghanistan showed Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Monday the draft of an agreement between the United States and the Taliban expected to clear the way for a phased US troop withdrawal, officials said.

Zalmay Khalilzad, the Afghan-born US diplomat who has completed nine rounds of talks with Taliban representatives, is meeting Afghan leaders in Kabul this week to build a consensus before the deal is signed.

The agreement is expected to include a staggered withdrawal of US forces from their longest ever war in exchange for a Taliban commitment that they will not allow Afghanistan to be used by militants to plot attacks on the US and its allies.

Ghani's government has been shut out of the talks as the militants refuse to recognise it, dismissing it as a US puppet.

But as part of the deal, the Taliban are expected to make a commitment to open power-sharing talks with the government. Ghani will consider the draft and share his views on it with Khalilzad within two days, sources with knowledge of the negotiations told Reuters.

EXPLAINED

Deal could still be scuppered by US discord over role

THERE ARE disagreement within the White House about the role the US should play in Afghanistan after troop withdrawal, according to a *New York Times* report. While some people believe the CIA should keep backing militias in the country and use them as a counterterror force, others say the militias themselves could be a threat, and without some sort of US military presence, the terror threat from Afghanistan can't be contained. There are also those who believe the Islamic State in Afghanistan is not a threat to the West at the moment and the US does not need to spend resources to keep it in check. Although the deal with the Taliban is almost done, there is a fear the discord within the White House might scupper an agreement with the militants who want a full withdrawal.

Record-setting hurricane keeps pounding Bahamas

RAMÓN ESPINOSA  
MCLEAN'S TOWN CAY, SEPTEMBER 2

IN A slow, relentless advance, a catastrophic Hurricane Dorian kept pounding at the northern Bahamas early Monday, as one of the strongest Atlantic storms ever recorded left wrecked homes, shredded roofs, tumbled cars and toppled power poles in its wake.

The storm's top sustained winds decreased slightly to 270 kmph as its westward movement slowed, crawling along

Grand Bahama island Monday morning at 2 kmph in what forecasters said would be a daylong assault. Earlier, Dorian churned over Abaco island with battering winds and surf during Sunday.

Information began emerging from the affected islands, with Bahamas Power and Light saying there is a total blackout in New Providence, the archipelago's most populous island, Abaco. "The reports out of Abaco as everyone knows," company spokesman Quincy Parker told ZNS Bahamas radio station, "were not good." AP



In Freeport, Bahamas on Sunday. AP

TO DIVERSIFY AWAY FROM OIL, KAZAKHSTAN IS SUPPORTING AN ANCIENT FORM OF CAMEL HYBRIDISATION

How many humps are there on a camel? In Kazakhstan, it's complicated

ANDREW E KRAMER  
AKTAU, SEPTEMBER 2

IN MOST of the world, camels come in two types: two-humped Bactrian and one-humped dromedary.

But nothing is so simple out in the desert of Kazakhstan, where the camels roaming about, munching shrubs, come in a dizzying array of back shapes — most of them some version of 1 1/2-humped. This is no accidental, naturally occurring oddity.

"All the best specialists in hybridisation are in Kazakhstan,"

Yuri V Gabrov, director of the Moscow Ethnographic Society and an authority on camels, said in an interview. "They are way out in front."

Kazakhstan, a vast and sparsely populated nation in Central Asia, is growing its camel herds by mating two-humped and one-humped camels, producing hybrids that are hardy to cold like Bactrian breeds, while producing copious milk like dromedaries.

Demand for the animals is driven by the improbable rise in popularity of a fermented camel milk drink known as shubat. It also stems from a push by the govern-

ment to develop agriculture and diversify the economy away from oil; the Kazakh Ministry of Agriculture provides loans to farmers to expand the hybrid herds.

This kind of camel husbandry was widespread in preindustrial Central Asia, where for centuries the most common form of hybrid, known as a "Nar camel", was the preferred beast of burden for east-west trade with China. But the practice largely faded in the early 20th century, when Soviet authorities confiscated livestock from nomads during collectivisation.

As Kazakhstan pulled out of



At a camel farm in Aktau, in western Kazakhstan. NYT

its post-Soviet economic slump, the camel herds also recovered. The number of camels in

Kazakhstan rose to 191,000 in 2017 from 96,000 in 1999, the last year for which figures are

available, according to the state statistics agency.

At the same time, hybrids became more common, giving rise to the distinctive 1 1/2-humped animals now seen roaming Kazakhstan's arid landscape.

"Up until a decade ago, Bactrian camels were the norm," said a 2017 study on Kazakhstan's camel herds, published in the *Journal of Arid Land Studies*. "The situation is changing."

The study found that 80% of the country's camels were hybrids.

"Now many people are keeping camels," said Gulnara Uteniayzova, a camel milkmaid

dromedary. Most other varieties are created by "back crossing" the resulting hybrids with other two-humped males. Unlike mules, donkey-horse hybrids that are almost always sterile, the offspring of a Bactrian and dromedary pairing are fertile.

The result is a great diversity out in the windswept desert.

Kazakhs have taken pride in their expanding, unusual herds. Kazakhstan is "the leader in selective breeding of camels, with nothing comparable elsewhere in the world," a business news site, *In Business*, wrote last fall. NYT



SUGGESTIONS OF INTER-MINISTERIAL PANEL ON FINTECH

‘Need to look into virtual banking licences, fixed deposit dematerialisation, gold bonds’

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

TO USE technology to promote financial sector growth, an inter-ministerial panel on fintech has recommended measures including the Reserve Bank of India examining issuance of ‘virtual banking licences’, dematerialisation of fixed deposits, sovereign gold bonds and post office certificates to promote easy transactions and collateral, and the central bank mandating banks to share crucial customer data after consent.

In its report submitted to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday, the panel suggested putting in place a comprehensive legal framework to protect consumers of digital services.

“Banks are increasingly moving towards virtualisation of services. The Committee recommends that Department of Financial Services and RBI may examine the suitability of ‘virtual banking system’ in the Indian context, costs and benefits regarding allowing virtual banks and prepare for a possible future scenario where banks do not need to set up branches and yet deliver the full scale retail banking services ranging from extending loans,

savings accounts, issuing cards and offering payment services through their app or website,” according to the report.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) has recently issued guidelines for setting up virtual banks and is examining applications for virtual banking licenses.

The Steering Committee, headed by the then Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg, also recommended adoption of regulation technology (or RegTech) by all financial sector regulators to develop standards and facilitate adoption by financial service providers. The committee suggested usage of fintech to improve access of financial products for MSMEs, farmers and poorer sections of the society.

It also suggested a significant change in the form of RBI adopting open data access approach for better delivery of products and services. “...RBI may consider making available banking data (such as transaction and account history data) for use by the financial sector, including fintech firms, (based on consumer consent and with other appropriate safeguards). It also recommends that all financial sector regulators study the potential of open data access among their respective

EXPLAINED  
Panel suggests user protection

USAGE OF financial technology for better delivery of products and services for a cross section of society—including MSMEs, farmers, banks and pensioners—is at the centre of many recommendations by a government panel. While suggesting measures to promote digital economy and fintech, the panel pitched for necessary legal framework to protect consumers of such services.

regulated entities, for enhancing competition in the provision of financial services,” it said.

Following the deliberations of the committee, it was considered necessary to have a nodal agency to coordinate developments across ministries and regulators in the area of financial technology (fintech). A dedicated team on digital econ-

omy and fintech is being set up in the Investment Division, Department of Economic Affairs for coordination on fintech with relevant ministries, the Finance Ministry said. The committee was constituted following the announcement made by the then Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in Budget 2018-19. The panel has also recommended that insurance companies and lending agencies be encouraged to use drone and remote sensing technology for crop area, damage and location assessments to support risk reduction in insurance/lending business.

Given the rapid pace at which technology is being adopted primarily by private sector financial services, the report said the Department of Financial Services (DFS) should work with PSU banks to bring in more efficiency to their work and reduce fraud and security risks. Significant opportunities can be explored to increase the levels of automation using artificial intelligence (AI), cognitive analytics and machine learning in their back-end processes, it said.

The committee also suggested digitisation of land records across the country on a war footing. The report favoured setting up of an Inter-

Ministerial Steering Committee on fintech Applications in the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) to monitor progress, including exploring and suggesting the potential applications in government financial processes and applications.

The panel suggested usage of common fintech platform for MUDRA loans, small saving schemes, pension schemes and provident fund. It recommended creating a common digital platform for all micro-pension schemes and government pension schemes, including EPF, through which pension subscribers can subscribe to specific schemes seamlessly and reduce access barriers by allowing payments through various modes such as Jan Dhan Yojana accounts, debit card, credit card, internet banking, mobile wallets etc.

To enable electronic service delivery in the financial services sectors, the panel suggested the Department of Legal Affairs to explore permitting digital alternatives in cases such as power-of-attorney, trust deeds, wills, negotiable instrument other than a cheque, any other testamentary disposition, any contract for the sale or conveyance of immovable property or any interest in such property.

As sales fall, Maruti cuts output for 7th straight month in Aug

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

A DAY after reporting a 36 per cent year-on-year drop in sales—its steepest so far—in the domestic market in August, Maruti Suzuki India on Monday said it has reduced output by 34 per cent (y-o-y) during the month, its seventh consecutive month of production cut to align output with reduced consumer demand.

With sales of automobile products across segments in the slow lane for the past straight 10 months now, almost all manufacturers of passenger vehicles and two-wheelers have been resorting to production cuts in the past 6-7 months to clear unsold inventory. In a stock exchange notice on Monday, Maruti said it produced a total of 111,370 units last month.

The cut has been the sharpest—63 per cent y-o-y—in the mini segment, comprising cars like Alto and WagonR with the company rolling out just 13,814 units. The segment sales dipped 71 per cent y-o-y at 10,123 units in August. For the first time in many years, production of utility vehicles (UVs) dipped by a little over 35 per cent.

Maruti Suzuki chairman RC Bhargava had last month said production will follow the market demand, and employment is related to the production volumes.

Maruti had cut output by 25 per cent y-o-y in July, while in June and May the cut was 15.6 per cent and 18 per cent y-o-y, respectively. The company had cut production

Cut GST before festival season: SIAM to govt

New Delhi: Auto industry body Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) on Monday sought immediate steps from the government, including reduction in GST rates and initiation of scrap-purchase policy, as sales continued to fall with passenger vehicle makers witnessing a decline in offtake in August.

“All this while, the industry has pulled out all the stops in offering attractive deals and discounts to the consumers. However, the ability of the industry to provide large dis-

counts is limited and this only highlights the need for the government to consider reducing the GST rates from 28 per cent to 18 per cent, which would significantly reduce the cost of vehicles and, in turn, create demand,” SIAM president Rajan Wadhwa said in a statement.

There is also an urgent need to come out with an integrated incentive-based scrappage policy covering all segments of the automobile industry as promised by the FM, he added. **FE**

by 10 per cent in April while in March, the cut was just under 21 per cent. Maruti had first cut production in February as dealers were saddled with inventory ranging from 45-60 days after Diwali last year when car sales lagged expectations, while most manufacturers continued to push stock to the dealers.

While the company has been putting out official production data since January, production cuts of nearly 30,000 units, are understood to have taken place in December 2018 too, as stocks had piled up after a subdued festive season. Even though production normalised in January with sales picking up slightly on the back of

discounts, most dealers today are sitting on around 35 days of stocks.

Even others have resorted to production cuts as the industry is going through one of its roughest patches in the last 19 years. Mahindra & Mahindra had shut production across plants for up to 13 days in the April-June quarter and recently said it would shut production for 8-14 days in the July-September quarter to adjust stocks to market demand. Others including Tata Motors, Honda Cars India and Renault-Nissan alliance had shut down their plants for anywhere between four and 10 days in May-June. The companies have been trimming output since January this year. **FE**

INTERVIEW WITH MANAGING DIRECTOR, KOTAK MAHINDRA AMC

‘By slowing down gold imports, we will stop flight of savings & capital’

GOLD PRICES breached Rs 40,000 per 10 gram mark last week. With India being one of the largest importers of gold with total imports of \$32.8 billion in 2018-19, NILESH SHAH, MD, Kotak Mahindra AMC, told SANDEEP SINGH that the country needs to reduce gold import and stop this flight of capital so that it can be deployed in the form of investments in the economy. He also proposed that Customs duty on gold should be replaced with GST. Excerpts:



Nilesh Shah

stop haemorrhage of capital out of our country even as we need it the most. We need to find a solution.

We can't keep sending hundreds of billions of dollars in gold import and then keep waiting for foreign investors to invest their dollars in India.

What are the solutions for us?

We have to do multiple things to reduce demand for gold and monetise existing holdings. We must encourage people to buy light jewellery and of lower purity. For example, 14 carat gold jewellery instead of 22 carat. We also need to work on making financial asset buying as simple as buying gold.

There are more women doing monthly investment in gold jewellery account with jewellers than SIP in mutual funds. We must reverse that. Gold bond is one way to stop this wasteful spending but, the procedural aspects have restricted its appeal. We must remove the inconvenience in buying gold bonds and encourage secondary market trading.

We must encourage financial innovation to monetise existing holding of gold. Lot of gold is held in religious trusts, they should be incentivised to monetise gold for social causes. We must change our taxation policy on gold. Import duty is encouraging smuggling of gold and is pushing people to buy gold as domestic prices have surged post levy of import duty and raised the prices. A better method would be to impose GST on gold purchase.

How can GST levy instead of import duty benefit?

The government should reduce customs duty on gold to zero and increase GST on gold and gold jewellery to similar extent. There are multiple benefits of such move. By removing import duty and charging GST, gold will be treated as an item of consumption rather than investment. Every time someone buys gold or jewellery, he or she straight away loses 12.5 per cent of value. It will be like any consumption item where the value of the item after purchase is lower than the purchase price.

This will discourage unnecessary buying of gold. Gold smuggling will come down significantly as no price arbitrage will be left. Jewellers will benefit as net tax impact is positive with GST offset. The government will be fine as GST and import duty would be by and large be cash neutral.

returns look better, which in turn increases demand. If we had channelised the savings in the economy, it would have resulted in higher domestic investments, higher GDP growth, higher corporate earning and higher equity gains. It would also have arrested the slide of rupee against dollar. Gold is also encouraging parallel economy as lot of black money is getting invested in gold. While the import duty of 12.5 per cent was put in place to discourage gold demand and import, it has in fact created higher demand for gold as returns have become attractive. Gold price without import duty will be Rs 35,555 per 10 gram and with import duty will be Rs 40,000 per 10 gram. More importantly, import duty has encouraged gold smuggling, resulting in expansion of black economy and hawala market.

The real worry for us should be accentuation in capital flight, if Indians decide to invest incrementally in gold away from bank deposits and equity. Gold is liquid, has lower taxes and is insurance against Indian economic policy and looks more rewarding over last three decades. A country can't reach its growth potential if capital flight takes place, as has been the case in Russia or Latin America. If we have to become \$5 trillion economy, we can't afford our precious capital go away.

**Do you think the government needs to crackdown on gold holdings too in a way it did on cash holdings through demonetisation?**

If we can do something for cash, why not for gold? While it will create its own inconvenience, we have to see how we can

India Inc's foreign borrowings at \$4.98 bn

Foreign borrowings of India Inc grew over two-fold to \$4.98 billion in July over the same month a year ago, according to Reserve Bank of India data

ROUTE USED BY FIRMS FOR BORROWING:

**\$3.37 billion:** Automatic route of external commercial borrowing (ECB)

**\$1.56 billion:** Approval route of ECB

**\$50.9 million:** Issuing masala or rupee denominated bonds

BORROWERS IN AUTOMATIC ROUTE:

- Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd: \$750 million for rupee expenditure and \$650 million for refinancing of earlier ECB
- ONGC Videsh: \$500 million for other purposes
- Larsen & Toubro: \$150 million for rupee expenditure
- HPCL-Mittal Energy: \$125



million for rupee expenditure

- Aditya Birla Housing Finance; L&T Finance; GAIL-NALCO Alkalies & Chemicals; and India Infoline Finance: \$100 million each for on-lending purposes

BORROWERS IN APPROVAL ROUTE:

- Reliance Industries:

\$912.87 million for rupee expenditure and import of capital goods

- REC Limited: \$650 million for on-lending purposes

LONE BORROWERS IN RUPEE DENOMINATE BONDS ROUTE:

- Toyota Financial Services India: \$50.86 million for sub-lending purposes

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA'S ANNUAL REPORT

‘Macro headwinds weighed on investor sentiments in 2018-19’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

AS MACROECONOMIC headwinds weighed on investor sentiments through the year, foreign portfolio investors pulled out Rs 38,930 crore in 2018-19, according to Securities and Exchange Board of India's (Sebi) annual report.

“In order to further develop the Indian securities market as an avenue for fundraising, eligibility

norms for FPIs (foreign portfolio investors) were relaxed and data privacy concerns of FPIs were addressed,” the 2018-19 annual report said.

Among other steps, the watchdog had withdrawn the minimum residual maturity restriction of three years for investment in government securities and state development loans.

Besides, sub-categories under the category of corporate bonds were discontinued resulting in a

**“Despite heavy capital infusion by FPIs in last two months, the Indian capital market suffered a net outflow to the tune of Rs 38,930 crore in 2018-19 as macroeconomic headwinds weighed on investor sentiment through the year”**

SEBI'S 2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT

single limit for FPI investment in all types of corporate bonds, as per the report.

The limit for FPI investment in debt was revised from Rs 6.49

lakh crore to over Rs 6.98 lakh crore for the April 2019-September 2019 and more than Rs 7.46 lakh crore for October 2019-March 2020, it noted.

To address concerns over data privacy, a provision similar to One Time Password (OTP) was introduced, wherein, an intermediary can access information related to beneficial owner, including senior managing official of an FPI only after confirmation from the FPI or its global custodian.

Additionally, measures like relaxation of eligibility norms for FPIs, monitoring of foreign investment limits, easing the process of on-boarding of FPIs were taken.

US & CHINA HAVE IMPOSED LATEST TARIFF INCREASES ON EACH OTHER'S GOODS

Factories fettered by trade wars, faltering demand in Aug

REUTERS

LONDON/TOKYO, SEPTEMBER 2

THE TRADE war between China and the US kept global factory activity largely in decline in August, business surveys showed.

In a fresh escalation of the trade spat, the United States began imposing 15 per cent tariffs on a variety of Chinese goods on Sunday. China reciprocated with new duties on US crude oil, increasing fears of a global economic slowdown. An ongoing decline in the euro zone's export-reliant powerhouse of Germany meant factory activity in the bloc contracted for a seventh month in August, bolstering expectations the European

Central Bank will ease monetary policy next week. IHS Markit's August final manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) was 47.0, matching an earlier flash reading but well below the 50 level separating growth from contraction. While an improvement on July, that month's reading was the euro zone's lowest since December 2012.

Manufacturing in Britain, rocked by the deepening Brexit crisis and global downturn, contracted last month at the fastest rate in seven years. China's factory activity expanded as output edged up, a private sector PMI showed, although orders remained weak and business confidence faltered. Export-reliant

South Korea, Japan and Taiwan saw factory activity shrink, underscoring the growing pain from the tit-for-tat tariff war between the world's two-largest economies.

“The broader picture for Asian exports remains very weak because of the impact of the US-China trade war, which is continuing to escalate,” said Rajiv Biswas, Asia Pacific chief economist at IHS Markit. In China, the Caixin/Markit Manufacturing PMI for August rose to a five-month high of 50.4 from 49.9 in July, beating a median market forecast. The reading followed Beijing's official PMI that showed factory activity shrank in August for the fourth month in a row, pointing to a further slowdown in the country.

India's manufacturing PMI falls to 15-month low in Aug

New Delhi: The country's manufacturing sector activity declined to its 15-month low in August, owing to slower increases in sales, output and employment, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), fell to 51.4 in August, its lowest mark since May 2018, from 52.5 in July, as most survey indicators fell since July to signal a wide-

spread loss of momentum.

This is the 25th consecutive month that the manufacturing purchasing managers' index has remained above the 50-point mark. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below that denotes contraction. The survey noted that competitive pressures and challenging market conditions restricted the upturn. **PTI**



# ‘No new bidders for Jet Airways during extended deadline period’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 2

GROUNDING Jet Airways, which is undergoing insolvency proceedings, failed to attract any new bidders during the extended deadline period for submission of initial bids, according to a source.

The third deadline for submission of expression of interest (Eoi) ended on August 31. With no new bidders emerging during this period, there are only three entities that had put in their initial bids earlier.

Russian Fund Treasury RA Partners, Panama-based investment firm Avantulo Group and South American conglomerate Synergy Group Corp had submitted the Eois.

“No new Eois have been received,” a source close to the development told PTI.

“Now, the deadline is unlikely to be extended further. The plan will be to go ahead with the three entities that had submitted their Eois,” another source said. On August 26, Jet Airways’ Committee of Creditors (CoC)

extended the deadline for submission of Eois.

It was the third time that lenders extended the deadline after the ones on August 3 and 10. In the second round of submission of Eois, which closed on August 10, the lenders received interest from energy baron Anil Agarwal’s family trust-backed Volcan Investments, Russian Fund Treasury RA Partners and Avantulo Group.

However, Volcan opted out of the race a day after publicly announcing its interest in Jet Airways.

After the August 10 deadline, Synergy Group Corp reportedly evinced interest in the airline.

The Synergy Group owns a majority in Colombian carrier Avianca Holdings, which has a codeshare partnership with Air India. Etihad Airways, which owns 24 per cent stake in Jet Airways, did not submit any bid.

In June, Ashish Chhawchharia was appointed as the resolution professional to manage the affairs of Jet Airways, which shuttered operations in April. The airline has liabilities worth over Rs 26,000 crore.

# India’s GDP growth to rebound at slower pace, says Fitch

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

AFTER SLUMPING to an over six-year low, India’s economic growth will pick up over the coming quarters but the rebound is expected to be weaker than before, Fitch Solutions said on Monday as it trimmed GDP forecast for the current fiscal to 6.4 per cent from 6.8 per cent previously.

“We at Fitch Solutions believe that growth has likely bottomed out and will start to rebound over the coming quarters. However, noting ongoing pressure on the external sector and private consumption, we now expect this rebound to be weaker than before,” the rating agency said.

The agency added it was revising its growth forecast to 6.4 per cent in FY2019-20, down from 6.8 per cent previously.

Meanwhile, Singapore’s banking group DBS revised the real GDP growth forecast down for the current fiscal to 6.2 per cent from 6.8 per cent projected earlier.

For monetary policy, limited fiscal implications from the latest fiscal measures keep the door open for further easing, said Radhika Rao, economist at DBS Group Research.

# RULE HAS COME INTO EFFECT FROM SEPTEMBER 1, SAYS CBDT ‘PAN to be generated automatically if Aadhaar is used for filing returns’

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE INCOME Tax Department will automatically issue PAN to taxpayers who use their Aadhaar number for filing returns, as part of a new arrangement to link the two databases.

According to a notification by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on August 30, a person who furnishes Aadhaar, as they do not have PAN, “shall be deemed” to have applied for allotment of PAN and they will not be required to apply or submit any more documents.

It said the rule has come into effect from September 1.

The notification added that the department will “obtain demographic information of an individual from the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)” for allotment of Permanent Account Number (PAN), a ten-digit alphanumeric identifier issued by it.

The CBDT frames policy for the tax department.

CBDT chairman P C Mody had said in July that the department would “suo motu” allot a fresh PAN to a person who files I-T returns (ITR) with only

## NOTIFICATION ISSUED BY CBDT ON AUGUST 30

■ According to an August 30 CBDT notification, a person who furnishes Aadhaar, as they do not have PAN, “shall be deemed” to have applied for allotment of PAN and they will not be required to apply or submit any more documents

■ As per data, more than 120 crore Aadhaar numbers have been issued in the country and around 41 crore PAN numbers have been generated, and out of these, more than 22 crore PANs are linked with Aadhaar

Aadhaar as part of a new arrangement to link the two databases.

“In cases where Aadhaar is being quoted and PAN is not there, we could possibly think on the terms of allotting a PAN to the person (who is filing income tax return).

“The law provides that the assessing officer can suo motu allot PAN. So, if Aadhaar is being quoted without PAN, I give him the PAN. It becomes linked,” he CBDT chairman had said.

Mody was also asked whether the I-T Department-issued PAN will be dead, after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her July 5 Budget speech 5 announced that PAN and Aadhaar are being made interchangeable as the govern-

ment will allow those who do not have PAN to file I-T returns by simply quoting their Aadhaar number and use it wherever they are required to quote PAN.

He replied that linking of the two databases is now mandatory and backed by law.

While UIDAI issues Aadhaar to a resident, PAN is a 10-digit alphanumeric number allotted by the tax department to an individual, company or entity.

Aadhaar contains all vital information of an individual such as name, date of birth, gender, photo and address, as well as biometrics. The same set of information is required to get a new PAN.

As per data, more than 120 crore Aadhaar numbers have been issued across the country

# Tata Steel to partially shut down operations in UK, 400 jobs at stake

REUTERS  
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 2

TATA STEEL Ltd said on Monday it would shut parts of its non-core businesses in the United Kingdom, a move that could cost about 400 jobs.

The steelmaker proposed to close its loss-making Orb Electrical Steels site in South Wales, potentially affecting up to 380 jobs, as it was “unable to find a way forward” for the business, it said in a filing to stock exchanges.

Tata put up five of its non-core businesses in Europe on sale in May last as it looked to focus on its strip products business. Orb is part of one of these businesses, Cogent, which makes electrical steels.

“Continuing to fund substan-

## JFE Shoji Trade Corp to buy CPI

New Delhi: Tata Steel Europe Monday said it has signed a deal with Japanese steel giant JFE Shoji Trade Corporation for selling its subsidiary Cogent Power Inc (CPI). However, Tata Steel did not provide any financial details of the deal.

CPI is part of Cogent Electrical Steels, one of the five non-core business units, the

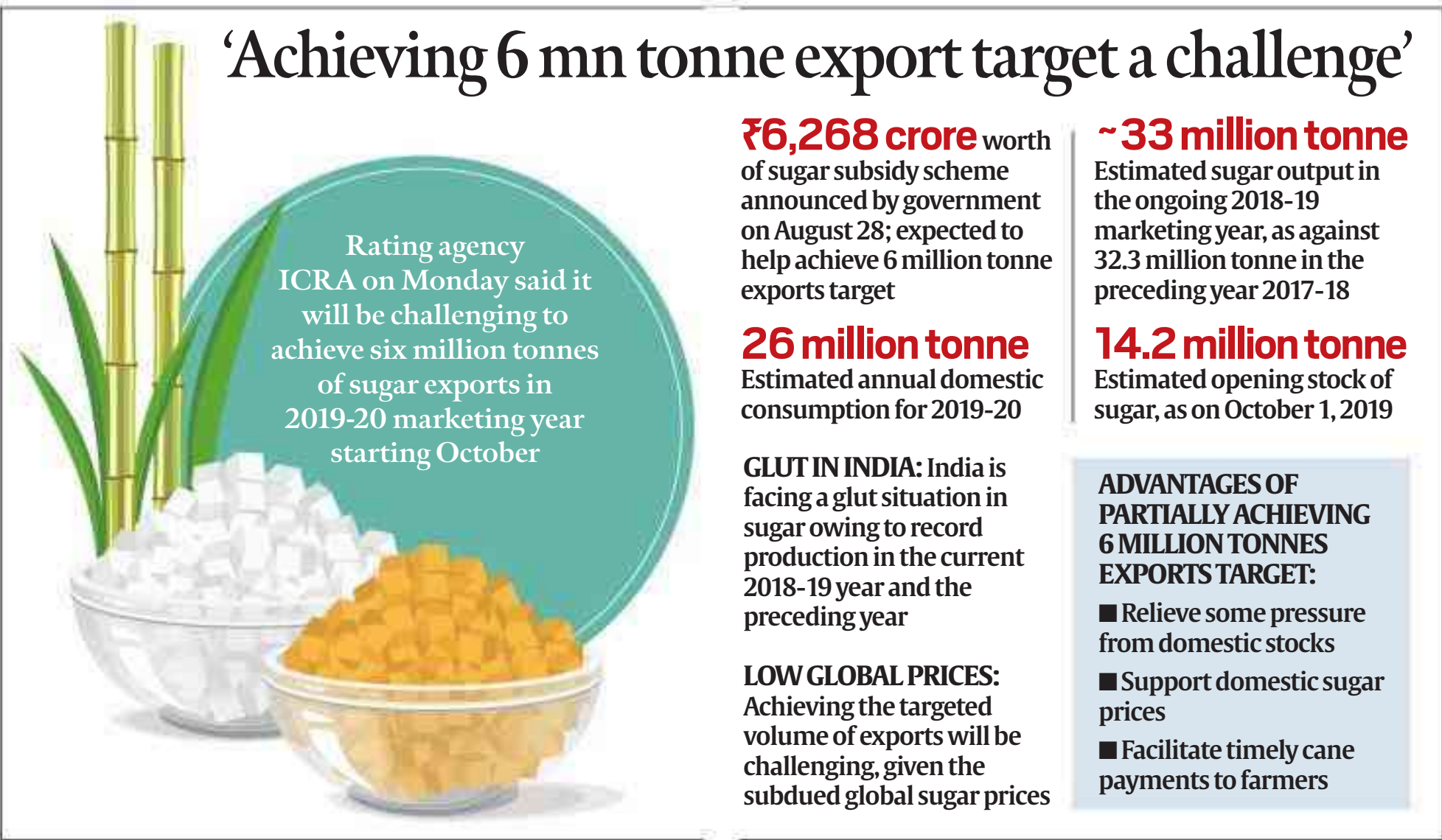
sale of which Tata Steel Europe had announced in May 2018, as per a statement.

Other non-core businesses under potential sales consideration were Germany-based Kalzip; UK-based Firststeel; Turkey-based Tata Steel Istanbul Metals; UK-based Engineering Steels Service Centre. PTI

tial losses at Orb Electrical Steels is not sustainable at a time when the European steel industry is facing considerable challenges,” said Henrik Adam, CEO of Tata Steel’s European operations.

The company saw no

prospects of the business returning to profitability in the coming years, Adam said. Tata Steel said it would cost the company over 50 million pounds (\$61.39 million) to upgrade the site to produce steel for electric vehicle production.



# Duty-free replenishment for jewellery exporters restored

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

THE GOVERNMENT has again permitted gold and silver jewellery exporters to replenish the precious metal duty free after selling it at international exhibitions, a move which would help in promoting growth of the sector. This facility of duty-free replenishment of precious metals was stopped after the implementation of the goods and services tax (GST).

The Directorate General of

A GJEPC official said duty-free replenishment was not available for jewellery sold at exhibitions abroad, so exporters were not selling, but now, they will get duty-free gold for the quantity sold abroad

Foreign Trade (DGFT) on Monday issued a notification in this regard by amending a provision of the foreign trade policy (FTP) which had stated that “no replenishment” of the precious metal shall be available to the exporter or manufacturer where they are availing benefits in respect of ex-

ported product.

An official of the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC) said it is a welcome move as exporters were demanding for quite some time to resume the facility.

“It is the re-introduction of the replenishment scheme for

gold and silver on goods exported/sold in overseas exhibitions,” the official said.

He added that earlier, the duty-free replenishment was not available for jewellery sold at exhibitions abroad, so exporters were not selling, but now, they will get duty-free gold for the quantity sold abroad, which will give a boost to exports.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said, “It was a long-pending demand and logical as IGST (integrated goods and services tax) and ITC (input tax

credit) refund provide refund of GST while replenishment give benefits of basic customs duty. The two are mutually exclusive.”

Exports of gems and jewellery dipped 8.5 per cent during the April-July 2019 period to \$9.7 billion. Gold jewellery declined 4.8 per cent during the period to \$4 billion. According to jewellery exporters, rise in import duty of gold to 12.5 per cent in the Budget have impacted the growth of the sector and allowing duty-free replenishment would increase availability of the precious metal.

# China lodges case at WTO against US over import duties \$300 bn of Chinese exports affected: Commerce Ministry

REUTERS  
HONG KONG/GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 2

CHINA HAS lodged a complaint against the United States at the World Trade Organization (WTO) over US import duties, the Chinese Commerce Ministry said on Monday.

The United States began imposing 15 per cent tariffs on a variety of Chinese goods on Sunday and China began imposing new duties on US crude oil, the latest escalation in their trade war.

China did not release details of its legal case but said the US tariffs affected \$300 billion of Chinese exports.

The latest tariff actions violated the consensus reached by leaders of China and the United States in a meeting in Osaka, the Commerce Ministry said in the statement. China will defend its legal rights in accordance with WTO rules, it said.

The lawsuit is the third Beijing has brought to challenge US President Donald Trump’s China-specific tariffs at the WTO, the international organisation that limits the tariffs each country is allowed to charge.

US officials say that they are

## CONDITIONS PART OF DEAL WITH EPA

■ The lawsuit is the third Beijing has brought to challenge Donald Trump’s China-specific tariffs at the WTO

■ US officials say that they are penalising China for theft of intellectual property that is not covered by WTO rules; although many trade experts say that any tariff hike above the allowed maximum must be justified at the WTO

penalising China for theft of intellectual property that is not covered by WTO rules, although many trade experts say that any tariff hike above the allowed maximum must be justified at the WTO.

Many experts also decry China’s decision to fight fire with fire, by imposing tariffs on US goods imported into China, also without the WTO’s approval.

On Friday the United States

published a written defence in the first of the three legal cases, asserting that China and the United States agreed the issue should not be judged at the WTO.

“China has taken the unilateral decision to adopt aggressive industrial policy measures to steal or otherwise unfairly acquire the technology of its trading partners; the United States has adopted tariff measures to try to obtain the elimination of China’s unfair and distortive technology-transfer policies,” it said.

China had chosen to respond not by addressing US concerns but with its own tariffs, “in an effort to maintain its unfair policies indefinitely”.

The US submission also said its actions were exempt from WTO rules because they were “measures necessary to protect public morals” — a clause used in the past to argue for trade restrictions over gambling, animal rights and public broadcasting.

Under WTO rules, Washington has 60 days to try to settle the latest dispute. Then China could ask the WTO to adjudicate, a process that would take several years. It could end with China gaining WTO approval to take trade sanctions, if the US is found to have broken the rules.

# Crude slips as US, China add more tariffs in trade war

GARY MCWILLIAMS  
HOUSTON, SEPTEMBER 2

OIL PRICES weakened on Monday after new tariffs imposed by the United States and China came into force, raising concerns about a further hit to global growth and demand for crude.

Brent crude fell 97 cents to \$58.28 a barrel by 1543 GMT, while US benchmark WTI crude was down 46 cents at \$54.64 a barrel. Activity was thin due to the US Labor Day public holiday.

The US began imposing 15 per cent tariffs on several Chinese goods Sunday, including footwear, smart watches and flat-panel televisions, as China put new duties on US crude, the latest escalation in a bruising trade war.

US President Donald Trump said the two sides would still meet for talks this month. Trump, writing on Twitter, said his goal was to reduce US reliance on China and again urged American companies to find alternative suppliers outside China.

Beijing’s levy of 5 per cent on US crude marks the first time the fuel had been targeted since the world’s two largest economies started their trade war more than a year ago. REUTERS

# Gloomy outlook drags euro down to 16-month lows; pound sinks too

SAIKAT CHATTERJEE  
LONDON, SEPTEMBER 2

THE EURO plunged to a 16-month low Monday as the impact of US-China trade war on the European economy dominated investor sentiment while the pound tanked on speculation that Britain may be headed for a general election. Germany’s export-dependent manufacturing sector remained in contraction in August as weaker demand pushed companies to scale back production and cut jobs.

With its sales abroad hit by a worsening trade climate, a global economic slowdown and an increasingly chaotic run-up to Brexit, most of Germany’s growth momentum and consequently Europe’s growth outlook has cratered.

“There are very few places in the currency market world to hide if trade tensions escalate, with emerging market currencies and the euro particularly vulnerable because of their trade linkages,” said Timothy Graf, head of macro strategy at State Street Global Advisors in London.

The euro was 0.3 per cent lower versus the dollar at \$1.0958 after falling below \$1.10 on Friday

## BRIEFLY

### ‘Four banks may exit PCA framework’

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry expects the remaining four public sector lenders — Indian Overseas Bank, Central Bank of India, UCO Bank and United Bank of India — to be out of the RBI’s prompt corrective action (PCA) framework with the recent round of capital infusion. “This regulatory capital is so much that it will enable four banks to come out of PCA framework this year,” Finance Secretary Rajiv Kumar said.

### Gold slips ₹40 to ₹39,600 on muted demand

New Delhi: Gold prices Monday inched Rs 40 lower to Rs 39,600 per 10 gram at the bullion market here owing to lower demand from local jewellers, as per the All India Sarafa Association. Silver, however, held steady against the previous level of Rs 48,800 per kg.

### PNB board to take up ₹18K cr capital infusion

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Monday said the board will consider capital infusion of up to Rs 18,000 crore in its meeting later this week. “The board shall consider capital infusion up to Rs 18,000 crore in its meeting scheduled on September 5, 2019,” PNB said in a regulatory filing.

### SBI Card says IPO process initiated

New Delhi: SBI Card has initiated the process for an initial share sale and the decision on when to come out with the offer will be taken at an appropriate time, a senior company official said on Monday. State Bank of India (SBI) holds 74 per cent stake in the SBI Card and the rest is held by Carlyle Group. PTI

### Airtel launches convergence platform

New Delhi: Bharti Airtel on Monday launched its convergence platform Airtel Xstream as it looks to provide various kinds of entertainment, including live TV and online content. The company has launched two android-based products, a stick and a 4K set top box that will allow users to watch content across screens of their choice —TV, personal computer or a smartphone. FE

for the first time since May 2017. The euro’s more than 4 per cent slide this year is a big reversal in fortunes for the single currency after ECB chief Mario Draghi first indicated a likely pull-back in its extraordinary stimulus policies in a speech in Sintra in June 2017.

But since then an escalation in trade tensions between the United States and China, plus a growing swathe of government bond yields sinking into negative territory thanks to a worsening economic outlook, has sapped demand for the euro.

Money markets were assigning a bigger probability of a 20 basis point rate cut on Monday by the ECB this month.

Though latest futures data indicated that net hedge fund positions in the single currency are broadly at neutral levels, they are quite some way from record high levels seen last year.

The pound led losers against a broadly firm greenback after Prime Minister Boris Johnson called an emergency cabinet meeting and was preparing to call a general election. Against the dollar, the British currency tanked 1 per cent to \$1.12046 and weakened 0.6 per cent vs the euro to 90.93 pence.





ISRAEL VS IRAN

# The plots thicken

New fronts open up in the conflict between Israel and Iran



Israel is keen for America to maintain pressure on Iran. It worries about the strategy of regional expansion championed by Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps and supported by Ali Khamenei. Reuters

AN EXPLOSION AND subsequent fire in the early hours of August 25th in Beirut’s Dahiye neighbourhood led to fevered speculation. Were they caused by two quadcopter drones, one of which was captured in a shaky video moments before? Were the drones Israeli or Iranian? Was the intended target a media office of Hizbullah, as the Lebanese militia suggested? Or was the target Iranian-supplied equipment to improve the guidance systems of Hizbullah missiles, as anonymous “intelligence services” claimed? One thing seems sure: the episode is part of a broadening of the battlefields between Israel and Iran.

Lebanon was one of the earliest frontlines. Iran helped found Hizbullah there in 1985 to fight the Israeli army, which had invaded its northern neighbour. More recently the conflict has expanded to Iraq. A series of explosions there has been ascribed to Israel. “Iran doesn’t have immunity anywhere,” said Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, neither confirming nor denying responsibility. Israel accuses Iran of spreading missile and attack-drone technology. The sites targeted in Iraq

are bases of Iranian-backed militias which may have been storing Iranian missiles.

The explosion in Beirut came just hours after an Israeli air strike near Damascus, where a team of Iranian and Hizbullah operatives were said to have been preparing to launch drones against Israel, apparently in retaliation for the attacks in Iraq. This time Mr Netanyahu was quick to acknowledge responsibility. (Lebanon’s state media claimed that Israel also struck the base of a Palestinian organisation aligned with Iran and Hizbullah near the Lebanon-Syria border on August 26th.)

The world’s attention, meanwhile, was on diplomacy. France’s president, Emmanuel Macron, engineered a surprise visit by Iran’s foreign minister, Muhammad Javad Zarif, to the G7 summit in Biarritz. Mr Macron has been trying to salvage the nuclear deal signed by Iran and six world powers in 2015. The agreement limits Iran’s nuclear programme in exchange for the partial lifting of sanctions. President Donald Trump withdrew from it last year and embarked on a policy of “maximum pressure” to

cripple Iran’s economy.

Mr Macron dangled the prospect of a summit between Mr Trump and his Iranian counterpart, Hassan Rouhani. Mr Trump seemed tempted by the idea. So did Mr Rouhani, at first. “If I know that by meeting someone, the problem of my country will be solved, I will not hesitate,” he said in a speech. But, under pressure from hardliners, he later backed away, saying that there can be no meeting unless America first lifts its sanctions on Iran.

Israel is keen for America to maintain pressure on Iran. It worries about the strategy of regional expansion championed by Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps and supported by the country’s supreme leader, Ali Khamenei. In recent weeks Israeli offi-

cial have warned that this strategy now includes a full rapprochement with Hamas, the Palestinian Islamist movement in Gaza. Ties between them were cut off in the early years of the Syrian uprising when Iran backed Bashar al-Assad’s regime, which was butchering Hamas’s Sunni coreligionists. With the war in Syria all but over, normal service has been resumed. Iranian support for Hamas is reckoned to be as much as \$100m a year.

But the Iranian network may have become overextended and easier for rival espionage agencies to penetrate. Israel has carried out hundreds of air strikes on Iranian targets in Syria. Senior Israeli officers claim they have succeeded in preventing Iran from establishing missile

bases there.

Until recently Israel maintained a policy of “opaqueness” regarding its strikes against Iranian targets. Mr Netanyahu, however, has taken to extolling Israel’s intelligence-gathering and operational successes in surprising detail, as well as openly saying it carried out the latest air strike in Syria. Some of his critics in Israel’s security and political establishments are uncomfortable with this. They see a link between his sudden transparency and Israel’s parliamentary election due on September 17th. Mr Netanyahu is currently defence minister as well as prime minister; successful strikes increase his popularity. His tactics are also causing unease in Washington, where sources in the Pentagon have briefed the media that Israel is behind the explosions in Iraq. The Americans fear this could destabilise the Iraqi government.

Like Iran, Israel too may have overreached. The incident in Beirut is seen as a breach of the unofficial “red lines” with Hizbullah. Since the war of 2006, in which the two sides fought each other to a stalemate while Israel destroyed much of

Lebanon’s civil infrastructure, they have not carried out offensive operations against each other on Lebanese territory. Hizbullah’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has publicly warned Israel to “wait for our response which may take place at any time on the border and beyond the border”.

Such talk is usually cheap in the Middle East, but Mr Nasrallah’s threats are taken seriously. Israel has closed roads and airspace on its northern border in anticipation of an attack. Still, neither side wants to see a major escalation. Hizbullah is not just an Iranian proxy but also a Lebanese political party with a stake in maintaining calm. Mr Netanyahu wants to preserve his tough image, but is anxious not to upset Israeli voters on the eve of elections.

With luck, such calculations will work to contain a dramatic escalation of hostilities. But the conflict between Israel and Iran is widening. That is one more reason—on top of the need to contain Iran’s nuclear ambitions—to hope that there is more to Mr Macron’s diplomatic efforts than G7 summit showmanship.

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**Binyamin Netanyahu is currently defence minister as well as prime minister; successful strikes increase his popularity. His tactics are also causing unease in Washington, where sources in the Pentagon have briefed the media that Israel is behind the explosions in Iraq**

THE FOOTBALL BUSINESS

# Bury, buried

The end of a 134-year-old English football club

ON A COOL evening in April, Bury Football Club celebrated. A 1-1 draw against Tranmere Rovers was enough to win promotion from the fourth to the third tier of English football. Four months later, the 134-year-old club is no more. Dire financial circumstances led to it being kicked out of the English Football League (EFL) on August 27th, after a rescue bid collapsed.

Life is not easy in the lower leagues of English football. The future of Bolton Wanderers, whose stadium is just a 30-minute drive from Bury’s ground and who play in the same league, was also in doubt until a last-minute deal was reached on August 28th. If the club had not found a buyer within a fortnight, it too would have been expelled. Bolton competed at European level as recently as 2008. In its latest matches, the team has been forced to field teenagers against the often brutish journeymen who dominate this tier.

Bury and Bolton have both suffered mismanagement. Bury’s tangled web of finances—which included a complicated mortgage on the club’s ground and a scheme by a former chairman that involved selling the club’s car-parking

**Bury’s tangled web of finances — which included a complicated mortgage on the club’s ground and a scheme by a former chairman that involved selling the club’s car-parking spaces — caused a potential buyer to balk at the last moment**

spaces for £10,000 (\$12,200) each—caused a potential buyer to balk at the last moment. Last week Steve Dale, the businessman who acquired the club for £1 in December, admitted that he “didn’t even know there was a football team called Bury” before he bought it. Bolton had been looking for a buyer since falling into administration in May. The deal almost collapsed this weekend with the club’s administrator blaming Ken Anderson, its previous owner, for scuppering it at the last moment (Mr Anderson denies this). “Over the years some

quite strange people have taken over and run football clubs,” summed up Greg Dyke, a former chairman of the Football Association, delicately.

Strange people are common in football. This is mainly because, as a rule, buying a club is a bad idea if you plan on making money. In the Championship, the second tier of English football, wages swallow 106% of turnover, according to Deloitte, a consultancy. It is little better in League One (confusingly, the third tier), where wages make up 94% of turnover. In 2017, the last year accounts are publicly available, Bury reported a loss of £2.8m from revenues of £4.7m. (By contrast Manchester United, whose ground is a 55-minute hop on a tram from Bury, had a turnover of £590m last year and operating profit of £44m.)

Unsurprisingly, dire financial straits are common at the bottom of the football pyramid, where there are smaller crowds and less money is to be made from sponsorship and broadcasting rights. Bury was one of ten sides to become insolvent in 2002, when a TV deal for lower-league clubs fell apart. Since then, English football clubs have entered insolvency proceedings another 27 times. Yet outright collapse is rare. Before Bury, the last club to be kicked out of the league was Maidstone United in 1992.

Comebacks are possible. A resurrected Maidstone is clawing its way back up the footballing ladder. Groups of Bury fans have already discussed setting up a “phoenix” club. Bury has a famous history. Until last season it held the record for the biggest FA Cup final victory, with its 6-0 thrashing of Derby County in 1903. If the fans have their way, it may still have a future.

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Before Bury, the last club to be kicked out of the league was Maidstone United in 1992. Reuters





RARE APPEARANCE

Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The Death of Breuze Sans Pitié* has hardly ever been seen in public since it was painted in the late 1850s. A part of art historian John Christian's collection, it will be displayed at the British Museum this week.

Modern Day Affair

TALK picks compelling artworks to look out for at the third edition of the Delhi Contemporary Art Week 2019



(Clockwise from top) Works by Sudipta Das; Champa Mohan; Tayeba Begum Lipi

PALLAVICHATTOPADHYAY

FROM ARTWORKS inspired by Girish Karnad's play and the fire in Brazil's Amazon rainforest to Hanuman in today's times, the third edition of the Delhi Contemporary Art Week chronicles the best of contemporary art. Over 50 established and emerging artists from South Asia are being represented by the city's leading galleries.

ANOTHER WORD FOR SOFT  
LATITUDE 28

Lahore-based Pakistani artist Noor Ali Chagani's sculpture *Hanging Rug II*, a cloth-like structure resting on a wall, made from miniature terracotta bricks, reveals the sensitive side of a man that remains mostly hidden, when trying to appear 'masculine' in front of society. By replacing the soft fabric with heavy bricks, Chagani's draws attention to the economic and social pressures that men are put through, who are forced-dreams of owning a house when growing up, and having to stand up as a support for their families. "That is why the birth of a boy is celebrated. It is taboo for a man to be emotional. I wanted to portray a more softer and fragile side that is not allowed to be public," he says. Another artist, a fourth generation migrant from Bangladesh, is represented at the show. Assam-born artist Sudipta Das' finger-sized paper sculptures of an army of displaced migrants, waiting in a queue with their belongings in their hands, are another highlight.

ALL SET FOR A MAKEOVER  
BLUEPRINT 12

Sitting atop a Royal Enfield, wearing boots and sporting a bandana, black jacket and pants, with his *gada* resting beside the backseat, Bengaluru-artist Champa Sharath's rendition of Hanuman is a favourite among the shutterbugs armed with their phones. Having grown up listening to MS Subbulakshmi's version of the *Hanuman Chalisa* every morning at home, it's no surprise to see the 40-year-old lend a pop culture twist to one of Indian mythology's most revered characters in *Hanuman with Royal Enfield*, interwoven with a *doha* culled from the *Hanuman Chalisa*.

SMALL IS BIG  
EXHIBIT 320

Kolkata-born Kaushik Saha's acrylic

on canvas *A piece of land within the frame 4* is interspersed with imaginary dwarf-life figures. It bears a strong resemblance to a childhood fairytale. Painted against the backdrop of an empty black hoarding, signifying the role advertisements play in the urban-scape, a pixelated tiny image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi watering a rhinoceros and a man running away with a post box are few of the narratives that emerge. Baroda-based Saha says, "These images have multiple interpretations, both positive and negative — be it Modi's ability to tame such a mammoth animal, much like this country, or how speed-post packages lie abandoned on railway platforms, despite containing many of our important letters."

STRUGGLING TO FIT IN  
GALLERY ESPACE

Inspired by renowned playwright Girish Karnad's popular play *Hayavadana*, about a creature with a man's body and a horse's head, Delhi-based artist Manjunath Kamath's digital print on archival paper centres around the half-animal, half-human to speak of how uncomfortable we are within our own skin. Surrounded by what appears like one of Italian sculptor Michelangelo's creations, he highlights how we constantly keep wishing to change parts of ourselves, especially our appearance, when trying to fit in.

IN A WOMAN'S SHOES  
SHRINE EMPIRE

Bangladeshi artist Tayeba Begum Lipi continues to attract eyeballs as always with *Never Tried One* and *Fits on You*, her sculptures of a corset and bra made from stainless steel razor blades, placed on hangers. Addressing her feminist concerns through her most preferred medium, razor blades — many of which she witnessed closer home during childbirths in her family when growing up — she zooms in on a woman's daily life and her hardships under the patriarchal gaze. Meanwhile, Shruti Mahajan from Hyderabad draws attention to the mystery, enigma, joy and happiness of opening and receiving letters. Her work, *Dastavez* (a series of 25 letter books), made from paper, is littered with sound advice, love notes and questions.

*Delhi Contemporary Art Week is at Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, till September 7*

What drew you to this line of work?

When I was studying psychology as my major in McGill University in Canada, I took Modern Art as a summer course. I enjoyed it so much that I took Art History as my minor, only to double major in Psychology and Art History. In 2008-09, I did my Master's degree, which was a really practical degree: less academic, more field trips. I joined Sotheby's in 2010.

What's it like to sell art? One is navigating a complicated relationship between beauty and commerce.

It's exciting. What I love about this job is that you have to care about the work. When it comes to evaluating an artwork for a sale, a list containing information about the piece, including provenance and medium, is shared with a number of art specialists all over the world. All of them get on a call with us, and then we go out to bat for the art. I know that art is seen as something that is elite, but it really is not. More museums around the world are making art accessible to visitors. A lot of people say that

they don't understand art; to them I say that if it evokes any feeling in you, then the artwork has done its job.

Who's buying art in India today?

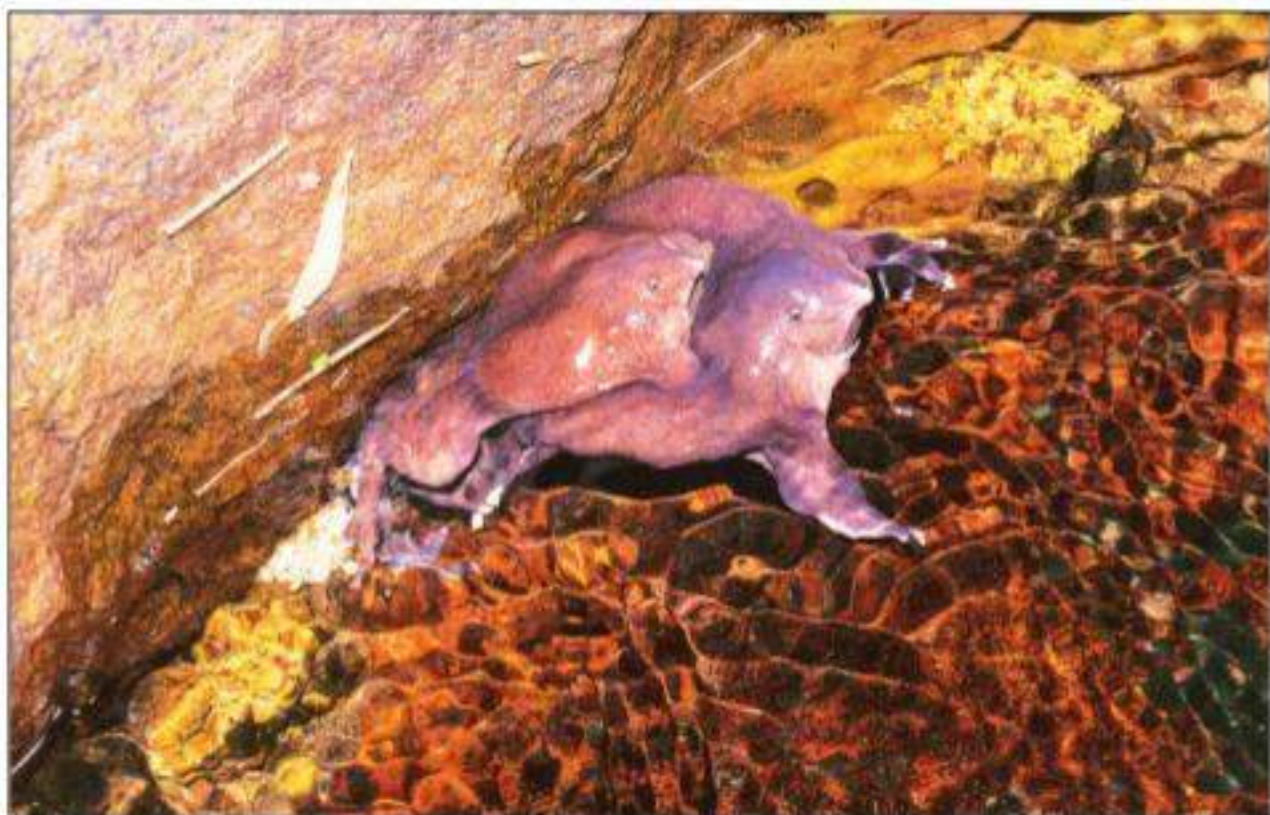
The only figures I can share are not specific to Indians but for all buyers/bidders in Sotheby's sales on modern and contemporary South Asian art. Last year, 41 per cent of buyers were under 40, while 36 per cent of bidders were under 30.

In India, the most avid collectors are the ones who are putting together their own collections for their homes.

There are young collectors who only collect paper works. They can get a VS Gaitonde on paper at a tenth of the price of canvases. But there are also artists like Nasreen Mohamedi, whose paper works reach the same prices as much as her canvases, if not more.

Is there an Indian artist or artists whose works you'd like to champion?

There are a few — SK Bhakre, NS Bendre, HA Gade. I'd like to push their work out there.



Purple Frogs and Lonely Battles

Filmmakers Vijay and Ajay Bedi, who recently won the National Award for *The Secret Life of Frogs*, on wildlife protection laws, saving the ecosystem and watching amphibians do headstands

SURBHIGUPTA

WILDLIFE FILMMAKERS Vijay and Ajay Bedi ventured into the Western Ghats in Kerala to look for the Purple Frog in 2016, only to be greeted by tadpoles. They had missed the breeding cycle when the rare amphibian — a robust and bloated creature also known as the pignose frog — emerges for just one day of the year. They decided to return the next year and reached there well in advance, but due to a bad monsoon, the frog did not appear. They waited for a month but had to come away without any footage. The third year they wondered if it was worth it at all. Nevertheless, they decided to try once again, and after waiting for 27 days, the frog emerged, and the duo became the first to capture the mating on record. Popularly known as the Twin Bedi Brothers, their latest film, *The Secret Life of Frogs* that documents the behaviour of five different breeds of frogs found in India, recently won the National Award in three categories — Non Feature, Sound Design and Cinematography.

"The idea was to make a natural history film on amphibians. There have been films on the megafauna, or big animals, like tigers, snow leopards and elephants, but people don't know about Indian amphibians. We don't see them nowadays. As children, we would hear them and call them out," says Vijay. More than 80 per cent of the 400 species of amphibians found in India are already on the endangered list, while some have not been seen for more than a century, and about 60 per cent of amphibians are endemic to the subcontinent.

The Delhi-based brothers are the third generation in their family to be engaged with wildlife filmmaking. They are known for filming the red panda in *Cherub of the Mist* (2008) and the man-monkey relationship in *The Policing Langur* (2004). They are the youngest Asians to have won the Green Oscar for the latter, and are one of the first Indians to win a nomination at Emmys. Their father and uncle — Naresh and Rajesh Bedi — were also popular as Bedi Brothers, and their grandfather Ramesh Bedi was also a known wildlife photographer and author.

During their school days, when their classmates returned from vacation with stories about countries they travelled to, the brothers narrated their stints in the wild. "We were called the Mowgli brothers," says Ajay. He recalls taking his first still photograph at the age of six, in Ranthambore, of a tigress with her three cubs. "On the field, they were our gurus, and very strict. My father used to hand me a film roll and instruct that I should not waste even one frame. He was very supporting and encouraging," adds Ajay.

The twins have worked closely with their father and grandfather since the age of five, tracking elephants in Corbett or tigers in Bandhavgarh, and made their first film at the age of 21. Over the last 15 years, they have made natural history documentaries for TV channels including CNN International, BBC, Channel 4 Television, Doordarshan, National Geographic and Discovery Channel.

"That's what we always wanted to do — make films on unknown Indian wildlife. In this film, it's about frogs and we're losing them really fast," says Vijay. Over the last three years, they have filmed 45 species of



We didn't want to use bright lights nor interfere with the natural behaviour of the frogs. Every sequence for the film had to be shot, as if we didn't exist

VIJAY BEDI, WILDLIFE FILMMAKER

frogs but only five feature in the film, which includes the Bombay Night Frog, and Kumbara Night Frog. "Each of these species has a unique story to tell, while one is a potter as it covers its eggs with clay to keep them moist, the other is a thumb-sized frog that dances to woo its partner, and another does the handstand to lay the eggs," says Vijay.

In the film, that premiered on Animal Planet in May, we see the only temple dedicated to frogs in India — the Manduk Mandir in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district. We also travel to Idduki, Kerala, where tadpoles of the purple frog are a monsoon delicacy for tribals. "This is a delicate debate. Tribals are most important when you talk about forests, and as a developing country, we shouldn't blame the poorest. But we feel

while personal consumption is fine, selling them commercially is not," says Vijay.

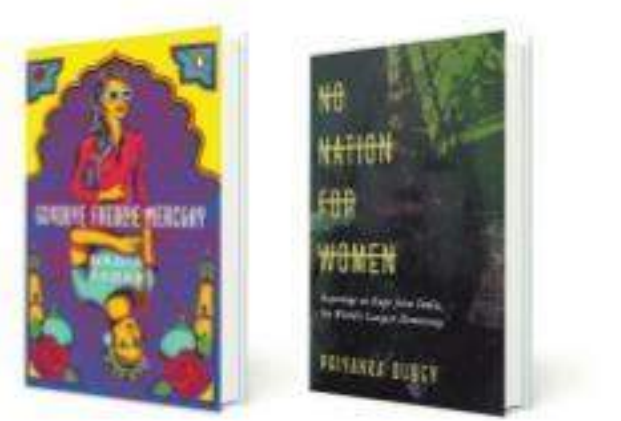
The challenges to film these creatures were plenty. The filmmakers had to constantly be in the rains, shivering, with their skin getting peeled off because of excess moisture, and gum boots full of cold water. "The frogs look big on screen but in reality they are as big as my thumbnail. So to not disturb them and go close to shoot was a big challenge. And for a cameraperson with expensive equipment, it was a technological nightmare trying to keep our filming gear dry every second. The second challenge was the light as amphibians normally come out at night. We didn't want to use bright lights nor interfere with their natural behaviour. Every sequence for the film had to be shot, as if we

didn't exist," says Vijay. They were accompanied by scientists and researchers from the Kerala Forest Research Institute, University of Delhi, and Gubbi Labs.

They also raise a concern that how the Indian wildlife protection laws mainly covers the megafauna and very few amphibians come under its purview. "Many of them are not notified. We hope that it changes and more frog species are added to the list, for that we need to know the exact numbers," says Vijay. The frogs are the first indicators of climate change, like canaries in the coal mines, if frogs disappear from the habitat, one can know that the rainforests are in trouble.

The filmmakers have also submitted a proposal to the government of Kerala to make the Purple Frog a state animal. "The rampant construction of unauthorised check dams leads to submerging of their perennial breeding grounds, along with road networks that lie close," says Ajay. Their next film will be on the "ugliest bird in the world" — Greater Adjutant Stork. India has half the world's population at 600 birds.

SNAP SHOTS



Word Power

AS IT Enters its 12th year, the shortlist for the Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize was announced yesterday. It includes *Goodbye Freddie Mercury* by Pakistani writer Nadia Akbar (pictured left), set amongst the young and the restless of Lahore's social elite; Numair Atif Chowdhury's *Babu Bangladesh* that is the biography of a national superhero; Roshan Ali debut *It's Endless Search for Satisfaction*; *No Nation for Women* by Priyanka Dubey, and Tony

Joseph's *Early Indians*. "Our selected books speak of origins and futures, of satirical masculinities and the continuing vulnerability of women in our society, of vaulting ambitions and the sweetness of dreams. Never flinching from confronting ugly truths or recognising the gossamer thread of hope, they provide a vivid commentary on South Asia's social and political fissures, its unresolved anxieties and its contemporary concerns," said Arshia Sattar, the co-curator, in a statement, adding that when "democratic processes are brutally demolished and our voices of dissent are choked off, our public and private bookshelves can stand tall as spaces of resistance. Solidarities can still be created by the books that we write and read and share. This year's shortlist is a shoutout to those spaces and solidarities." The prize, set up in 2008 in honour of writer/editor Shakti Bhatt, awards debut authors from the South Asian subcontinent.



Taste Matters

ENGLISH FOOD writer and cooking show host Nigella Lawson will be in India to attend the second edition of The World Series presented by American Express. The author of 12 cookbooks and five television shows, Lawson will be hosting a London-themed bespoke culinary experience featuring her signature menu at The Chambers at The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai on September 14, and The Roseate, New Delhi, on September 15. The 2018 edition of The World Series was headlined by Chef Daniel Humm.



# Debate on concussion rule after Bravo’s substitution

**SANDIP G**  
KINGSTON, SEPTEMBER 2

OFF THE first ball of the 17th over, Darren Bravo crunched a lovely boundary off Jasprit Bumrah, suggesting he was not carrying any wounds, mental or physical, from Jasprit Bumrah’s vicious bouncer that had disassembled his helmet.

However, before he took guard for the next ball, he hunched down on the ground and began to drag himself to the pavilion. He had been cleared in the morning to resume his innings after the blow late on Sunday evening, but as is often the case with a concussion, the symptoms could relapse the next day. As it was with Australia’s Steve Smith when he was felled by a Jofra Archer’s bouncer at Lord’s.

But in the middle of his innings, Bravo felt dizzy and disoriented, and later after further medical inspection, was deemed “unfit to bat”, and Jermaine Blackwood was named the concussion substitute, reigniting debates on whether substitutions should be allowed for concussion, a like-for-like replacement as decided by the match referee

While most of the cricketing firmament agrees that concussion is a serious condition, and cricket was in fact late in realising its dangers, they differ on the substitution rule. Some feel that it’s harsh on bowlers, who are more prone to injuries in the middle of the match. Like West Indies paceman Shannon Gabriel in this match, and Miguel Cummins in the Antigua Test, leaving Jason Holder and Kemar Roach with the bulk of the bowling burden.

But, that’s a debate for another day. The question here is not about the unfairness to the bowlers, but why batsmen are getting hit on the heads so frequently nowadays. In the space of three weeks, we have already seen two substitutes — Marnus Labuschagne and Blackwood.

Former West Indies fast bowler Andy Roberts puts it down to technical ineptitude. “Batsmen getting hit was common in our days, but never on the head, despite the licence to bowl as many bouncers as we want. It was because their techniques were better. There was no helmet, so they weren’t pampered. They watched the ball, and there were some terrific hookers and pullers,” he had told this newspaper.

Bravo, for one, clearly didn’t watch the ball. He neither ducked, weaved or swayed from the line of the short ball, a sharp delivery that seemed to follow him. Tough as the delivery was, he completely took his eyes off it, as it cannoned onto the helmet. He was immediately attended to by the support staff and seemed quite comfortable throughout the remainder of the day.

Even the remarkable Smith was caught off-guard for a fleeting moment. He was crouching, but a split second’s indecision was all it took for the Archer rip-snorter to smash into his neck. A better technique and awareness would have helped both batsmen, though their replacements did jump in gleefully. Labuschagne made the best of the lucky break, scoring 59, 74 and 80 in his next three outings. Blackwood, whose last Test came as far back as 2017, too began briskly, taking on the Indian bowlers with panache. So while debates rage on over the rule, the substitutes seem to be making the most of it.

## Scoreboard (Lunch, Day 4):

India first innings 416 in 140.1 ovs. Windies first innings 117 in 47.1 ovs. India 2nd innings 168/4 dec in 54.4 ovs.

**WEST INDIES 2ND INNINGS** 146/4 in 41 overs [J Campbell c Kohli b Shami 16, K Brathwaite c Pant b I Sharma 3, D Bravo retired hurt 23, S Brooks not out 36, R Chase lbw b Jadeja 12, S Hetmyer c Agarwal b I Sharma 1, J Blackwood not out 34, Extras 21; FoW: 1-9 (Brathwaite, 2.3 ov), 2-37 (Campbell, 7.4 ov), 2-55\* (Bravo, retired not out ), 3-97 (Chase, 27.5 ov), 4-98 (Hetmyer, 28.4 ov); Bowling: I Sharma 10-3-29-2, J Bumrah 8-3-22-0, Shami 12-1-44-1, R Jadeja 10-1-33-1, H Vihari 1-0-3-0]

# ‘Experience of bowling with Dukes in England helped me’

*Kingston:* India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah said experience of bowling with duke balls in English conditions has helped him to succeed in the ongoing Test tour of the West Indies. Bumrah, who has been in sensational form, claimed a five-wicket haul (5/7) in the first Test in Antigua. He followed it up by becoming only the third Indian to take a Test hat-trick in the ongoing second Test here.

Bumrah returned with excellent figures of 6/27 from 12.2 overs to help India bundle out the West Indies for 117 in the first innings.

“I played a lot of cricket in England, we played a lot of Test matches, we bowled with the duke ball. There is a lot of movement with the duke ball, you get a lot of confidence in outswing, inswing, whatever you’re trying. So, that experience helped me out,” Bumrah told reporters after the third day’s play on Sunday.

India inched closer to a series sweep on day three by setting West Indies a massive target of 468 runs. In reply the hosts ended the day on 45 for 2. Asked about India’s strategy, Bumrah said the plan was to create pressure in the first innings.



Darren Bravo was substituted on Monday after being hit on the helmet by Jasprit Bumrah on Sunday evening. *BCCI*

# Connoisseur’s delight

Be it old-timers or youngsters, everyone in the Caribbean has been left smitten by the Bumrah phenomenon



**EXPRESS IN WEST INDIES**

**SANDIP G**  
KINGSTON, SEPTEMBER 2

A GROUP of middle-aged men are gathered around a makeshift drinks table in a corner of the George Headley Stand, drowning the misery of another West Indies collapse in the rum of their choice. “Yeah man, they makin’ us drink more. You can’t watch them without some rum. They givin’ us headache. This man Bumrah, he’s like rum, hits you fast,” says Ralph, a 65-year-old.

Soon the discussion drifts into which brand of rum Bumrah characterises. “I think he’s like Appleton, smooth, it’s like drinking juice, you won’t realise it until the head starts spinning,” says Regal, who claims he hasn’t missed a Test since home boy Patrick Patterson battered the Englishmen in 1986. He’s baffled by the economy of Bumrah’s run-up. “How can you generate such speed from this run-up? You think he’s harmless like your old fellas, but then he hits you. He’s got a lot of power, eh? He Indian? Is he human?” He then arrives at a firm conclusion: “He’s an Indian with a Jamaican soul.”

But Ralph, much more a fan-boy, disagrees with the Appleton comparison. He says Bumrah’s more like another local brand that leaves a bitter aftertaste. “He’s like Coruba, man. Very hard to drink even with juice. It’s worse than cough syrup. Three shots and you’re down. You wake up the next morning, you won’t realise what has happened,” he says.

A third one, Joseph, negates both. To him, Bumrah is like Wray and Nephew, a headier local brew, notorious for its hangover. “The headache never leaves you. The next three-four days, you won’t feel like drinking it again. Let me tell you, these boys wouldn’t want to face Bumrah again in their lifetime. He give them hangover they will never forget,” he says, evoking laughs and approval from his friends.

**Ishan’t has played a lot more cricket than all of us. Shami has played a lot, I’m the new guy, so I try and ask questions. I ask them, they’ve played here before, so what works in different conditions? If the wicket is not doing anything what should we do? What different plans are to be there.”**

**JASPRIT BUMRAH**

“You have to assess the wicket, what are the conditions, what works here. Here the wicket has a lot more bounce. In such bouncy wickets you can become greedy and bowl short but you shouldn’t do that. You should look to bowl in good areas and create pressure and try and bowl full. That was the plan going into the first innings,” he said.

The 25-year-old pacer said he is always focussed on contributing to the team’s cause.

“I always look at the team goals, if we win the match and I don’t have any wickets it’s fine.



Jamaican cricket watchers have gone to the extent of comparing Bumrah with their favourite tippie. ‘He’s like rum, hits you fast,’ one observer said. *AP*

In Jamaica, whatever that amuses them, whether it’s a fancy car or a sportsman, they compare it to two intoxicants — rum and marijuana. It’s also a sign of approval that they like what they’re watching. They behold him amusingly, even reverentially. The qualities they see in their heroes are not technical, rather it’s the more human qualities they admire and applaud. Like bravado, toughness or even a bit of quirkiness. There is also some ganja talk. You can hear people wondering: “What stuff he’s smoking, man? Is it the one your sadhus smoke? Give our boys some of it too. They need some of it when batting.” The logic being in marijuana’s influence, you keep doing the same thing for a long time, as if in a trance.

■ ■ ■

To Kelly, one of the scorers for the Test, Bumrah poses an occupational hazard like few others. He takes wickets in piles and induces typos.

“He gets wickets with almost every ball. So you have to be really fast. My fingers are still aching.” Contrary to what commentators make us believe, a batsman who gets out for zero troubles the scorers more than someone who has scored a hundred.

My aim is to contribute to the team’s success, be it by taking wickets or creating pressure,” Bumrah said.

Bumrah said his aim always is to pick the brains of his experienced pace colleagues. “We have done a lot of hard work and last year we played a lot of away matches. Lot of camaraderie is there, we back each other. Even when things are going well we discuss what we can do better. We have a good relationship,” he said.

“Ishan’t has played a lot more cricket than all of us, Shami has played a lot, I’m the new guy, so I try and ask questions. I ask them, they’ve played here before, so what works in different conditions? If the wicket is not doing anything what should we do? What different plans are to be there,” the 25-year-old said.

After Bumrah removed one of the West Indies batsman in the first innings, skipper Virat Kohli was caught on the stump mic saying, “What a bowler, man! What a bowler!”

Asked about Kohli’s reaction, Bumrah said the captain’s faith instills self-belief in him. “The captain’s confidence gives you a lot of self-belief. When you bowl, you can express

yourself, you can try whatever you want to do. That gives you a lot of confidence, not only me but each and every bowler is being backed by him so much.”

**Roach: Unlucky but happy**

“Unlucky” to have missed out on a hat-trick by a whisker, West Indies pacer Kemar Roach said he was happy to just be in contention for the feat against a strong Indian batting line-up. After dismissing opener Mayank Agarwal (5) before lunch on the third day of the second Test, Roach came out firing on all cylinders and removed KL Rahul and skipper Virat Kohli off successive balls to be on the verge of a hat-trick in India’s second innings on Sunday. Ajinkya Rahane inside-edged the next ball, but it missed the stumps by an inch. “Inside edge and missing the stumps — a bit unlucky but I am pretty happy with what happened. It was a good feeling. Obviously, the Indian batting line-up is very strong, so to be on a hat-trick against those guys is obviously a good feeling.” **PTI**



**US OPEN**

## OSAKA CRASHES OUT

Defending champion Naomi Osaka was eliminated from the US Open in the fourth round with a 7-5, 6-4 loss to No. 13 Belinda Bencic. Osaka was visited by medical personnel in the second set and took some type of tablet.

**CARIBBEAN DIARY**

## Salute that! Cottrell a hit among mates

KEEPING HIS sniper-gun aside, Dunstan Devlin is prowling the stairs that take you to the West Indies dressing room. He’s restless and, by his own admission, angry. Not just that the hosts are reeling, but he feels his close friend, Sheldon Cottrell, would have made a massive difference. “Did you see the way we bowled? Wouldn’t Sheldon been better? It’s his home ground and he’s not playing. It’s a tragedy,” he fumes.

Devlin and Cottrell go back a long way. The left-arm seamer was his immediate senior when he joined the Jamaica Defence Force. “I was nervous, and he says come on, we gonna rock. I was just 23 and I hadn’t played any competitive cricket. Now I’m a regular for the club, and the reason is Cottrell.”

Cottrell is the man who salutes after taking wickets and the man who blew England in the ODIs earlier this year. The Defence Camp is just a few kilometres from the stadium, guarded of course, but not as heavily as it’s in India. There’s no ‘trespassers will be shot’ signages or barbed wires, the walls don’t touch the sky, you can see the quarters from outside, though you can’t just walk in or take photographs.

Deep inside the camp is a ground, where Devlin, Cottrell and others play cricket. “Don’t tell him, but he hardly comes for practice. He just turns up for the match and starts bowling. He’s just incredibly talented. But he will always be there watching us, helping us out. He’s a good soccer player too. A defender you can’t beat,” Devlin says.

His colleague Floyd Junior agrees. “He’s like a bull. Very strong. Have you seen him taking push-ups? He takes them for fun, 100,200,300... He always wins the push-up competition, and of course not a bad sprinter too,” he says.

Cottrell’s cricket was plunging to obscurity when he joined the force a decade ago. “But one day he was watching our senior team practise, and one of the players asked him if he were interested. He jumped in and started knocking the hell out of him. That’s the reason they don’t him bowl in the nets. They’re scared,” says Junior.

With Cottrell amidst them, JDF, as their acronym goes, emerged as a force to be reckoned with, culminating in their league triumph in 2017. “He took some 40 wickets in eight or nine games. As he was also playing for Jamaica, he didn’t have much time. But he ensured that whenever he was free, he would come and play with us. We won the league after some 30 years,” Junior says.

There are several versions of how he started his salute routine. “There was a time when he was depressed that he was not getting into the Jamaica team. Then one day he got the call from the selector, and we sought a party. It was during the party that he told us about his plans to salute after getting wickets. For he says he wouldn’t have got anywhere in cricket but for the JDF,” members Junior.

Devlin has another version: “There was a tough superior who used to ask him to salute every time he saw him. So during one of the net sessions, he clean-bowled him and then saluted him. I have heard he never played cricket again.”

There are other stories of his bravado too—like nabbing a bunch of gangsters in Downtown Kingston, a task the police couldn’t accomplish, saving lives during hurricanes. “He’s a very serious guy when it comes to his work, doesn’t make any excuse for drills and still does any job he’s asked to.”

Floyd and Cottrell have been on stadium duties several times, guarding the dressing room. This time, though, he was expecting him to spot his friend inside the dressing room. “It’s unfair,” quips Devlin.

—SANDIP G

## Denly set to open at Old Trafford, out-of-form Roy drops down order

**AGENCIES**  
LONDON, SEPTEMBER 2

JOE DENLY will open the batting for England in the fourth Ashes Test with the struggling Jason Roy to drop down the order, the batsman told the BBC on Monday. England will hope that Denly can add some solidity with Rory Burns when the fourth Test gets underway at Old Trafford on Wednesday, as the latter’s Surrey team-mate Roy has accumulated just 62 runs in the three Tests so far.

Roy, who has failed to adapt to the five-day format since the World Cup-winning campaign earlier in the season, will drop down to four. Denly scored his first-half century of the series in England’s miraculous run chase in the third Test, inspired by Ben Stokes, which levelled the five-match series at 1-1.

“I got a call from (captain) Joe Root after a bit of time off and he said he’d like me to go at the top of the order and try to get us off to

a good start,” Denly told BBC Radio.

“Obviously Jason is going to bat four and that’s great for English cricket,” said the 33-year-old Denly.

“With Jason Roy in the team we are a better team and with him coming in at four, hopefully with the new ball worn off and myself and Rory Burns doing our job at the top, it allows him to come in and play his way. He’s a great player to have there.”

**Langer feel ‘sick’ after loss**

Australia’s head coach Justin Langer on Monday said he felt “physically sick” in the aftermath of the defeat in the third Ashes Test at Headingley. The most frustrating bit for Australia was the unbeaten tenth-wicket partnership of 76 runs between Ben Stokes and Jack Leach. “That’s the toughest part of it, we were that close. I actually felt physically sick after it, then I went back to my room and I wasn’t sure whether to cry my eyes out or smash my hotel room.”



# Faster, smarter

Doha-bound Jinson Johnson has consistently improved his timing and become a better tactician on track

NIHAL KOSHIE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

JINSON JOHNSON is at the Berlin airport, waiting to board a flight to the United States. Colorado Springs will be his training base for the next few months as he strives to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Johnson has reason to celebrate, yet he chooses to remain grounded. In just over two months, he has broken the 1500 metres national record twice, the second time on Sunday at the IAAF World Challenge at the Olympiastadion in the German capital.

He won silver and clocked three minutes and 35.24 seconds to qualify for the World Championships in Doha next month.

Athletes tend to ballyhoo their performances aboard and the medals they win in international competitions when a major event is around the corner. But Johnson starts off by talking about what he missed out on – in terms of electronic timing it was 3:35.00, the qualification standard for the Tokyo Games. He isn't a glass-is-half-empty pessimist but a realist.

"Over a distance of 1500 metres, microseconds isn't too much of a time difference. This was also a fast race because there were some good runners, including Olympic medallists. I just missed out on qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics so I am disappointed. My aim was to improve my timing, which I achieved and it gave me a place in the World Championships. The silver medal was a bonus. Yet I have been thinking about how close I was to qualifying for Tokyo," the 28-year-old said on Monday.

With 150 metres to go, Johnson moved into second place, inching closer to race leader Cornelius Tuwei of Kenya and looked like going past the East African. From the outside lane though, United States's Joshua Thompson gained ground and nosed ahead of both Johnson and Tuwei, who eventually slipped to third. There were nine runners who had gone faster than the Indian this season and the 17-man field also included two-time Olympic medallist Nick Willis.

Johnson says there are two ways to approach a strategic race like the 1500 metres and it depends on what athletes are aiming for – a specific timing or a medal.

Johnson's 3:35.24 would have given him a sixth place finish at the 2017 World Championships and a gold at the Rio Olympics! United States' Matt Centrowitz had won gold (3:50.00), however, it was the slowest timing by an Olympic winner over the metric mile in over 80 years.

"It would be an opportunity for a medal, if there is another Olympic final which is so slow. But it is unlikely that will happen again. At the World Championships and the Olympic Games, runners try to outwit each other when it comes to race strategy. So at the major events, the timing is not important as the aim is to win a medal. At the 2016 Olympics, it was race strategy which was key. In events like the IAAF World Challenge, it is about timings more than medals, because people are looking to qualify," Johnson says elaborating on the relatively faster race.

The season has been a see-saw one for Johnson because a calf injury robbed him of potential medals in the 800m and the 1500m at the Asian Athletics Championships in Doha. Johnson dropped out during the final lap of the 800 metres and did not start the 1500. Looking back, Johnson believes there was a medal for the taking if he was fully fit.

In the longer race Kenyan-born



Jinson Johnson will be training in Colorado Springs for the next few months as he strives to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. *File*

RECORD, PLAYER		
Timing	Date	Event
3:37.86	14-4-2018	CWVG, Gold Coast
3:37.62	15-6-2019	Next Gen meet, Nijmegen
3:35.24	01-09-2019	IAAF Challenge, Berlin
■ World Championships qualifying standard: 3:36.00		
■ Tokyo Olympics qualifying standard: 3:35.00		

Abraham Kipchirchir Rotich, running for Bahrain, won the gold clocking 3.42.85. Johnson had gone faster in March (3:41.67) to win the title at the Federation Cup in Patiala, which served as the final selection trial for the continental event.

There was a change in fortune, when in June at the Next Generation Athletics meet in Nijmegen, The Netherlands, Johnson won gold and bettered the national record, a performance he says was a confidence-booster.

## 800 metres dumped

Johnson also took a big decision after the Asian Championships in April – to focus only on the 1500 metres henceforth. "I had discussions with the Athletics Federation of India coaches and we concluded that it is important to train for one event. You can focus on two events and train for them if your objective is to win medals at the Asian level. But

if one wants to do well at the Olympics, it is better to train for one event. The training schedule is different for the 800 metres and the 1500, so it gets tougher. I have a better chance of doing well in the 1500 metres at the Olympics," Johnson said.

He will now spend the next few months at Colorado Springs as part of the training group of the American Distance Project, a centre where army runners are also coached.

"This is the first time I will be training aboard. It will be a new experience and I hope to become a better and smarter runner. The 1500 is a strategic race and results depend on who executes the strategy better on the particular day. So I can't say how well I will do at the World Championships because it is less than a month away. Maybe if I qualify for Tokyo, I will be in a better position next year to predict where I could finish at the Olympics."



Johnson decided to focus only on the 1500 metres after the Asian Championships.

## Arrest warrant against Shami, has to surrender in 15 days' time

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 2

KOLKATA'S ALIPORE COURT on Monday issued an arrest warrant against India pacer Mohammed Shami, currently on a tour to the West Indies, in connection with a domestic violence case filed by his estranged wife Hasin Jahan.

The warrant has been issued by additional chief judicial magistrate Subrata Mukherjee on a case filed by Hasin Jahan against Shami and his brother. The court has given Shami 15 days' time to surrender considering his current assignment.

"It's in court notice that Shami is playing abroad, hence court gave him 15 days' window to surrender. It is written in the court order that if he fails to appear, then law will take its own course. In his brother's case, the arrest warrant comes into effect from today itself. The warrant against Shami would be kept in abeyance for 15 days," said Hasin Jahan's advocate Anirban Guha Thakurta.

The warrants were issued under sections 498A of the Indian Penal Code (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty) and 406 (criminal breach of trust). However, Shami's lawyer Salim Rahaman claimed a victory since the court dropped charges against Shami's mother and sister.

"It was our victory. The court has asked Shami to appear in 15 days after returning to India. Also charges against his parents and sister has been dropped," he said.

He added that the three prime allegations of rape (allegedly by Shami's elder brother), attempt to murder and physical assault were dropped from the case.

Meanwhile, the Committee of Administrators (CoA) that has been helming the BCCI will discuss if Shami should be made available for selection for India's upcoming home Test series against South Africa in the wake of the latest development.

## 'Reaction time'

According to a source, the CoA needs some 'reaction time' before taking a decision. Shami is not part of the 15-member Indian squad for the three T20 Internationals against the Proteas, commencing on September 15. The 29-year-old fast bowler, however, is a regular in the 50-over format and Test cricket. After the T20Is, India will play three Tests against South Africa from October 2.

Kolkata Police submitted a chargesheet against Shami in March and it is claimed that 25-30 people had recorded their statements in the case as witnesses.

On March 8 last year, Kolkata Police had registered an FIR against Shami and others on the basis of a complaint filed by Hasin Jahan. The two were married on April 7, 2014, about two years after they met at a Kolkata Knight Riders party and have a daughter.

Following the controversy, Shami was also subjected to a probe by the anti-corruption unit of the Cricket Board as his wife had also accused him of receiving money from a Pakistani woman named Alishba on the insistence of an England-based businessman, Mohammad Bhai.

However, the BCCI later gave him the clean chit. Hasin Jahan had also shared screenshots of her husband's alleged affair on social media.

## VICTIM OF POLITICAL COERCION

# Iranian judoka fears for safety after refusing to quit World Championship

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TOKYO, SEPTEMBER 2

AJUDO world champion from Iran is afraid to return home after disobeying orders from the government to withdraw from the world championship in Tokyo to avoid a potential bout against an Israeli opponent.

The International Judo Federation said late Sunday that Saeid Mollaei was ordered to withdraw from last week's competition by Iranian deputy sports minister Davar Zani. The IJF said Mollaei was then called by Iranian Olympic Committee president Reza Salehi Amiri, who said security services were at his parents' house.

Mollaei was the defending champion and could have faced Israeli athlete Sagi Muki in the final. They were the two top-ranked athletes in their class prior to the world championships. Mollaei said he was ordered to withdraw ahead of a preliminary bout against a Russian so it didn't appear to be a boycott of Israel. Iranian athletes are prohibited from competing in any sport against Israel.

Mollaei kept competing but eventually lost in the semifinals and did not have to face Muki, who won gold and later called Mollaei "an inspiration." "I want to compete wherever I can," Mollaei said in a statement from the IJF. "I live in a country whose law does not permit me to. We have no choice, all athletes must comply with it. All I did today was for my life, for a new life. I need help. Even if the authorities of my country told me that I can go back without any problems, I am afraid."

IJF president Marius Vizer wrote on Twitter that Mollaei was in Germany and was "following the respective procedures" regarding asylum. "Soon the procedure against Iran Judo Federation will start," Vizer said. The IJF said it would help Mollaei prepare for next year's Olympics, also in Tokyo. If Iran refuses to enter him, one option could be the International

**Saeid Mollaei said he was ordered to withdraw ahead of a preliminary bout against a Russian so it didn't appear to be a boycott of Israel.**

Olympic Committee-backed team of refugee athletes. "After learning about the case, the IOC has requested a full report from IJF. Based on this report we will further evaluate the situation," the IOC said.

The IOC, however, didn't comment when asked if it could invite Mollaei as a refugee, or whether it could take action against the Iranian Olympic Committee.

Iranian sports teams have for several decades had a policy of not competing against Israelis, which the country does not recognise. The IJF has said Iranians have thrown matches and used "questionable injuries" to avoid competing against Israelis.

Mollaei's case comes four months after judo officials hailed a breakthrough in relations with Iran, publishing a letter signed by Salehi Amiri pledging to "fully respect the Olympic charter and its non-discrimination principle."

On Saturday, Iranian Sports Minister Masoud Soltanifar accused the IJF of trying to "create problems" with Mollaei, the IRNA news agency reported. He said Iran will send a protest letter to the IOC.

Iranian team manager Majid Zareian also criticised the IJF, saying "everything was set in advance to put Mollaei against a participant from (Israel)." "They did not allow me to be present next to my athlete in exercise salon," Zareian said. "After the competitions they changed hotel of Mollaei without my permission, against the regulations." He denied reports Iranian authorities had put pressure on Mollaei.

## Mollaei offered Olympic lifeline

### The backdrop

■ This is not the first time athletes from Arab nations or Iran have been ordered to pull out or refuse to compete with Israeli athletes at Olympics or other international competitions.

■ At the 2004 Athens Olympics, then-Iranian world champion Arash Mirasmaeili refused to fight Israeli judoka Ehud Vaks, earning praise back home. At Rio de Janeiro 2016, Egyptian judoka Islam El Shehaby was sent home after refusing to shake the hand of Israeli Or Sasson following the end of their bout.

■ Since its Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran has refused to recognise Israel and the two have been arch-enemies for decades.

### False dawn

■ The latest controversy comes four months after judo officials hailed a breakthrough in relations with Iran, publishing a letter signed by Iranian Olympic Committee president Salehi Amiri pledging to "fully respect the Olympic charter and its non-discrimination principle."

■ Japanese media reported that Saeid Mollaei had said that pressure was being exerted on his family in Iran, prompting him to lose to Belgium's Matthias Casse in the semifinal of the competition in Tokyo.

■ The 27-year-old Tehran native subsequently fled to Berlin where he is currently seeking asylum.



Iran's Saeid Mollaei (left) lost the men's under-81 kg semifinal to Belgium's Matthias Casse at the world judo championships in Tokyo. *Reuters*

### Iran's reaction

■ Iran's Fars news agency has accused Mollaei of pre-planning his defection, quoting their team's judo head

coach Majed Zarian as saying: "Everything was set in advance – someone in Iran must have surely helped him."

**I am a fighter. I want to compete wherever I can. I live in a country whose law does not permit me to. We have no choice, all athletes must comply with it. All I did today was for my life, for a new life."**





# Shoulder trouble cuts short Djokovic’s title defence; Serena rolls ankle

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2

SERENA WILLIAMS was in pain — “acceptable” pain, her coach called it — after rolling her right ankle during the second set of a U.S. Open victory. That was the bad news.

On a day that defending men's champion Novak Djokovic pulled out of his match because of a problematic left shoulder, the good news for Williams as she pursues a seventh championship at Flushing Meadows and 24th Grand Slam singles title overall is that, while she reached the quarterfinals by beating No. 22 seed Petra Martic 6-3, 6-4 despite the ankle issue, No. 2 Ash Barty and No. 3 Karolina Pliskova both exited her side of the bracket

Sunday.

Not that Williams seemed to care all that much about being one of only three of the top 12 seeded women who will still be around Monday.

“I can't afford to look at it that way. Every single match I have played, people come and they play their best. The women that I play are not generally playing at this level against other players in the locker room, so for me, I have to be the greatest, whether it's against the second seed, the No. 1 seed, or the No. 80th player in the world,” said Williams, who faces No. 18 Wang Qiang next. “I have to show up or else I'm going to go home.”

Williams, who turns 38 this month, appeared to be cruising along to a straightforward victory when she took an awkward step while

up at the net for a volley. She tumbled to the ground and sat there, cross-legged, right in the middle of Arthur Ashe Stadium for a few moments.

Williams has dealt with various health issues all season, including one that ended her stay at the Australian Open.

Might that sort of thing be happening again? Williams immediately asked for a trainer, who added tape to her lower right leg and foot during a medical timeout at the ensuing changeover.

Still, Martic thought Williams' play might actually have improved the rest of the way.

“She started going for even more, I think. She felt like maybe she couldn't move that well anymore,” Martic said. “Her shots were really precise. Serve was unbelievable. And when she

hits those backhands and those first serves that well, it's not easy to play against her.”

Williams ended things by raising both arms after smacking an ace at 118 mph, her fastest of the afternoon, punctuating an overpowering performance that included 38 winners to Martic's 11.

“I didn't know what to expect from her ball. I knew she (hits it) hard,” Martic said, “but until you feel it on your own racket, you just don't know what to expect.”

The scene Sunday brought back memories of Williams' Australian Open quarterfinal in January against Pliskova. Williams was way ahead — holding a match point at 5-1, 40-30 in the third set — when she turned her left ankle awkwardly. From there, Williams was no longer, well, Williams, dropping every point

she served the rest of the way.

She failed to convert four match points in all that day, ceded six games in a row and lost 7-5 in the third. That time, Williams didn't call for a trainer, which surprised many. Didn't make that mistake this time. And a couple of hours later, she was walking without any apparent hitch in her step. She figured she'd know more about the ankle based on how it responds Monday; she plays Wang on Tuesday.

Williams has not managed to complete a non-Slam tournament in 2019, withdrawing from each with one ailment or another, including a viral illness, a hurt left knee and, most recently, back spasms. She hasn't won a title since returning to the tour after having a baby; her daughter, Olympia, was born exactly two years ago Sunday.

“Best day of my life,” Williams called it.

Wang, who never had played in the fourth round at a major until Sunday, advanced by surprising French Open champion Barty 6-2, 6-4. Pliskova, the 2016 U.S. Open runner-up, went home with a 6-7 (1), 6-3, 7-5 loss against 16th-seeded Johanna Konta of Britain.

**RESULTS** (Fourth round) Men's Singles: S Wawrinka (23) def. N Djokovic (1) 6-4, 7-5, 2-1, ret, R Federer (3) def. D Goffin (15) 6-2, 6-2, 6-0, G Dimitrov def. A de Minaur 7-5, 6-3, 6-4, D Medvedev (5) def. D Koepfer 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (2) Women's Singles: W Qiang (18) def. A Barty (2) 6-2, 6-4, J Konta (16) def. K Pliskova (3) 6-7 (1), 6-3, 7-5, S Williams (8) def. P Martic (22) 6-3, 6-4, E Svitolina (5) def. M Keys (10) 7-5, 6-4