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NEARBY



Batala blast a result of multiple lapses: official

BATALA
The Batala firecracker factory incident, that has not just left the family members of the victims but also local residents furious, was a result of "multiple lapses", officials have said.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

Kashmiri youth beaten by mob in Neemrana

JAIPUR
A Kashmiri youth studying in an aeronautical engineering college was tied to an electric pole and allegedly beaten up by a mob in Neemrana town of Rajasthan's Alwar district on Wednesday night. The mob claimed that the youth, dressed in a woman's clothes, was looking suspicious.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

IGIA to try facial recognition entry

NEW DELHI
Starting today, a mere facial scan will allow Vistara passengers to zip through Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, which has commenced a three-month trial for paperless travel. Passengers need to follow some simple steps to experience this futuristic way of travelling.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 8 PAGES
(TABLOID)

Chidambaram sent to Tihar jail till Sept. 19 in INX Media case

Former Minister, son get anticipatory bail in Aircel-Maxis money laundering case

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday sent former Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram to custody in Tihar jail in the INX Media case, even as another court granted anticipatory bail to him and his son Karti in the Aircel-Maxis money laundering case.

Special judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar said: "Having considered all the facts and circumstances of the case, the nature of offences and the stage of investigation, which is still in progress, the accused is remanded in judicial custody till September 19."

"I am only worried about the economy," Mr. Chidambaram commented, when a reporter asked him if he had anything to say after the court ordered his judicial custody.

Earlier, the CBI produced him before the court and urged it to send him to judicial custody, submitting that he was an influential person in public life and wielded substantial and pervasive influence over witnesses, having the potential to tamper with evidence.

Opposing the prosecution plea, Kapil Sibal, counsel for Mr. Chidambaram, argued that the CBI had not brought anything on record to even suggest that his client had ev-



In custody: P. Chidambaram being taken to Tihar jail in New Delhi on Thursday. •PTI

er tried to influence the witnesses or interfere in the investigation.

'Ready to surrender'

Mr. Sibal further argued that his client was ready to surrender to the Enforcement Directorate in the money laundering case since his appeal challenging the Delhi High Court order denying him protection from arrest had been dismissed.

Mr. Chidambaram also filed an application in the court seeking permission to surrender in the money laundering case connected with the INX bribery case. The court sought the ED's reply by September 12.

Earlier, special judge O.P.

Saini granted anticipatory bail to the father-son duo in the Aircel-Maxis money laundering case. "Considering the distance of time between the commission of alleged crime and the filing of the instant application, unexplained delay in investigation, there being no possibility of the accused tampering with the evidence or threatening any witness or fleeing from justice and there being no possibility of their committing a similar crime again, I am satisfied that it is a fit case for grant of benefit of anticipatory bail," he said.

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SC DENIES RELIEF TO CHIDAMBARAM ▶ PAGE 12

A separate cell but no special facilities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

P. Chidambaram, who was brought to Tihar Jail on Thursday evening, will get no special facilities, except a separate cell and a Western toilet as specified by the court, jail officials said. Like other inmates, he will have access to the library, and can watch television for a specified period.

After the mandatory medical check-up, he was lodged in Jail No. 7, which houses those accused in Enforcement Directorate cases. His son Karti was kept in the same cell for 12 days in the same case last year.

A jail official said food is served between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., but it is kept aside for those who arrive late owing to court procedures. The usual dinner menu is roti, dal, sabji and rice.

Mr. Chidambaram will be lodged in the cell from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Breakfast will be served between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. He can drink water from a reverse osmosis plant or buy packaged water from the canteen.

SC allows Iltija Mufti to meet her mother Mehbooba

'Move local authorities for permission to go around in J&K'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed Iltija Mufti to meet her detained mother, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, in Srinagar.

But when she asked the court's permission to move around in Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Justice of India Ranjan (CJI) Gogoi orally remarked, "Why do you want to move around? It is very cold in Srinagar." However, the court later recorded that she could move the district authorities for permission to move around.

The top judge did not pay heed to the government's insistent pleas that Ms. Iltija Mufti had no business moving the "august forum" of the Supreme Court.

The Centre said she should have ideally gone to the local District Magistrate for permission to meet her mother.

Ms. Mehbooba Mufti, PDP leader, has been under detention, along with several others, since August 5 in the backdrop of the dilution of provisions of Article 370, the ensuing curfew and bifurcation of the State into Union Territories. The Valley has been in a state of lockdown for the past month.

Attorney General K.K. Venugopal said Ms. Mehbooba Mufti's mother and sister had met her after taking per-

'Tarigami held without order'

CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury informed the Supreme Court that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir was "contrary" to the government's claims.

With the court's permission, he travelled to the State on August 29 to meet his party colleague M.Y. Tarigami. Mr. Tarigami told him that he was confined to his house for the past 25 days without any detention order. Mr. Yechury said he described his situation as a "*de facto* arrest." ▶ PAGE 13

A spark can set off a blaze: MP

By withdrawing Articles 370 and 35A, the Centre has added to the volatile situation in Jammu and Kashmir, and with one spark, the blaze could spread, PDP Rajya Sabha member Nazir Ahmed Laway said. "Leaders who trust the Constitution have been put behind bars. Had the government detained the separatists, no one would have shed tears. Why arrest those who worked within the Constitution?" he asked. ▶ PAGE 13

mission from the Magistrate. "Why should she [Ms. Iltija Mufti] come here now?" he asked.

'Ostensible purpose'

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said there might be something more to Ms. Iltija Mufti's appeal than the "ostensible purpose" to meet her mother. But the CJI stopped him short, saying, "It is her privilege to move this forum... Are you going to prevent her from meeting her mother?"

Ms. Iltija Mufti said she was not permitted to leave her house in Srinagar from August 5 to August 22 by the authorities. "There was a

chilling effect on my movement," senior lawyer Nitya Ramakrishna for Ms. Iltija Mufti submitted.

Finally, the court gave Ms. Iltija Mufti, who is now in Chennai, permission to return to Srinagar at a time of her choice to meet her mother in private.

The court recorded the government's assurance that it would "not prevent" her from doing this. It further ordered that CPI(M) leader M.Y. Tarigami be flown to Delhi from Srinagar for treatment at AIIMS.

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YOUTH SUSTAINED FATAL PELLET INJURIES ▶ PAGE 13

Romila Thapar declines to send CV to JNU

Historian writes letter to the administration explaining what her status means

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

Historian Romila Thapar has refused to submit her curriculum vitae to the administration of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), which says it is "reviewing" her position as Professor Emerita. Instead she has written a letter explaining what her status means.

"No, I don't intend to send them my CV. They have contradicted themselves in the letter they sent to me. When the status was originally conferred, it was stated that this was a lifetime honour. They are going back on that, negating what they originally wrote. They have changed the rules, and are applying



Romila Thapar

them retrospectively," she said in a telephone interview on Wednesday.

On July 12, JNU Registrar Pramod Kumar wrote to Professor Thapar asking her to provide her latest CV by August 16 so that a committee, appointed by the University's Academic Council, could "assess [her] work and decide on [her] continuation as Pro-

fessor Emeritus". A similar letter was sent to 11 other Professors Emeritus, all of them distinguished scholars in their respective fields.

Professor Thapar herself has been awarded the Kluge Prize, known as the American Nobel, holds honorary doctorates from half a dozen of the world's top universities, and is the author of a slew of books on ancient India, which have been required reading for generations of students. She taught at JNU for over two decades, helping to found the university's Centre for Historical Studies, and has been a Professor Emerita since 1993.

At 87, she is still actively involved in research, teaching

and writing and was preparing for a workshop even as much of the academic world exploded in outrage at her treatment by JNU. Her CV is available on the university's website. "I sent them a letter explaining what was meant by a Professor Emeritus, for if they knew what it meant they would not be demanding my CV to re-evaluate my status," said Professor Thapar. "The university has not yet responded to me."

She pointed out that the position of Professor Emeritus is an honour given on the basis of work already done. "How can it be based on future expectation?" she asked.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Institute of Eminence tag for five

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Human Resource Development Ministry has awarded the status of Institute of Eminence to IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University and University of Hyderabad, said an official statement.

Four private universities – Vellore Institute of Technology, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Jamia Hamdard and Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology – were issued Letters of Intent to grant them the status.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Facing ₹11,000 fine, man sets bike afire

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Staring at a hefty fine for drunken driving under the amended Motor Vehicles Act that kicked in this month, a motorcyclist set ablaze his two-wheeler on Thursday, the police said. The man, Rakesh, was fined near Triveni Complex in Chirag Dilli.

Traffic policemen busy enforcing the new regulations stopped Rakesh, a resident of

Sarvodaya Enclave, for driving without a helmet. On putting him through a breathalyser test, he was found driving under the influence of alcohol – 200 mg per 100 ml of blood – the police said. The permissible limit for drunk driving is 30 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood.

While his motorcycle was being impounded, Rakesh set fire to the fuel tank and soon the vehicle was engulfed in flames. He was arrested, the police said.

As per the amended Motor Vehicles Act, he was charged ₹10,000 for drunk driving and ₹1,000 for not wearing a helmet," said a traffic police officer.

Delhi Fire Service said it received a call around 2 p.m., but by the time its team reached the spot and doused the flames, the motorcycle was badly gutted.

India lends \$1 billion for Russia's Far East

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VLADIVOSTOK

India on Thursday announced an "unprecedented" \$1 billion line of credit for the development of Russia's Far East, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowing that New Delhi would walk shoulder-to-shoulder with Moscow in its quest for the development of the resource-rich region.

At the plenary session of the Fifth Eastern Economic Forum here, he said it was a "unique case" of India providing such special credit line to another country. "For the development of the Far East, India will give a line of credit worth \$1 billion," he said.

RUSSIA FOR JOINT SUBMARINE DEVELOPMENT ▶ PAGE 13

'ACT FAR EAST' POLICY ▶ PAGE 13

Hyderabad's priceless map lies in neglect

Officials promise steps to conserve it but nothing happens, says caretaker

SERISH NANISETTI
HYDERABAD

It is easily Hyderabad's biggest treasure. A sprawling 10 ft x 10 ft map of the walled city of Hyderabad dating from 1772. Nearly 250 years later, the map is slowly disappearing in one quiet corner of the city at Panjagutta. On the first floor of the Idara-e-Adabiyat Urdu in a damp airless room, without lights, is the big map stretched across a wall. Holding it together are four wooden slats, and a glass pane forms the only protection from the elements. It isn't much of a protection as the dampness seeps inside.

"We have a financial problem. Taking care of the map is beyond our budget.



No protection: The map is made on a cloth, with the lines drawn with vegetable dyes. The colour is flaking off.

Our best protection is the glass sheet," says Rafiuddin Quadri, who takes care of the institution started by his father Mohiuddin Qadri Zore. "We have scholars, government officials coming in and seeing the map, promising steps to conserve

it but nothing happens. It is a cloth map with the lines drawn with vegetable dyes. The colour flakes off when it is touched. The cloth has become brittle," says Mr. Quadri.

The map, as well as a number of artefacts, was

donated by Inayat Jung, a descendant of Mir Musa Khan known as Rukn Ud Dowla, the Prime Minister of Nizam II. The map was key to the decision to move the Asaf Jahi capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad.

The Hyderabad map predates the effort by Scottish soldier Colonel Colin Mackenzie of the East India Company, who created maps for the Nizam's Dominions in 1780s. The maps were so useful for the East India Company during the Anglo-Mysore wars that he was made the Surveyor-General of India. A role which is largely forgotten as Mackenzie is remembered more for the manuscripts and oral histories he collected.

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IN BRIEF
Passengers injured after falling from escalator
NEW DELHI
A couple of passengers sustained injuries after they fell down from an escalator at Mandi House metro station on Thursday, officials said. The incident took place at around 7.20 pm, they said. "Today at Mandi House metro station, 2-3 passengers fell down from an escalator, likely due to imbalance caused by one co-passenger," the DMRC said in a statement. PTI

Air quality of Delhi-NCR				
Delhi	95	Gurgaon	76	
Ghaziabad	88	Faridabad	43	
Noida	86	Greater Noida	101	
0-50 Good 51-100 Satisfactory 101-200 Moderate 201-300 Poor 301-400 Very poor >401 Severe				
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) [SOURCE: CPCB]				

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Jeffrey Gettleman, South Asia Bureau Chief, New York Times will deliver a lecture that proposes to look at Africa through the geopolitics of Asia at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Talk: Workshop on "Circular Economy in business: A Blueprint for action towards SDG-12" organised in collaboration with UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI). The event will feature seminars and lectures by various speakers at Auditorium, UNESCO House, 1, San Martin Marg, 9.30 a.m. - 2.45 p.m.

Music: Sitar recital by Shahana Banerjee, accompanied by Mithlesh Jha on the tabla at Amaltes Hall, IHC, 7 p.m.

Music: Hindustani vocal recital by Sawani Shende-Sathaye from Pune, accompanied by Vinod Lele on the tabla and Pt. Vinay Mishra on the harmonium at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Exhibition: A solo painting exhibition by Ashok Baldodia at Convention Centre Foyer, IHC, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Urban Dwellings", a solo show of paintings by V. Ramakrishna at Triveni Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Exhibition: "Colourful Dreams", seventh solo show of paintings by Mohi Jaya at All India Fine Arts & Craft Society (AIFACS), 1 Rafi Marg, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Screening: "Nabbie's Love", Japanese film screening with English subtitles at The Japan Foundation, 5A Ring Road, Lajpat Nagar IV, 6.30 p.m. (Mail your listings for this column at cityeditor@thehindu.co.in)

We want teaching to be the most sought-after profession, says CM

Kejriwal honours 87 teachers for their efforts in changing education system

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Deputy Manish Sisodia felicitated and awarded 87 teachers in various categories for their "selfless service and rigorous efforts in making qualitative changes in the education system in Delhi and shaping the future", on the occasion of Teachers' Day. Addressing a gathering of principals and teachers at Thyagaraj Stadium, Mr. Kejriwal said, "Till 1830, before the introduction of British Education System, teaching was the most sought-after profession in India. The Delhi government plans to revive that unique system in the Capital to ensure that the creamy layer of the society will take up the profession." The CM said that the biggest mission for the Delhi government was to fix government schools and that they have managed to do so only because of the support from teachers and principals.



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal awards Anita Singal, a teacher of Government Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, on Thursday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"We have reached a point where government schools are just as good, if not better than private schools. We have transformed the entire environment of government schools," Mr. Kejriwal said. **Competitive edge** He said that over the past year and a half, the government was working on providing students with a competitive edge when it comes to entrance examinations. "I realised that coaching for competitive exams today costs ₹1 lakh to ₹1.5 lakh. Despite government schools becoming better, when it comes to competing with children from rich families with money to pay for expensive coaching institutes, poor children often lag behind. To change this, we launched the free coaching scheme," Mr. Kejriwal said.

Consumer panel directs travel agency to pay ₹1 lakh to senior citizen

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A district consumer disputes redressal forum here has directed a city-based travel agency to compensate a senior citizen by paying over ₹1 lakh for failing to arrange air tickets to Las Vegas despite the complainant having paid a deposit amount of over ₹2.40 lakh. Observing that the 69-year-old man had to suffer mental agony for the deficient services on part of the

travel agency, the consumer panel observed, "The sole defence is that the complainant was not provided air tickets on time because there was a delay in making the balance payment by him... However, they did not bother to place on record even a single document to substantiate the alleged delay." The directions came when Mussoorie resident Rajinder Parkash Gupta approached the forum alleging that the SOTC had "cheated" him by not delivering the services promised. "It is the complainant's case that he made the payment as and when demanded by the travel agency. If there was delay in making payment of the tour cost, they [agency] should have refused to accept the balance payment and cancelled the tour of the complainant," the consumer panel observed while noting the allegations made.

WE have reached a point where government schools are just as good, if not better than private schools

ARVIND KEJRIWAL
Chief Minister

He added that the Jai Bhim Mukhyamantri Pratibha Vikas Yojana had been successful in bridging the gap between rich and poor that it has been expanded to general and OBC categories as well. "If any child in Delhi wants to go to an IIT, then the lack of resources should never come in the way of them seizing that opportunity," said the Chief Minister. In his address, Mr. Sisodia said that the most important factor behind the revolutionary 'Delhi Education Model' is taking the teachers and the principals into confidence, in order to improve the infrastructure and the learning environment in government schools.

Ensure proper lighting in subways, FOBs: court

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed authorities to ensure adequate lighting in subways and police patrolling on foot overbridges in the Capital so that they are not misused by miscreants. A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar said the authorities should create such conditions so that public at large can use them freely and without any fear. The Bench further said that these subways and foot overbridges should be kept clean. The court was hearing a petition by NGO Anti Corruption Council of India, which said that subways and foot overbridges in the city were being misused by miscreants due to insufficient lighting. The counsel, representing various authorities, submitted that they would take requisite action and if there is any need of additional lights, it would be installed and proper patrolling would also be carried out.

IGI Airport to start trial on facial recognition entry at T3 today

Process voluntary, fliers can ask for biometric details to be deleted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Starting today, a mere facial scan will allow Vistara passengers to zip through Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, which has commenced a three-month trial for paperless travel. Passengers need to follow some simple steps to experience this futuristic way of travelling. Firstly, they need to report at the registration desk outside Terminal 3, from where Vistara operates its flights, with their air ticket and valid ID proof. The papers will be verified by CISF personnel. After this, their facial details will be captured on a camera and a data envelope for each passenger will be generated. Thereon, the facial image will be the passenger's ticket. The passenger can enter the terminal where the e-gates would open automatically after a face scan. The passenger can then proceed towards the check-in counter to drop his bags, or head straight for security check if there are no check-in luggage. Before entering the security hold area, the passenger will again have to undergo face scan for the e-gates to open. The same drill will be repeated one last time before approaching the departure gate and boarding the flight. The process is voluntary and allows a passenger to

Look ahead



- Passengers need to report to the registration desk outside Terminal 3, from where Vistara operates its flights, with their air ticket and valid ID proof
- The papers will be verified by CISF personnel
- After this, their facial details will be captured on a camera and a data envelope for each passenger will be generated
- Thereon, the facial image will be the passenger's ticket
- The passenger can enter the terminal where the e-gates would open automatically after a face scan
- The passenger can then proceed towards the check-in counter to drop his bags, or head straight for security check if there are no check-in luggage
- Before entering the security hold area, the passenger will again have to undergo face scan for the e-gates to open
- The same drill will be repeated one last time before approaching the departure gate and boarding the flight

have full control on his or her data and ask for it to be deleted any time during their journey. On the successful implementation of this trial, Delhi International Airport Limited will launch the biometric-based access system in partnership with more airlines. The airport is introducing this technology in partnership with Vision Box, which has developed and installed the One-ID platform. The platform is fully compliant with European Union General

Nehru Planetarium to celebrate Chandrayaan-2 mission

It's planning moon carnival to give virtual views of touchdown

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and Nehru Planetarium in the Capital will be celebrating ISRO's Chandrayaan-2 Mission in-coming towards a location 70 degrees south and on the far side of the moon, a location so far unexplored, with an overnight moon carnival. The planetarium has planned an evening sky-watch of the moon on September 6 with telescopes followed by sky theatre interaction related to the moon. During the interaction, they will show full-dome immerse visualisations which will give ringside virtual views of those nail-

biting moments of the touchdown. "Before the launch of Chandrayaan-2, the planetarium had also made available a completely in-house full-dome planetarium show titled "Back to the Moon" – a retrospective look at moon studies from ancient and medieval times to the first lunar exploration excitement onwards to the Chandrayaan missions. Viewing of the show will be a part of the moon carnival," said Planetarium Director Nandivada Rathnasree. **Mail to register** She added that interested people may send a mail to nehruplanetarium@gmail.com to register and participate in the ringside virtual views as seating is limited. Ms. Rathnasree added that the nation will reach a milestone with this soft landing on the moon, demonstrate technological capabilities for soft landing on an extra-terrestrial body, obtain and transfer in situ data from the far side of the moon, robotic manoeuvring on a celestial body, and navigation. Even from the point of view of global interests in moon science, the mission has crucial explorations of distribution of water-bearing minerals and other useful minerals on the moon.

Clear floodplains by March 2020, NGT tells Agra body

Plea seeks restoration of the area

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following a plea seeking remedial action against pollution on the Yamuna riverbed and floodplain in Agra, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Agra Development Authority to complete the exercise of clearing the floodplain by March 2020.



Begin exercise While noting that authorities had completed the process of demarcation of the floodplain, a Bench headed by NGT judicial member Justice Raghuvendra S. Rathore directed, "The exercise of clearing the floodplain of river Yamuna at Agra be done by the Agra Development Authority, after giving opportunity of hearing to all concerned by ensuring that all encroachments are cleared." "It is made clear that the Agra Development Authority shall immediately take up the matter and commence the exercise for implementation of the report given by the National Mission for Clean Ganga [NMCNG] and other authorities without any further delay, in no case later than September 15,"

the Bench added. The directions came when the green panel was hearing a plea moved by petitioner Umashankar Patwa who sought restoration of the floodplain to its original condition sans pollution. The plea had also sought directions to authorities to demolish encroachments that had come up due to constructions on the riverbed and floodplain. A report furnished by an NGT-appointed joint inspection team, dated May 2019, had read, "During field visit it was seen that area along the floodplain has changed considerably due to construction activity and some of the drains have been filled up due to human activity... The elevation is dynamic and continuous to change due to a large number of reasons, including human intervention, natural processes like erosion and deposition."

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India



The Nobel Prize Series- 2019 edition will be jointly inaugurated by Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab on 11th September, 2019 at NABI, Mohali. It is expected that approximately 500-600 students and research scholars in addition to 600 to 700 teachers and early career faculties from across Punjab and other parts of the country will participate in NPS-2019 being held at Mohali and Ludhiana. NPS-2019 will inspire, encourage and ignite the minds of the country's students and teachers to innovate in their fields and to promote interaction amongst various stakeholders to promote highest quality of science based education.

Oorja Ladies Club celebrated Teej celebrations



Teej was celebrated with great enthusiasm by Oorja Ladies Club of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited here yesterday. While addressing the members of the club Ms. Baljit Kaur President of Oorja Ladies Club, said, Celebration of Teej festival is a symbol of unity, harmony, equality, spirit of affection and above all, mutual cooperation. She said that Punjab State Power Corporation Limited is also playing a vibrant role in the protection of environment and Punjabi culture too.

PSPCL SURPASSES HYDEL GENERATION RECORDS - 69 % MORE GENERATION THAN LAST YEAR

Punjab State Power Corporation Limited in a press release has informed that in the FY 2019-20, upto the month of August total hydel generation from PSPCL hydel plants is 2588.5 Million Units (MUs) in comparison to only 1533 MUs in the last financial year (2018-19) during the corresponding period which is 1055 MUs i.e. 69 % more. Previous highest generation from April to August was in FY 2014-15 was 2519 MUs which was also very good year from hydel generation point of view.

Sh. Yash Paul Bhola takes over as Director (Finance), NFL



Shri Yash Paul Bhola has taken over as Director (Finance) in NFL on 3rd September. Prior to this, he was Executive Director (Finance) in the Company.

Indian Oil Refineries Headquarters free eye check-up camps benefits nearly 300 persons



Mr. V K Shukla, Executive Director, Refineries Headquarters, IndianOil, inaugurated the free eye check-up camps organised for the contract workers like house helps, drivers, maintenance workers, security guards, etc. at the Divisional Headquarters and in IOC Residential Colony, Noida, benefitting nearly 300 needy people. Organised under CSR, as part of 60th IndianOil Day celebrations, free spectacles, eye drops were given as per requirement. IndianOil shall also bear the cost of 8 cataract surgeries, which were prescribed

during the medical investigation. I-care Hospital, Noida, supported the camps.

NTPC Ltd. pays Final Dividend of Rs. 2,473.64 crore for FY 2018-19



For the financial year 2018-19, NTPC Ltd. has paid final dividend of Rs. 2,473.64 crore, being 25% of the paid-up equity share capital of the Company.

The RTGS advice for the transfer of Rs. 1,348.23 crore to Government of India, being the share of Government of India in the final dividend, was presented to Shri R.K.Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and Ministry of New & Renewable Energy by Shri Gurdeep Singh, CMD, NTPC, in the presence of Shri S.C.Garg, Secretary (Power) from Ministry of Power and Shri Saptarshi Roy, Director (Human Resources).

HON'BLE PM INAUGURATES 'GARVI GUJARAT' SADAN



Hon'ble PM takes a look at the model of Garvi Gujarat Sadan during inauguration while Shri Neelesh Kumar Shah, Director (Projects), NBCC, seen explaining Hon'ble PM, special features incorporated in the Iconic eco-friendly Structure. This State Bhawan, executed by NBCC, is an Iconic eco-friendly earthquake resistant Structure, a first of its kind in the capital. Built on an area of 20325 Sqmtr. and at a cost of Rs.131 crore, the Sadan has been completed in 3 months ahead of schedule.

IN BRIEF

8,700 students to decide fate of 14 candidates

NEW DELHI
JNU students will be voting for its students' union on Friday, with six candidates vying for the top post out of the total 14 contesting the polls. Amid slogans of 'Jai Bhim', 'Lal Salaam', 'Vande Mataram', some booing and a minor clash, the presidential debate was held at JNU on Wednesday. The event, a sought-after affair, will be a deciding factor for the union elections. All arrangements have been made by the election authorities for the polls which will see 8,700 students casting their votes through ballot papers. PTI

NHRC issues notices to Haryana in two cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission on Thursday issued notices to the Haryana government and the police in two cases - one involving the reported suicide of a rape victim at a police station in Yamunanagar and the other about the alleged detention and beating of a woman at a Gurugram police station.

Taking suo motu cognisance of media reports on Wednesday, the NHRC issued notices to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Haryana over the reported suicide by a complainant, alleging inaction in her rape case, at Jathlana police station. Seeking reports within six weeks, the NHRC also asked the DGP to inform it about the action taken against the police personnel involved.

According to reports, the victim was tired of repeated visits to the police station in her effort to seek justice.

In another case, the NHRC issued a notice to Gurugram Police Commissioner over reports of a 30-year-old woman, who works as a maid, being detained, stripped and beaten up by police personnel at DLF-I police station after being accused of theft on Tuesday. The police commissioner was asked for a detailed report within four weeks.

Students' bodies announce final panel for DUSU elections

Outfits promise to work towards women's safety, fighting inequality, among others

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

With promises of working towards women's safety, affordable transportation and fighting inequality, prominent students' groups - ABVP, NSUI and AISA - declared their final panel for the upcoming Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections, on Thursday.

Among candidates for the post of president fielded by the ABVP, which was in power in the previous academic year, is Akshit Dhaiya, a sports person and a first-year student at the Faculty of Law. Mr. Dhaiya said he hopes to cultivate an environment to encourage more university students to win medals at international competitions, such as the Olympics. The group's candidates hope to form a "trustworthy, accountable and accessible" student's union that would work towards "inclusive activism" and making the campus safer for women.

The party has also fielded Yogit Rathe, who was a leader of the Ramjas students' union when there was an in-



Students campaign for upcoming DUSU elections, at Delhi University in New Delhi on Thursday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

cident of violence on the campus in 2017. Commenting on that incident, he said that the ABVP did not believe in violence but if he wins, he would work towards removing anti-national elements from the North Campus.

ABVP has fielded Pradeep Tanwar a first-year MA (Hindi) student to the post of vice-president and Shiangi Kharwal, a first-year student in MA (Buddhist Studies) for the post of joint secretary.

The NSUI, which hopes to "fight all types of inequality on campus", has fielded a woman candidate after a long time, party leaders said.

Chetna Tyagi (19), a third-year BA student at Shaheed Bhagath Singh College is also the youngest presidential candidate this year. Ms. Tyagi said she would work towards ensuring that the Internal Complaints Committees are made functional in all colleges and ensuring safety and equal rights for women in hostels. Towards ensuring representation, party leaders said, they have also fielded Ankit Bharti for the post of vice-president who said he would fight discrimination against Dalit students in the university. "Dalits do not feel safe on campus," said Mr. Bharti.

Little star



A girl child showing some acrobatics move before asking money from motorists near Connaught Place in New Delhi on Thursday. • R.V. MOORTHY

Drowning minor rescued by two policemen in Narela

Parents said they had no idea how the six-year-old boy sneaked out of house, reached the drain: police

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A six-year-old boy, who was drowning in a 10-foot-deep drain, was rescued by a team of police officers in outer-north Delhi's Narela on Wednesday.

The officers had gone to the area after receiving a tip-off regarding a supplier of illicit liquor.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said that on Wednesday, Head Constables Narendra and Yogendra and Constable Manoj received a tip-off that a supplier of illicit liquor would pass through Narela and the police had laid a trap in the area. "Suddenly, Narendra heard a child shouting

but when he looked around, he could not find anyone. Narendra and Yogendra then realised that the noise was coming from a nearby drain," the officer said.

The officers peeped inside the drain and found that the child was caught in the current of the sewer water. Yogendra and Narendra

started making efforts to rescue the child. After the two policemen pulled the child out of the drain successfully, the parents were informed about the incident, Mr. Sharma said.

He said that the parents had no idea as to how the child, later identified as Vineet, had sneaked out of house and reached there.

The family had lost another child, Vineet's cousin, to a illness about a week ago, the police also said.

Liquor seized

Meanwhile, the rest of the team managed to apprehend illicit liquor supplier Kailash and 22 cartons of liquor were seized from his possession, the police said.

Delhi zoo welcomes cobras, pythons, gharials

Two exchange programmes were held

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

In two exchange programmes with two other zoos, the Delhi zoo has got 19 snakes, including Indian cobras and Rock Pythons, a pair of 'gharial' (long snout crocodile), and a pair of wolf.

The National Zoological Park, commonly known as the Delhi zoo, now has a total of 27 snakes and as it had only eight before the exchange happened, officials said.

The zoo has obtained four Indian cobras, five rock pythons, two monitor lizards, four rat snakes, two common sand boa and two red sand boa. "We got the snakes on August 26 and in return we have given them six

red jungle fowl, six painted stork among other animals," a zoo official said.

"Though the snakes are in the enclosure, it is not put for public viewing yet," the official added.

Officials also said that the Delhi zoo had more snakes earlier and as numbers kept on decreasing, the exchange programme was conducted.

The Delhi zoo had obtained the pair of 'gharial' and the pair of wolves from Jaipur zoo and gave a pair of hippopotamus in return.

Earlier programme

In July, the Delhi zoo had got a male white tiger in another such exchange programme with the Lucknow zoo.

JNUTA wants university to apologise to professors emeriti

'All 12 professors emeriti deserve retraction of Registrar's letter'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Responding to the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) administration's response to the professors emeriti issue, in which it said it was merely following university rules, the JNU Teachers' Association alleged that the university, through its response, confessed that the purpose of sending the letters was "indeed meant to weed out some or all of them for having turned 75".

Facts misrepresented

The JNUTA, in a statement, said: "The purported aim, we are told, is to correct what the JNU Registrar considers to be a huge skew in emeritus appointments, and to remedy alleged historical wrongs done by previous JNU administrations. However, once again the JNU Registrar has misrepresented the facts. JNU has always had clear rules about the appointment of emeritus professors." The teachers said that the rules of the university show that there is



The university, through its response, confessed that the purpose of sending the letters was indeed meant to weed out some or all of them for having turned 75

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

no cap on the number of professors emeriti at all and that no deserving professor could have missed out on being designated one because of it.

"Any professor can nominate another professor for his/her contribution to the discipline and society, to emeritus status. Thus, the JNU Registrar's insinuations about huge skews and missed opportunities for deserving retired faculty are just attempts to cover up what has always been an intent to dishonour," the teachers said.

The JNUTA added that rules formulated in 2018

cannot have retrospective effect and that it reiterates that all twelve professors emeriti deserve a retraction of the Registrar's letter and a formal apology at the earliest.

The JNUTA also said that for either past or future nominees, the conferment of emeritus status was recognition for achievements and service to the discipline and the institution during the professor's academic tenure, and cannot be retracted once given. "If the recognition is to have any meaning at all, the review clause must be deleted," the JNUTA said.

Ravidas temple issue: protesters draw dharna to a close after 7 days

Leaders underline next steps of movement against demolition

AARUSHI AGGARWAL NEW DELHI

The seven-day dharna at Jantar Mantar against the demolition of Guru Ravidas Temple in Tughlakabad ended on Thursday with the leadership discussing the next steps of the movement.

Prominent Dalit activist Ashoka Bharti, in a briefing to the press, highlighted a four-pronged approach that the community's leaders will now pursue. He said that on September 10, a month since the demolition, there will be a march to perform a puja on the site of the demolished temple and that police disruption "will not prevent us from performing the puja wherever we are standing". The next step, Mr. Bharti

said, was to gather one crore signatures of people belonging to the Dalit community from across the country to be submitted to the government, highlighting their disappointment. Mr. Bharti said, "After the court hearing on September 13, we will file our petition."

He also said that it has been decided that the temple will be rebuilt at the same site and not an alternative one.

Warning of protests

He also warned of protests starting September 14, if the court decision is not in the favour of the community, saying that they "will either thank the government or protest against it". Key organisations advo-

cating for Dalit rights have supported the call for nationwide protests.

The national head of the Akhil Bhartiya Sant Shiromani Guru Ravidas Mandir Sanyukt Sanrakshan Samiti said, "Sant Gurudas is like God to us and there has never been such an insult towards us," adding that this was a question of faith and "we are not ready to die yet, so we protest peacefully and have been praying here at Jantar Mantar in an unprecedented move". The community had, in a previous statement, given the government time till November 26 to review its decision and said they would continue their protests adopting legal and democratic processes before that.

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi zoo has ordered an inquiry into the death of its last Cape Buffalo from whose stomach a piece of plastic was found. The post-mortem report has mentioned the presence of plastic as one of the four reasons that led to its death.

"An inquiry will be done by A.K. Bhowmik, who was the former joint director of National Zoological Park. Strict action will be taken against anyone found guilty," said R.A. Khan, Curator (Education) of National Zoological Park, commonly known as the Delhi zoo.

Samples of the animal, which died on August 27, has been sent to Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI)

in Bareilly to get more clarity on the cause of death.

The report of the post-mortem done by doctors at the Delhi zoo had mentioned four reasons behind the death - lung tuberculosis lesions, impact due to plastic, heavy stone affecting digestion and senility.

Mr. Khan said that plastic has been banned in the zoo since the early 1990s, but plastic bottles are allowed. Stores inside the zoo also sell water in plastic bottles. According to zoo records, two people have been fined for littering inside the zoo in 2019.

The Hindu accessed a photo of the plastic piece found inside the stomach of the animal. The photo shows an about 5-cm-long piece of a

thin plastic. Zoo officials said that it could be part of a plastic bag.

"The incident of plastic found in the stomach of a Cape Buffalo has raised many questions," said Abhijit Bhawal, who is a veterinary officer at the zoo, in a letter sent to the zoo director Renu Singh on September 1. The letter also mentions "lapses" in cleanliness around enclosures.

Commenting on the incident, animal rights activist Gauri Maulekhii said: "There is a complete mismanagement at the zoo and there is corruption too."

Though Mr. Khan said that the material could be carried to the zoo by birds, other officials said that it could have been blown by the wind.



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IN BRIEF
Court sends Ratul Puri to six-day ED custody

NEW DELHI
A court here on Thursday sent Ratul Puri, nephew of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, to 6-day ED custody in a money laundering case related to the AgustaWestland chopper scam. The court also noted that the Enforcement Directorate sought Puri's custody to confront him with "voluminous documents collected" by it and to find out the roles of the co-accused.

Civic body inspector 'harassed' by AAP MLA
NEW DELHI
A North Delhi Municipal Corporation inspector was allegedly harassed by an Aam Aadmi Party MLA and his associates in northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar on Thursday, the police said. After getting information about the incident, a team went to the spot and found NDMC Inspector Ravinder Kumar Gupta injured. A case has been registered at Adarsh Nagar police station and further probe is on, the police added.

Son, grandson nabbed for killing septuagenarian
Accused wanted share in property

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A 70-year-old woman was killed allegedly by her son and minor grandson over a property dispute in north-east Delhi's Jyoti Nagar on Wednesday afternoon, the police said on Thursday.
Deputy Commissioner of Police (North East) Atul Thakur said Maya Devi's eldest son Rajbir and his minor son have been nabbed.
The police said a PCR call was received at 3.30 p.m. regarding the incident. On reaching the spot, they found Devi dead on a charpoy with strangulation marks on her neck.
Served lunch, left home
The victim's younger daughter-in-law told the police that her daughter had served lunch to the victim at 12 p.m. after which they left the house for some work.
A while later, one of Devi's grandson, came home and found her lying on the charpoy. After trying to wake her up, when she did not, he informed his mother, the police said.
The family raised suspicion over the eldest son af-

1 dead, 11 hurt as lift wire snaps at construction site

DDA tells contractor to pay compensation under labour law

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A labourer died and 11 others were injured when a lift, carrying construction material, fell while they were inside it at a Delhi Development construction site in outer Delhi's Narela on Thursday morning, the police said.
Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said a team was sent to the spot following a PCR call regarding the incident.
"It was found that a wire of the lift, which is used for transporting construction material, had broken," he said adding that 12 injured persons were rushed to Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra Hospital from where 35-year-old Sandesh was shifted to Lok Nayak Hospital where he succumbed to injuries.
Three injured persons are said to be critical at a private

There is another lift inside the building, which is in a better condition, but they are not allowed to use it

VICTIM
hospital in Shalimar Bagh.
One of the injured, who did not wish to be named, said at 8 a.m., about five-six of them took the lift to reach the eighth floor while a couple of them were standing downstairs.
On the fifth floor
He said when they reached the fifth floor, the safety belt broke and all of them fell down. "The building has 24 floors. Thankfully, we were on the fifth floor at that time else if we had fallen from upper floors, many of us could

have died," he said.
The labourer alleged that there is another lift inside the building, which is in a better condition, but they are not allowed to use it.
The DDA said construction of EWS and category II houses was under way at that time and it is being executed by Ahluwalia Contracts (India) Ltd.
"The DDA has directed the contractor to pay suitable compensation under relevant labour law to the family of the deceased and the injured," a statement by them read.
The Superintending Engineer of the DDA has been entrusted an enquiry into the safety lapses at the site. Mr. Sharma said a case under relevant sections of the IPC has been registered against the contractor and the construction company.

Seelampur collapse: govt. to give ₹5 lakh to victim's kin

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday visited Seelampur where a building collapse killed two persons and announced a compensation of ₹5 lakh to their family. He also ordered an inquiry into the incident.
The incident on Monday night also left three persons injured. "A life lost can never be replaced but the government will provide ₹5 lakh each as support to the family of the deceased and the injured," a statement by them read.
'Will fund education'
Mr. Kejriwal added that the government will take care of the education of the children of the deceased. "Mr. Kejriwal ordered an immediate inquiry to ascertain the exact causes behind the collapse," an official statement said.

Congress leader murder: head constable and PSO arrested

Accused had shared personal details of Vikas Chaudhary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
FARIDABAD
A Faridabad police head constable and the personal security officer of Congress leader Vikas Chaudhary have been arrested in connection with his murder on Thursday.
Accused head constable Raju has been arrested on charges of criminal conspiracy for allegedly supplying the contact number and the details of the daily routine of the leader to gangster Kaushal and his accomplices. He has been dismissed from the service. Chaudhary's PSO Pradeep Dhariwal was arrested at his instance, the police said.
Carrying a cash reward of ₹5 lakh on his head, Kaushal was arrested by the Special Task Force of Haryana Police at Delhi airport on August 26. He was wanted in around 50 cases of murder, kidnapping and extortion in the state, including the murder of



The accused in police custody. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chaudhary.
Kaushal had purportedly told the police about his connection with Raju during interrogation. Besides Kaushal, Raju was also in contact with Sachin Kheri, who was arrested in connection with the case two days ago following an encounter. Sachin carried a cash reward of ₹25,000 on his head. The policeman was also in touch with the other accused in the case - Dhariwal, Neeraj Faridpuri and Amit Dagar. Neeraj and Amit are already arrested. Raju was in contact with Kaushal and Sachin till few days before their arrests. He had pro-

ceeded on long leave before the Kaushal's arrest, the police said.
Pradeep, a close friend of Raju, had been Chaudhary's PSO for around five years and had complete information about his activities. Pradeep shared details of Chaudhary with Raju and also suggested him that they could extort money from the politician.
Following this, Raju passed on contact numbers of Chaudhary and other businessmen to Kaushal, who in turn made extortion calls to them. Sachin carried out the reconnaissance of the places visited by Chaudhary before the murder based on the details furnished by Raju.
Raju would supply the information in return for money and also took ₹3 lakh from Kaushal's mother in Gurugram in the first week of August. The head constable has been remanded in two days police custody.

DCW notice to SDMC, police on sex rackets

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Delhi Commission for Women on Thursday issued notices to South Delhi Municipal Corporation and the police over alleged sex rackets in spas in Nawada and Madhu Vihar. The notices were issued after a raid conducted by the commission on Wednesday.
"The commission found that prostitution activities were taking place in the spas. During the raid, nine girls were rescued. Written statements of the manager, customers and girls were recorded where they have admitted to the fact that the premises were being used for illegal activities," said DCW. It also sought details of licenses granted to the spa centres. The civic body was also asked to provide details of the monitoring systems that are in place to prevent prostitution.
The police said they have received complaints from four staff members of the spa where the DCW conducted the raid. "The SPA owner presented all valid documents to police. We are going through it," said an officer.

Four men shoot at passer-by; nabbed

Accused got weapon from man who is in judicial custody

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Four persons have been arrested for allegedly firing at a man in Dwarka during a joyride, the police said on Thursday.
Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Anto Alphonse said the accused - Pawan alias Golu (22), Vishal alias Prince (23), Parveen alias Bhalla (22) and Kishan (23) - wanted to show off their skills.
In the small hours of August 29, the police were informed that one Sunny from Uttam Nagar was shot at in the stomach by four masked men - two on a luxury bike and two on a scooty - in front of his house.
"The accused were firing in the air when one shot hit him. The accused then fled from the spot while Sunny was rushed to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital," Mr. Alphonse said.
At the spot, police found two empty cartridges. A case under Sections 307 (attempt to murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code was registered and investigation was taken up.
The police said Sunny has ruled any personal enmity



The four accused in police custody on Thursday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

with anyone after which CCTV footage of the spot was examined after which the accused were identified.
Raids conducted
"Raid was conducted at accommodation in Uttam Nagar where three persons were found. They revealed the involvement of the fourth accused who lived nearby," the officer said, adding that the accused attacked the policemen when they had gone to arrest them. Following this, two cases were registered in connection with the incident on Tuesday.

The police claim to have recovered three pistols, 13 live cartridges, a bike and scooty used in the commission of the crime.
During interrogation, the accused allegedly told the police that they used to go on a joyride at night and target people who were alone.
"In the particular incident, they fired at Sunny just for show off. Further, the accused were planning a robbery in the area," the officer said. The accused got the weapon from a man, who is in judicial custody in an attempt to murder case, Mr. Alphonse added.

Man killed during feud over urinating in public

Accused was out on bail, drunk at that time

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A 24-year-old man was killed in a feud over urinating in the open in west Delhi's Vikaspuri, the police said on Thursday.
Shivam alias Shiva from Mohan Garden has been arrested, they said. Shivam who has been involved in several cases of robbery and vehicle thefts had recently come out on bail.
On August 2 at 12.17 a.m., the police said they received a PCR call regarding stabbing of a man under Janakpuri flyover. A team was sent to the spot and on enquiry, the injured was identified as Aneesh Kumar Yadav from Delhi.
He was shifted to DDU Hospital in a police van where he succumbed to injuries, the police said. During probe, it came to fore that Aneesh was with his maternal uncle and a friend on a scooty to District Centre when the incident happened at 10.45 p.m. They were under Janakpuri at the time when the victim went away to urinate. After a while, when he did not return, the other two went to

look for him and found him lying injured on the ground. They also saw a man running away, the police said.
DCP (West) Monika Bhardwaj said an FIR of murder was registered at Vikaspuri police station and teams were formed to nab the accused. She said while going through the CCTV footage, one blue motorcycle was spotted near the place of incident. The motorcycle was traced near Nawada metro station but it was found to be stolen from Mohan Garden a few days back.
Tip-off on accused
"We found that it was stolen by Shivam," she said. On September 4, the police nabbed him from near Nawada metro station following a tip-off. During interrogation, the accused said he was drunk when deceased came to the spot. They had some quarrel over urinating when Shivam stabbed Aneesh three times with a knife. "We have recovered bloodstained clothes, a knife and motorcycle from his possession," said Ms. Bhardwaj.

Vagabond arrested for killing man

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A homeless man was arrested for allegedly killing a 32-year-old man after he was confronted with suspicion of theft, the police said on Thursday.
Saheen used to stay at night shelters, they said. On August 28, the police received information regarding stabbing of one Manoj at 7.30 p.m. inside a de-addiction centre in Kotla Mubarakpur's Babu Park. Manoj suspected Saheen of stealing a water pump from his house and had gone there to confront him, the police said. Manoj had sustained eight stab injuries, a senior officer said. During the investigation, it was found that the two had an altercation following which Saheen stabbed Manoj and fled the spot.
"During probe, we did not get any information about Saheen's whereabouts as he was vagabond. He used to stay at various night shelters. He was previously involved in four other criminal cases, including an attempt to murder and robbery. He was also jailed for over three years," the officer said.
"He was held following a tip-off. The knife used in commission of crime has also been recovered," he added.

Bar association demands removal of Law Department Principal Secretary

'He defied Cabinet's decision to release ₹50 cr. for lawyers'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Delhi Bar Association on Thursday demanded the removal of Principal Secretary of Law Department Sanjay Kumar Aggarwal for allegedly defying Cabinet's decision to release ₹50 crore for welfare schemes for around 90,000 lawyers.
"Delhi Bar Association demanded the immediate removal of the Principal Se-

cretary for creating an impasse and not allowing the government to release the ₹50 crore annual grant... for the number of welfare schemes for almost 90,000 lawyers of Delhi," a statement issued by the Bar Association reads.
However, Mr. Aggarwal said the file regarding the matter was never put up before him since his joining on May 31, 2019. "The file was

sent to the Law Minister by the previous Principal Secretary on April 23 or 24. The file was never put up before me. I have not exchanged any opinion with the Minister on the issue," Mr. Aggarwal told *The Hindu*. The association also said if the money is not released, they will protest outside Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal's residence on September 11.

Political wing of SDMC defends audit findings

Report by civic body highlights irregularities of around ₹1,600 crore

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Defending itself over various findings of an audit report by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, which highlighted financial irregularities of around ₹1,600 crore, leaders of the political wing of the civic body addressed a press conference on Thursday.
Standing Committee Chairperson Bhopendra Gupta said among the ₹1,177 crore of property tax not collected, as reported, a large part of the money was tied up

The report is still being examined. In case serious lapses are identified, they would be investigated

BHUPENDRA GUPTA
Standing Committee Chairperson

in court cases and since the time of the report, around ₹200 crore had been collected.
Apart from this, he claimed that the cost overrun of ₹32.08 crore for the build-

ing of a multi-specialty hospital at Kalkaji had taken place as the government had stopped funding the project.
The corporation had to fund the project, he said, adding that meanwhile, the cost had gone up.
Cost escalation
With regard to cost escalations over parking projects in the SDMC's jurisdiction, Mr. Gupta said according to replies sought from officials, the hike was due to additional parking space being creat-

ed at these sites.
Attacking the Aam Admi Party, which had earlier highlighted findings of the report alleging large scale corruption in the municipal corporation, Mr. Gupta said the party regularly made such claims and later backtracked.
However, he said he was under no impression that everything was fine with the SDMC and that the report was still being examined.
In case, serious lapses are identified, they would be investigated, Mr. Gupta added.

Brothers found dead inside rented house

Post-mortem report awaited

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Two brothers were found dead at their rented accommodation in west Delhi's Hari Nagar on Thursday afternoon, the police said.
Foul smell
They have not recovered any note. A senior officer said a call was received at 1 p.m. that a foul smell was coming out from a house.
On reaching the spot, it was found that the house is owned by one Babu Lal who had rented the house to Ashish Kumar Deb (58)

about four months ago.
"Crime team was called to the spot and the team broke the door where the Ashish and his brother Chhote were found dead. The body had been decomposed," the officer said.
The bodies have been shifted to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital for post-mortem and further investigation is under way, the police added.
Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -7.30 p.m.

Unnao rape case: court rejects accused's anticipatory bail plea

He 'framed' survivor's father for possession of illegal firearms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI
A court here dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of an accused on Thursday in a case of an alleged conspiracy to frame the Unnao rape survivor's father for possession of illegal firearms and sent him to judicial custody.
District Judge rejected the pre-arrest bail plea and sent accused Sharadveer Singh to the Tihar jail after he appeared in the court in pursuance to a summons issued to him on taking cognisance of the supplementary char-

gesheet filed by the CBI in the case. The arguments on framing of charges against Singh are scheduled to commence on Friday.
The court had earlier framed charges against expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, his brother Atul Sengar, three former U.P. policemen and five others for allegedly framing the 19-year-old rape survivor's father in an illegal arms possession case. It had also noted that Sharadveer Singh was part of the alleged conspiracy to frame the survi-

vor's father by planting arms and for falsely implicating him by creating of fake documents. The CBI has named Singh for offences under Sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 166 (public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person), 167 (public servant framing an incorrect document), 193 (false evidence), 201 (disappearance of evidence) and 218 (public servant framing incorrect record) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the relevant sections of the Arms Act.

DUTA protests against 'unjust treatement'

Demonstration held on Teachers' Day

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Delhi University Teachers' Association held a protest demonstration over "unjust treatment being meted out to teachers" on Teachers' Day.
"Symbolic celebration of Teachers' Day is not a substitute for ensuring service and working conditions of teachers, which are conducive to attracting and retaining talent to the teaching profession," the DUTA said.
"More than 4000 ad hoc teachers are languishing without permanent jobs for

no fault of theirs. Year after year, our ad hoc teachers are producing meritorious students even as their own jobs lack stability," the group said. They also raised the demand for restoration of old guidelines for the appointment of guest teachers, the release of the second tranche of posts under OBC expansion, increase in posts on account of EWS expansion and ensure speedy promotions. The group also attacked the draft National Education Policy, calling it an attempt to privatise education.

DELHI ☀️ Timings			
FRIDAY, SEPT. 06			
☀️ RISE	06:01	🌇 SET	18:37
🌙 RISE	13:06	🌇 SET	23:53
SATURDAY, SEPT. 07			
☀️ RISE	06:02	🌇 SET	18:36
🌙 RISE	14:03	🌇 SET	00:00
SUNDAY, SEPT. 08			
☀️ RISE	06:02	🌇 SET	18:35
🌙 RISE	14:57	🌇 SET	00:42

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	28
Safdarjang	36	28
Palam	37	27

Delhi Palam Today
34°C A humid and hazy morning turns warm day with cloudy sky. Spells of rain and thundershower will occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C Warm and humid weather with cloudy sky likely. Spell of rain and thundershower will occur.

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THE HINDU
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Kashmiri youth beaten by mob in Neemrana

Locals claim he was in women's clothes, looked suspicious

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

A Kashmiri youth studying in an aeronautical engineering college was tied to an electric pole and allegedly beaten up by a mob in Neemrana town of Rajasthan's Alwar district on Wednesday night. The mob claimed that the youth, dressed in a woman's clothes, was looking suspicious.

The youth, identified as Mir Faiz, 25, belonging to Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, has lodged a complaint with the police for assault by the mob. Though the police have launched an investigation in the matter, they were also checking the youth's credentials.

Based on Mr. Faiz's complaint, a First Information Report under Sections 323

We are checking the student's mobile phone, laptop and social media accounts and have searched his rented accommodation

AMANDEEP SINGH KAPOOR
Superintendent of Police, Bhiwadi

(voluntarily causing hurt), 143 (unlawful assembly), 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement), 505 (intent to cause hurt) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of Indian Penal Code was registered at Neemrana police station.

Intelligence agencies
Bhiwadi Superintendent of Police Amandeep Singh Kapoor told *The Hindu* on Thursday that the police were scrutinising the Kashmiri student's mobile

phone, laptop and social media accounts and had searched his rented accommodation. He said the intelligence agencies were also inquiring into the matter and would independently inter-rogate the youth.

‘Took his for ATM thief’
Mr. Kapoor said the mob grew suspicious of Mr. Faiz's movements as he was attired in a woman's clothes while coming out of an ATM kiosk. “The people who overpowered him probably thought that he was trying to hack the ATM machine,” he said.

No person has been arrested so far on the complaint lodged by the student and nothing suspicious found from the latter, according to police sources. Mr. Faiz is a final-year student of BTech (Aeronautical Engineering).

2 live-stream death on social media

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SANGRUR

A young man and a woman shot themselves dead here, streaming their death live on social media, police said on Thursday.

The alleged incident took place at Gujran village, about four kilometres away from Dirba town of Sangrur district, on Wednesday night, police said.

Their bodies were found in the fields, police said.

The cause for the extreme step is not clear. Both were unmarried and their families denied having information about any possible relationship between them, police said.

The woman was a student of BA (final year) while the man was a Class XII passout.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -7.30 p.m.

Punjab govt. puts on hold implementation of MV Act

Old penalty to continue until a decision is taken: Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government on Thursday put on hold implementation of the amended Motor Vehicles Act in the State.

State Transport Minister Razia Sultana in an official press release said old penalty would continue to be charged for traffic-related violations until “a decision was taken on the implementation of the amended Act”.

‘Huge penalties’
Admitting that traffic rule violations were a major cause of road accidents, for which violators must be punished, the Minister said at the same time “people must not be burdened with huge penalties”.

“In a welfare state like India, the idea behind such kind of penalties was to deter people from violating

In a welfare State like India, the idea behind such kind of penalties was to deter people from violating traffic rules, not to augment the State treasury

RAZIA SULTANA
Transport Minister

traffic rules, not to increase the State treasury,” the Minister said, adding that the government would soon take a call on this.

Spelling out the initiatives taken by the State government to tackle traffic-related violations, the Minister said the department had recently decided to equip the traffic police with e-challan machines.

A decision to establish a road safety secretariat had also been taken, which would keep an eye on vehi-



ular traffic all across the State and be responsible for ensuring compliance of road safety norms, she said.

A few days ago, Punjab Additional Director General of Police (Traffic) S.S. Chauhan had said that the State government would soon call a meeting of all stakeholders with regard to implementation of the amended Act.

Parliament in July had passed the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019, which seeks to tighten road traffic regulations.

Jaipur violence



Nine persons, most of them policemen, were injured in Jaipur on Thursday during violence triggered by a fatal axe attack on a hawkler. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Batala blast was a result of cumulative faults: official

VIKAS VASUDEVA
BATALA

Inconsolable family members of those who died in the blast at the Batala firecracker factory started pouring in at the crematorium on Thursday even as the anger against the local administration was palpable.

The incident, which according to officials was a result of “multiple lapses”, has not just left the family members of the victims but also local residents furious.

Since morning, Manjeet Singh has been running from one hospital to another with the hope of finding the body of his 50-year-old elder brother Satnam Singh, who was killed in the blast.

“I saw the picture of (the dead body) of my brother in a newspaper and on WhatsApp. He came from Amritsar only yesterday to work here at the factory. Since morning I have been trying



Grief stricken: Kin of those killed being consoled by relatives during the last rites of the blast victims. • AKHILESH KUMAR

to search for him but without any luck. The hospital staff here says the body is not at this hospital. Where do I go?” asked Manjeet, who drives an autorickshaw in Amritsar and has been camping at Batala's Civil Hospital.

Deputy Commissioner Vipul Ujjwal told *The Hindu*: “We are trying to find the fault. Such kind of accident

is a result of cumulative faults and not because of the involvement of any single person... Multiple lapses at multiple levels over a prolonged period of time... So now we have to go out and find out who are these multiple stakeholders.”

As many as 23 people died in the deadly explosion at the fireworks factory on Thursday.

Man beaten to death over ₹180 food bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHADOHI (U.P.)

A 25-year-old man was beaten to death by a hotel owner and its waiters following a dispute over a bill of ₹180 in Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi district, police said on Thursday.

Suraj Singh and Vishal Dubey were beaten up with rods on Wednesday after they got into an argument with Gurmil Singh over their dinner bill, Superintendent of Police Ram Badan Singh said.

Though Mr. Dubey managed to flee, Mr. Singh was caught and thrashed. He succumbed to his injuries, the SP said. The incident took place at Sardar Dhabha near Mahrajanj.

The hotel's owner, Gurmil Singh, and his son Surendra Singh have been arrested, while two waiters of the hotel are at large, police said.

Haryana protester breathes last

Rajesh had immolated himself as his sons were jobless

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

A man, who set himself afire in Rathdhana village of Sonapat district last month when Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra' was passing through the area, died at a Rohtak hospital on Thursday, said officials.

Rajesh succumbed to his injuries at the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS), Rohtak, they said.

After setting himself

afire on August 26, Rajesh had told reporters that he took the extreme step because his son was jobless despite having been “assured” of employment when he had met the Chief Minister earlier.

The yatra was nearing a halt in Sonapat district when the man doused himself with some inflammable material nearby and set himself on fire, police had said.

Haryana Minister and BJP MLA from Sonapat, Kavita

Jain had said that when the yatra reached the village, they saw a man engulfed in flames after which security officials were asked to rush to his help.

Referred to PGIMS

The seriously injured person was referred to PGIMS hospital, police said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had flagged off the Jan Ashirwad Yatra for the Assembly polls in Haryana, from Kalka on August 18.

Three of family held for ‘honour killing’ in U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

In a suspected case of honour killing, three members of a family were arrested in Jalalabad Dehat village of Shamli on Wednesday for killing a woman, whose body was found in the bushes on September 2.

The police said Niyamat Ali, his son Sharafat and his son-in-law Sharafat were arrested for murdering Gulshafa, 20, as she was in love with a boy against the fami-

ly's wishes.

SP Abhay Kumar said the accused had confessed that they strangled Gulshafa as she ruined the family's reputation. “The post-mortem report showed strangulation marks. We also recovered her mobile which showed that she was in a relationship with another boy of the same community. The family doubted her character and said that this was coming in the way of her getting married,” he said.

Man stumbles upon treasure while digging

But police say he can't keep it

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HARDOI (U.P.)

A man digging the foundations for his home here on Thursday stumbled upon a treasure trove of jewellery worth atleast ₹25 lakh, but the police say he can't keep it.

The police seized the jewellery – 650 gm of gold and 4.53 kg of silver ornaments – as it appeared to be over 100 years old and could be of archaeological significance, Hardoi Superintendent of Police Alok Priyadarshi said.

‘No relevant papers’

“It was seized as the person in whose possession it was found had no relevant papers,” said Mr. Priyadarshi.

The police learn about the jewellery after informa-

tion about the find spread in the village.

The man, who found the jewellery, first denied the incident but later admitted having unearthed it, they said.

Treasure Trove Act

Any jewellery or costly item dug out from earth is legally termed “treasure” and is governed by the Indian Treasure Trove Act, 1878.

Under Section 4 of the Act, the finder of a “treasure” is supposed to apprise the district revenue officer either on his own or on receiving a notice.

The finder is also required to deposit his find either with the district revenue officials or undertake to produce it before authorities when required.



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NGO works with govt. to alleviate anaemia among kids

Swades Foundation tests children for anaemia in six blocks in Raigad district, starts them on supplements

JYOTI SHELAR
MUMBAI
In a unique initiative, a non-profit organisation is helping the State government identify anaemic children and start them on the required supplements. Swades Foundation has been working in this area in six blocks of Raigad district over the past few years. With a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the State, the foundation is all set to expand its work in other areas. Anaemia is a condition wherein one lacks healthy red blood cells to carry adequate oxygen to the body's tissues. Anaemic children, therefore, are weak, fatigued and unable to grow to their full potential. While iron deficiency is one of the major triggers, the government already has a preventive programme under



Check-up: A volunteer tests the haemoglobin levels of a child at a school. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

which iron supplements are distributed in schools every week. "But despite these supplements, many children continue to be anaemic. The main reason is they don't eat wholesome, nutritious meals at home. Their diet largely consists of rice and dried fish in this region, and there is no intake of leafy vegetables and other nutrient-rich vegetables. Rag

they are put on injections and are also given blood transfusions. They are monitored until the levels are normal. Children with mild and moderate haemoglobin levels are put on a daily dose of 45 mg iron supplements for 60 to 90 days," Ms. Harmalkar said. While the government provides the medication, the foundation provides the testing machine, kits and training, and helps create awareness among parents and teachers, which is crucial. The therapeutic management of anaemia is focussed on schoolchildren in the age group of five to 16. Till August, the foundation has tested 43,578 children, of whom 16,129 were found to be anaemic. Of the 5,518 children who have completed treatment so far, 75% have been cured of anaemia and nearly 10% have shown progress in their haemoglobin levels. At present nearly 2,000 children are under treatment. Collaborative approach Founded by Ronnie and Zarina Screwvala in 2013, Swades Foundation looks at a problem with a 360-degree view. "When we talk about health, we have to look at clean drinking water, access to toilets and all other such issues in the backdrop," Ms. Screwvala said. Problems in rural Maharashtra are complex and need a collaborative effort, she said. "One cannot work in isolation. We are working strategically with the government to create sustainable solutions and eco-systems that can function on their own." The MoU, signed on August 27, enables the foundation to work across the

State. "We have already expanded our work to the seventh block, which is Sudhagad," Ms. Screwvala said. The six blocks that the foundation has been working in covered 2,000 villages in Mangaon, Mahad, Mhasla, Poladpur, Shrivardhan and Tala. Besides anaemia, the foundation works in the field of eye care and paediatric cardiac care. It has carried out over 14,500 cataract surgeries and distributed over 78,800 spectacles till date. Dr. Anup Yadav of the Directorate of Health Services, Maharashtra, said the government realises the potential of public-private partnerships to offer holistic health services. "With the aim of taking this forward and encouraging NGOs' participation, we have signed an MoU with Swades Foundation," he said.

MNS on silent mode over campaign against EVMs

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

A month after announcing a door-to-door campaign against EVMs, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) seems to have gone silent on the issue. Party members have denied that its silence has anything to do with MNS chief Raj Thackeray being questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on August 22. Mr. Thackeray has said the ED grilling him would not stop him from speaking out against the government.

When asked about the campaign, senior MNS leader Anil Shidore said, "We have not let go of it. Yes, the door-to-door campaign which Mr. Thackeray had originally thought has not been launched yet, but it won't be appropriate to link this with the ED probe," he said.

On Thursday, MNS leader and former MLA Nitin Sardesai was called for questioning by the ED in the ongoing probe into money laundering charges in the IL&FS case. Mr. Sardesai is Mr. Thackeray's partner in Matoshri construction company.

While Mr. Shidore blamed floods and the need for planning as causes for the delay, sources in the party said they are awaiting instructions from their leader. "There have been no instructions on how to go forward with the campaign since the probe," said one leader from Mumbai. He said the ED is being used by the ruling party to silence the opposition.

Mr. Thackeray had also said he would address party workers about the ED's questioning, but for the last 12 days there has been no communication with party workers.

Rushing for cover



Drenched: Pedestrians and motorists are caught in a spell of heavy rain in Nagpur on Thursday. ■S. SUDARSHAN

A day after threatening to quit Congress, Harshvardhan Patil goes incommunicado

Party says decision on Indapur seat not yet final, NCP's Sule says ready for talks

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

A day after hinting that he may quit the Congress and join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), senior Congress leader and former minister Harshvardhan Patil on Thursday remained out of reach of Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leaders, despite several attempts to contact him.

Mr. Patil had criticised the NCP in a rally on Wednesday. State Congress president Balasaheb Thorat said "We have not been able to contact Harshvardhan Patil Even [NCP president] Sharad Pawar does not want him to join the BJP. He is positive."

Mr. Thorat said Mr. Patil might be unhappy since he was promised the Indapur Assembly seat, currently



Harshvardhan Patil

held by the NCP, during the Lok Sabha poll campaign. Former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan, who was in Delhi, told reporters he had been unable to reach Mr. Patil. "There has been no decision on the Indapur seat. On the contrary, talks with Pawar saheb are positive (regarding exchange of the seat). I tried to contact Mr.

Patil, but could not reach him," Mr. Chavan said. He was in Delhi to attend meetings of senior Congress leaders from the State and the screening committee for the Assembly polls.

Supriya Sule, the NCP MP from Baramati, which includes the Indapur Assembly segment, said there has been no discussion regarding the seat. "The NCP is not going to stretch for the Indapur seat. Both parties are entering talks with a list of all 288 seats. This does not mean that the list has been finalised. If [Mr. Patil] has complaints against the NCP, I am ready for a discussion," she said.

Ms. Sule said she had met the Congress leader three days ago, but he had been incommunicado on Thursday.

"I have left a message for him with an important person. I was not startled, but was saddened by his comments about the NCP," she said.

Mr. Patil, in a rally of his supporters on Wednesday, criticised the NCP for not vacating the Indapur seat despite it being promised to him in the Lok Sabha poll campaign. The NCP's Dattatraya Bharne defeated Mr. Patil from the constituency in 2014, when both parties contested separately.

Meanwhile, the screening committee of the Congress for the Assembly polls met in Delhi on Thursday. According to Leader of Opposition in Assembly Vijay Vadettiwar, the party has finalised the first list of 60 candidates and is likely to declare it by September 10.

UPS Madan takes over as State Election Commissioner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Retired bureaucrat UPS Madan on Thursday took over as the 6th State Election Commissioner of Maharashtra.

Mr. Madan replaces J.S. Saharia, who has completed his five-year tenure in the top post at the State Election Commission. Mr. Madan, a 1983-batch IAS officer, has held various important posts during his decades-long career, including that of Maharashtra Chief Secretary.

The former bureaucrat has a long experience in the administration having worked as a zilla parishad CEO, district collector, additional chief secretary, State electoral officer, MMRDA commissioner and MHADA CEO before becoming the Chief Secretary.

Mr. Madan retired earlier this year. Mr. Saharia's term ended on September 4, a SEC statement said.

Patil suggests nephew for Kolhapur South

Sena MP Mandlik backs Congressman

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Senior Congress leader and former minister Satej 'Bunty' Patil said on Thursday his nephew Ruturaj would be the Congress's candidate for the Kolhapur South Assembly seat.

Mr. Patil, an MLC and the son of educationist and politician D.Y. Patil, made the announcement at a meeting of his supporters in Kolhapur. "There is no need to worry about leaders leaving the Congress and the NCP. The common people are still with us," Mr. Patil said.

Interestingly, Sanjay Mandlik, the newly elected Shiv Sena MP of Kolhapur, was also present at the meeting, emphatically voicing his support for Ruturaj.

Mr. Patil and Mr. Mandlik are both avowed adversaries of the powerful Mahadik family and especially Dhananjay Mahadik, the former Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP from Kolhapur who recently joined the BJP. Mr. Patil has a history of

political rivalry with the Mahadik clan. After winning the Kolhapur South seat twice in 2004 and 2009, Mr. Patil was defeated by Mr. Mahadik's cousin, Amal. However, the Congressman managed to win the Legislative Council seat in 2015 by defeating Amal's father, Mahadevrao.

Mr. Patil refused to campaign for Mr. Mahadik in the general election, campaigning for Mr. Mandlik instead. This resulted in the NCP leader losing to Mr. Mandlik.

"In return, Mr. Mandlik is endorsing Ruturaj's candidacy for Kolhapur South. Mr. Patil and Mr. Mandlik are motivated by a common desire to defeat Amal Mahadik [sitting BJP MLA from Kolhapur South]," a Kolhapur-based analyst said.

Meanwhile, former State minister Prakash Awade quit as the Kolhapur Congress president, allegedly unhappy at the party's stand on the abrogation of Article 370. Mr. Patil's name is doing the rounds for the post.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE
DEATH ANNIVERSARIES
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State gets first electric bus, Shivaee, for intercity services

Foundation stone laid for MSRTC's ambitious redevelopment plan for Mumbai Central depot

AJEET MAHALE
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) inducted its first electric bus on Thursday called Shivaee. Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray, who inaugurated the bus, said it was a matter of pride that Maharashtra was the first State to have an electric bus on intercity routes.

The bus can run for 300 km on one charge and takes between one and five hours for a full charge. The fare will be between that charged for the Shivshahi service and the premium Shivneri. MSRTC vice chairman and managing director Ranjeet Singh Deol said they haven't



Shivaee enters Mumbai Central depot after being inaugurated by Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday. ■EMMANUEL YOGINI

finalised the routes. "Fifty buses will come soon. All will be procured on wet lease. We will discuss with the operator on the routes they can ply," he said.

Mr. Thackeray also laid the foundation stone for the ambitious redevelopment of the Mumbai Central depot and MSRTC's head offices. MSRTC plans to build a 49-

storey building and redesign the depot. The first eight floors will be used for parking, while administrative offices will be housed between floors nine and 14. The rest will be rented to other government departments.

Mr. Deol said the design is as per the FSI they have. "We will not lease the extra space to private entities. We will give it only to government departments and agencies," he said.

The project will be built by the MSRTC and the transport department and will not involve any private players. The estimated cost of the building will be around ₹468.12 crore and the corporation expects around

₹16.17 crore as rent from the 35 floors. "We are working on the tender specifications. The tenders will soon be floated," he said.

MSRTC also unveiled a plan to redevelop a 10-acre plot in Kurla, which houses some administrative offices and a workshop.

The redevelopment is being done through a public-private partnership with Eduspark International Private Limited. The latter will redevelop the offices and workshop, and build two 12-storey buildings for staff quarters. The remaining land will be used for a school, where 50 seats will be reserved for children of MSRTC employees.

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IN BRIEF
Provide security to Muthoot staff, says HC

KOCHI
A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday directed the police to ensure that willing staff of Muthoot Finance Limited's various branches in Kottayam and Ernakulam districts were allowed to enter the branch offices and work. The Non-banking and Private Finance Employees' Association (CITU) and the CITU State unit were stopping them from entering their offices by use of force, Muthoot branch managers said in a petition.

Lookout notices issued for UNA office-bearers

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Crime Branch of the Kerala police has declared United Nurses Association president Jasmin Shah a fugitive from the law. It has issued a lookout notice for Mr. Shah and three associates in connection with a case relating to large-scale misappropriation and illegal diversion of funds collected for trade union purposes from nurses. Mr. Shah had successfully spearheaded a series of agitations to better the working conditions and wages of nurses.

Court to hear Navayuga plea on September 12

VIJAYAWADA
The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday adjourned to September 12 the hearing on a petition filed by Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NECL) director Y. Ramesh against the cancellation of the Machilipatnam port concession agreement. NECL advocates told the court that the government was not supposed to cancel the agreement after the company had incurred a huge expenditure and was not given possession of the land.

Shivakumar's aides asked to appear for questioning by ED

Agency assures Karnataka HC that they will not be arrested till September 17

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday assured a Division Bench of the High Court of Karnataka that it will not arrest till September 17, the three associates of former Minister D.K. Shivakumar if they appear before the investigation officer for questioning as per the summons issued to them.

The assurance was given to the Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice Mohammad Nawaz during the hearing of the appeals – filed by Sunil Kumar Sharma, Sachin Narayan, and Anjaneya Hanumanthaiah – challenging the single judge order of August 29, 2019, that had rejected their plea against ED summons issued in January.

The ED contended that the appeals were not maintainable before a Division Bench while counsel for the appellants argued that the appeals were maintainable, upon which the Bench said it



Unfazed: Supporters of former Minister D.K. Shivakumar staging a protest in Ramanagaram. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

would have to decide the issue of jurisdiction to hear the appeals.

Noting that the appellants were not summoned during the pendency of their petitions, the Bench asked the ED what it proposed to do during the pendency of the appeals, as counsel for the appellants said fresh summons were issued after the dismissal of their petitions. ED's counsel then sought 20

minutes to get instructions from officials, and told the Bench that the appellants would not be arrested for a week or 10 days if they appeared before the ED.

Advocates for the appellants said their interests would be prejudiced if they were to appear before the ED, which was likely to question them along with Mr. Shivakumar, who is in the agency's custody. The Bench said

Ramanagaram shuts down

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANDYA

Ramanagaram district came to a standstill for the second day on Thursday in response to a bandh called by supporters of Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar against his arrest. They staged protests at around 50 places. All educational institutions remained shut. Buses remained off roads.

such an apprehension was uncalled for as their appeals were pending before the court. The hearing was adjourned till September 16.

The appellants face a criminal case filed by the Income Tax Department for evasion of IT, submission of false tax statement, and alleged transport of unaccounted money belonging to Mr. Shivakumar through hawala channels.

VIP darshan ticket may cost ₹20,000

TTD likely to open exclusive counter

G.P. SHUKLA
TIRUMALA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is likely to peg the cost of each VIP darshan ticket at ₹20,000, which devotees can buy without any recommendation from any VIP.

The main intention behind the proposal is to mobilise funds for the newly floated Sri Venkateswara Alaya Nirmana (SRIVANI) Trust under which the TTD desires to take up construction of temples of Lord Venkateswara at all important cities and towns across the country.

Open to all

Highly informed sources have confirmed that a counter will be exclusively set up for the issue of VIP tickets and devotees will be free to avail any number of tickets of their choice by tendering the cost.

It will be an open-to-all facility and no kind of recommendation will be entertained in the process. Devotees purchasing the

VIP tickets across the counters will be extended all courtesies which include priority in the darshan, accommodation and laddus.

They will be allowed ahead of the normal VIPs and will be permitted to have the darshan of the presiding deity from the closest quarters (from Kulasekhara Azhwar padi) inside the sanctum sanctorum, apart from a 'harathi' on a par with protocol dignitaries.

Checking middlemen

Though it was earlier thought to fix the cost of each ticket at ₹10,000, the management had second thoughts given the popularity of VIP darshan coupled with the fear of touts.

The TTD is confident that the new proposal is sure to check the rampant middlemen system atop the sacred town and usher in more transparency in the issue of darshan tickets.

The TTD expects an initial sales of 200 and 300 tickets on average every day.



Paul Muthoot George

HC sets aside life term of eight in Paul Muthoot case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday set aside the Thiruvananthapuram CBI Special Court's order convicting eight accused and awarding them life imprisonment in the Paul Muthoot George murder case.

Paul Muthoot George, 32, scion of the Muthoot M George group, was stabbed to death in a road rage incident at Ponga on the Alappuzha-Changanassery road on the night of August 21, 2009.

Nine accused were awarded life term and asked to pay a fine of ₹50,000 each by the special court. The court did not consider the case of second accused Sathesh Kumar, alias 'Kari' Sathesh, who stabbed Paul George, as he did not file an appeal.

The Bench of Justices A.M. Shaffique and N. Anilkumar passed the verdict while partially allowing the appeal filed by the eight accused against the sentences awarded to them by the lower court.

However, the sentence and conviction imposed on the accused on charges of unlawful assembly and voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means and other charges would remain in force.

Jose Tom cannot contest under KC(M) symbol

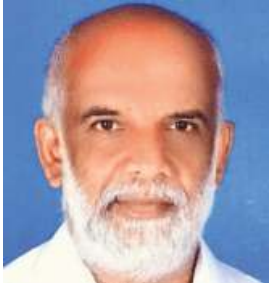
He will have to fight Pala bypoll as an independent

STAFF REPORTER
KOTTAYAM

The crisis in the Kerala Congress (M) ahead of its all-important Pala byelection precipitated further with the election authorities here on Thursday rejecting the nomination of Jose Tom Pulikkunnel, who sought to contest under the party symbol.

With this, Mr. Pulikkunnel will be contesting the byelection here on September 23 as an independent candidate of the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Returning Officer and Deputy Collector S. Sivaprasad rejected Mr. Pulikkunnel's nomination after taking into consideration an order by the Idukki munsif court, which prevented Jose K. Mani from officiating as the chairman of the regional party. Further, a letter handed over by the KC(M) working



Jose Tom Pulikkunnel

chairman P.J. Joseph to the Election Commission as well as the Returning officer against allotting the party

symbol to Mr. Pulikkunnel, also proved crucial in taking the decision.

"The acting chairman also informed us that Stephen George, who endorsed the 'B' form of Mr. Pulikkunnel as an office secretary, was under suspension. He will now be allotted a symbol as demanded in the second set of nomination on a priority basis," Mr. Sivaprasad said.

Soon after the decision came out, Joseph Kandathil, the rebel candidate fielded by the Joseph faction, with-

drew his nomination.

Earlier in the day, the scrutiny of nomination by the election authority witnessed a fierce battle between the rival factions over the party symbol.

The issue, which had been on the boil since the naming of Mr. Pulikkunnel as the UDF candidate in Pala, snowballed into a major crisis first with the Joseph faction requesting the authority to declare his nomination invalid citing the absence of a consent letter from the party

working chairman.

The group feels that Mr. George, who had endorsed Mr. Pulikkunnel's candidacy in the nomination papers, held no official position in the party while the nomination also failed to elaborate on the legal battles in the party.

"We agreed on the candidature of Mr. Pulikkunnel on the condition of not allotting him the party symbol," Mr. Joseph said.

In all, the nominations of 14 candidates were accepted.

Andhra youth drowns in U.S.

He left for higher studies 3 weeks ago

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE

Kedarnath Reddy, 22, a native of Nippon Centre here in Andhra Pradesh who had gone to the U.S. to pursue MS Computer Science course in the University of Texas, died when he drowned in the Turner Falls in Oklahoma on Tuesday.

He was reportedly not wearing a life jacket, reports reaching his family here suggest.

A pall of gloom descended on the house of Kedarnath Reddy here on Thursday as his mother Umamaheswari and sister Vaishnavi were inconsolable. Only three weeks ago, Reddy, who had graduated from Sriram College of Engineering, Chennai, went to the U.S. for higher studies.

Vaishnavi, who also got admission in a foreign un-

iversity, preferred to continue in the job she had landed recently.

Reddy's body was expected to be brought here by Saturday, sources said.

Dies of cardiac arrest

Staff Reporter in Vijayawada writes:

The body of a techie, Anand Rao Dudala, who died of cardiac arrest at San Ramon, California, U.S., would be brought to Hyderabad where his family resides by the early hours of September 7. Later, the body would be taken to Rajamahendravaram for cremation.

Anand was working for TechM on deputation for the last 18 months and died on September 1. Anand is survived by wife Lakshmi, son Pranav and daughter Annika.

Rain lashes interior Karnataka

Bhagamandala, a pilgrim centre in Kodagu, gets a record 260 mm in 24 hours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU/CHIKKAMAGALURU

After a brief lull, monsoon is active again in south interior Karnataka with Kodagu, Hassan and Chikkamagaluru districts witnessing heavy downpour since Wednesday, raising fears of another deluge.

Torrential showers have been hammering Kodagu with heavy to very-heavy rains recorded at most places. Bhagamandala, a pilgrim centre, recorded highest rainfall of 260 mm in 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m. on Thursday. Heavy rains pounded Talacauvery, the birthplace of Cauvery River.

Schools and colleges remained closed on Thursday with the district administration declaring holiday as safety measure with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing "red alert" (indicating extremely heavy rainfall) for the district. The



The flooded Bhagamandala-Napoklu Road in Kodagu on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

district administration had requested the people to be on alert.

In the last 24 hours, Kodagu recorded an average of 99.16 mm rainfall. The water level at Bethri near Murnad has risen substantially.

Landslips have been re-

ported on Gaalibeedu-Paati-Kaloor Road and traffic, barring light motor vehicles, have been banned until further orders. With heavy rain lashing its catchment areas, the inflow into Harangi dam has been rising since Wednesday. Several parts of

Chikkamagaluru and Hassan districts have been receiving moderate to heavy rain in the last two days. The people, who were affected by the recent landslips caused due to heavy rains in August, are worried about their safety once again.

74-year-old woman from A.P. gives birth to twins

Team of doctors at IVF clinic in Guntur helps elderly couple realise their dream

P. SAMUEL JONATHAN
GUNTUR

In a miracle of sorts in modern medicine, a 74-year-old woman gave birth to twin daughters at a private hospital in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, on Thursday. Yerramatti Mangayamma realised her dream after doctors at an In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) clinic performed a Caesarean section operation under the supervision of specialists.

Her husband Rajarao and her close relatives were present at the hospital when the surgery was performed. The couple are from Draksharamam in the East Godavari district.

In 2016, 72-year-old

Daljinder Kaur gave birth to a boy at Amritsar.

Sanakkayala Uday Shankar, an IVF specialist, said the couple approached the clinic in November 2018. "I decided to go ahead with the IVF procedure after a team of experts, including a pulmonologist and cardiologist, confirmed that she had no health issues," Dr. Uma Shankar told reporters at his clinic.

The doctors collected semen from her husband, and using the IVF technique, combined it with the ovum of another woman. The treatment met with success during the first cycle itself and the woman conceived in January. "We then started



Rajarao and Yerramatti Mangayamma. ■ T. VIJAYA KUMAR

preparing the woman under the close supervision of three teams of doctors, including a nutrition specialist, cardiologist and pulmonologist. We also

assessed her vital body signs, including blood pressure and sugar, through 20 weeks. It has been a planned procedure throughout the preparatory

period and finally today, we performed the C-section and delivered the twin baby girls," said Dr. Umashankar.

The girls weighed 1.5 kg each and were put under observation for six hours.

Long wait

The couple were married on March 22, 1962, and had since then been making rounds of hospitals. They were already into their 70s when a neighbour told them about the clinic in Guntur.

A team of doctors, including cardiologist P.V. Manohar, paediatricians Ramesh and Radha Madhavi, anaesthetist Ramesh, and gynaecologists Neelima and Keerthi, assisted during the surgery.

Farmer dies while waiting in queue for urea in Telangana

He had waited in vain for two days for the fertilizer

R. AVADHANI
SIDDIPET

A 60-year-old farmer collapsed and died of cardiac arrest while standing in a queue to collect urea at the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society's (PACS) counter in Dubbak town here in Telangana on Thursday. The incident comes amidst reports of urea shortage in the State.

Sources said Chervapur Yellaiah from the Achamayapalli village in the Dubbak mandal, along with other farmers, had arrived from his village to collect urea for his farm. He had reportedly



Farmers waiting for urea at Dubbak in Siddipet district of Telangana. ■ MOHD ARIIF

done this on Tuesday and Wednesday as well, but had to return return empty-handed on both days.

After waiting for about an hour in the queue on Thursday, Yellaiah collapsed. Fellow farmers shifted him to the government hospital

where he was declared brought dead.

Yellaiah is survived by wife and four daughters. The marriage of one of his daughters, who is differently abled, is yet to be performed. He owned two acres of land, and had taken two more on lease, and cultivated cotton, maize and paddy.

Dubbak MLA S. Ramalinga Reddy has extended immediate financial assistance of ₹1.2 lakh to Yellaiah's family. Officials said there was no shortage of fertilizers.

Farmers held a rasta roko and dharna at the Shivampet mandal headquarters in the Medak district, seeking urea supply. According to sources, farmers at several places in Medak were seen standing in long queues for urea.



2,000 red-eared turtles seized at Tiruchi airport

TIRUCHI
Officers of the Customs Air Intelligence Unit seized as many as 2,058 red-eared slider turtles from a passenger Beer Mohamed Mustafa, 68, from Chennai, at the Tiruchi international airport on Thursday. Customs sources said the reptiles were smuggled from China and the detained passenger was being questioned as to which place in that country he had brought the reptiles and for how long they were concealed in the suitcase.

Tarpaulin firms searched for ‘cartelisation’

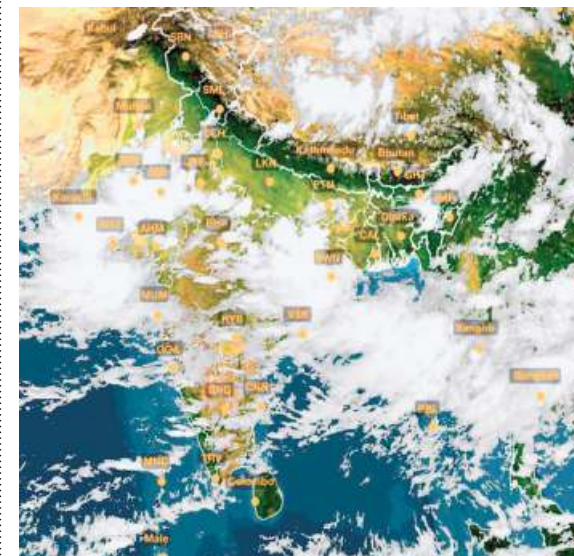
NEW DELHI
The office of the Competition Commission of India's Director General has conducted searches on the premises of some companies supplying tarpaulin to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) on suspicion of cartelisation. The searches were carried out in Delhi, Karnal, Solan, Mohali and Vadodara, said an official. Based on the information, searches were initiated at six locations by over 40 officials of the Commission. The FCI buys tarpaulin worth crores of rupees for safekeeping of stocks, mainly of wheat and rice procured from farmers.

ED serves show-cause notice to Amnesty India

NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has served a show-cause notice on Amnesty International India Private Limited for alleged violation of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) involving ₹51.72 crore, under the Borrowing and Lending Regulations, “for rendering civil society activities in India by getting remittances from parent body, Amnesty International-UK, in the garb of export of services”. The notice was sent on July 25 by the ED Special Director concerned.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Friday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Vidarbha, Odisha, central Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, coastal Andhra Pradesh, coastal & south Interior Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm accompanied with squall very likely over Andaman & Nicobar islands.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala.....	—	35.0	28.0	Kozhikode.....	38.4	30.0	24.0
Ahmedabad.....	55.9	32.0	25.0	Kurnool.....	2.2	33.0	24.0
Aizawl.....	36.0	29.0	17.0	Lucknow.....	—	35.0	27.0
Allahabad.....	—	33.0	26.0	Madurai.....	—	39.0	27.0
Bengaluru.....	—	26.0	20.0	Mangaluru.....	70.7	25.0	23.0
Bhopal.....	37.0	30.0	25.0	Mumbai.....	242.2	28.0	24.0
Bhubaneswar.....	9.9	30.0	24.0	Mysuru.....	13.2	27.0	20.0
Chandigarh.....	8.8	33.0	25.0	New Delhi.....	35.0	28.0	—
Chennai.....	6.8	35.0	25.0	Patna.....	—	35.0	28.0
Coimbatore.....	1.2	31.0	23.0	Port Blair.....	39.0	30.0	23.0
Dehradun.....	4.5	33.0	25.0	Puducherry.....	18.4	34.0	23.0
Gangtok.....	4.3	24.0	18.0	Pune.....	2.7	27.0	22.0
Goa.....	91.4	26.0	23.0	Raipur.....	0.2	30.0	25.0
Guwahati.....	5.8	34.0	27.0	Ranchi.....	1.0	29.0	23.0
Hubballi.....	—	24.0	22.0	Shillong.....	0.8	26.0	17.0
Hyderabad.....	3.7	30.0	23.0	Shimla.....	—	23.0	17.0
Imphal.....	33.0	23.0	—	Srinagar.....	27.0	16.0	—
Jaipur.....	—	34.0	26.0	Thiruvananthapuram.....	25.7	31.0	24.0
Kochi.....	8.0	30.0	26.0	Tiruchi.....	—	36.0	28.0
Kohima.....	10.8	31.0	19.0	Vijayawada.....	—	34.0	26.0
Kolkata.....	1.0	32.0	27.0	Visakhapatnam.....	35.3	29.0	26.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad.....	62	95	50	72	68	■
Bengaluru.....	11	47	75	—	79	■
Chennai.....	10	36	60	59	—	■
Delhi.....	8	42	39	73	211	■
Hyderabad.....	3	—	20	21	32	■
Kolkata.....	10	12	11	30	30	■
Lucknow.....	4	33	51	89	—	■
Mumbai.....	18	13	106	13	38	■
Pune.....	74	8	67	22	22	■
Visakhapatnam.....	—	—	—	—	—	■

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

Govt. launches campaign to promote ‘eat right movement’

‘It is a crucial measure to trigger social, behavioural change’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

“It’s time for India to eat right,” said Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday, kick-starting POSHAN Maah 2019 with a year-long social and mass media campaign on the Eat Right India movement.

Leading with a tweet-a-day focusing on a weekly theme of eating right for the next 365 days, Dr. Vardhan also launched the new Eat Right India logo that represents a healthy plate, an on-line eat right quiz and online course for frontline health workers.

Preventive health

Stating that the country is in need of a movement on preventive health for all in the backdrop of the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases including diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases, widespread deficiencies of vitamins and minerals and rampant food-



Dr. Harsh Vardhan

borne illnesses, Dr. Vardhan said: “The Eat Right India movement is a crucial preventive healthcare measure to trigger social and behavioural change through a judicious mix of regulatory measures, combined with soft interventions for ensuring awareness and capacity building of food businesses and citizens alike.”

Aligned with plans

This movement is aligned with the government’s flagship public health programmes such as POSHAN

Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukht Bharat, Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Swachh Bharat Mission.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has also put in place robust regulatory measures under three major pillars: Eat Safe, Eat Health and Eat Sustainably for the programme.

FSSAI has prescribed a limit for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) at 25% in cooking oil to avoid the harmful effects of reused cooking oil.

The Minister said Eat Right India takes a holistic approach to food habits that promote health and sustainability. “Launching this movement on this platform with the support of stakeholders such as the World Health Organization (WHO), along with Ministers and delegates from South East Asian countries, is a landmark event,” noted the Minister.

LCA pricing issue resolved, says MoD

‘Major changes in DPP outlined’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The pricing issue of 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Mk1A, to be manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), has been finalised, said Apurva Chandra, Director General (DG) (Acquisition) in the Defence Ministry.

Procurement of additional Akash surface-to-air missiles for the Indian Air Force (IAF), worth ₹5,500 crore, had also been cleared by the Union Cabinet last week and it would be signed within a week, he stated.

“Pricing of the LCA, which was under discussion with the costing committee, has been finalised two days back in a meeting with the Secretary of Defence Production. Now, discussion for the support package is on. That also should be finalised in a month or two,” he said at a seminar on the Indian aerospace industry.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) had given the initial clearance for the 83 LCA-Mk1A aircraft in November 2016. However, ne-



Negotiations on the pricing of the Light Combat Aircraft were stuck since 2016.

gotiations were stuck due to the steep price quoted by the HAL which, the IAF had said, was more than the price of a Su-30MKI.

Mr. Chandra also outlined major changes in the Defence Procurement Procedure s and Defence Procurement Manual (DPM). There would be separate chapters in the DPP on ship-building and air platforms, and sub-committees had been appointed to look into them. “We would like to have a separate chapter on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) too,” he stated.

One-third of traffickers are women and neighbours, says new study

Of the 429 accused, 50% are in the age group of 25 to 45 years

SHIV SAHAY SINGH KOLKATA

A recent study conducted on the profile of persons accused in trafficking in almost 200 cases in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh has revealed that one-third of them are women.

“One-third, or 162 out of 429 traffickers (accused in cases of trafficking) are female. Fifty per cent, or 216 accused in these cases are from the age group of 25 to 45 years,” Snigdha Sen, a researcher who has come out with the findings, told *The Hindu*.

For the study and analysis, Ms. Sen collaborated with several organizations such as HELP from Andhra Pradesh, Goranbose Gram Bikash Kendra (GGBK) from West Bengal and Partners for Anti-Trafficking (PAT), which is a consortium of eight community-based organizations in Bengal.

Not family members

In the study, Ms. Sen analysed documents such as chargesheets, FIRS and police general diaries related to 198 human trafficking cases registered between 2008 and 2018. Of the 429 people whose names appeared as accused in these 198 cases, only in 30 were the accused family members, including from the extended family.

“There was a belief in some



In need of help: Lack of legal support to survivors and a prolonged trial give impunity to traffickers in many cases. ■ R. RAGU

people that in many cases family members are involved in trafficking. That does not hold true in this research. In most cases, if the survivors are asked they will say *Didi* (sister) took them from their village. But on a more detailed inquiry, it will be revealed that the accused is not a relative but a neighbour or an acquaintance,” Subhasree Raptan, programme manager of GGBK said.

The largest group of the traffickers (34%, or 148) were neighbours, while 31% were completely unknown to the survivors, the study said.

Lack of legal support

According to Ms. Sen, of the 198 cases analyzed – in which the names of 429 accused have figured – only one trafficker from

This monsoon, Mumbai has got more rain than annual average

TANVI DESHPANDE MUMBAI

Mumbai has received more than 3,000 mm rainfall this season, way beyond its annual average of 2,514 mm. The last time this happened was in 2011.

Schools and colleges remained closed on Thursday. Rain has largely abated and the Met Department has scaled down its alert from orange to yellow.

The Hindu reported on Thursday that the city received more than the entire month’s rainfall in the first four days of September (496.5mm). This brings the total rainfall in Mumbai since June 1 to 3078.2 mm – 1117.3 mm above normal. Mumbai has already received 122.4% of its annual average rainfall.

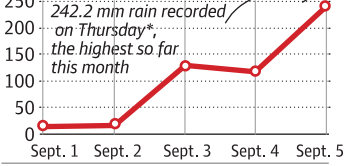
The city received 242.2 mm rainfall in the 24 hours leading up to 8.30 a.m. on Thursday, the second highest in a decade. The highest was 303.7 mm in 2017. The all time record for the highest 24-hour September rainfall is 318.2 mm in 1981.

According to data from BMC’s automated weather systems, some areas that received the highest rainfall between 3 p.m. on Tuesday

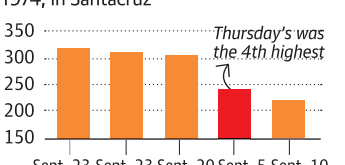
In short bursts

In just 15 minutes, between 11.15 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday, Mumbai’s Santacruz received a massive 25 mm of rain. Similar short and intense spells at various intervals may have led to the flooding of the city. **Sumant Sen & Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

A September high | The daily rainfall recorded (in mm) in the first five days of Sept. in Santacruz



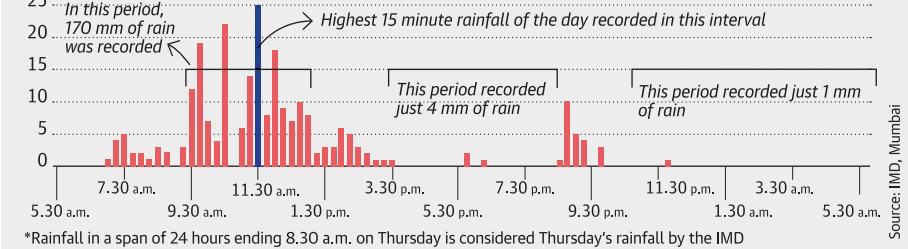
High five | The five highest 24-hour rainfall (in mm) in September, since 1974, in Santacruz



Breaking records | In the first five days of September, rainfall in Santacruz has crossed 80% of the fifth-highest September rainfall recorded since 1959

Record years for Sept. rainfall	Sept. rainfall (in mm)	% of rain achieved in the first five days of Sept. 2019
1988	628.2	83.46%
2016	711.6	73.68%
2005	744.1	70.46%
1981	821	63.86%
1993	904.6	57.96%

Short but severe | The chart shows rainfall recorded every 15 minutes in Santacruz between 5.30 a.m. on September 4 and 5.30 a.m. on September 5



and 3 p.m. on Wednesday are Vikhroli (354 mm), Borivali (330 mm), Marol (314 mm), Wadala (310 mm), Andheri West (304 mm), Kandivali (303 mm) and Dharavi (300 mm). There is still a month to go

for the monsoon season to end, tweeted K.S. Hoslikar, Deputy Director General, IMD, on Thursday. “As on date, Santacruz has received 3078.2 mm and Colaba has received 2162.2 mm.” The IMD had issued an

‘orange alert’ (heavy to very heavy rain) for Mumbai for Thursday, but scaled it down to ‘yellow alert’ (heavy rain at a few places). Between 8.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m., Mumbai received only 8.9 mm rainfall.

Vikram on the cusp of lunar landing

MADHUMATHI D.S. BENGALURU

Will India’s Vikram alight on the moon in the wee hours of September 7? Will Chandrayaan-2 create space history and make us the first country to place a spacecraft on moon’s promising southern polar region?

“The entire world awaits the data from Chandrayaan-2,” said K.Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation. “Our mission will be giving inputs for future programmes” of space agencies such as NASA, which have big plans ranging from sending probes to human habitation of the uncharted southern polar region, Dr. Sivan had said as the spacecraft neared the moon.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be at the Mission Operations Complex to watch the event as it happens.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Traffic violations after the implementation of the Motor Vehicles Act, 2019, will not only have you digging deeper into your pockets to pay steeper penalties, but will also entail a visit to a court as many States are yet to pass an order that would allow police personnel to let off offenders after the payment of the fine.

State orders awaited

According to the new Act, as many as 30 offences are compoundable, including common violations such as over-speeding, not wearing helmets and seatbelts as well as not restraining children under the age of 14, among others.

However, most States are yet to issue an order granting officers the authority to discharge offenders.

As a result, regardless of the offence you have committed, you will be given a

New traffic rules may entail steeper penalties, court visit

Gadkari defends heavy fines for traffic violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India Nitin Gadkari on Thursday defended hefty fines under the new Motor Vehicles Act, saying the intention was not to impose heavy penalties on people but to bring road discipline for preventing loss of lives through accidents.

“The government does not wish to fine people. The

thing is that a time should come that nobody has to pay such fines,” said Mr. Gadkari on the sidelines of a conclave here. “In the country, there are 5 lakh accidents happening each year, around 1.5 lakh people die. Should we not save these lives? If there is no respect for the law of the land and there is no fear as well, then it is not a good thing,” he said.

date on which you will have to appear before a court.

“So far, we have only received information from the Karnataka government that it has issued the relevant notification,” a senior official of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, data collected in the first four days since the implementation of the Act on September 1 showed that Haryana had issued 343 challans and collected ₹52,32,650 in penalties, while Odisha had issued 4,000 challans and collected ₹88,90,107.

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NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited by the Search Committee from retired Professors with at least 10 years experience for the selection of Ombudsman on part-time basis in APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University, Thiruvananthapuram. Signed applications in hard and soft copies with bio data, proof of experience, qualification etc in the prescribed proforma should reach the Principal Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department, Government Secretariat (Annex II), Thiruvananthapuram- 695 001 on or before 5 pm on 30/09/2019. For more details visit www.kerala.gov.in/www.highereducation.kerala.gov.in/www.ktu.edu.in.

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No. A.12026/4/2018-Estt.IV
Government of India
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources,
River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

Narmada Control Authority (NCA) is a Body Corporate set up by the Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 6A of the Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956, for the purpose of securing compliance with the implementation of the decision and direction of the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal. The Narmada Control Authority has its headquarter at Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

- Applications are invited from eligible and suitable officers for filling up one post of Member (Environment & Rehabilitation) in Narmada Control Authority, Indore in the Pay Matrix Level-14 (Rs. 144200-218200/-) on deputation (including short-term contract) basis.
- The last date for receipt of applications for appointment on deputation (including short-term contract) basis to the post of Member (E&R) in Narmada Control Authority, earlier published in the Employment News on 22-28 June, 2019 is hereby extended up to 19.10.2019.**
- Details of the post, eligibility conditions etc. are available on websites of this Department (mowr.gov.in); and Narmada Control Authority (nca.gov.in). Applications complete in all respects of suitable and eligible officers and who can be spared immediately in the event of selection may be sent through proper channel to :- The Under Secretary (Estt.IV), Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Shram Shakti Bhavan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi - 110001.
- Advance copies of application or application received after the prescribed period or not accompanied with the requisite information/ documents are liable to be rejected.**

(Arun Kumar)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India



Interesting, but risky

RBI's diktat to banks could spur borrowing but may pressure lenders' margins

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has finally decided that it needs to address the problem of inadequate interest rate transmission head on. In a circular to banks on Wednesday, it directed lenders to link all new floating rate loans given to borrowers in the personal, retail and micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) categories to external benchmarks, including the repo rate, with effect from October 1. While giving banks the relative freedom to choose the specific external benchmark, including yields on the 3-month and 6-month Treasury Bills published by the Financial Benchmarks India Pvt. Ltd., the central bank made it clear that lenders would need to adopt a uniform benchmark within a loan category. Banks have also, crucially, been given the leeway to determine their spread over the benchmark rate with a caveat that changes to the credit risk premium can only be made when the borrower's credit assessment undergoes a substantial change. That the inadequate transmission of policy rate moves has been an abiding conundrum for the RBI is well known. In 2015, then Governor Raghuram Rajan decided that the system used by banks to price their loans needed to be changed and so introduced the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR) regime. In October 2017, an internal study group of the RBI recommended the adoption of external benchmarks to ensure effective policy transmission, after observing that the MCLR too had failed to deliver.

Polymakers, in fact, have been so vexed with poor transmission – against a total of 75 basis points (bps) reduction in the RBI's repo rate between February and June, the weighted average lending rate on fresh rupee loans at banks eased only by 29 bps – that Monetary Policy Committee member Chetan Ghate in August cited the issue as reason to oppose the proposed 35-bps cut and instead voted for a 25-bps reduction. “By a large cut (35 bps) I feel we will be burning through monetary policy space without much to show for it. While the real economy needs some support, we should wait for more transmission to happen,” he said at the MPC's rate setting meeting, the minutes show. Though the latest move will surely lower the interest cost on new floating rate loans availed by borrowers to buy cars or homes, it may force banks to start cutting the interest rate they pay deposit holders or risk seeing their margins shrink. And while the RBI wants to try and nudge an uptick in credit for becalmed personal consumption and borrowing by beleaguered MSMEs, the success of the measure will ultimately be determined by a regaining of confidence by consumers to spend and a conviction by industry to invest.

A weak chase

Controlling the hepatitis B virus calls for universal vaccination of newborns

On September 3, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Thailand became the first four countries in the World Health Organization's southeast Asia region to have successfully controlled hepatitis B. The virus is said to be controlled when the disease prevalence is reduced to less than 1% among children less than five years of age. Despite the introduction of hepatitis B vaccine in the Universal Immunisation Programme in 2002 and scaling-up nationwide in 2011, about one million people in India become chronically infected with the virus every year. According to the Health Ministry, as on February 2019, an estimated 40 million people in India were infected. Hepatitis B infection at a young age turns chronic, causing over 1,00,000 premature deaths annually from liver cirrhosis or liver cancer. A study published in 2013 found lower coverage of hepatitis B vaccine in eight of the 10 districts surveyed. But the coverage has witnessed an increase with the introduction of a pentavalent vaccine on a pilot basis in Kerala and Tamil Nadu in December 2011 and national roll-out in 2014-2015. According to the WHO, the coverage of hepatitis B third dose had reached 86% in 2015. However, despite the high vaccination coverage, disease prevalence in children aged less than five years has not dropped below 1%. One of the reasons for this is the sub-optimal coverage of birth dose in all infants within 24 hours of birth.

Hepatitis B birth dose, given in the first 24 hours, helps prevent vertical transmission from the mother to child. The compulsion to increase birth dose to cut vertical transmission arises from two important reasons – about 70-90% newborns infected this way become chronic carriers of hepatitis B, and about 20-30% carriers in India are due to vertical transmission. But even seven years after the Health Ministry approved the birth dose in 2008, its coverage remained low – 45% in 2015 and 60% in 2016 – according to a 2019 Health Ministry report. What is indeed puzzling is that even in the case of institutional delivery, the birth dose vaccine coverage is low – 76.36% in 2017. Incidentally, institutional delivery accounts for about 80% of all deliveries in the country. The birth dose coverage when delivery takes place outside health-care institutions is not known. One of the reasons for the low coverage is the fear of wastage of vaccine when a 10-dose vial is used. Unfortunately, health-care workers are very often unaware of the WHO recommendation that allows hepatitis B open-vial policy. Opened vials of hepatitis B vaccine can be kept for a maximum duration of 28 days for use in other children if the vaccine meets certain conditions. There is also a need to increase public awareness about the merits of the birth dose.

Teaching in the time of consumerism

Changes in social ethos and state policy have pushed the once-venerated Indian teacher to the margins of public life



KRISHNA KUMAR

Like many other topics, teaching and those who earn a living by teaching are subjects of a highly polarised debate in our country. Public perception of schoolteachers is quite negative in many parts of the country. If you ask a young urban audience: ‘Who wants to be a schoolteacher?’, the answer will come with so much hesitation that you will be right to summarise it as: ‘No one, really.’ You can verify this by asking freshly enrolled students at a teacher-training course: ‘Was teaching your first preference?’ Very few will say, ‘yes.’ Among young men, there will probably be no one answering in the affirmative.

This low popularity of school teaching can be linked to several changes that social ethos and state policy have gone through over the last three decades or so. In a consumption-oriented environment, the kind of idealism school teaching requires is not easy for a young person to cultivate and sustain. The working conditions and ethos at their respective schools erode the stamina of the few who start with a sense of dedication.

I hardly need to add that this macro picture conceals the tales of several thousand teachers who battle on and remain committed to their duty against all odds. Some of them do get appreciation from parents of the students, but more often than not, parents remain dissatisfied. Many parents now treat their progeny's school life as an ‘investment’ for which they demand the best ‘value’, often by relentlessly criticising the teacher and the principal. They don't know the burden teachers carry on their fragile, ill-equipped professional shoulders. This burden includes the weight of family and community life, and the pressure coming from officialdom.

On their part, children bring to schools the psychological bruises incurred at home where the adults are too preoccupied with their own lives. Further, as recent surveys in both urban and rural habitations show, technology is a dominant player in child upbringing. A schoolteacher must cope with the impact that these drastic changes have made on the inner world of children.

Weak professional training

Speaking of training, the vast majority of teachers being hired today have had their professional training in poorly equipped institutions. Weak professional preparation is not a recent woe, but it has certainly worsened under the ‘licensing raj’ of the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE). There was a time when teacher training had no licensing authority. The NCTE was an advisory body then, with no statutory powers. It acquired legal teeth as a result of the NCTE Act, 1993. The new, empowered NCTE came into being two years later.

The mid-1990s marked a period of tumultuous change in the landscape of public education. The impact of market-friendly policies was spreading across the system, but it was the most palpable in professional education. Private enterprise in medical, engineering and management education had already set in. Compared to these areas, teacher training was both cheap and highly profitable.

Demand for qualified teachers rode the wave of rapid growth in primary education. In response to this demand, teacher-education institutes and correspondence courses mushroomed. The NCTE had a difficult mandate to fulfil and had to maintain standards by regulating a bullish market of enrol-



ment providers. Initially, it seemed as if the NCTE's regulatory role would succeed in imposing quality norms. However, before long, the body's failure to control the flood of commercial private interests started looking inevitable.

Teacher training was, of course, not the only area of professional education to be corrupted by the new licensing regime. The system of education was in general battling hard to find ways to regulate the swelling, strong current of privatisation.

The teacher-training sector became so afflicted by fraudulent institutions and practices that internal mechanisms of correction proved inadequate. Hundreds of cases against bogus institutions reached the Supreme Court, which appointed a commission chaired by late Justice J.S. Verma. For a few years after 2012, when its report was published, an attempt was made to implement its recommendations, but the momentum slowed down before long. Several recommendations required substantial state funding, but the NCTE had already taken the self-financing route. Its institutional capacity to provide academic leadership to teacher training was already limited. Its further decline coincided with the rise of technological gimmickry. However, it would be wrong to hold the NCTE alone responsible. The wider pro-

blems of higher education have also made their contribution to the decline of teacher training. This is not hard to explain. Graduates whose college education is of poor quality cannot be expected to overcome their learning backlog at a training institute. Faculty shortage exacerbates this deprivation.

The government recently came up with a policy decision favouring four-year courses that integrate undergraduate learning with pedagogic training. This model is not new, and its success depends on investment in institutional infrastructure. But with commercialisation fully entrenched in teacher education, one cannot expect generous spending on faculty and infrastructure.

Impact on school education

Problems of teacher training have had a pervasive impact on school education as a whole. Governments have been aware of this, both at the Centre and in the States. One of the steps they have taken to fill the quality gap is to introduce a teacher-eligibility test. This has only made a marginal difference, as the proportion of trained teachers who get through the test is low, creating a vast backlog in recruitment. On the other hand, para-professionals have been growing in number and influence. They are known by various names in different States,

but they also exist in vast numbers outside the system – as providers of home tuition and coaching. This underbelly of the education system suffers no interference from state norms. In the world of coaching, we see the utopia of free enterprise and the demise of teaching as noble work.

It is hard to date the beginning of the current, ongoing decline in the status of teachers. A conversation with a senior official in Madhya Pradesh comes to mind. During a visit to Bhopal more than two decades ago, I asked him if it was correct to say that school teaching was no longer considered a career in M.P. He readily agreed. We discussed the new realities that had emerged. We agreed that a major shift in culture, pushed by economic changes, had occurred, and it had marginalised the teacher.

The Indian teacher, once a foot soldier in the freedom struggle and a contributor to nation building in the early years after Independence, now stands relegated to the margins of public life. This marginalisation is reflective of the social change that has taken place in the country and flags the diminishing importance of intellect. This is also evident from the news about our greatest historian being insulted by her university. Our collective vulnerability to the power of propaganda and rumour is not new; disrespect for the teacher's dedication to a life of intellect is.

Nonetheless, no matter what the subject and howsoever limited his or her own knowledge, every teacher tries to nudge his students towards reality and truth. Children want their teacher to verify and appreciate their efforts. Having faith in his/her teacher is a part of being a child, a blow to which will disturb the foundations of social living.

Krishna Kumar is a former director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

Putting the pedal to the metal

The government should consider dropping GST rates for BS-IV vehicles to revive the automobile industry



RAGHUVIR SRINIVASAN

The automobile industry is notoriously cyclical. It is also a lead indicator for economic growth. And it has been in a tizzy since this time last year when the signs of an impending slowdown were first seen. Sure enough, the decline began in the last quarter of calendar year 2018 and intensified with the passage of every month in 2019.

So, if the industry goes through cycles of ups and downs, is the current slowdown something to worry about seriously? Yes, indeed. Are auto manufacturers heading towards an apocalypse? No, certainly not. So, why do we need to worry about this slowdown? Simply because the current downturn is like nothing that the industry has seen in a long, long time in terms of depth, scale and character.

So, what's different this time? First, every segment of the auto industry, beginning from two-wheelers to passenger cars, light commercial vehicles and heavy commercial vehicles, and even tractors, has been hit. The downturn this time is all-encompassing.

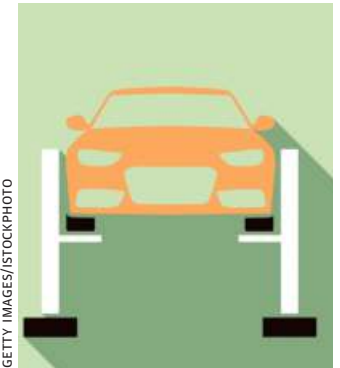
Second, what was a natural, cyclical downturn has been amplified by extraordinary circumstances unleashed by reform measures that may have been well-meaning but have come back to bite the government.

Finally, an unthinking approach to a critical policymaking area such as electric vehicles has only intensified and prolonged the slowdown. Yes, key Ministers are now scrambling to contain the damage by retracting some of their earlier statements and reassuring the industry that the electric motor will not be privileged over the internal combustion engine but it has come too late.

Revision in axle-load norms

Let's take the case of the commercial vehicles (CV) industry. In July 2018, the government revised axle-load norms (for the first time since 1983) for cargo carriers by between 12% and 25%. The idea was to legalise over-loading, which is common practice, and help reduce freight costs for both consignors and consignees.

But by applying the higher cargo rules to all trucks on the roads, instead of only trucks to be produced after a given date, the government, in one stroke, raised existing carrying capacity by up to a quarter, forcing per-tonne freight rates down. This at a time when carrying capacity was already increasing due to the introduction of



the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which helped in quicker turnaround of trucks. Operators were able to keep the trucks gainfully deployed for 25% more days in a month than before.

These two reform measures only served to advance the cyclical slowdown which was on its way. The CV industry has a well-earned reputation for sharp practices such as steep-price discounting and dealer dumping by vehicle manufacturers. Like elephants that spray their own heads with sand, vehicle manufacturers – CVs and cars – have honed into a fine art the practice of clogging the pipeline by over-producing vehicles without a care for demand, and dumping them on dealers to sell.

This became a particularly painful issue because of the approaching deadline for the transition to BS-VI norms from April 1, 2020. Dealers are saddled with invento-

ry of BS-IV vehicles that they need to clear out before the deadline. For the manufacturers, the problem is that they're unable to plan their production schedules for BS-VI vehicles as freight operators are watching the fun from the sidelines. They're waiting for the steep discounts that are bound to come by as the deadline nears and are not in a hurry anyway to add new trucks given the slowdown in goods movement.

Model fatigue

If it was a deadly cocktail that consumed the CV industry, in the case of cars, it appears to be one of model fatigue. Between Maruti and Hyundai, the two big players that account for two-thirds of the industry, there have been hardly any exciting new launches in the last one year. There have been facelifts and limited editions of existing models but the two biggies have not ventured into launching fresh models, at least until very recently.

The model-fatigue theory is proved by the response that two new kids on the block – the Kia Seltos and the MG Hector – received. Though they're not mass-market cars and are priced considerably higher than the median range, the two models have attracted bookings in excess of 30,000 units each in what is supposedly a depressed market. Maruti and Hyundai have clearly been caught sleeping at the wheel.

The onset of festival season sales and the impact of recent measures by the government may help the cycle play itself out soon but is there something that the government can do to quicken the turnaround? Of course, yes. Should it reduce GST on automobiles from 28% to 18% as per the demand of the industry? Yes, it should, but not for all vehicles.

The government should consider dropping GST only for BS-IV vehicles – CVs, cars and two-wheelers – that are now idling in stockyards of vehicle manufacturers and dealers. It should consider a scheme where all BS-IV vehicles sold until March 31 will suffer only an 18% GST. For the industry, this will help clear the clogged pipeline and for the government, it will help contain the fallout on its revenue as the lower rate will apply only on a limited stock and until a specified time.

A quick GST Council meeting by video conference should be called right away instead of waiting for September 20 when it's slated to next meet. Prospective buyers, of cars as much as CVs, are delaying their decision as the word is out that the government may consider a tax cut. If rates are to be cut anyway, it makes sense to do it immediately. Two weeks can make a huge difference to an industry writhing in agony.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

A trusted partner

In view of the emergence of China as a superpower, the Indo-Pacific region has turned into a theatre of conflicting interests (Editorial page, “Steaming back into the Indo-Pacific,” Sept. 5). The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between U.S., Japan, India and Australia has not made any progress towards the stated objective of securing the Indo-Pacific. Though it created a lot of enthusiasm in the beginning, it has not been pursued by its members with the required energy. Hence, it would be in the interest of India if Russia plays a bigger role in the region. Russia has been a time-tested friend of India

and continues to be its largest defence partner. If this relationship expands into a strategic partnership, it would help secure India's interests and will infuse the required dynamism and balance in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit will help sow the seeds for such a partnership.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

Political machetes

By now, it has become quite clear that the Narendra Modi government is not averse to misusing the central agencies to take revenge on ‘political enemies’. It is naive to

suppose that agencies like the Enforcement Directorate and CBI are ‘politically neutral’ and act independent of government control. The charge or perception that they are tools in the hands of the government to go after political adversaries is not without substance. The cases of Congress leaders P. Chidambaram and D.K. Shivakumar spring to mind. On the other hand, cases against members or supporters of the ruling party are not pursued with the same vigour. The law must take its own course and not the one paved by political machetes.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Shrill rhetoric

Even in normal times, Pakistani generals and politicians have nothing to lose but everything to gain by indulging in shrill warmongering because the theocratic military state's identity is tied to a perpetually adversarial relationship with India (Editorial, “Irresponsible rhetoric,” Sept. 3). Pakistani elites dread nothing more than a public perception that they have been outmanoeuvred by their arch-rival. The dilution of Article 370 has dealt a severe blow to their prestige and self-respect. It is no wonder that some of them have taken to brinkmanship to impress

upon the people their determination to confront the ‘permanent adversary’. The Indian political leadership has demonstrated the maturity to nonchalantly ignore this provocative behaviour.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,
Thiruvananthapuram

Remembering Massoud

As observed by the American journalist Steve Coll, in his work, *Ghost Wars*, “Afghanistan after 1979 was a laboratory for geopolitical and military visions” that were conceived abroad and imposed by force”. Amidst this, Ahmad Shah Massoud, the ‘Lion of Panjshir’, emerged as the country's

own nationalist visionary. Even though his Northern Alliance (NA) was no match for the ISI-backed Taliban in terms of resources and finances, his military genius helped NA present a formidable challenge to the ISI-Taliban duo in those turbulent years (Front page, “How India secretly armed Afghanistan's Northern Alliance,” Sept. 1). Assisting Afghanistan to secure the elusive peace without placing troops on the ground would be the greatest tribute that India can pay to Massoud.

ABHILASH THIMMAIAH,
Bengaluru

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Will PSB mergers alter the banking scenario?

PARLEY

Consolidation will cause disruption in the short run, but could lead to speedier decision-making in future

Last week, the Centre announced a sweeping consolidation that would see 10 public sector banks being merged into four. While the government has touted the move as one that will enhance credit capacity, there are concerns that more large banks could make the banking system vulnerable. In a conversation moderated by Suresh Seshadri, T. T. Ram Mohan and V. Srinivasan look at the challenges to successful integration. Excerpts:

How does this merger benefit the economy?

T.T. Ram Mohan: How it benefits the economy remains to be seen. Because I think the case for the merger has not been articulated properly enough. We have some reference to Indian banks becoming global in size. But that sort of talk needs to be discounted. Because, even if you take the largest of the mergers that have been proposed, which is PNB combining with two other entities, it's going to give you a bank which is about one third the size of the 50th largest bank in the world, which is not saying much.

Second, the correlation between size and efficiency is suspect beyond a certain minimum size. And that size is quite low: say \$10 billion in assets or so you get the necessary scale of economy. Beyond that, the empirical evidence does not suggest there are many great advantages to simply growing bigger. And we have seen this in the Indian context where the large public sector banks underperform in relation to private banks, which are much smaller. And of course, the classic comparison is between HDFC Bank and the consolidated State Bank of India, which is many times its size. The price to book value ratio of HDFC Bank is close to 4, whereas the price to book value of SBI is around 1.25. Therefore, the suggestion that getting bigger is going to, in itself, give you some benefits is not validated by experience, either internationally or within India.

Srinivasan, as someone who is from within the industry, is integration going to be something which ends up in

some way impacting the so-called benefit that the integration move aims to provide? Is the timing going to end up getting the management of these banks to focus on integration itself rather than on using the balance sheet to lend to the economy, especially when investment pickup is crucially required?

V. Srinivasan: I would agree with the argument that, from a timing point of view, this does not seem an ideal time for going ahead with these mergers. Because, as all of us are aware, the economy is clearly going through a major slowdown. And it requires all hands on the deck. And whenever a merger of such scale happens, I think the senior management gets distracted in terms of trying to make sure who gets what. I think there's a lot of work to be done. Even though that may be done by several teams, ultimately human emotion will come into play here, where people are going to be looking at saying, "What's in it for me? Where am I headed as far as this action is concerned?" And therefore, in the short term, I think there is going to be some amount of disruption. That is something which you could have avoided in this sort of time. Consolidation is good, because from an administrative perspective, as people retire, you would see some economies of scale getting through, but just sort of putting banks together is not going to solve the problem as far as the credit flow is concerned.

There's also this other issue, that from a structural perspective, fewer larger banks might increase the risks to the banking industry.

TTR: The way to look at that question is to see the share of the top three or the top five banks in assets. And if that share is very large, then you have a concentrated banking system. If the share is too low, then you have a highly fragmented banking system. And I think it's fair to say that in India we were tending towards a high degree of fragmentation rather than concentration. So, I



think so far as the increase in systemic risk is concerned, it's not going to be an immediate problem. Because if you look at the share of the top three or four banks in assets it was about 30-32%. That is not a very high degree of concentration.

But I do know that regarding the point that Srinivasan made, which is that in order to make a success of a merger, you need two conditions to be satisfied – you need a very high degree of managerial ability, and at least one of the entities in the merger must be financially strong – I'm afraid I can't see either condition being satisfied in the mergers that are being proposed. If you're not able to make a success of your operations and deliver the performance of your existing level of assets, how does the management propose to make a success of a much bigger and more complex entity? The question is not answered simply by citing the theoretical scale economy. Making a success of merger is a huge challenge.

Another concern is that as earlier mergers haven't yet given the benefits, why then this rush to announce a whole host of mergers.

VS: As far as Bank of Baroda (BOB), Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank are concerned, it's still very early days... I don't think the merger integration is complete. And clearly we have not seen much in terms of how exactly they have put things together and gone to the market, with a single value proposition. The way I look at it, this was something which has been on the table for a long time. I think they tried out BOB and just decided to go ahead.

The feedback from the BOB exper-

The most important rationale for the mergers is that the multiplicity of banks was making enormous demands on the bandwidth of the Finance Ministry

iment was that things were not falling apart. And things seemed to be broadly business as usual, not very different from what was happening in the past. And they decided that this is something which we can go ahead with and do the rest of the previous plan, which was actually already, I think, part of the blueprint. I think that's how they have gone ahead with these mergers. The only thing here is, I don't think there's any identity which they have tried to create for each of these merged entities in terms of trying to say, one will be focusing on Corporate, one will be on Small and Medium Enterprises, one will be Retail. There's been no thinking in terms of any or each of these banks' focus on a particular theme, particular skill-set and developing expertise in a space which is important as far as the overall economy is concerned. Basically, I think they've said, every bank falls broadly in the same template, and there's not much to choose from in terms of who goes with whom.

From an underlying logic perspective, there are those who fear that bank NPAs could worsen, at least in the interim, while this process of integration is on.

TTR: In terms of resolution of NPAs there is some merit in having the merger because there are coordina-

tion problems involved when you have multiple banks trying to resolve NPAs which are common to all of them. So, you have the middle and senior management deputed for meetings, where they have discussions with their counterparts from other banks. And then they have to go back to the top management for a decision, come back again for a meeting, and it goes on and on. Therefore, the resolution of NPAs becomes difficult when you have so many banks trying to arrive at an understanding amongst themselves. So, to the extent that the discussion is happening among fewer banks, I think the resolution of NPAs will be facilitated. That could be one argument for the merger.

But I think the most important rationale is that the multiplicity of banks was making enormous demands on the bandwidth of the Finance Ministry in terms of appointments of chairmen, managing directors, executive directors, independent directors. Even though they have the banks board bureau to advise them on appointments, the process is extremely time-consuming. There were long delays in making the senior appointments, as a result of which these banks have been incurring substantial costs. When you don't have a person at the top or persons at the top, or even directors in play, it exacts its own cost on the bank. And so, collapsing the number of banks makes it easier for the Ministry to monitor the banks on its watch. I think that is probably one argument for the merger which I can sort of relate to.

The other argument is that having bigger entities enables people to make bigger loans, which would give them a degree of pricing power vis-a-vis corporates because corporates have been playing one bank off against the other under the multiple banking system. To the extent that you combine banks and they do a bigger amount of funding, it does improve the bargaining position of the bank. Again, fee income that the banks get from selling mutual funds and insurance products can go up, because now the banks can command a much larger network and therefore demand a bigger commission from the people whose products they're selling.

The fundamental issue is a managerial issue with making a success of the merger, which is a challenge

even in a developed economy, where you have a lot of flexibility in terms of laying off people, rationalising branches. Here, even if you rationalise the branches, a commitment has been given that people will not be laid off. That is one of the assurances given by the Ministry. And therefore, it's not clear how any cost economies will be effected... if people are to be retained and yet be redeployed for other purposes.

There are those who say “we were comfortable with a small bank, are we going to be lost in the larger scheme of things once this bank becomes owned by some bank from Mumbai?” How does this really pan out for the customers?

VS: I would think it is more the lending side which can get impacted on account of this rather than the customer on the deposit side. The deposit side, however weak the government-owned banks, they didn't face any risk of deposits sort of unwinding and they continued to have reasonably decent deposit growth, irrespective of whether they were figuring in the top quartile or the bottom quartile because the sovereign guarantee was clearly there. It will be business as usual. I don't think things will change as far as these banks are concerned. From a lending perspective, the impact will be felt more for the SMEs and small businesses, who have a lot to gain from the personal contact they have with a local person. And as that becomes a lot weaker, that can impact... That is something which we will know only as we go along. But there would be some amount of transition issues as things change.

Is this announcement going to make a large difference to the banking industry?

VS: Clearly, a lesser number of banks means, hopefully, speedier decision-making across banks. That's the upside one can hope for. And the other thing which it can trigger is some consolidation in private sector banks. Because the private sector banks would now be falling behind in terms of scale compared to some of these banks. And therefore, to some extent, this can force the private sector banks to think of a similar consolidation.

Re-engaging the Iran regime

Unless hardliners are isolated in the U.S. and Iran, the nuclear deal cannot be revisited

GARIMELLA SUBRAMANIAM

During the G7 summit in Biarritz, U.S. President Donald Trump told French President Emmanuel Macron that the U.S. is not looking for leadership change in Iran. “This country has been through that many times before; that doesn't work,” he said. This is a hopeful sign for the proposed dialogue between Washington and Tehran, after months of increasing tensions. The U.S. President, who had once sought to cut Iran's exports to zero, even suggested that the U.S. and its allies could offer Iran loans or some credit as incentive for reaching a new nuclear deal.

Reaching out

These overtures signal a marked departure from Mr. Trump's position on Iran in the past. In May 2018, the U.S. withdrew from the 2015 nuclear agreement reached between the P5+1 countries, the European Union, and Iran, which Mr. Trump once derided as the “the worst ever deal”. That move was in disregard of the opinions of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Mr. Trump's own top advisers that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action had proved effective. If followed through with action, Mr. Trump's recent comments could strengthen the efforts of the U.K., France and Germany to secure relief for Iran from U.S. sanctions and prevail upon Tehran to desist from its recently revived uranium enrichment activity.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani was not impressed by Mr. Trump's remarks. He ruled out talks with the U.S. until all sanctions were lifted, though he has immense stakes in rebuilding the agreement and reasserting his moderate position at home. He added that he was not interested in photo opportunities, an apparent swipe at Mr. Trump's high-profile summits with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, which yielded few concrete outcomes.

His condition for talks is understandable, however. Iran has had no relief on the sanctions front, despite opposition from the European Union, Russia and China to the punitive measures. The European payments channel, Instex, launched after much

delay to circumvent U.S. sanctions, serves a limited purpose, as the system does not include oil sales, a major source of Iran's foreign exchange earnings. Tehran's crude exports are said to have plummeted to 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) or less since April 2018 levels (more than 2.5 million bpd), according to estimates. Corporations that continue to do business with Iran face the risk of being cut off from the dollar system.

There has not been any let-up from the U.S. strategy of exerting “maximum pressure” on Iran so far. Earlier this month, the administration imposed sanctions against Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. In June, Iran reacted to sanctions against Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Tehran's Supreme Leader, as “outrageous and idiotic”. And in April, the country's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was designated a terrorist organisation.

In retaliation to these measures, Iran demonstrated its ability to paralyse Western maritime operations by seizing oil tankers off the Gulf of Hormuz. While Mr. Trump held back from a counter-offensive following the downing of a U.S. drone, the missile attack amplified the risk of conflict in the region.

Moving forward

Neither Secretary of State Mike Pompeo nor National Security Adviser John Bolton would easily reconcile to Mr. Trump's remark that regime change in Iran is off the table. But Mr. Trump, not for the first time, has come close to pushing back against the hardliners in his administration. Following through on his proposal, France has confirmed the finalisation of a \$15 billion credit line backed by France, Germany and the U.K., subject to Washington's approval. While this initiative will boost Iran's confidence in the West's intentions, the ultimate goal must be to revive the 2015 nuclear deal. President Rouhani's position has weakened in Iran as hardliners have become more assertive in the country. Unless he is also able to isolate them, moving forward on the deal will not possible.

Garimella Subramaniam is a Deputy Editor with The Hindu



NOTEBOOK

A matter of recording

Reporters are caught in a bind when officials request them not to be quoted

DENNIS S. JESUDASAN

“Don't quote me.” These are the three words that journalists dread the most and also hear frequently. While reporting the statements of people in public service is only one aspect of journalism, it is a crucial and challenging one.

Reporters are always keen to know what those in charge of administration and public policy think. They are eager to report the statements and opinions of officers, but they are bound by the ethics of reporting – such views can be published only with the consent of the persons in question. Sometimes, there is a grey area that is difficult to negotiate, and we grapple with many dilemmas: Should we report the news or not? And if yes, how? And therein lies the rub.

A senior officer, who was in charge of disaster man-

agement in a northern State, was once invited to a research institute in Chennai as the chief guest for a function. During his speech, the official let it slip that the India Meteorological Department's weather alerts were reaching him late. He said he would rather prefer tracking weather updates from Western countries than wait for the IMD's alerts.

Now, this was a big admission and was definitely worth a report. However, it turned out that the officer was not informed that there were journalists in the audience who were recording his comments. Once he was informed of this, he requested every reporter at the event to refrain from publishing or broadcasting these comments. An important story was, therefore, automatically killed. Even though the comments were made before a gathering, we

could not write about this as we had to honour the officer's request.

Sometimes, even diplomats, who are careful with their words, tend to be candid. A few years ago, a diplomat from a South Asian country launched a tirade against China at an event in Chennai. He said his country disagreed with the Asian power on sea traffic in the South China Sea. Again, on realising that there were reporters in the audience, he requested us not to quote him.

In yet another incident, one of the country's top scientists, who was involved in the preparation of a report on the protection of a well-known mountain range in south India, said that a religious body was wielding a lot of influence in the region. This, he said, was affecting the report. When we asked if he could be quoted, he refused.

Those holding important positions understand and recognise the hurdles in their jobs, but they refuse to let the media and the people know about these issues, which are of public interest. Sadly, they also do little to resolve these issues, given their limitations. One wonders if the extra caution in seeking the non-publication of public statements is due to the burgeoning of outlets in the media space or simply denotes the keenness of the officials to secure their careers.

The journalist then is forced to accept the source's request, or argue and reason with him, or request the source to be quoted anonymously. This is a compromise of sorts, but does not serve the purpose of public interest in a substantive way as this avoids mention of the position and post that the source holds.

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 6, 1969

Suggestion to shift capital

Mr. C. Chatterjee, Director-General of the Geological Survey of India, suggested here [Tenughat (Bihar)] yesterday [September 4] that the capital of India should be shifted from Delhi to some other place. Delivering his presidential address at the fourth annual general meeting of the Indian Society of Engineering Geology here, Mr. Chatterjee said the growing population and mounting pressure of urbanisation would be an ever-increasing phenomenon in the capital of India. “We must consider,” he said, whether Delhi as seat of capital will be able to cope with the future demands of urbanisation and development. He said this aspect of the question had attracted the attention of the Government of India immediately after independence. In fact, even some sites had been examined in central India but for some reason or other the preliminary investigations were not followed up. Mr. Chatterjee said that he felt that a centrally located place like the Betul plateau in Madhya Pradesh should be considered as a site for the capital.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 6, 1919.

Mr. Gandhi's Birthday.

Sir, – Some time ago I saw a letter in your journal from Mrs. Arantika Gokhale regarding the proposal to present a purse to Mahama Gandhi on his birthday which comes on the second of October. I learn that Bombay is trying to celebrate the event in a fitting manner and I know that Bombay can present a lac of rupees and more to the Mahatmaji. But I wonder whether Madras will respond to an appeal, if one such is made by the public leaders of this place. Here an appeal has already been made on behalf of the forlorn families in the Punjab. I would humbly request the public to read again the moving speech of Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar at the Madras Provincial Conference held recently at Trichinopoly. The appeal on behalf of the suffering people in that Province has been made by Swami Shradananda, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mahatma Gandhi himself. Let us not therefore be slow in responding to the cries of the poor mothers and children in Punjab. Our contributions, however small it be, if done quickly will please Mahatma Gandhi's heart very much, and I am sure he will value more the help to such a cause just now than to presenting a purse.

V.A. Sundaram.
Triplicane, September., 3.

FROM PAGE ONE

Congress leader sent to judicial custody

Mr. Saini said that in the event of their arrest, Mr. Chidambaram and Mr. Karti shall be released on bail on their furnishing personal bond for ₹1,00,000 each with one surety of like amount to the satisfaction of investigating officer/arresting officer/Duty Magistrate.

“Moreover, the allegations against the applicants/accused are also not of a grave magnitude as the amount of bribe/laundered money is only ₹1,13,61,125 which is a paltry amount in comparison to the allegations against Sh. Dayanidhi Maran and others, where the bribe/laundered amount was ₹749 crore, but he was not arrested,” the judge stated.

Mr. Maran and the other accused were discharged in the case.

The judge noted that the Enforcement Directorate has filed its complaint in the case on June 13, 2018 and a supplementary complaint on Oct. 25, 2018. The matter is listed for consideration of cognisance but the ED, instead of arguing on this point, is seeking date after date, “on the pretext that further investigation is still going on. This conduct of the ED speaks for itself and needs no elaboration.”

In both cases, the agencies alleged that the former Minister received bribe in lieu of giving approvals for foreign direct investments and laundered it.

Romila Thapar declines to send her CV to JNU

On Monday, the University defended itself by claiming that it was only following rules – which were amended in August 2018 – and that the letters were written to Professors Emeritus “not for discontinuation”, but to “know their availability and their willingness to continue their association with the

university.”

Professor Thapar pointed out that the letter sent to her has the following subject line: ‘Assessment of past work of “Professor Emeritus” in Jawaharlal Nehru University for the Committee to decide on Continuation’, thus exposing the administration’s defence as baseless.

Institute of Eminence tag for five

The new greenfield Bharti Institute, a project of Airtel’s Satya Bharti Foundation, has also been issued the letter.

The Ministry took the action on Wednesday, following a recommendation from the University Grants Commission (UGC) last month. Each university will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry, laying out its plan to achieve the objective of becoming a world-class institution. The public institutions on the list will then be eligible for a government grant of ₹1,000 crore.

Four other institutions, which had also been recommended by the UGC, require the State governments to act before they can be awarded the status. The Ta-

mil Nadu and West Bengal governments must commit themselves to contributing half of the funds required for Anna University and Jadavpur University. The Uttar Pradesh and Haryana Assemblies must pass legislation to end the private university status of Shiv Nadar University and OP Jindal University, so that they could receive the new status of IoE Deemed Universities.

UGC inspections

These institutions will not be subject to UGC inspections, and are free to set their own courses and curriculum, fee structure and merit-based admission systems. They will have complete academic, administrative and financial autonomy, the statement said.

SC allows Iltija Mufti to meet her mother

The order follows a petition filed by party general secretary Sitaram Yechury, who visited Mr. Tarigami, also under detention, in his home town in the Valley. Mr. Yechury, however, said he would still pursue his case against the curfew and restrictions in the Supreme Court. The court issued notice to the government in this regard and asked the latter to respond in a week.

The court heard Anuradha Bhasin, executive editor of *Kashmir Times*, who said the communication blockade continued unabated even after 31 days.

Senior lawyer Vrinda Grover, for Ms. Bhasin, demanded the government to produce the order or noti-

cation by which it had shut down mobile and Internet services.

“What are journalists and the media supposed to do here to report on Kashmir with freedom and fairness?” Ms. Grover argued in an impassioned manner.

She referred to an incident of how a doctor was detained for seeking better medical amenities.

Mr. Mehta immediately countered that this was “factually incorrect”.

The court issued notice to the government and asked it to file its response in a week. It said all the petitions challenging the curfew and restrictions imposed in the Valley would be heard on September 16.

Bihar MLA’s voice sample tests positive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

The voice sample report of imprisoned Bihar MLA Anant Singh on Thursday has tested positive. The Independent MLA from Mokama had given his voice sample on August 1 to the Patna police in connection with a telephonic conversation with an alleged contract killer.

Mr. Singh was, later,

found missing from his official residence in Patna and declared an absconder after an AK-47 rifle, 26 cartridges and two hand grenades were recovered from his ancestral home at Ladma, under the Barh Police Station in Patna.

After five days, the MLA surprised everyone by surrendering at a local court at Saket in Delhi. The MLA was booked and sent to jail.

SC denies relief to Chidambaram

Supreme Court judgment clears path for ED to arrest him in INX Media money laundering case

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday denied former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram protection from arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is investigating charges of money laundering against the senior Congress leader in the INX Media case.

A Bench of Justices R. Banumathi and A.S. Bopanna said anticipatory bail (bail in the pre-arrest stage) was an extraordinary remedy, which an accused in an economic offence is usually not entitled to.

Anticipatory bail is given by court sparingly, especially in economic offence cases. “Economic offences stand as a different class as they affect the economic fabric of society,” Justice Banumathi, who wrote the 57-page judgment, observed.

The Bench said anticipatory bail at the stage of investi-



Karti Chidambaram arriving at the Rouse Avenue court in New Delhi on Thursday. ■SANDEEP SAXENA

gation frustrated the interrogation and collection of “useful information” and concealed materials. The interrogation may not succeed as the accused knew that he was protected by the bail or-

der. In economic offences, the accused may use his liberty to “definitely hamper effective investigation”.

The court completely agreed with Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta’s submis-

CBI may file chargesheet in INX Media case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

After questioning Congress leader P. Chidambaram in custody, the CBI may file a chargesheet this month in the INX Media case related to ₹305 crore of foreign investment clearance given to the company in alleged violation of norms, sources said. Some 11 entities may be charged in the first chargesheet in the case, the sources said.

sions for the ED that this was not a fit case for anticipatory bail.

“A case of money laundering involves many stages of ‘placement’, ‘layering’ i.e. funds moved to other institu-

New CBI unit to help investigators share info

Jitendra Singh says it will allow real-time communication during probes across the country

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh on Thursday said a Centralised Technology Vertical (CTV) would be set up under the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at a cost of ₹99 crore to facilitate real-time information sharing with investigators across the country.

The CTV would be functional by next year, said the Minister at the first national conference on cyber-crime investigation and forensics organised by the CBI.



Jitendra Singh

tioners” were posing risk to the country by circulating fake videos on social media, which needed to be addressed.

Cyber offences

The Minister highlighted the importance of studying cyber offences, given that India has the second largest users of Internet in the world. He said non-government organisations and activists should also join the fight against cyber crime.

He said under the leadership of Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi, the Central government had given thrust to the optimum use of technology, quoting examples of Digital India, Government e-Marketplace, Aadhaar and Jandhan schemes.

Dr. Singh praised the CBI for having gained a “high degree of credibility” over the years in terms of the quality of investigations.

Stating that India was still evolving as a nation, he said organisations like the CBI had helped enhance the credibility of Indian democracy.

U.S. backs India naming terrorists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

The U.S. has backed India’s move to declare JeM chief Masood Azhar and three others as terrorists individually under a new anti-terror law.

Besides Azhar, India on Wednesday declared Mumbai terror attack accused Zaki-ur-Rehman-Lakhvi, fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim, and Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed as individual terrorists.

“We stand w/ #India & commend it for utilizing new legal authorities to designate 4 notorious terrorists: Maulana Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi & Dawood Ibrahim.

This new law expands possibilities for joint #USIndia efforts to combat scourge of terrorism,” the Acting Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia, Alice G. Wells, tweeted on Wednesday.

The decision to declare all four of them as terrorists has been taken nearly a month after Parliament approved a crucial amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment (UAPA) Act, 1967.

The law is in conformity with United Nations conventions as well as international standards, the government said.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks mastermind, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, and the US, since 2012, has offered a USD 10 million reward for information that brings the JuD chief to justice.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly asked Pakistan to abide by its UN Security Council commitments to deny terrorists safe haven and block their access to funds.

In May, the United Nations designated Azhar as a “global terrorist” after China lifted its hold on a proposal to blacklist him.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

An Assam-based NGO has lodged a complaint against three “declared foreigners” who were reportedly included in the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) released on August 31.

The NGO named Assam Public Works (APW), the first litigant in the Supreme Court seeking the updating of the NRC, said that a Foreigners’ Tribunal in central Assam’s Morigaon had declared Jubeda Begum, wife of Dil Mamud, her son Md. Jahur Ali and daughter Sahida Begum as foreigners under clause 2(s) of the Foreigners’ Act of 1946 for entering Assam illegally after March 24, 1971, which is the NRC cut-off date.



Loud and clear: Members of Social Unity Centre of India protesting against the NRC in New Delhi. ■R.V. MOORTHY

“The NRC authorities should not have included their names. I request you to investigate how they managed to get into the NRC and whether the NRC officials were involved in such inclusions,” the organisation’s Dhrubajyoti Taludar said in

an FIR filed in Guwahati’s Geetanagar police station on Wednesday.

Mr. Talukdar also wanted to know if there were any monetary transactions between the NRC officials and the trio, and whether there was any long-term agenda

WHO SE Asia Region plans to banish measles, rubella by 2023

Resolution was adopted at the WHO Regional Committee

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Member-countries of the World Health Organisation (WHO) South-East Asia Region have resolved to eliminate highly infectious childhood killer diseases measles and rubella by 2023.

“The new target to eliminate both the diseases will leverage the existing momentum and a strong political commitment, which is being demonstrated through unprecedented efforts, progress and successes in recent years,” said Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia.

A resolution to eliminate the diseases was adopted at the 72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in Delhi.

Measles is particularly dangerous for the poor, as it attacks malnourished children and those with reduced immunity. It can cause se-



Poonam Khetrapal Singh

rious complications, including blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhoea, ear infection and pneumonia, while rubella/congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) causes irreversible birth defects.

“Eliminating measles will prevent 500,000 deaths a year in the region, while eliminating rubella/CRS would avert about 55,000 cases of rubella and promote health and well-being of pregnant women and infants,” Dr. Singh said.

Measles elimination and rubella control has been a regional flagship priority since 2014. Bhutan, North Korea, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste have eliminated measles. Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste have controlled rubella.

New targets

To achieve the new targets, the member-countries resolved to strengthen the immunisation systems for increasing and sustaining high level of population immunity against the two diseases at both the national and sub-national levels.

The resolution calls for ensuring a highly sensitive laboratory supported case-based surveillance system – better evidence for appropriate planning and response. It also emphasises on preparedness for outbreak response activities.

tions to conceal origin’ and ‘interrogation i.e. funds used to acquire various assets’, it requires systematic and analysed investigation, which would be of great advantage,” the court agreed with Mr. Mehta.

The court held that an accused cannot insist that he be first confronted with the evidence placed in court to deny him anticipatory bail. It said this may run the risk of exposing evidence collected by it “with huge efforts using their men and resources”.

Knowledge of evidence would prod the accused to tamper with it or influence witnesses. The court found no substance in Mr. Chidambaram’s argument that the ED had to prove from the transcripts of the questions and answers exchanged during interrogation that his answers were evasive. Justice Banumathi said this was like asking the court to conduct a “mini trial.”

Pak. moved troops close to LoC, says India

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL
NEW DELHI

Amid tensions over the Kashmir issue, Pakistan has moved almost a brigade-size force in the Bagh and Kotli sector close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The troops moved are from a peace location and for now have been stationed around 30 km from the Line of Control, Indian Army sources said here.

“At present, they have not been deployed in offensive posturing. However, the Indian Army is closely watching their movements,” the sources informed.

The sources said the movement of the Pakistan troops had come at a time when it had already activated its terrorist infrastructure and terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed had started recruiting locals and Afghans in a big way.

It added that the troops moved by the Pakistan Army were close to a brigade-size and their numbers would be more than 2,000.

The Pakistan Army has moved troops closer to the LoC at a time when Islamabad has been trying to fuel terrorism in the Valley.

International attention

It has also been attempting to draw international attention and intervention by terming the prevailing situation between the two countries very tense.

Since the removal of Article 370 which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan deployed more than 100 SSG commandos along the LoC to push terrorists and incite violence.

Ministry rolls out 25 new mobile science museums

They will cover 115 aspirational districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Aiming to take science education to students in areas without access to such services, the Union Culture Ministry on Thursday rolled out 25 new mobile science museums, including one for Ladakh.

Union Culture and Tourism Minister of State (Independent charge) Prahlad Singh Patel flagged off the science museum bus in Leh. These museums-on-wheels will travel to schools in the 115 “aspirational districts”, as named by the Centre.

Speaking at the launch in Leh, Mr. Patel said the programme has been successful in supplementing formal education and creating scientific awareness since its inception in 1965. Till now, the programme had 23 such buses or vans.

“The buses will travel to schools in aspirational districts throughout the year except during the vacations



Prahlad Singh Patel

and will aim to create a scientific awareness among the rural children. Each specially designed bus contains 20 interactive exhibits and other demonstrations related to children and rural life,” a statement released by the Ministry said.

The exhibitions cover topics like measurement, machines in everyday life, food and health, chemistry and life with focus on water, energy, hygiene and sanitation and space science for human welfare, the statement said.

'Srinagar youth sustained fatal pellet injuries'

Nazir Laway says Centre has added more fuel to volatile situation in Kashmir

The last time he went to Kashmir was two months ago, between Parliament sessions, and since then, Mr. Laway said, he had had very limited contact with the Valley. "For the past 30 years, the situation in Kashmir has been violence, and with the latest move to dilute Articles 370 and Article 35A, the government has only added more fuel on the already volatile situation. It only needs a spark and we don't know who all will be caught in the blaze," Mr. Laway said.

A woman makes a call after landlines were restored in Lal Chowk and other areas in Srinagar. ■PTI

“Leaders who trust the Indian Constitution and democracy – they have been

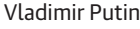
His decision to stay on in Parliament is contrary to the directions given by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti.

In another incident, a non-local labourer was shot at by unknown gunmen in Sopore on Wednesday evening.

Bilateral issues: Narendra Modi with Mahathir Mohamad at Vladivostok in Russia on Thursday. ■PTI

Hours after India's move, Prime Minister Imran Khan called up Mr. Mohamad and sought support on the issue. Prime Minister Mahathir expressed hope that India and Pakistan would exercise "utmost restraint" to prevent further escalation.

“The proposal includes joint design and development of a conventional submarine with air independent propulsion (AIP) to Indian Navy’s requirements with full access to technology and intellectual property rights,”



a Russian source said.

The Navy has issued an Expression of Interest (EoI) for six advanced conventional diesel-electric submarines under Project 75I and the bids are expected to be submitted later this month. The procurement is through the

For the P-75I, Russia has pitched a modified Amur 1650 conventional submarine to suit Indian requirements. The contenders in the P-75I are Naval Group of France, Rosoboroneexport

India has signed a series of mega defence deals with Russia in the past few years through the IGA route. "Last year and today saw the emergence of a tremendous portfolio of contracts in contrast to all previous years, \$14.5 billion. This is an impressive figure, it's a real breakthrough," Dmitry Shugaev, Director-General of Federal Service of Military-Technical Cooperation of Russia, was quoted by Russian news agency TASS.

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A ND-NDE

Would rather die than delay Brexit: Boris

British Parliament set to vote on Monday on a motion calling for an early election

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON
Boxed in by opponents and abandoned politically even by his own brother, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson struggled Thursday to keep his Brexit plans on track, and he accused lawmakers of thwarting democracy by blocking his call for a new election.

Mr. Johnson remained determined to secure an election after lawmakers rejected his call for a snap poll on October 25. Lawmakers moved to stop the U.K. leaving the European Union next month without a divorce deal. House of Commons leader Jacob Rees-Mogg told Parliament that a vote would be held on Monday on a new motion calling for an election in October.

It's uncertain whether it will pass, with opposition parties divided over whether to agree to an election now.

Mr. Johnson said he would

“rather be dead in a ditch” than delay Brexit any further, and insisted that whether or not Britain left the EU as planned on Oct. 31 must be “a matter for the people of this country to decide.”

“I don't want an election at all, but frankly I cannot see any other way,” he said, flanked by cadets at a police academy on what felt very much like an election campaign stop.

Earlier, he called the rejection of a snap election “a cowardly insult to democracy.”

Mr. Johnson's determination to lead Britain out of the EU on Oct. 31 faces strong opposition from lawmakers, including members of his own Conservative Party who oppose a no-deal Brexit.

In a personal blow, the Prime Minister's brother, Jo Johnson, quit the government, saying he could no longer endure the conflict “between family loyalty and



A file photo of Jo Johnson, Conservative MP and brother of PM Johnson, who quit the government on Thursday. • AFP

the national interest.”

Mr. Jo had served as a Minister in his older brother's government, despite his opposition to leaving the EU without a divorce deal.

After just six weeks into the Prime Minister's office, his plans to lead the U.K. out of the EU are in crisis. He is caught between the EU, which refuses to renegotiate the deal it struck with Mr. Johnson's predecessor, Theresa May. A majority of law-

makers are opposed to leaving without an agreement. Most economists say a no-deal Brexit would cause severe economic disruption and plunge the U.K. into recession.

Mr. Johnson's solution is to seek an election that could shake up Parliament and produce a less troublesome crop of lawmakers. It's a risky gambit as opinion polls don't point to a clear majority for the Conservatives.

PM's brother quits U.K. govt

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was dealt a fresh blow on Thursday when his brother Jo Johnson quit the government, saying he could no longer reconcile “family loyalty and national interest”.

Mr. Jo had campaigned strongly against Britain's exit from the European Union in 2016, a position that put him at odds with his older and more famous brother Boris. But he took a job as Universities and Science Minister.

“In recent weeks I've been torn between family loyalty and the national interest – it's an unresolvable tension & time for others to take on my roles as MP & Minister,” he tweeted.

U.S., China set to resume trade talks in Washington

New tariffs to make it difficult for them to hammer out a deal

ALEXANDRA STEVENSON
SHANGHAI

The U.S. and China will hold trade talks in Washington early next month, officials from both countries said on Thursday, but new tariffs will make it difficult to find a way to end their economic clash.

Liu He, a top Chinese economic official and Beijing's top trade negotiator, will travel to Washington in October, State media said. Mr. Liu spoke on Thursday morning with Robert Lighthizer, the U.S. trade representative, and Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary. Mr. Lighthizer's office said that deputy-level meetings would take place before the talks.

If held as scheduled, the talks would take place after new U.S. tariffs kick in,



Next stop: Workers making cowboy boots for export to the U.S. at a factory in Dongguan, China. • NYT

which could make it difficult for the two sides to reach a deal.

President Donald Trump has said he would raise tariffs to 30% from the current 25% on \$250 billion in Chinese goods. Those tariffs cover everything from cars to aircraft parts.

On Sunday, Washington began charging a 15% tax on more than \$100 billion

worth of Chinese imports. Beijing retaliated with its own increased tariffs. Both countries plan to impose still more tariffs in December, barring a breakthrough in talks.

Businesses in both the United States and China have begun to express concern about a trade war that has dragged on for more than a year. NY TIMES

ELSEWHERE



Pope takes message of peace to Mozambique

MAPUTO
Pope Francis praised Mozambique's President Felipe Nyusi and opposition leaders on Thursday for their courage in signing a landmark peace accord, as he opened a visit to the African nation by calling for a future where reconciliation and sustainable development become “weapons of peace.” AP

Italy nominates Gentiloni as EU Commissioner

ROME
Italy has put forward former centre-left Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni as its candidate for the incoming European Commission, one of his colleagues in the Democratic Party (PD) said Thursday. Gentiloni, 64, was premier from 2016-18. AFP

South Africa shuts embassy in Nigeria

JOHANNESBURG
South Africa said on Thursday it had closed its diplomatic missions in Nigeria following violence against South African businesses carried out in reprisal for attacks on foreign-owned stores in Johannesburg. The embassy in Abuja and consulate in Lagos were shut. AFP

Trump's West Asia envoy set to resign

WASHINGTON
Jason Greenblatt, U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy tasked with developing a plan to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians, is leaving the White House. His departure casts further doubt on the peace plan's future. AP

We meet everyone, Indian envoy on meeting with Bannon

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

India's Ambassador to the U.S. Harsh Vardhan Shringla met with former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon at the latter's house in Washington DC. Their meeting included a discussion on India, Russia, China and domestic politics in the U.S., according to Mr. Shringla. “He's someone who has high regard for India and wants to see strong relations [between the U.S. and India],” Mr. Shringla said.

Mr. Shringla's comments to *The Hindu* were in the context of a tweet he had

written summarising the meeting. “A pleasure to meet the legendary ideology and ‘Dharma’ warrior @StephenBannon, an avid follower of the #Hindu epic the #BhagvadGita,” the tweet, which was subsequently deleted, said.

As a former head of Breitbart, the alt-right news website, and as someone who served in leadership roles at Cambridge Analytica, the data analytics firm involved in a scandal around the unethical harvesting of Facebook profiles, Mr. Bannon is a divisive figure.

Too much was being read

into their meeting, Mr. Shringla told *The Hindu*, adding that some from ‘across the border’ [an apparent reference to Pakistan] were imparting conspiratorial angles to it. “Don't look into it as a conspiracy,” Mr. Shringla said. Some websites had linked the meeting to the tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

“We meet everyone from Bernie Sanders to Steve Bannon,” he said, adding that in his role he had to meet people of different ideological views but it did not imply one subscribed to those views.

Lam calls for dialogue, resumption of order

Protesters vow to keep up campaign

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

Hong Kong's leader on Thursday urged pro-democracy protesters to end their demonstrations after her surprise decision to bow to one of their key demands was condemned as too little, too late.

Carrie Lam, the city's pro-Beijing chief executive, surprised many on Wednesday when after three months of rallies she suddenly announced she was scrapping a hugely unpopular extradition law.

Millions of people have taken to Hong Kong's streets since June in the biggest challenge to China's rule of semi-autonomous city since

its handover from the British in 1997.

The protests were sparked by a proposed Bill allowing extraditions to mainland China.

At a press conference on Thursday, she continued her conciliatory tone, saying her decision to fully withdraw the Bill was an attempt “to help prevent violence and stop chaos as soon as possible, resume the social order and help our economy and people's livelihood to move forward”.

Since Ms. Lam's announcement on Wednesday, there has been condemnation across the protest spectrum with activists vowing to keep up their campaign.

Trump keeps defending wrong map of Hurricane Dorian's path

He displayed a map showing edited path, which is against the law

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Trouble is raining down on U.S. President Donald Trump, who appears to have given Americans incorrect information on Hurricane Dorian's trajectory.

During an Oval Office press briefing on Wednesday, Mr. Trump displayed a map from the National Hurricane Center showing the storm's predicted path.

As he held up the poster to give the journalists a better view, it became clear the map had been edited: Dorian's cone had been extended with what appeared to be black marker to include the



Damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian on the Great Abaco island town of Marsh Harbour, Bahamas. • REUTERS

state of Alabama. It is against the law to falsify a National Weather Service forecast and pass it off as official.

When asked a few hours later about the surprising addition, Mr. Trump responded,

“I don't know. I don't know,” while continuing to maintain that the predictions included the possibility that Dorian would make landfall in the southern state.

San Francisco calls NRA a domestic terrorist group

‘It exists to spread pro-gun propaganda’

MARIEL PADILLA
SAN FRANCISCO

Unsettled by recent mass shootings across the nation, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a resolution this week declaring the National Rifle Association a domestic terrorist organisation.

The resolution was introduced by Supervisor Catherine Stefani on July 30, two days after a shooting at a garlic festival in Gilroy, California, in which three people were killed and more than a dozen injured.

Before the resolution was put to a vote on Tuesday, Ms. Stefani spoke about the “carnage across this country,” also citing mass shoot-

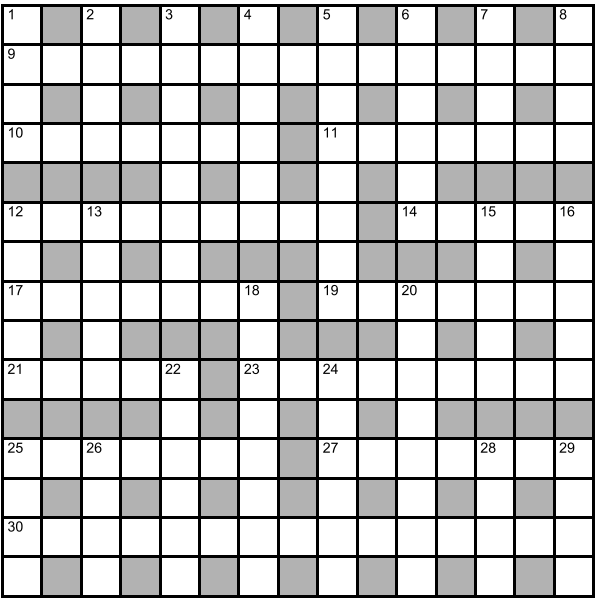
ings last month in El Paso and Dayton, Ohio.

Ms. Stefani said the NRA conspires to limit gun violence research, restrict gun violence data sharing and block every piece of sensible gun violence prevention legislation proposed at local, State and federal levels.

“The NRA exists to spread pro-gun propaganda and put weapons in the hands of those who would harm and terrorize us,” Stefani said. “Nobody has done more to fan the flames of gun violence than the NRA.”

Ms. Stefani said, “I firmly believe that words matter, and I think this is a step in fighting the negative impact of the NRA.” NY TIMES

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12723



ACROSS

- 9 You and I rush after hero and the actors in "Cloudy with a chance of rain", perhaps (7,8)
- 10 Fail to pay when due and flat broke! (7)
- 11 Fast or strike without a purpose (7)
- 12 Wild crab and one deeply burrowed (9)

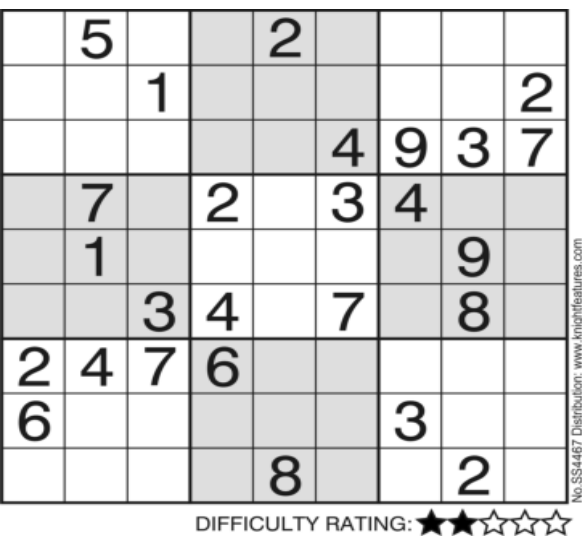
(set by Hypatia)

- 14 A little dog fight starting near swamp (5)
- 17 Spice and flavour from reddish orange natural sources (7)
- 19 Patent Hypatia had registered in first lady's book (7)
- 21 Stretchy fabric from two fashion capitals (5)
- 23 Jane's casual clothes (4,5)
- 25 Upset when flat earning rent's gutted (7)
- 27 Bother hiring nurse before a disaster (7)
- 30 MI associate and double "O" shot on the US shores (1,8,3,3)
- 6 That man needing parking is escorted and assisted (6)
- 7 Reportedly manufactured cleaner (4)
- 8 Delay support (4)
- 12 Burning issue? (5)
- 13 Terrific or Terrible? (5)
- 15 Talk show hostess invites European leaving Hungary for entertainment (5)
- 16 Perhaps re-do records? (5)
- 18 Name country entertaining British before the French duke, say (8)
- 20 Casting a spell, criminal's hot and smashing (8)
- 22 Batting after putting up century abroad (3-3)
- 24 Disunity in party is getting messy (6)
- 25 Animal's tail flicked by leg (4)
- 26 Avoiding the restless Cheetah attacking in hunger (4)
- 28 Trace a cat (4)
- 29 Out briefly at regular intervals to submit (4)

DOWN

- 1 Impressed by old woman knocking girl out (4)
- 2 Spouse nearly adopted a homeless child (4)
- 3 Bear ought to get climbing again (8)
- 4 Something charged for running behind time (6)
- 5 I drop bananas with a bit of Ragi, picking up say, a breakfast dish (8)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12722

E	R	C	I	C	K	W			
E	U	R	K	A	N	E	O	N	A
R	W	R	T	N	N	R			
D	O	M	I	N	E	E	R		
Z	R	E	U	R	A	E			
D	O	G	E	A	R	E	R		
N									
D	E	N	S	E	R	E	D	O	U
A	S	P	I	R	E				
H	P	A	M	A	H	A			
W	I	C	K	E	R				
V	N	O	I	L	D	V	O		
R	E	N	O	U	N	C	E		
R	T	G	R	R	N	T			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Bhagiratha Prayatna

The story of how Bhagiratha of the Ikshvaku race brings the celestial Ganga to earth is described in the many puranas and the Itihasas. In a discourse, Swami Paramasukananda drew attention to how posterity has come to associate Bhagiratha's name with the value of tremendous effort, austere penance and determination by which even the most formidable challenges can be overcome. It shows that self confidence, tenacity and above all faith in God are of utmost importance when pursuing any goal, worldly or spiritual. Bhagiratha's sole aim is to redeem his ancestors, the sons of King Sagara, who had been reduced to ashes in the hermitage of Lord Kapila.

The story goes that during the Aswamedha yaga performed by Sagara, the sacrificial horse goes missing. His sons go in search of it and find it in the ashram of Sage Kapila. In a fit of haughtiness they raise their weapons against the sage who is steeped in meditation. This act reduces them to ashes. Amshuman, the grandson of Sagara, follows the footprints of his uncles and finds the horse near the heap of ashes. He also sees Lord Kapila and is told that the forbears would be relieved of their sin if the sacred waters of the Ganga are sprinkled on the ashes. Though Amshuman and later his son Dilipa try to bring the Ganga during their lifetime, they fail. It is left to Dilipa's son, the righteous Bhagiratha to take up the responsibility of saving his forefathers. He understands the importance of honouring the family tradition and the duties of the progeny towards the family ancestors.

He renounces kingly responsibilities and devotes his entire time and effort to somehow see Goddess Ganga and request her to come to earth.

MARKET WATCH		
	05-09-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	36,644	-0.22
US Dollar	71.84	0.38
Gold	39,271	0.21
Brent oil	62.14	2.76

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	366.55	2.20
Asian Paints	1519.75	-15.40
Axis Bank	649.60	2.30
Bajaj Auto	2759.20	23.50
Bajaj Finserv	7001.05	-22.05
Bajaj Finance	3292.70	42.45
Bharti Airtel	347.70	2.00
BPLCL	380.80	17.25
Britannia Ind	2678.65	43.20
Cipla	478.40	7.00
Coal India	194.85	12.70
Dr Reddys Lab	2682.45	-79.75
Eicher Motors	15754.20	111.80
GAIL (India)	130.95	3.65
Grasim Ind	697.10	3.05
HCL Tech	1111.95	-13.70
HDFC	2044.15	-55.95
HDFC Bank	2235.15	-12.60
Hero MotoCorp	2605.90	39.80
Hindalco	184.60	2.95
Hind Unilever	1829.75	-16.85
Indiabulls HFL	447.95	-10.35
ICICI Bank	389.00	-8.50
Indusind Bank	1308.10	-9.50
Bharti Infratel	248.20	0.15
Infosys	834.05	12.75
Indian OilCorp	124.70	4.35
ITC	244.25	1.00
JSW Steel	216.25	1.45
Kotak Bank	1410.15	-16.30
L&T	1320.30	12.25
M&M	517.00	11.30
Maruti Suzuki	5968.65	137.90
NTPC	123.45	4.00
ONGC	125.15	6.15
PowerGrid Corp	199.35	2.45
Reliance Ind	1198.60	-2.55
State Bank	273.30	-1.80
Sun Pharma	431.80	5.35
Tata Motors	118.05	8.55
Tata Steel	345.15	5.90
TCS	2215.30	-30.10
Tech Mahindra	695.45	-7.80
Titan	1048.65	11.45
UltraTech Cement	3888.80	12.30
VEDL	569.65	8.60
UPL	139.30	2.60
Wipro	255.60	-0.45
YES Bank	61.95	2.50
Zee Entertainment	360.80	5.30

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on September 05		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.64	71.96
Euro	79.28	79.64
British Pound	88.37	88.77
Japanese Yen (100)	67.17	67.48
Chinese Yuan	10.03	10.07
Swiss Franc	72.95	73.28
Singapore Dollar	51.80	52.03
Canadian Dollar	54.26	54.53
Malaysian Ringgit	17.10	17.18
Source: Indian Bank		

BULLION RATES CHENNAI		
September 05 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	54.8	(54.8)
22 ct gold (1g)	3741	(3741)

PNB board approves amalgamation with OBC, UBI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Board of Punjab National Bank has approved the amalgamation of Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India into Punjab National Bank, the company informed stock exchanges in a regulatory filing on Thursday.

It has also approved the government's capital infusion of ₹18,000 crore, pending shareholder approval.

"In continuation to our intimation dated August 31, 2019, the exchange is hereby informed that the board of directors of the bank in its meeting held on September 5, 2019, has considered and decided to give its 'in-principle approval' for amalgamation of the Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India into Punjab National Bank and commence the amalgamation process for the same, subject to all applicable approvals," the filing said.

The bank's board met on Thursday following a letter from the government on August 30 advising the board to consider the amalgamation of the three banks.

Nod for capital infusion The bank's board has also approved a capital infusion of ₹18,000 crore by the Government of India, the filing added.

"Further, in the meeting today the Board has also approved the capital infusion of up to ₹18,000 crore by Government of India for preferential allotment of equity shares of Bank at a price determined in terms of SEBI (ICDR) Regulations and holding of Extra General Meeting (EGM) on Tuesday, October 22... for obtaining approval of shareholders," the filing added.

'Govt. looking at export sops, GST incentives for auto sector'

Gadkari promises to take up industry's plea for cut in GST with Finance Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Offering some solace to the crisis-hit auto industry, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday assured 'full' support from the government to help overcome the free fall in vehicle sales. He said the Centre was looking at steps, including export sops and GST incentives, to help create demand in the sector.

"As far as the present economic data is concerned, automobile sector is facing a slowdown because of the global economy... because of demand and supply. The government is with the automobile sector," the Minister said at the 59th SIAM annual convention.

The Minister also clarified that the government did not intend to ban ICE (internal combustion engine) powered vehicles.

He, however, added that the government would promote the use of alternative fuels and electric vehicles to



Offering hope: Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari speaking at the SIAM convention. ■KAMAL NARANG

tackle issues of a high crude oil import bill and pollution. Thursday's statement comes as a relief for the industry, given that it was Mr. Gadkari who had in 2017 asked car makers to move to electric or they would be "bulldozed" into doing it.

Mr. Gadkari also promised to take up the industry's request for a GST cut with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. "The industry's demand for reduction in

GST is understandable. I will take your suggestion [to reduce GST] to the finance minister... even if it can be done for a limited period of time. I will follow this up. This sector needs help at this time and that help should be in such a manner that it helps increase sales," he said. Noting that the GST on electric vehicles had been reduced to 5% from 12% earlier, he said the government was mulling to extend the

same benefit to hybrid vehicles.

Any decision on GST on automobiles would be taken up for discussion at the upcoming meeting of the GST Council on September 20. However, the industry is seeking an early solution as they fear that customers would defer purchases anticipating further reduction in prices.

Mr. Gadkari also said that his Ministry would award 68 road projects worth about ₹5 lakh crore in the next three months, which, in turn, would help generate demand for commercial vehicles.

SIAM president Rajan Wadhwa sought introduction of a scrappage policy and a nodal Ministry for the industry, in addition to GST cuts. CII president designate and MD and CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank Uday Kotak said that there was enough liquidity in the banking system to finance any form of vehicle.

Slowdown effect: M&M defers ₹1,000 crore of planned capex

'At current production levels, every carmaker is overstaffed'

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA NEW DELHI

Homegrown auto major Mahindra & Mahindra has deferred 10%, or about ₹1,000 crore, of its planned capex to cope with the prolonged slowdown in the auto sector, the company's managing director Pawan Goenka said on Thursday.

Mr. Goenka also warned that if the industry did not return to positive growth for the remaining months in the current fiscal, the sector may see more layoffs as almost every carmaker is overstaffed, based on the current level of production.

Pointing out that the company's investment in products had not slowed down, he said the investments in building capacity and discretionary capital expenditure would slow down.

"The capacity that we expected 2-3 years from now is less than a year ago. So, there will be a slowdown in capacity investment. And probably about a year's deferral... discretionary capex like repair and maintenance



Pawan Goenka

will be deferred as much as possible. At Mahindra, we will probably end up deferring 10% of capex... about ₹800-1,000 crore."

'More domestic'

Mr. Goenka pointed out that that the current slowdown was different from the previous three slowdowns that the industry witnessed. This one was "more domestic", while the previous ones were caused more by global scenarios. "Therefore, a little bit of intervention by the government could easily get us out of trouble. But this time, there is no magic wand that can work... a variety of things need to be done to-

gether to get us out of the current situation," he said.

Stating that it was "un-kind" to say that the industry was not doing anything, he said it was only after attempting everything from product launches to price incentives, the industry had turned to the government.

On layoffs in the company and the sector, he said M&M has had to lay off about 1,500 temporary workers, of a total of 30,000.

"That is like 5% reduction when volume is down by 20%. We are not removing people just because volumes are down, but if it continues beyond a certain point then the industry would be unable to carry the extra people."

He also said it would be more difficult for commercial vehicles to turnaround than the passenger vehicles, as the latter was a discretionary purchase, while CVs were purchased based on the demand. "For CVs, just a reduction in GST may not help; you need more of an economic turnaround."

Surcharge roll-back fails to halt FPI selling

Since August 23 announcement, FPIs have sold shares worth nearly ₹6,200 crore

Outflow unabated

Since the budget announcement on July 5, foreign investors have sold shares worth over ₹30,000 crore. In September, FPIs have so far been net sellers at ₹3,848 crore.

Date	FPI flows (₹cr.)	DII flows (₹cr.)	Sensex (change)
Aug. 26, 2019	(669.71)	1,272.29	792.96
Aug. 27, 2019	(1,041.30)	1,162.65	147.15
Aug. 28, 2019	(1,081.34)	359.32	(189.43)
Aug. 29, 2019	(563.36)	489.23	(382.91)
Aug. 30, 2019	812.15	1,502.27	263.86
Sept. 3, 2019	(2,427.56)	1,251.35	(769.88)
Sept. 4, 2019	(1,203.32)	1,304.58	(80.32)
Net Flows	(6,174.44)	7,341.69	

Source: NSDL, BSE

has made foreign investors bearish on equities.

"Persisting negative environment of lower risk appetite from foreign investors, given global uncertainty, flagging demand environment for consumption sectors and continued rural stress overshadowed the announcement withdrawing surcharge on long-term and short-term capital gains for FPI," stated a report from Elara Capital.

An improvement in consumption demand during

the upcoming festival season, coupled with current levels of valuation will make India an attractive destination, it added.

While presenting the Union Budget on July 5, Ms. Sitharaman announced a surcharge on individuals that earn over ₹2 crore but since many FPIs operate under a trust structure, they also became subjected to the tax.

The effect of the Budget announcement can be gauged from the fact that fo-

reign investors sold shares worth over ₹30,000 crore in just two months – July and August. In September, FPIs are currently net sellers at ₹3,848 crore.

"We see the announcements... as a short-term positive for the market," BNP Paribas had stated in a note, a day after the government announcement, while adding that a "revival in earnings growth is needed for a more sustainable rally."

"The QIFY20 [first quarter of 2019-20] earnings season was lacklustre... Furthermore, global factors such as the most recent escalation in U.S.-China trade tensions have turned more unfavourable," stated the report.

Incidentally, domestic institutional investors, which include banks, insurance companies and mutual funds, have been buying even as their foreign counterparts have been aggressively selling.

Since August 26, DIIs have bought shares worth ₹7,342 crore.

Jio starts fibre-to-home service

Tariff plans start at ₹699 a month and go up to ₹8,499

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Reliance Jio on Thursday announced the commencement of JioFiber, its fibre-to-home service, across 1,600 cities in India with the basic pre-paid 'Bronze' plan starting at ₹699 per month and going up to ₹8,499 a month for its 'Titanium' pre-paid plan.

Under the Jio Welcome offer, the basic plan offers 100 GB of data (with 50GB extra), free voice calls to anywhere in India, TV video calling, conferencing, gaming, home networking (content sharing at home and outside) and device security for up to five devices.

On payment of ₹2,500 for installation, which includes a security deposit of ₹1,500, the subscriber will get Jio home gateway worth ₹5000, 4K set-top box worth ₹6,400 and bluetooth speaker worth ₹2,999 and annual subscription for Jio content.

"With JioFiber, Jio continues to deliver on its promise of connecting the unconnected while bringing



about transformational changes to Indian homes, that it started with its mobility service three years ago, on September 5, 2016," said Jio in a statement.

Television sets will be available to customers committing to long-term plans starting at ₹1,299 per month.

43-inch TV set

Under the Jio Titanium offer with a monthly rental plan of ₹8,499, users will get a 43-inch 4K TV worth ₹44,990 and an annual subscription of leading OTT apps along with Jio home gateway worth ₹5,000, along with the 4K set-top box. Titanium subscribers will get 5,000 GB of data at a speed of 1 Gbps.

Jio's Diamond, Platinum and Titanium subscribers will get immersive, virtual reality (VR) experience (theatre-like personal experience on a VR headset) and premium content, which includes first-day, first-show movies and special sports content.

"Currently, the average fixed-line broadband speed in India is 25 Mbps.

'In top five soon'

"Even in America, which is the most developed economy, it is around 90 Mbps. JioFiber, India's first 100% all-fibre broadband service, will start from 100 Mbps and go all the way up to 1 Gbps. This will propel India to top five broadband nations globally," said Jio.

Commenting on the launch of JioFiber, Akash Ambani, director, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd., said, "Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and all of JioFiber has been designed with the sole purpose of giving you a delightful experience."

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR MUMBAI

Attempts by the government to revive foreign investors' interest in the Indian stock markets by rolling back the contentious surcharge has failed to make any impact as selling by overseas investors continues unabated.

Data shows that since August 23 when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the roll-back of the surcharge, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have been net sellers on all trading sessions but one, having sold shares worth nearly ₹6,200 crore.

Interestingly, the first trading session after the government announcement - August 26 - saw the Sensex surging 793 points but FPIs remained net sellers at ₹670 crore.

Market participants believe that while the government has acknowledged the issue and rolled back the tax surcharge, there are larger macroeconomic concerns – both domestic and global – gripping the markets that

Aleris deal still in play despite lawsuit: Hindalco

'DoJ ignored competition from steel'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Hindalco Industries' U.S. subsidiary Novelis Inc. has said it is 'committed to closing' its proposed \$2.6 billion acquisition of Aleris Corporation, notwithstanding the U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) lawsuit to block the transaction.

"Novelis intends to vigorously defend against the DoJ's challenge, which it believes is without merit. DoJ suit ignores the full scope of automotive body sheet competition. "The DoJ lawsuit is based on the contention that the only relevant competition among automotive body sheet providers is that among aluminum manufacturers such as Novelis and Aleris," said a statement from Novelis, adding that the claim ignored competition from steel automotive body sheet sector, even though the latter's products are currently used for nearly 90% of the market'.

"The day-to-day reality of the automotive body sheet market is aluminum automotive body sheet striving to take share from steel, and the steel automotive body sheet companies fighting back," said Steve Fisher, president and CEO, Novelis Inc.

To prevail in its lawsuit, the DoJ will need to prove that there is a distinct "relevant market" for aluminum automotive body sheet, which means that steel automotive body sheet does not significantly constrain the price and quality of aluminum automotive body sheet.



Steve Fisher

tant market" for aluminum automotive body sheet, which means that steel automotive body sheet does not significantly constrain the price and quality of aluminum automotive body sheet.

Time line, process

Due to the agreement reached with the DoJ on a timetable and process for resolving this dispute, Novelis is 'confident that the suit is not an impediment to closing the transaction by the January 21, 2020, outside date under the merger agreement, even if a remedy is required to address the DoJ's competitive concerns'.

Novelis is simultaneously fending off an anti-trust challenge by the European Commission on the Aleris deal. Satish Pai, MD, Hindalco Industries, told *The Hindu*, "We are expecting a decision on this soon from the European Commission."

PSB mergers credit positive, says Moody's

'Asset quality may remain unchanged'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The consolidation of 10 public sector banks into four will be credit positive due to increased operational scale and capital, and improved corporate governance in the long run, rating agency Moody's said on Thursday.

"The consolidated banks will have larger operating scale, which will result in improved competitiveness in corporate banking and retail lending, where their market share is low," Moody's said.

Last week, the government announced the consolidation of 10 banks into four. The process is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Tech investments

"A larger scale will also enable PSU banks to increase technology investment, which is an area where they have lagged private sector peers," the rating agency said, adding that these benefits would not be realised until the medium term.

"Based on the announced allocations, all rated PSU banks, after consolidation, will have a pro forma Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio of more than 9%," Moody's said.

As most of these banks have higher bad loans, Moody's said.



Post consolidation, rated PSBs will have a Common Equity Tier 1 ratio of more than 9%

dy's expects no significant change in asset quality and profitability, post merger.

"Asset quality and profitability will remain broadly unchanged after consolidation. PSU banks already score poorly on these two factors, and there is no reason to assume that the merged entities will make significant improvements in these metrics," it said.

"While boards have been given more power, their roles and responsibilities will remain significantly circumscribed compared with boards of private sector companies, including private sector banks," it said.

HR challenges

Moody's added that flexibility in PSBs' human resources practices, compared with private sector peers, remained limited.

"There is little latitude to provide incentives, which tends to stifle work performance. This is compounded by the rigidity of recruitment, compensation and career progression, which makes it very difficult to set goals for employees," Moody's said.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS, TIRUPATI Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh Office of the Chief Engineer, TTD, Tirupati					
e - PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE					
Adv.No. 06/D3/CE/TTD/2019-20					
Sl. No.	NIT No.	Name of the Work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs & Time for Completion	Schedule Download Start Date	Download end date & last date for bid submission
1	2	3	4	5	6
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER-I					
1	38/SE-I/TTD/2019-20	Construction of cattle sheds, over head tanks, roads and other Allied infrastructure to SVIC at Palamaneru Chittoor dist	2967.00 18 Months	07.09.2019 5.00 PM	23.09.2019@1.00 PM & 3.00 PM
2	39/SE-I/TTD/2019-20	Construction of isolation sheds, Overhead Tanks and other allied infrastructure to SVIC at Kamalahangaripali, near Bakarapet, Chittoor District.	508.00 12 Months	06.09.2019 5.00 PM	21.09.2019@1.00PM & 3.00 PM
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER-II					
3	142/SE-II/TTD/2019-20	Disposal of Non Hazardous Solid Waste from Tirumala	EOI-Offline tender -15 years	11.09.2019 5.00 PM	27.09.2019@1.00PM & 3.00 PM
For NIT No 142/SE-II/TTD/2019-20 EOI document can be downloaded from TTD Website (www.tirumala.org) and also can be purchased at O/o SE-II, TTD, Tirupati from 12.09.2019, 10.30AM to 27.09.2019 upto 1.00 PM IST during office hours and shall be deposited in tender box kept in O/o SE-II, TTD, Tirupati on or before 27.09.2019 by 3.00 PM IST.					
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER-IV					
4	52/SE-IV/TTD/2019-20	Construction of Balance two quadrants of Kalyanavedika at Vontimitta, Kadapa District.	1350.00 12 Months	13.09.2019 5.00 PM	30.09.2019@1.00PM & 3.00 PM
Note: for full details log on to the website https://tender.aeprocurement.gov.in or http://www.aeprocurement.gov.in					
Roc. No.PR4/1391/Adv.No.234/PRO/2019,Dt:05.09.2019					
EXECUTIVE OFFICER					

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In a diverse market like India, should brands think local or believe in a one-size-fits-all approach?

Localisation is an extremely important parameter to devise a marketing campaign for any region. Brands should think globally but act locally. Therefore, a campaign that best suits the interests of the local population is more likely to be successful than a one-size-fits-all. Take, for instance, our 'Kiska Bajaa' and 'Naya Note' campaigns, both of which were conceptualised based on local insights.

Anuj Sharma
Chief Marketing Officer, Xiaomi India

You can read the full interview in The Hindu BusinessLine today or scan the QR Code.

This article is part of a brand initiative by The Hindu BusinessLine to profile marketing professionals from across India.

IN BRIEF



Rakesh Srivastava named Nissan Motor MD
CHENNAI
Rakesh Srivastava has been appointed as managing director, Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd (NMIL). He will report to Sinan Ozkok, president, Nissan India Operations, according to a company statement. Previously, he worked as director in charge of electric vehicle development in JSW Group. Prior to that, Mr. Srivastava held senior positions in Hyundai Motor India and Maruti Suzuki.

Dr. Reddy's launches generic of Zyban tablets
HYDERABAD
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories said it had launched in the U.S. Bupropion Hydrochloride Extended-Release tablets, a therapeutically equivalent generic version of Zyban that is indicated as an aid to smoking cessation. The Zyban brand and generic had U.S. sales of approximately \$5.4 million moving annual total (MAT) for the twelve months ended June 2019, Dr.Reddy's said, citing IQVIA Health numbers.

Eveready Industries to sell land in Hyderabad
KOLKATA
Eveready Industries India Ltd. is planning to sell a land parcel of 25 acres at Hyderabad for ₹100 crore. The land had become surplus after the battery unit, which it housed, was closed down in 2010 due to uneconomic operations. An agreement for sale has already been executed with Nuland Technologies for sale of this land situated at Moula All Industrial Development Area, Hyderabad, the company said in a regulatory filing.

NCLT okays JSW Steel's ₹19,700-cr. BPSL bid

Company likely to appeal against the order seeking various reliefs from statutory authorities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Thursday approved JSW Steel's ₹19,700 crore bid for Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL).
However, the company is likely to appeal against the order as NCLT had disposed of JSW Steel's petition seeking various reliefs from statutory authorities under the Income Tax Act 1961, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Department of Registration of Stamps and Reserve Bank of India (RBI), said sources in the know of the development.

Filing application
"We do not feel persuaded to accept the prayer made in the resolution plan yet the



Ray of hope: BPSL's profit during insolvency period must be distributed to creditors, says NCLT. ■B.M. SIDDALINGASWAMY

resolution plan applicant may file appropriate applications before competent authorities which would be considered in accordance with law because it would not be competent for adjudicating authority— NCLT – to enter into any such area for grant-

and as per our legal input, we will take a call tomorrow."
The NCLT ruled that the profit made by BPSL during the insolvency period must be distributed to creditors, in accordance with a ruling by a higher tribunal in a case involving ArcelorMittal-Essar Steel India.
"National Company Law Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, has today, in its pronouncement approved the resolution plan submitted by JSW Steel Limited in respect of the corporate insolvency resolution process of Bhushan Power and Steel Limited.
"The written order containing the details and terms of such approval, if any, are awaited," said the company in filing to the exchanges.
A two-member principal bench of the NCLT, headed by Justice M. M. Kumar, also said the criminal cases against the promoters of BPSL for siphoning of the funds from the company would not impact JSW Steel as it was a new promoter.

Rejects objections
The NCLT rejected the objections raised by Tata Steel over the bids submitted by JSW and its erstwhile BPSL promoters.
Tata Steel had objected to the improved financial offer of JSW Steel before the resolution professional and the committee of creditors of Bhushan Power and Steel.
JSW Steel shares on the BSE rose 0.77% to close at ₹216.25 in a weak Mumbai market on Thursday.

Aditya Birla Capital to raise ₹2,100 crore

Firm to repay debt, fund growth

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL) will raise ₹2,100 crore equity capital through a preferential allotment to investors and the promoters.
The equity capital will be raised at ₹100 per share, which is at a 10.62% premium to the ABCL closing price of ₹90.40 as of September 4, the company said in a statement.
Jomei Investments Limited – an entity affiliated with U.S.-based private equity firm Advent International – would invest ₹1,000 crore while PI Opportunities Fund – an entity affiliated with Premji Invest – would invest another ₹100 crore.

The remaining ₹1,000 crore will be invested by promoter Grasim Industries (₹770 crore) and promoter group entities (₹230 crore).
"Upon the completion of the issuance, Advent, through its affiliate, will hold approximately 4.15% of ABCL's equity capital, while Premji Invest, through its affiliates, will hold approximately 4.11% of ABCL's equity capital," the company said in a statement.
The promoter and promoter group entities will hold about 70.54 % in ABCL after the issue.
The money will be used to fund the future growth of the company's businesses as well repay outstanding debt, ABCL said.

'Ahead of festive season, auto makers in wait and watch mode'

Firms expect footfalls at showrooms to convert into sales

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI
With festive season around the corner, the automobile industry is seeing a slight uptick in footfalls at showrooms, leading to hopes of an uplift from the deep decline in sales over the past few months.
"In the upcoming festive season, I am quite hopeful that there will be enough demand. I am basing it entirely on the fact that enquiry levels have gone up 5-7% for our petrol vehicles," Shashank Srivastava, executive director (marketing and sales), Maruti Suzuki India, told *The Hindu*.
The company is hopeful that they would be able to

convert these footfalls to retail sales. Asked if this festive season could kick-start the reversal of the slowdown for the industry, he said, "I do see light at the end of the tunnel, but I am not able to gauge how far the light is. We will have a better outlook after a couple of months."
An industry representative said while the industry was hopeful that the second half of the year would be better than the first, things were dicey as consumer sentiment remained low.
SIAM president Rajan Wadhwa, who is also the president, Automotive Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra, echoed similar sentiments. "We always have light at the

end of the tunnel, but everything depends on how long the tunnel is," he said.
Asked about the upcoming festive season, he said these 2-2.5 months typically accounted for 20-25% of sales for all manufacturers.
Deep discounts
In order to woo customers, carmakers are pushing deep discounts on vehicles, averaging around 5%.
In Maruti Suzuki, for example, the discounts range from ₹30,000 to ₹1 lakh.
"The discounts are almost at an all-time high for most models. It is the best time for a consumer to buy," an industry representative added.



Looking up: The company is exporting to 105 countries and has only had to ramp up its exports, says Rajiv Prasad.

Replacement market, exports rescue JK Tyres

Outbound shipments grew 50% in Q1

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI
JK Tyres & Industries Ltd., a major player in the Indian tyre industry, has seen around 30% fall in its sales to Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) in line with the ongoing slump in the auto industry. But the company has managed to cut the risk by focussing on replacement and exports markets, a top executive said.
"While the OEM market, which accounts for 27% of our total volume, is suffering, we were able to capitalise on this by using the same capacities to sell more in the replacement and exports markets, because these products were already there with us," Rajiv Prasad, president, (India Operations) JK Tyre & Industries Ltd., said in an interview.
"We just had to do some new moulds, so we had just shifted the market position from OEM to exports. Unlike the auto industry, there is no inventory issue," Mr. Prasad said. He said the company was exporting to 105 countries, and has only had to ramp up its exports.
"In the first quarter of the current year, exports have grown 50%. Overall, we may

not have grown by 24% (y-o-y) but we still maintained a flat growth. In the last quarter, we were up by 2-3% (y-o-y same quarter). That has been a good sign for us," he added.
"Due to anti-dumping duty on Chinese products in the U.S. market, we could manage to capitalise on that as well. And that's why I am talking about a huge 50% jump in exports in the current situation," he added.
He said currently the replacement market was doing fairly well and the company reported 16% growth in this segment in the first quarter.
"On the overall number, we were able to maintain growth levels which is creditable. We are ensuring that at least our company doesn't go down in terms of volumes [in the current situation]," he added.
Now that the impact of the 15% increase in axle lead on the OEMs is expected to extinguish shortly, the current inventory pileup is posing a new challenge, he said.
"The inventory pile-up is happening because of the slowness in the industry and due to the implementation of BS VI from April 1, 2020," he said.

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

A feast of articles and pictures on the just concluded, once-in-40-years, 48-day exposition of Athi Varadar and the fascinating history of Varadaraja Swamy Temple in Kanchipuram.



- Complete view of the 48-day exposition
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- Athi Varadar-Utsavar meeting
- Special poojas for Athi Varadar before re-immersion
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DEEPA ALEXANDER

There is a 1936 classic by Norman Rockwell, legendary illustrator of American life, of four men hitting the perfect note. A portrait of a barber shop in the 1890s, it has the men holding a razor, comb, shaving brush and mug, eyes closed, singing in harmony, even as one has his face covered in foam. The painting that first graced *The Saturday Evening Post* has been immortalised as a mural at the Barbershop Harmony Society in Nashville, USA.

Halfway around the globe, a century later, four men in their 30s gather on the steps of St Andrew's Kirk in Chennai. The church steeple lances a grey sky, and a sudden sharp downpour sends them dashing into its magnificent interiors. Under the swirling cosmos painted on the dome, Joseph P George, Ashish Ittyerah, Roshan Santosham and Alfred Pramod break into song – blending voices so well that they weave in and out of each other's vocal orbits before ending in a triumphant 'tag', a dramatic variation.

Joseph, who sings lead, is an engineer; Ashish, a journalist, sings tenor; Roshan, a pulmonologist and critical care doctor, sings baritone; and Pramod, an airline business development manager, sings bass. They first sang in college and church choirs and continue to be associated with them, but came together as Organised Chaos, a rock band founded a decade ago. It exchanged its blood-curdling snarls for the relative, soothing harmony of barbershop music, making it perhaps India's first quartet to follow this unique style of a cappella singing.

A bit of history

Characterised by a four-part chord for every melody note, the genre had its origins in Europe, where patrons sang while waiting at saloons for barbers, who were then also dental practitioners. Singing in quartets was popularised in the US during the Vaudeville era of the early 1900s. It led to the founding of the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), now headquartered at Nashville, in 1938. Considered the largest all-male singing organisation with 30,000 members across continents, it has a formidable collection of sheet music, costumes and mem-

The sign of four

Chennai-based Organised Chaos, considered India's first barbershop quartet, on how it stumbled upon the genre, training at Nashville and what it sounds like when four voices become one



On cue (Clockwise from left) Ashish Ittyerah, Roshan Santosham, Alfred Pramod and Joseph P George of Organised Chaos

orabilia. It also hosts workshops to hone skills, and Organised Chaos was the first quartet from India to be part of one.

"We were all part of the Madras Musical Association, led by Augustine Paul. It was Roshan who initiated Organised Chaos, inspired by his father's Gatt Quintet. We sang church music by day, rock by night, hence the name. But the band petered out because I moved to Bangalore, Roshan moved to Pondy and Pramod got married," laughs Joseph, the conductor. "In January 2018, Roshan got us together again

and Ashish joined us. By March, I nudged Organised Chaos into singing barbershop harmony."

While Ashish and Joseph had passed Grade 8 in western classical vocal and piano respectively, and Pramod was an accomplished guitarist, Roshan says that moving to a form of singing that requires no instrumental accompaniment was a whole new world. "We meet once a week for an hour for practice," he says, "But with our hectic schedules and distant workplaces, it's an effort." Which is why it is remarkable

that a little more than a year since their experiments with barbershop music, they were invited on full scholarship by BHS for a week-long workshop at Harmony University. "The whole of 2018 had us unlearning the way we sing, to fit in together," says Pramod. "I had to lose my classical vibrato," adds Ashish. The quartet recorded two songs – 'Irish Blessing' and 'Jingle Bell Rock' – that were tagged to the BHS Facebook page. "Our avenues to perform also were church- and carol-related events. So, our being 'found' by BHS was a miracle," says Roshan.

The programme, held in Nashville since the 1970s, was a revelation, and went beyond the mere tropes of harmonising popular tunes and how to 'lock and ring'

We hope to develop a culture where barbershop finds its place in the already-rich Indian music scene

FOOD SPOT

A hilsa thhali for hungry souls

My Spice Kitchen at C.R. Park offers an assortment of veg and non-vegetarian dishes, but the fish is special



RAHUL VERMA

As a child, an event I really looked forward to was the annual nummaish. This was a giant mela which offered food, games, and some daring stunts on motorcycles. The bustling markets of Chittaranjan Park in the evenings remind me a bit of that experience.

Everybody is out, talking volubly and excitedly, and there is a great whiff of fried food all around. And though there are no men on bikes going around in vertical circles, I must say I love it.

I was in that part of town the other day and thought I should have a look at some of the eateries in market no. 1, the main market. That Bengalis love to eat becomes apparent when you land up there, for in

every corner of the market you will find people digging into snacks. Somewhere, chops – mashed fish or meat or veggies coated with bread crumb – are being fried, somewhere else, you will see rolls – paranthas with egg, and other fillings – being prepared.

These days, CR Park, like the rest of India, also offers momos. And then, of course, it has a host of small eateries selling Kolkata Biryani, a dish made delicious by the presence of a plump potato.

This time, though, I was looking for something different. I walked around the market and stopped in front of a place called My Spice Kitchen. I liked the name and its tag line, "Delightfully tasteful". I had a chat with the helpful young man standing outside, and asked for two plates of Hilsa Thhali to be packed.

The basic thhali consists of a helping of basmati rice, a light dal, fried potatoes, a vegetable dish, and chutney. You can ask for a mutation thhali, which will have all this,



along with a meat dish, or a fish thhali, which will include fish curry. My Hilsa Thhali (₹320) had a piece of hilsa fish along with the regular fare.

I sat out, and looked around. There was a crowd in front of the

Colourful cuisine A combination of rice and fish; (below) the restaurant

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

shop next door, an eatery called Bengal Snacks. On the pavement outside the shop, people were lining up for momos and ghugni, a dish of spicy chickpeas/dried yellow peas.

I asked for a plate of Mangsher Ghugni, which had small pieces of minced meat in the preparation. It is served topped with bits of chopped onion, coriander leaves, a sprinkling of masala, and some sev. I just had the ghugni without the toppings, and quite enjoyed it.

Meanwhile my food had been packed rather well, in a disposable plate with partitions. Our dinner consisted of some fluffy rice, a very, very light dal and crispy fried potatoes that is known as Jhurjhurey Aloo Bhaja. The potato is sliced so well that once fried, it turns into

and 'tag'. With no stars and no beatboxing, there were lessons in how to create the perfect blend, with no one voice dominating. "There were 21 quartets and two choruses from around the globe, and you get to choose whether you want to head to the quartet, chorus, educator or director's college. Mornings began with nearly 600 people singing together before heading out for different electives, such as rehearsal techniques, sight reading, music branding and how to be a great baritone," says Roshan.

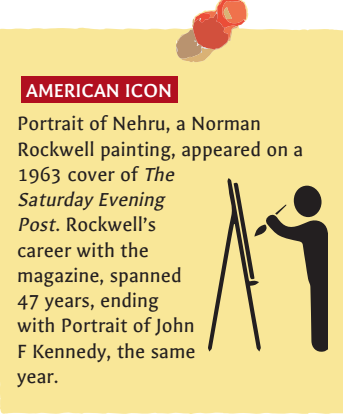
"Everything is looked at with a magnifying glass," says Joseph, "Your individual voice, group sound, how to let go of your inhibitions..."

Competitions mark the end of the workshop and follow guidelines such as every song must end in a 'tag' – a hallmark of barbershop. For the finale, the bandhgala-clad Organised Chaos sang the spiritual 'It is well with my soul', although barbershop repertoire includes show classics, jazz standards and pop tunes.

Their greatest joy came from gathering in the open to singing tags with barbershop legends such as The Gashouse Gang, and other 16- to 60-year-old-men in bowler hats, followed by giant bowls of ice cream, a tradition here.

"We hope to start an association in Chennai," says Roshan. "Include secular music and develop a culture where barbershop music finds its place in the already-rich Indian music scene," adds Ashish.

They sign off with 'Thank you Lord for the music'. When it ends with Pramod's deep bass echoing through the chancel, I could not have agreed more.



AMERICAN ICON

Portrait of Nehru, a Norman Rockwell painting, appeared on a 1963 cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Rockwell's career with the magazine, spanned 47 years, ending with Portrait of John F Kennedy, the same year.

SHOWCASE 17

POP-UP

Celebrating South Asian contemporary

The 3rd Delhi Contemporary Art Week is underway, and younger collectors with an increased engagement with the political, drive up the popularity of the genre



This isn't just another art fair. When the Delhi Contemporary Art Week (DCAW) first started in 2017, it came together as a way to show the art of now, by identifying fresh talent in an age-agnostic way.

"A lot of people don't position [newer] artists very well – they end up selling [them] for interiors and to architects, and don't really work on their careers," explains Bhavna Kakar, founder-director of Latitude 28, one of the initiators of the DCAW. "I had an all-young roster, and wanted to work hard to present them in the best biennales and art fairs. But in large expositions, they obviously get sidelined," she says.

It is but natural. The modern masters, from M.F. Husain to S.H. Raza, have been evergreen in their appeal and value for collectors, even world over. In 2015, for example, Christie's sold Raza's *Tapovan* for \$4.45 million. It was the highest price for a work in the category of South Asian modern and contemporary.

Things are changing however, notes Kakar. In their first year, only about a couple hundred visitors, "mostly clients", had visited the DCAW, which started with only three participating galleries. Today, the expected footfall stands at about 5,000 people for the entire week, and the number of participating galleries – incidentally all women-led – has grown to seven in total.

Nature Morte, Gallery Espace, Latitude 28, Blueprint 12, Shrine Empire, Exhibit 320, and Vadehra Art Gallery are all a part of DCAW 2019, and participated in the previous edition in 2018 as well. Together, they've brought 50 artists, from various South Asian countries, including Mehreen Murtaza from Pakistan, Zimbiri from Bhutan, Tayeba Begum Lipi from Bangladesh, and Gihan Karunaratne from Sri Lanka, among various others.

"The idea is to showcase contemporary art – truly and simply, art of the time. This has nothing to do with the age of the artists. It is the concept, the subject, and the application of the subject that makes a piece of art contemporary," Kakar says.

There has been a gradual but definitive change in how contemporary art is looked at, and sought out by collectors, she says. "There are young collectors now, even as young as 19, who understand that the modern masters might fetch them more in the future, but they see value in works that resonate more immediately with them, which address the political too," she adds.

Collectors with no prior family history in dealing with art, are also helping expand the appeal of contemporary work. "People in the 25-30 age bracket are also earning well. And this generation isn't going the route of getting a job, buying a car, and then a house. Older generations would think of acquiring art only after all of this is checked," she notes, adding that now it is also "cool" for this demographic, to acquire art.

On till 2 p.m. on Saturday, 7th September; Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

PRODUCT

Pocket play

Goulian Finch is a brand dedicated to making pocket squares that seek to epitomise the qualities of a colourful passerine bird native to Australia. The handcrafted pieces, used to take suits up a notch, are hand-woven with mulberry silk and 3 grams of gold zari. The credit for weaving a 16x16 inch piece with small motifs goes to a few weaving families in Banaras, who have resisted the use of power looms.



Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



PERFORMANCE

Flute recital
Parichay Foundation presents the 6th edition of its Parampara series, an initiative to promote the richness of Indian classical music. In this edition, flautist and Padma Vibhushan recipient Hariprasad Chaurasia will perform with his disciple Digvijaysinh Chauhan. Ustad Rashid Mustafa Thirakwa will accompany on the tabla.
VENUE: Sri Sathya Sai International Centre
TIME: 5 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Mixed-media
Commemorating 100 years of Kala Bhavana at Santiniketan, Janus Art Gallery has organised a group art exhibition called 'Kala Bhavana: The Legacy of Ingenuity' at Shridharani Gallery. The display features works by 20 young artists from Kala Bhavana, with an aim to trace and showcase the progress of the institution's pedagogy.
VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg
TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



CONCERT

Jugalbandi
The Raza Foundation presents Aarambh XVI, a series of classical music and dance concerts, to promote young talent. The event will showcase a jugalbandi of Hindustani vocals and the saxophone, with Shubhra Talegaonkar and Priyank Krishna. This will be followed by a Odissi dance recital by Arunima Ghosh.
VENUE: M. L. Bhartia Auditorium, Lodhi Road
TIME: 5.30 p.m.



FILM

Bohemian Rhapsody
Sunset Cinema Club will screen the English feature film, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, this evening. The biographical drama about Freddie Mercury, the lead singer of the British rock band Queen, released in 2018. Directed by Bryan Singer, it follows Mercury's life from the formation of the band up to their 1985 Live Aid performance.
VENUE: Hard Rock Cafe, DLF Place, Saket
TIME: 7 p.m.



DANCE

Kathak recital
India Habitat Centre is hosting, Yagyaseni-The Ultimate Oblation, a solo Kathak dance theatre production, this evening. Conceptualised and choreographed by Sangita Chatterjee, the presentation is based on the adaptation of the novel *Yajnaseni: The Story of Draupadi*, written by Jnanpith awardee Pratibha Ray.
VENUE: The Stein Auditorium, IHC
TIME: 7 p.m.

A record of ALL THE SPINACH

Keeraikadai.com has foraged, identified and documented more than 100 varieties of healthy greens



K JESHI

“Ezhuthaani poondu, neernochi, siriyangalai... all of these pack a real punch,” says G Sriram Prasad, founder of keeraikadai.com, an e-commerce company that sources and sells around 110 native varieties of *keerai* directly from farmers across Tamil Nadu. “There are said to be over 500 varieties and we are still counting. Our R&D team works with farmers to understand the medicinal values of these greens. Then, we rely on *paati vaithyam*, where elders share recipes and their wisdom. We collate all that with information that is available online. We also sell the seeds to

encourage people to grow them,” says Sriram. Sriram, who networks with 130 farmers in and around Tamil Nadu, says the idea to revive native greens came about during a friendly chat with an elderly couple. “They asked us to get varieties like red *pulicha keerai* and *gopuram thaangi*. We were only supplying common varieties like *ponnanganni*, *arakeerai* and *thandu keerai* then. So we asked farmers in Aliyar, near Pollachi, and in the process realised there were many more native greens like *ayyam panai* and *kal uruvi*. The farmers also shared ways to cook them: we collected more than 100 recipes of soups, *pori-*



ysal, *kootus* and *thovayals*.”

Food writer, chef, and cookbook author Mallika Badrinath, who has written 30 books on vegetarian cuisines, recommends eating at least 100 grams of greens every day. “Once you cook them with dal, they take care of your protein requirement. Chop them up and sauté them with onions and add them to your *sundal*, to make it healthier,” she suggests.

Red pulicha keerai (red gongura)

One finds this green only in the wild now, says Sriram. The vitamins and minerals it has are said to reduce bad cholesterol. It is slightly sour in taste and can be consumed either raw or cooked as *paruppu keerai*, *thokku*, or *thovayal*.

“I make pickles, chutney and a tasty red *pulicha keerai* biryani too. Or make a *keerai masiyal* and have it with hot rice and a sprin-



gling of ghee,” says Mallika.

Avuri (true indigo)

“It is very difficult to get *avuri*,” admits Mallika, who often stores native greens in dry form. “I use them as garnish, in dosas, sand-

wiches and in chapathi dough.” Sriram says that as it is fibrous, *avuri* is often made into a paste along with goat's milk. “The farmers use this paste to get rid of skin allergies. They also drink the juice extracted from boiling the

leaves in water. It is said to rid the stomach of worms. Dried *avuri* is also used along with yellow and white *karisilanganni*, and hibiscus flowers to make hair oil. Many corporates buy *avuri* from us for medicinal purposes,” says Sri-

Painting dinner green Pick from a variety of green options such as *keerai vadaai* and *keerai kozhukattai* • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ram, adding that only a handful of farmers in Pollachi grow these greens now.

Ayyam panai (ayapana tea) and Thuthi (Indian mallow)

Ayyam panai, is usually consumed in liquid form. “When one of my colleagues suffered from mouth ulcer, he simply chewed on the leaves,” says Sriram. *Thuthi* is a common green. As an experiment, Sriram tried out *thuthi* juice on an empty stomach (*thuthi* leaves are believed to be cooling, and flush out toxins). “I made a paste of *thuthi* leaves, extracted the juice, added coconut milk and *panangkalkandu* and consumed it for over a week. I felt so light and energetic.”

Kal uruvi (blistering ammannia)

This grows in the wild, and its leaves have a sour taste like that of tamarind leaves. “As the name suggests, it dissolves kidney stones,” says Sriram. Mallika says the sourness can easily be offset when cooking. “For example, in-

Dried *avuri* is also used along with yellow and white *karisilanganni*, and hibiscus flowers to make hair oil

stead of *toor dal*, try *channa dal*. Or combine two varieties of greens and cook it with two *dal* varieties to get a new taste.”

Gopuram thaangi (false water willow)

It is believed to purify the blood, remove bad cholesterol, and improve the health of the urinary tract. Sriram shares a tip: “An 85-year-old farmer in Pollachi attributes his good health to the greens. He drinks juice extracted from *gopuram thaangi* and *vilva* leaves along with *panangkalkandu*, every morning, without fail.”

AS OLD AS TIME

Indigo was being used in India as early as 5,000 years ago to make deep blue dye. The word Indigo means ‘the Indian’ or ‘from India’.



POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



WUMO



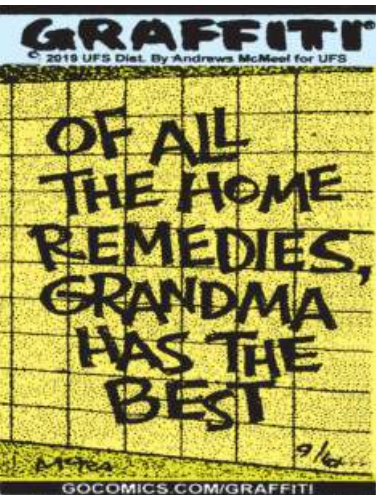
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



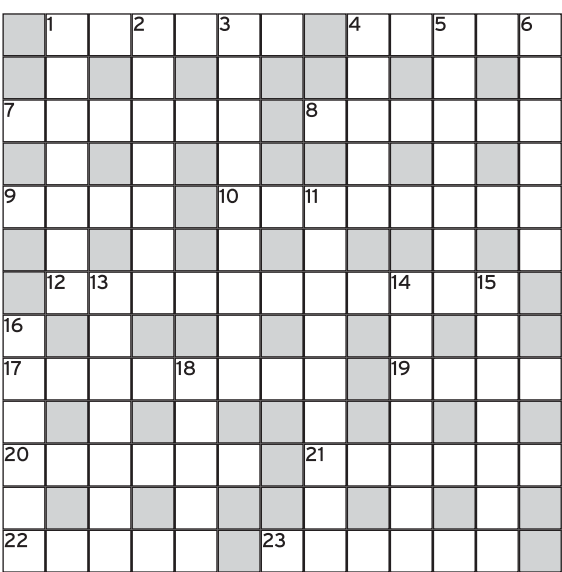
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13167



- Across
- 1 Stopped briefly (6)
 - 4 Demand as a right (5)
 - 7 Chinese martial art (4,2)
 - 8 Befitting (6)
 - 9 Colliery (but not yours!) (4)
 - 10 Volcano near Naples (8)
 - 12 Uninvited guest (11)
 - 17 Jewellery worn around the wrist (8)
 - 19 Move by slow degrees (4)
 - 20 Sustain (6)
 - 21 Tilted in a particular direction (6)
 - 22 Special delight (5)
 - 23 In the existing circumstances (2,2,2)
- Down
- 1 Raining heavily (7)
 - 2 Ointment (7)
 - 3 Ambiguous (9)
 - 4 Ionian holiday island (5)
 - 5 Inform (7)

- 6 Lugubrious (6)
- 11 Leader of the slave revolt against Rome, 73BC (9)
- 13 Greek girl who unwisely challenged Athena and ended up as a spider (7)
- 14 Salon service (7)
- 15 Disease caused by vitamin D deficiency (7)
- 16 Take away by force (6)
- 18 Brilliant display – conspicuous success (5)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated September 7, 2019.

Solution No. 13166

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Berrettini prevails over Monfils in a thrilling five-setter

To meet Nadal, who grinds out a win over Schwartzman; teenager Andreescu makes women's semifinals

US OPEN

REUTERS
NEW YORK

Big-serving Italian Matteo Berrettini took another step in his breakthrough season as he beat Frenchman Gael Monfils 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (5) at the U.S. Open on Wednesday to reach his first career Grand Slam semifinal.

In the other men's quarterfinals, Diego Schwartzman, the smallest player in 25 years to reach the last eight, gave Rafa Nadal a big fight and forced the second-seeded Spaniard to grind out a 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

Putting away the 13th-seeded Frenchman took everything that Berrettini had as Monfils, who struggled mightily with his serve late in the match, managed to see off four pressure-packed match points until the Italian finally prevailed.

"Right now I don't remember any points. Just the match point," Berrettini said on

court. "While I was playing I thought, this is one of the best matches I ever saw. I was playing, but I was watching also."

Big serves

Berrettini used booming serves and stinging forehands to overwhelm Monfils, who struggled with humid conditions in Arthur Ashe Stadium until shortly after the roof closed during the third set and brought in cooler temperatures.

In the decider, Berrettini broke twice for a 4-2 lead but a rejuvenated Monfils, who despite being bent over in exhaustion after many points, dug deep and raced around the court to fight off three match points to force a final-set tiebreak.

But Monfils ran out of tricks and it was Berrettini who leaned on his powerful serve to prevail and become the fourth Italian man to reach a Grand Slam semifinal in the Open Era.

Monfils was very efficient



Yesss! Matteo Berrettini gives vent to his feelings after thwarting Gael Monfils' comeback on Wednesday. ■ AP

in the first set and had an early 2-0 lead in the second but Berrettini took over and broke the fatigued Frenchman twice before ultimately firing down an ace to seal a

hold to love that levelled the match at 1-1.

Berrettini, the 24th seed, broke twice for a 5-2 lead and served out the third set, which was interrupted for

about five minutes when rain forced the closure of the roof.

Monfils, with his back firmly against the wall to start the fourth, suddenly looked full of energy and was bouncing

on his feet between points as he got a crucial break and won 88% of his first-serve points to force the decider.

For Berrettini, it marked the latest triumph in a season

in which the 23-year-old Italian won titles in Budapest and Stuttgart en route to a career-high ranking of 20th in June.

Staying on course

With Roger Federer and 2018 champion Novak Djokovic having already exited, Nadal's path to a fourth Open trophy has been cleared of familiar hurdles.

But Schwartzman reminded Nadal that danger can lurk everywhere, even from an opponent he had beaten in all seven previous meetings and only lost two sets.

That caution was well placed as Schwartzman made the 18-time Grand Slam winner work for every point, with the Argentine fighting back from two breaks down in the opening two sets.

In the women's section, Canadian teenager Bianca Andreescu came from behind to overpower Elise Mertens 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 and reach her first Grand Slam semifinal, against Belinda Bencic.

Match stats			
Berrettini		Monfils	
15	Aces	10	
6	Double Faults	17	
54	First Serve (%)	60	
69	Net Points Won (%)	71	
6/17	Break Points Won	5/15	
53	Winners	41	
64	Unforced Errors	51	
165	Total Points Won	159	
12.28	Distance Covered/pt (m)	13.35	

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals:

Men: 24-Matteo Berrettini (Ita) bt 13-Gael Monfils (Fra) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6(5); 2-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt 20-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

Women: 15-Bianca Andreescu (Can) bt 25-Elise Mertens (Bel) 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

Magnificent Smith seizes the day



England's nemesis: It was business as usual for Steve Smith on Thursday as the top-ranked Test batsman notched up his third career double ton. ■ RYAN PIERSE/GETTY IMAGES

THE ASHES

REUTERS
MANCHESTER

Steve Smith's domination of England's bowling attack in the Ashes series reached new heights on Thursday as his magnificent 211 (319b, 24x4, 2x6) led Australia to 497 for eight declared on the second day of the fourth Test at Old Trafford.

England lost opener Joe Denly for four, brilliantly caught by Matthew Wade at short leg after he fended off a rising delivery from Pat Cummins, to leave it struggling on 23 for one at the close.

But the day, in which Australia smelt again the chance of retaining the Ashes, was all about Smith and the 30-year-old's fine demonstration of the art of Test batting even as he enjoyed good fortune.

Reprieves

Having made his third century of the series, Smith was on 118 when he was caught by Ben Stokes off left-arm spinner Jack Leach. Unfortu-

nately for the host, joy turned to despair when video officials deemed Leach had delivered a no-ball.

Earlier, Smith had had a lucky escape when Jofra Archer dropped a caught and bowled chance.

England had come into this match in buoyant mood but minute by minute, over by over and run by run, Smith drained away its self-belief. His 145-run sixth-wicket stand with captain Tim Paine (58) and Mitchell Starc's blistering unbeaten 54 put Australia firmly in control.

None of England's seamers nor Leach were able to seriously trouble Smith and in the end, with the third double century of his Test career – the previous two also came against England – in the bag, he fell to the occasional spin of captain Joe Root.

As Smith headed back to the pavilion, there were still a smattering of now tire-some boos from England fans, recalling his 12-month ban for his role in a ball-tampering affair, but most at Old Trafford stood in appreciation.

SCOREBOARD

Australia – 1st innings: Marcus Harris lbw b Broad 13, David Warner c Bairstow b Broad 0, Marnus Labuschagne b Overton 67, Steve Smith c Denly b Root 211, Travis Head lbw b Broad 19, Matthew Wade c Root b Leach 16, Tim Paine c Bairstow b Overton 58, Pat Cummins c Stokes b Leach 4, Mitchell Starc (not out) 54, Nathan Lyon (not out) 26; Extras (b-8, lb-14, w-3, nb-4): 29; Total (for eight wkts. decl. in 126 overs) 497.

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-28, 3-144, 4-183, 5-224, 6-369, 7-

387, 8-438.

England bowling: Broad 25-2-97-3, Archer 27-3-97-0, Stokes 10.5-0-66-0, Leach 26.1-3-83-2, Overton 28-3-85-2, Denly 3-1-8-0, Root 6-0-39-1.

England – 1st innings: Rory Burns (batting) 15, Joe Denly c Wade b Cummins 4, Craig Overton (batting) 3; Extras (nb-1): 1; Total (for one wkt. in 10 overs): 23.

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

Australia bowling: Starc 2-2-0-0, Hazlewood 4-1-3-0, Cummins 3-0-10-1, Lyon 1-0-10-0.

Abhimanyu puts Red in command

His unbeaten hundred takes the team close to Green's total

DULEEP TROPHY

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Abhimanyu Easwaran (102 batting, 173b, 11x4, 2x6) pushed India Red close to India Green's first-innings total on the second day of their Duleep Trophy final at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Thursday.

Abhimanyu displayed a wide array of shots, dispatching the ball to all parts of the ground. The Bengal opener, who has struggled since making an exceptional 233 against Sri Lanka-A in May, came good in great style.

Comfortable

Abhimanyu was comfortable against the pacers and spinners alike. He was especially strong off the back-foot, punching the quicks through the cover and point regions. When the slow bowlers came on, the 23-year-old either danced down the track or went deep into the crease.

After reaching his 13th First Class century, Abhimanyu reached into his pocket and took out a 'Rakhi' thread. "That was dedicated to my sister, Pallavi," Easwaran said.

Abhimanyu explained that he once suffered from throwing away good starts, until he sought help. "I had a chat with (India-A coach) Rahul Dravid sir and my coach Apurva Desai. We decided that I needed to focus on the present.

"Earlier, if I was on 60, I would try to dominate and get out.

"It is important to stay focused on the present and



Back with a bang: Abhimanyu Easwaran found his touch to come up with a long innings. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

the match situation," he said.

Failing to convert starts

His teammates Priyank Panchal (33, 78b) and Karun Nair (20, 24b), however, failed to convert their good starts. Panchal paid the price for playing away from his body, edging one from Ankit Rajpoot.

Karun – who has scores of 99, 166 n.o. and 90 in his last three innings – committed himself too early to pull leg-spinner Mayank Markande and lost his stumps.

Earlier, fighting knocks from Markande (76 n.o.), Tanveer Ul-Haq (18) and Rajpoot (30) rescued India Green. Resuming on 147 for eight, India Green was in serious danger of being bowled out cheaply, but the trio took the total to 231.

Markande and Tanveer added 60 for the ninth wicket before Tanveer was cleaned up by a perfect inswinging yorker from Sandeep Warrier. Rajpoot used the long handle to great effect, while Markande fluent-

ly reached his highest First Class score.

The scores:

India Green – 1st innings: Faiz Fazal lbw b Unadkat 12, Akshath Reddy run out 16, Dhruv Shorey c Kishan b Warrier 23, Siddhesh Lad c Panchal b Unadkat 0, Akshdeep Nath c Panchal b Sarvate 29, Akshay Wadkar b Unadkat 6, Dharmendrasinh Jadede c&b Avesh 15, Mayank Markande (not out) 76, Rajesh Mohanty c Kishan b Unadkat 0, Tanveer Ul-Haq b Warrier 18, Ankit Rajpoot c Sarvate b Avesh 39; Extras (nb-1, b-4, lb-1): 6; Total (in 72.1 overs): 231.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-53, 3-54, 4-65, 5-92, 6-99, 7-107, 8-112, 9-172.

India Red bowling: Unadkat 24-2-83-4, Warrier 17-3-39-2, Avesh 16.1-1-56-2, Sarvate 11-1-30-1, Wakhare 4-0-18-0.

India Red – 2nd innings: Priyank Panchal c Wadkar b Rajpoot 33, Abhimanyu Easwaran (batting) 102, Karun Nair b Markande 20, Ankit Kalsi (batting) 11; Extras (nb-7, w-2): 9; Total (for two wkts. in 52 overs): 175.

Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-126.

India Red bowling: Tanveer 12-2-35-0, Rajpoot 12-1-38-1, Mohanty 9-0-43-0, Jadede 9-0-35-0, Markande 10-1-24-1.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG

Uncapped left-arm spinner George Linde was on Thursday named as replacement for all-rounder Jon-Jon Trevor Smuts in South Africa's squad for the three-match T20 International series against India, starting September 15.

Linde was drafted in after Smuts was pulled out of the squad for "failing to meet the required fitness stan-

dards", a CSA release said.

Linde has played 75 T20 matches so far, scoring 611 runs at a strike rate of 139.81. He also snapped up 77 wickets at a strike rate of 19.3.

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

Mithali to lead in ODIs, Harmanpreet in T20s

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Mithali Raj will lead the India women's team in the ODI series at home against South Africa, the BCCI announced.

Harmanpreet Kaur will lead Indian T20 squad for the first three matches in the six-match series.

The team was named by the All-India Women's Selection Committee, after a meeting at the Cricket Centre.

Harmanpreet will be Mithali's deputy in the ODIs, while Smriti Mandhana is the vice-captain for the T20s.

The five T20Is in the Paytm series against the tourists will be played under lights in Surat, while the 50-over format will be day games in Vadodara. The home series will start with T20 games in Surat, starting September 24. The ODI games in Vadodara, will start from October 9.

The Indian women's squads:

ODIs: Mithali Raj (Capt.), Jemi-



Mithali Raj. ■ AP

mah Rodrigues, Harmanpreet Kaur, Punam Raut, Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Mansi Joshi, Ekta Bisht, Poonam Yadav, D. Hemalatha, Rajeshwari Gayakwad and Priya Punia

T20 squad (first three games): Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Poonam Yadav, Shikha Pandey, Arundhati Reddy, Pooja Vastrakar, Radha Yadav, Veda Krishnamurthy, Harleen Deol, Anuja Patil, Shafali Verma and Mansi Joshi.

Oman cashes in on India's defensive lapses

WC QUALIFIER

ANIRUDH VELMURI
GUWAHATI

Two late goals, aided by defensive errors, saw Oman come from behind to take all three points against India in the first Group-E FIFA World Cup qualifying match at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium on Thursday.

At home and in front of a boisterous crowd, India upped the ante and stayed in control for most of the first half.

Good midfield pivot

The midfield pivot of Anirudh Thapa and Rowlin Borges was at the centre of everything good India did. They stayed in continuous communication with the defence when India was on the backfoot and in telepathic understanding with the forwards when on the ball.

Five minutes into the

game, a hopeful long ball found Ashique Kuruniyan, who ran down the left-wing and crossed into the box. With Sunil Chhetri nowhere close, the Oman defence cleared with little pressure.

A minute later, Ali Al Bussaidi's chip found Abdulaziz Al Maqballi in the box but his left-foot shot on the turn was palmed away by Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

At the quarter-hour mark, the ball fell to Chhetri after the Oman goalkeeper made an error from his goal kick. With the keeper off his line, Chhetri found Udanta on the right but, after skipping a challenge, he saw his shot bounce off the bar and away from any waiting teammate.

Minutes later, Ashique ran behind the Oman defence once again. With the 'keeper running to the edge of the box, he chipped in a cross but found no takers.

Twenty-four minutes in, Ashique attacked the visi-



Bitter-sweet: Indian skipper Sunil Chhetri racked up yet another international goal but it was Oman that came away with full points. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

tor's right-back Abdulaziz Al Gheilani once again, was promptly brought down and a yellow card followed.

From the freekick, Chhetri ran out of the crowd in the box, latched onto Brandon's pass and smacked a left-foot shot into the goal. There was nothing the keeper could've

done to save that.

In the second half, India was happy to defend and hold onto the lead, which is always a wrong move with more than a half left. And when the equaliser came, it wasn't a surprise.

The defensive mistakes that hounded India during

6 We're very sad, deserved more from this game. We could have scored many in the first half and finished the game before the break

IGOR STIMAC
India's chief coach

the King's Cup and Intercontinental Cup were back again.

Moshin Al Khalid's pass found the Indian defence stranded. Al-Mandhar Al Alawi brought down the ball, saw Gurpreet come off his line and chipped it into an empty net.

On the 90th minute mark, Al Alawi ran down the left-wing and danced his way past Rahul Bheke to fire in a curler into the top corner.

India has little time to regroup before taking on Qatar on September 10.

The result: India 1 (Sunil Chhetri 24) lost to Oman 2 (Al-Mandhar Al Alawi 82, 90).

Even-Steven



Coming good: Puneri Paltan's Manjeet, second from left, who scored 10 points, in action during the 33-33 tie against U Mumba in the Pro Kabaddi League in Bengaluru on Thursday.

■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Kashish meets Prerna in last eight

Top seed Sai Samhitha wafts past Salsa Aher

ASIAN TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Kashish Bhatia, with impressive mobility and sharp strokes, overcame stiff resistance from the fifth seed Sonashe Bhatnagar for a 6-7(4), 6-3, 6-3 victory in the pre-quarterfinals of the Asian Tour women’s tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex here on Thursday.

Behind her spectacles, Kashish hides her strong will. The heat and humidity did not deter her from playing a robust game right till the end, against an opponent who wilted after the energetic show in the first set, unable to match the intensity.

A student of Manav Sthali School, who trains with coach Ram Kashyap in Hari Nagar, Kashish will get a chance to gauge her game better in the quarterfinal against four-time national champion Prerna Bhambri, who has dropped only two games in her two matches so far. Prerna handled the challenge from Arthi Muniyan with poise, after having blanked Adrija Biswas in the first round.

Top seed Sai Samhitha



Overcoming stiff resistance: Kashish Bhatia, who reached the quarterfinals on Thursday. ■KAMESH SRINIVASAN

was fluent against the young Salsa Aher, who was hampered by a back strain. Sai will play left-hander Sara Yadav in the quarterfinals.

Second seed Vaidehi Chaudhari continued with her impressive ways and out-classed S.B. Apoorva for the loss of a solitary game. She will play Akanksha Nitture, who stopped an erratic Soha Sadiq in straight sets.

Yubarani Banerjee was

equally impressive in beating qualifier Ananyaa Bhargava for the loss of five games. She will play Prathiba Narayan Prasad who had a tough outing against Vanshita Pathania.

With no umpires and ball boys, it has been rough for the players in the taxing weather. Some of the blatant line calls, which even shocked the roving umpires, did unsettle some players to

a great extent.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Sai Samhitha bt Salsa Aher 6-4, 6-0; Sara Yadav bt Priyanka Rodricks 6-3, 6-3; Prerna Bhambri bt Arthi Muniyan 6-0, 6-2; Kashish Bhatia bt Sonashe Bhatnagar 6-7(4), 6-3, 6-3; Prathiba Narayan Prasad bt Vanshita Pathania 7-5, 7-6(1).

Yubarani Banerjee bt Ananyaa Bhargava 6-4, 6-1; Akanksha Nitture bt Soha Sadiq 6-4, 6-2; Vaidehi Chaudhari bt SB Apoorva 6-1, 6-0.

Eetee and her second innings

Former top-five player finds her calling in coaching

ANANT KAUR
NEW DELHI

Despite hailing from a small town, Patan, near Ahmedabad, and training on cement courts, Eetee Maheta was able to reach the top-5 of Indian women’s tennis by sheer will power. However, a recurring knee injury ended her playing career early. As destiny closed one door, it opened another. Eetee is thrilled to stay connected with the game by becoming a coach at the age of 23 last year.

She plays her part in one of the best tennis centres in India, Altevol Academy in Ahmedabad, that has a tie up with the Alexander Waske Tennis University in Germany.

Eetee had been trained by coach Jignesh Raval, who has joined another prominent coach in Ahmedabad, Shrimal Bhatt, for the collaboration.

Right early in her coaching career, Eetee had the advantage of being part of a 15-member team that was based in Offenber, Germany, for three months, which proved an eye opener.

In Delhi for the Asian Women’s tennis tournament, and guiding one of the best players in the country Vaidehi Chaudhari, Eetee spoke to



Eetee Maheta.

The Hindu about the possibility of Indian women being regulars in the Grand Slam circuit in the next five to ten years.

“I used to see my brother Sameep, who later accompanied me as coach, play tennis and gradually developed interest. I used to practice on cement courts in MK Gymkhana.

“They made two synthetic courts in 2015,” Eetee recalled.

She reels off the names of Vipasha Mehra, Bhakti Parwani and Akanksha Bhan as some of the girls who have done well by training in Ahmedabad.

“Good physical fitness

I used to see my brother Sameep, who later accompanied me as coach, play tennis and gradually developed interest

and mental toughness is the key to last in any sport. The players have the advantage these days with better financial support, world class coaches and fitness trainers. The training in Germany helped me understand that while we focus on rehab after injury, there are experts who prevent injury with strength and conditioning,” Eetee said.

On asked why the breakthrough performance is late for Indian players, Eetee said, “the grassroots development of the Europeans are much stronger than us and physically they are better than us. We are working on it and soon we will see the results. Karman Kaur Thandi and Ankita Raina are doing well.”

Even though she reached the finals of singles and doubles in the international circuit, a title eluded Eetee.

She is confident that her players will win a number of titles, and take Indian women’s tennis forward in the international arena.

Tickets gone in a jiffy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JOHANNESBURG

South African tennis fans bought 48,000 tickets in under 10 minutes on Wednesday for a exhibition match next February between world superstars Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. The game at the Cape Town Stadium, built for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, is set to break the attendance record of 35,681 for a tennis match set by Kim Clijsters and Serena Williams in Brussels, 2010.

A spokeswoman for the organisers said the tickets were snapped up online and at ticket outlets. “We are overwhelmed by the enthusiastic reaction on our ticket sales and we sincerely thank you for the overwhelming support,” said Janine Handel, chief executive of the Roger Federer Foundation.

“Lines were opened up by (online ticket sellers) Computicket at 0900 and within 10 minutes the tickets were sold.”

Another crucial test awaits

National selection trials from today

SHOOTING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The strength of Indian shooting is in its vibrant domestic system. It may be hard on the rifle and pistol shooters, who have helped India top the medals table in all the four World Cups this season in Delhi, Beijing, Munich and Rifle, to be constantly kept under scrutiny but the system has invariably delivered.

It will be another crucial test for the shooters when the sixth and seventh national selection trials are conducted at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, from Friday, starting with men’s air rifle.

While the trials, followed by the national training

camp for the shooters in Delhi and Bhopal, may keep them sharp for the Asian championship in Doha in November, which offers the last set of Olympic quota places for Tokyo 2020, it will also give chance for the rest to stake claim in to the national squad.

The best of shooters can retain their place in the national team only with constant good scores, and that has driven Indian shooting to greater heights this season, past the formidable Chinese.

To add to the interesting scenario, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has also announced that there would be a revised selection policy for next year. It would mean that the sixth and seventh trials scores will

form the basis for national selection, as against the regular practice of the National championship scores forming the base.

To this effect, the NRAI had even stretched the closing date of entries till the end of August, to ensure everyone eligible gets into the fold and stays in the race for national selection.

The men’s air rifle, will be followed by women’s air rifle, rapid fire pistol and the men’s rifle 3-position events. It will be to the advantage of the shooters that they shoot the two trials back to back, and be done with it.

Women’s sports pistol, men’s air pistol and women’s rifle 3-position events follow, before the conclusion with women’s air pistol on September 17.

BADMINTON

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

It was also a dream come true for the 32-year-old L. Raju, who played a significant role in the emergence Manasi Joshi – the specially challenged shuttler – as the 2019 Para World badminton women’s singles champion in Basel (Switzerland) recently.

Himself a six-time gold medallist in the under-20 age group in 400m and relay events in junior National meets, Raju is a qualified physio – with degrees in Physical Education, NIS and yoga – and joined the Gopi Chand Academy four years ago.

“It was a different kind of challenge to train Manasi for

the last four months at the academy unlike regular athletes. Even the slightest mistake from my side can lead to serious complications,” he said in a chat with *The Hindu*.

“Because of the accident, which saw her left leg amputated and a rod [placed] in her left fore-arm, I had to study her body structure for four weeks. I had to study her [physical] demands and how to go ahead with the conditioning.

Complex conditioning

“It was a complex conditioning programme even as badminton coach J. Rajendra Kumar took care of the skills part. To her credit, Manasi never complained though she suffered a lot of pain regularly. The best part was she

It was a different kind of challenge to train Manasi for the last four months at the academy unlike regular athletes

never gave up,” said the trainer, who has also worked with the Hyderabad under-23 cricket team and is currently the team physio for the national badminton team too.

Raju could also empathise with Manasi as his sister is physically challenged and could accordingly programme a schedule with which she was happy during the two-hour grinding sessions.

“Since she didn’t have knee support, we had to work a lot on strengthening to ensure proper balance in



Manasi Joshi with L. Raju. ■ V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

the whole body. It was never easy for her,” said Raju.

The Kadapa-born physio couldn’t go to the Worlds but he was on the job daily, pre-scribing the training programme depending on the opponent Manasi was scheduled to face.

“With Gopi sir there, it was easier for us,” he added.

‘Delighted’

“Though we didn’t think about the gold, I always felt if she gave her best, she could come back with a medal.

“I am delighted with her gold,” said Raju, who had to quit his athletics career for want of support.

“For me it is a dream phase to be associated with the academy and I am grateful to them for being so supportive to my ideas,” he added.

Uzbekistan prevents India’s ‘golden sweep’

Host bags 15 out of 16 titles

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

As expected, the Indian domination swept 15 out of 16 gold medals at stake in the rapid section of the inaugural Western Asian Youth chess championship here on Thursday.

In all, out of the 48 medals, India claimed 43.

The only gold that eluded the host was in the under-18 open section where Uzbekistan’s Mukhammadali Adurakhmonov’s effort prevented a ‘golden sweep’ for India.

Even as the host collected 15 gold, and 14 silver and bronze medals, Uzbekistan was second with a lone gold, followed by Bangladesh and Tajikistan with a silver each. Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka claimed a bronze each.

Exciting matches

The seven-round competition across 16 categories witnessed some exciting matches and close finishes in the race to the podium.

The classical format begins on Friday and ends on September 10. On the final day, the blitz format will also be played.

The medalists (points from seven rounds): Open: Under-6: 1. R. Nijesh (5.5), 2. Havish Tadvavthy (5.5), 3. Aditya Joshi (5.5) **Under-8:** 1. Ethan Vaz (6.5), 2. Rosh Jain (6), 3. Aaryaveer Agarwal (5).

- Uzbekistan was second with a lone gold, followed by Bangladesh and Tajikistan with a silver each
- Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka claimed a bronze apiece

Under-10: 1. Daaevik Wadhaman (6), 2. Krupal Wanjari (5.5), 3. Arun Daakshin (5).

Under-12: 1. Gaurang Bagwe (6.5), 2. Sahib Singh (5.5), 3. Shaik Sumer Arsh (5).

Under-14: 1. R. Abhinandhan (6), 2. Aditya Gampa (5), 3. Nikhil Magizhnan (5).

Under-16: 1. V. Jayachandra (5.5), 2. Anees Mohammad (5.5), 3. Abilmansur Abdilkhair (Kaz,5).

Under-18: 1. Mukhammadali Abdurakhmonov (Uzb, 5.5), 2. Srijit Paul (5), Arjun Gupta (5); **Under-20:** 1. Sankalp Gupta (6), 2. Rahul Srivatshav (5.5), 3. Anuj Shrivatiri (5.5).

Girls: Under-6: 1. Diya Sawal (7), 2. Geethika Rammadugu (6), 3. Srija Das (5).

Under-8: 1. Meenakshi Kola-gatla (6.5), 2. Khusbu Warsia (Ban,6); Tashna Agarwal (5)

Under-10: 1. Sachi Jain (6.5), 2. Hiya Panchal (6.5), 3. Suguna Kukreja (5).

Under-12: 1. G. Tejaswini (6), 2. K. Ratnapriya (5.5), 3. Cera Dagarla (5.5).

Under-14: 1. Shivika Rohilla (6), 2. Sabrina Abrorova (Tjk, 5.5), 3. Sarayu Valpula (5.5).

Under-16: 1. Bristy Mukherjee (6), 2. Vyshnavi Chinam (5.5), 3. Dewnethmie Dahampariya (Sri, 5)

Under-18: 1. K. Priyanka (6.5), 2. L. Jyothsna (5.5), 3. Srishti Pandey (5).

Under-20: 1. Aakanksha Haganwane (7), 2. Rutuja Bakshi (5), 3. Savitha Shri (5).

India tour an exciting challenge for everyone: Nkwe

Enduring sleepless nights trying to find the best formula, says SA’s interim team director

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG

South Africa’s newly-appointed interim Team Director Enoch Nkwe says he is enduring a lot of sleepless nights to find the “best formula” for his side to perform well during the tough tour of India starting next week.

Nkwe, who was appointed last month following South Africa’s disastrous campaign in the World Cup under coach Ottis Gibson, said a lot of work has been done ahead of the tour beginning with the T20 series on September 15 in Dharamsala.

“A lot has been happening behind the scenes to find the best formula of going to India” he said ahead of the team’s departure on Thursday. “It is sleepless nights but for a good cause and it is



Planning: Nkwe has been communicating with the organisation in order to deliver the right things for the team. ■AFP

also an exciting challenge for everyone. It has been long hours communicating with the support staff and the organisation who have been helpful to ensure that I deliver the right things for the team.”

“There has been serious amount of work and we are slowly getting there in terms

of building up to the tour. We have been working hard enough to ensure that by the time we come together as a group we are able to create clear direction and structure,” said Nkwe.

Former Proteas all-rounder Lance Klusener has been roped in as batting consultant for the T20 series and

Nkwe said his presence will be valuable.

“He has plenty of experience he is someone who embraces and likes his way of dealing with white ball cricket. He has been around the world not just from a playing perspective but he has been involved in T20 leagues around the world over the last few years.

“I see him making a serious impact and sharing some of the ideas that have worked for him. He is excited with the journey that lies ahead for this team in India and we will unpack with him as we go along. He will add a lot of value for us in the coming months and that is good for us.”

“We want to come back from India with some sort of blueprint for whoever will be taking over on a full-time basis to be in a good position,” said Nkwe.

Rabada counting on past experience to face India

Pace spearhead feels that the team can counter spin by learning from the SL tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PRETORIA

South Africa pacer Kagiso Rabada says his team will look to use the past experience of playing in the sub-continent when it takes on India.

“You need to figure out what you need to do to give the team a better chance to win – that is what I try to focus on. When you have played there before you will have an idea of what to do in

certain tough situations,” he said at South Africa’s training camp here on Wednesday.

“The previous tour we were successful because we won the T20 and ODI series but the Test series was a bit of a shambles because those wickets were just terrible” Rabada said.

“If I could give an example the first Test match it was 200 v 200 in first innings. If we batted first it was going to be a different ball game be-

cause we ended up having to chase the game. We lost 3-0 and we were truly hampered.”

Asked how they will approach spin bowling during the tour, Rabada said: “On our recent tour to Sri Lanka it was tricky conditions. There is a whole lot of talk about how to approach spin but we will see how it goes.

“What helps is that there are guys who have played there in the past and I guess

what you can do is to use what worked and what did not work during the Sri Lanka tour to have a base.

‘Weird’

“When you go there for the first time it’s weird and you don’t know what to do.

“If you look at how Faf (du Plessis) batted in Sri Lanka he got good starts which showed that he had played there and knew the conditions.”

Noah Lyles eyes Diamond League double

Would be the ideal preparation for the World championships

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS

US sprint sensation Noah Lyles will look to bag a second Diamond League trophy when he competes in the 200 metres in the Brussels final on Friday.

The 22-year-old went to last week’s first final in Zurich and pipped American teammate and current world champion Justin Gatlin to win the 100m.

A shot at a second discipline victory offers Lyles a perfect chance to notch up a psychological booster ahead of the September 27-October 6 World Championships in Doha.

Lyles will go into the 200m as favourite, having clocked 19.50sec in Lausanne last month, a time

that made him the fourth fastest of all time over the half-lap race.

The meet record of 19.26sec was set in 2011 by Jamaican Yohan Blake. It remains the fastest time ever run over the 200m after Usain Bolt’s World record of 19.19sec set in the 2009 Berlin Worlds. American Walter Dix ran 19.53sec behind Blake in 2011 and Bolt himself has clocked a 19.57sec at the stadium, where there have been an impressive 23 sub-20sec performances in the 200m.

The field for the 200m also features World and European champion Ramil Guliyev of Turkey, as well as Canada’s Andre De Grasse and Ecuador’s Alex Quinonez.



Looking ahead: Kagiso Rabada reckons that having played in India would help him in tough situations. ■ AFP

TV PICKS

India-A vs South Africa-A: Fifth unofficial ODI, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
Bangladesh vs Afghanistan: Only Test, Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Duleep Trophy: (final), Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
The Ashes: 4th Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
Sri Lanka vs New Zealand: Third T20I, Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
US Open: Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m.

Mysuru races cancelled

MYSURU: The Stewards of the Mysore Race Club decided to cancel Thursday's (Sept. 5) races due to overnight rains rendering the race track not conducive for racing.

Only the postponed H.M. Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar Memorial Trophy will be held on September 11 (Wednesday). The declaration for this race shall hold good.

TN boys stun Uttar Pradesh

SPORTS BUREAU CUTTACK

Tamil Nadu boys came back from behind to upset defending champion Uttar Pradesh 77-69 in the sub-junior national basketball championship here on Thursday.

Important results (league):
Boys: Punjab 64 (Akhil Kumar 17) bt Andhra Pradesh 45 (Yuvraj Singh 16); Chandigarh 58 (Ajay 13) bt Kerala 56 (V. Vishnu 12, Aswin Krishna 12); Chhattisgarh 61 (Sanju 23, Sujal Yadav 14) bt Karnataka 48 (Melind Sahoo 16); Madhya Pradesh 45 (Goutam Pal 12, Chiragh Singh Rathore 10) bt Himachal Pradesh 15; Mizoram 58 (E.M.Easter 12, Johan Lal 12) bt Delhi 18; Rajasthan 62 (Anurag Singh 16, Harsh Sharma 16) bt Punjab 50 (Rupansh Garg 19, Jaadu Maan 17); Tamil Nadu 77 (Abhymanyu 23, Ravikiran 13, Harsh Aravind 12) bt Uttar Pradesh 69 (Deepanshu Yadav 17, Himanshu 13); Odisha 94 (Sreyansh Panda 28, Upasak Mohanty 11) bt Puducherry 26.

Girls: Tamil Nadu 84 (J. Anthea 25) bt Delhi 45 (Reha 10); Uttar Pradesh 86 (Anushka Rathore 27, Deepika Nayak 10) bt Rajasthan 44 (Anita Banjara 19); Chandigarh 31 (Mandira 14) bt Uttarkhand 14; Karnataka 38 (Yashaswini 13) bt Haryana 24; Himachal Pradesh 32 bt Bihar 8; West Bengal 53 (Juhi 10) bt Puducherry 18.

Prajnesh in quarterfinals

SPORTS BUREAU JINAN (CHINA)

Top seed Prajnesh Gunneswaran set up a quarterfinal against the seventh seed go Soeda of Japan, with a 6-4, 7-6(3) victory over Tung-Lin Wu of Chinese Taipei in the \$162,480 Challenger tennis tournament here on Thursday.

Other results:
\$162,480 Challenger, Jinan, China: Doubles (quarterfinals): Matthew Ebden (Aus) & Divij Sharan bt Pedja Krstin (Srb) & Aira Santillan (Aus) 6-1, 6-4; Saketh Myneni & Jeevan Nedundchezhiyan bt Hiroki oriya 9Jpn) & Goncalo Oliveira (Por) 7-5, 6-2.
€ 46,600 Challenger, Cassis, France: Doubles (quarterfinals): Quentin Halys & Tristan Lamasine (Fra) bt Evgeny Karlovskiy (Rus) & Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-3, 6-2.
\$15,000 ITF men, Hua Hin, Thailand: Singles (pre-quarterfinals): Sidharth Rawat bt Kelsey Stevenson (Can) 6-3, 7-5; Nitin Kumar Sinha bt Cheng-Yu Yu (Tpe) 3-6, 6-4, 5-2 (ret'd.).
\$60,000 ITF women, Changsha, China: Singles (pre-quarterfinals): Rina Stojanovic (Srb) bt Rutuja Bhosale 7-6(2), 6-2. **Doubles (quarterfinals):** Jessy Rompies (Ina) & Prarthana Thombare bt Hanyu Guo (Chn) & Aldila Sutjiadi (Ina) 6-4, 6-3; Erika Sema (Jpn) & Rutuja Bhosale w/o Fatima Al Nabhani (Oma) & Angelina Gabeueva (Rus).
\$15,000 ITF women, Tabarka, Tunisia: Doubles (quarterfinals): Nadia Echeverria Alam (Ven) & Anna Popescu (GBR) bt Coralie Garrigues (Fra) & Likhitha Kalava 6-3, 6-3.

Disappointing day at Indian GP

Most disciplines barely had enough participants to even qualify for competition

ATHLETICS

UTHRA GANESAN PATIALA

Arpinder Singh was unrecognisable to even his coach, Dutee Chand ran a three-legged race and Archana Suseendran had a false start. The three were among those the Athletics Federation of India was banking on to increase the size of its contingent for the World Championships at the final qualifying event here on Thursday.

The sixth leg of the Indian Grand Prix, though, was even more disappointing than last week. Except for the men's javelin throw, most disciplines barely had enough participants to even qualify for competition. The women's 200m had four – two did not start and Archana fouled, leaving Anjali Devi to run a solo race!

The women's 100m had five, with two DNS. In 400m, Saritaben Gayakwad pulled up halfway through in a field of four. Javelin had only two.

In triple jump, coach Antony Yaich was blunt enough to say he didn't recognise Arpinder. "In testing through the weekend, he was fantastic. Yesterday and today, he was horrible. I have no idea what happened.

Arpinder's best was a 16.35m, almost half a metre short of even his performance (16.83m) last week!

Murali Sreeshankar though stayed true to his recent form with a 7.79m jump but the surprise was Sahil



True to form: Murali Sreeshankar won the long jump with 7.79m.

Mahabali from Haryana, who jumped the same but had two fouls to push him to second spot.

Focus on relay

In the process, the entire focus was on the men's 4x400m relay side that had made a mockery the process last week. With Alex Anthony yet to recover from a pulled hamstring, K.S. Jeeven replaced him in the squad but was the weakest link in the quartet.

The team clocked 3:03.68 but stayed on course for the Worlds. However, what would concern the AFI would be the individual timings of the side with the riddle of relay squad composition nowhere near

resolution when the AFI selection committee meets on September 9.

The results: Men: 100m: 1. Kush Kumar (11.48s), 2. Abhishek Chaudhary (11.67s), 3. Nikhil Rahangdale (12.19s); **200m:** 1. Gajanan Mistry (21.77s), 2. Sarthak Bhambri (22.05s), 3. Nikhil Rahangdale (25.72s); **4x400m relay:** 1. India-B (3:03.68), 2. AFI Team-A (3:10.55), 3. Sri Lanka (3:13.08); **Shot put:** 1. Inderjeet Singh (19.53m), 2. Jasdeep Dhillon (18.10m), 3. Devinder Singh (17.44m); **Long jump:** 1. M. Sreeshankar (7.79m), 2. Sahil Mahabali (7.79m), 3. Samit Singh (7.51m); **Pole vault:** 1. Prashant Kumar Kanhaiya (4.90m), 2. Dharendra Kumar (4.60m), 3. Gourav (4.50m); **Triple jump:** 1. U. Karthik (16.69m), 2. Arpinder Singh (16.35m), 3. Mohd. Salauddin (16.33m); **Javelin:** 1. Ra-

jender (78.67m), 2. Davinder Singh Kang (78.37m), 3. Yashvir Singh (76.19m).

Women: 100m: 1. Dutee Chand (11.43s), 2. Jilna (11.77s), 3. Indi Prasad (12.56s); **200m:** Anjali Devi (23.44s), 2. Archana Suseendran (FS); **400m:** 1. Revathi (53.63s), 2. Aishwarya Mishra (54.72s), 3. Payal Vohra (57.51s); **1500m:** 1. Lili Das (4:19.77), 2. W.K.L. Arachchi Nimali (4:25.86), 3. K.M. Deeksha (4:46.89); **3000m steeplechase:** 1. Sudha Singh (10:00.66), 2. Chinta Yadav (11:11.67), 3. Preenu Yadav (11:32.63); **Long jump:** 1. Maareena George (6.01m), 2. Sowmiya Murugan (5.91m), Sonu Kumari (5.68m); **Shot put:** 1. Abha Khatua (16.01m), 2. Navjeet Dhillon (15.71m), 3. Tunlai Narzary (13.54m); **Javelin:** 1. Sharmila Kumari (50.40m), 2. K.M. Saloni (46.78m).

South Africa-A squeezes out a narrow victory

India-A falls short after being comfortably placed at one stage

SA-A IN INDIA

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

South Africa-A broke the sequence of defeats as it scored a four-run win over India-A in the fourth unofficial one-day match at the Sports Hub here on Thursday.

Needing 193 to go to 4-0 up in the series, India-A could only manage 188 for nine off 25 overs.

An India-A win looked a mere formality when it was comfortably placed at 161 for three at the start of the 20th over. However, it suffered a dramatic collapse – losing six wickets for just 17 runs – to fall short of the target.

Poor shot selection

The South African fast bowlers were incisive in the death overs but the Indian batsmen compounded their woes with poor shot selection.

Heavy rain in the morning and wet outfield delayed the start of the match yet again.

When play finally got underway at 1.30 p.m. the overnight pair of Shikhar Dhawan and Prashant Chopra

played fluently to bring up their fifty-run stand for the second wicket.

Shikhar Dhawan in particular was in ominous touch and scored boundaries regularly to punish the wayward South African bowling.

Rut begins

The rut began when Prashant Chopra (26) flicked Lutho Sipamla straight to Anrich Nortje at fine leg. Dhawan left soon after completing his fifty, feathering a catch to wicketkeeper Si-nethemba Qeshile off Marco Jansen.

However, Shivam Dube (31) and captain Shreyas Iyer (26) added 51 runs briskly for the fourth wicket to put India-A in command.

But man-of-the-match Anrich Nortje in his second spell dismissed both the batsmen in the same over to give South Africa hope. Both batsmen fell to attacking shots and in the process exposed the lower order.

Strong return

Sipamla, who bore the brunt of the attack from Dube and Shreyas, came back strongly



Top notch bowling: Anrich Nortje dismissed Shivam Dube and Shreyas Iyer (26) in the same over to give South Africa hope.

and induced an edge from Sanju Samson (1) which was brilliantly held by Qeshile. Nitish Rana (1) also flattered to deceive and threw his wicket away.

Marco Jansen then dismissed Washington Sundar (7) and Tushar Deshpande (0)

off successive deliveries to further dent India-A's chances. India-A needed 15 from the final over bowled by Beuran Hendricks and it was a tall order for both Rahul Chahar and Ishan Porel and they could only manage 10.

The scores: South Africa-A:

Century by Rahmat

CRICKET

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE CHITTAGONG

Batsman Rahmat Shah on Thursday became the first Afghanistan cricketer to score a Test century, helping the minnows start strongly against Bangladesh on the opening day of the one-off match.

Shah made 102 and put on a crucial 120-run fourth-wicket stand with Asghar Afghan, batting on 88, to counter the Bangladesh spin attack at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

Afghanistan was 271 for five at stumps with Afghan

SCOREBOARD

Afghanistan – 1st innings: Ibrahim Zadran c Mahmudullah b Taijul 21, Ihsanullah Janat b Taijul 9, Rahmat Shah c Soumya b Nayeem 102, Hashmatullah Shahidi c Soumya b Mahmudullah 14, Ashgar Afghan (batting) 88, Mohammad Nabi b Nayeem 0, Afsar Zazi (batting) 35; Extras (lb-1, nb-1): 2; Total (for

five wkts., in 96 overs): 271. **Fall of wickets:** 1-19, 2-48, 3-77, 4-197, 5-197. **Bangladesh Bowling:** Taijul 31-4-73-2, Shakib 17-1-50-0, Mehidy 22-4-59-0, Nayeem 13-0-43-2, Mahmudullah 4-0-9-1, Soumya 4-0-26-0, Mominul 4-0-9-0, Mosaddek 1-0-1-0. **Toss:** Afghanistan.



Rahmat Shah. ■AFP

East Bengal, Bagan post wins

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

East Bengal and Mohun Bagan recorded wins in their respective matches of the Calcutta Football League Premier Division 'A' on Thursday.

Bidyashagar Singh and Jamie Colado scored a goal apiece as East Bengal defeated Southern Samity 2-1.

Mohun Bagan rode on strikes from Romario Jesuraj and Nongdamba Naorem to beat Bhawanipore Club 2-0.

East Bengal, which is tied with Peerless and Bhawanipore on 10 points, is in the third place after playing five matches. Mohun Bagan, with eight points, is fifth after five matches. **The results:** East Bengal 2 (Bidyashagar 32, Colado 62) bt Southern Samity 1 (Arjun 81).

Mohun Bagan 2 (Romario 29, Naorem 56) bt Bhawanipore 0.

Bajrang is seeded No. 1

WORLD WRESTLING

Y.B. SARANGI KOLKATA

Bajrang Punia has been seeded No. 1 in men's freestyle 65kg for the World championships to be held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, from Sept. 14 to 22.

Bajrang, who won a bronze medal in 60kg in 2013 and a silver in 65kg in Budapest last year, aims to become the second Indian after Sushil Kumar (66kg FS, 2010) to win a gold in the Worlds, which will also serve as an Olympic qualifying event.

"Training abroad has helped me grow as a wrestler. Sparring with some of the best names in Georgia, Russia and the USA has made me more aware of my opponents," said Bajrang, who has been in Russia to fine-tune his game.

"Having my own team of coach, physio, trainer and sports science support staff has benefited me."

The 25-year-old was

'It was not easy staying patient'

Continued my training and worked on fitness, says Neeraj

EXCLUSIVE

UTHRA GANESAN PATIALA

Four months after an elbow surgery, Neeraj Chopra landed at the National Institute of Sports (NIS) here on Monday to get back to throwing. Despite not participating, he was at hand to cheer the other javelin throwers during competition on Thursday and spoke to *The Hindu* about his time out of action and future plans. *Excerpts:*

Four months without any action, how was this period away from sports?

I had my surgery on May 2 but it wasn't too difficult because I was not completely inactive. Yes, it was difficult because of the injury but I continued my training and worked on fitness.

Except for throwing or using the elbow, I was doing most of my regular training. So it was ok. I tried to maintain my routine through this period and that helped a lot.

How did you manage this spare time?

It was a little difficult in the beginning but you cannot help injuries. There is nothing left to do, you cannot hurry your return or advance your recovery and come back before you are fully fit.

It was not easy staying patient but I have learnt to do that now. You have to keep patience and stay positive and that's what I tried and kept myself busy. In Mum-



Keeping his fingers crossed: Neeraj Chopra will take a call on the Worlds and how to go further after meeting a doctor next week. ■FILE PHOTO

bai, during rehabilitation, I made sure I took full time for every bit of training, extend even something as simple as stretching as much as possible.

If there was time left I used to go to malls or elsewhere, anything to not allow the setback to affect my mind.

How did feel on your first day back at the track after rehab? When you picked up the javelin?

Stepping out on the track is something different, you cannot explain the feeling. I was training all this while but that moment of standing on the runway, the feeling of being a thrower even when you are not doing anything is something that can only be felt by an athlete.

Picking up the javelin was

different. There is a different kind of happiness you feel, like something was missing for so long but your body is now complete. It also felt like I was doing something for the first time ever but even that was a happy feeling.

How disappointing it is to miss the World Championships?

A lot. I had trained really hard for this year – for all the events but specially Worlds. There were many major events, the Diamond Leagues and the Asian Championships.

I have had to miss all of them. I will be training here for now but I will be meeting Dr. Dinshaw Pardiwala next week or so and then take a call on the Worlds and how to go further.

Good practice for me: Shikhar Dhawan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

All the attention was on Shikhar Dhawan during the fourth unofficial one-day match against the visiting South Africa-A. And the batsman made the most of his stay in the middle by scoring a fluent half century and made a timely return to form.

"I enjoyed it. I was hitting the ball in the middle and it was good that I scored a half century as well after coming into the India-A squad after a long time," he told media persons here on Thursday.

"It was a good practice for me before the upcoming series against South Africa.

"I am not part of the Test team so I had enough rest and there is nothing like going out in the middle and playing.

"The more I play, the more confident I become. Looking at the workload, I think I had enough of practice and match practice as well," he added.

As a senior member in



Shikhar Dhawan.

■GETTY IMAGES

the India-A squad, Shikhar said he was always willing to share his experience with other players.

Looking forward

Though an injury break cut short his World Cup sojourn early this year, Shikhar said he was looking forward to play an important role for India in the next T20 World Cup.

"Absolutely I am looking forward to scoring a lot of runs for India and be a consistent performer in the next T20 World Cup. As long as I keep performing and enjoying the game I think I will be there," he said.

CST to take on IOC

PNB draws with IOC, in semis

MURUGAPPA HOCKEY

K. KEERTHIVASAN CHENNAI

Central Secretariat (CST) had garnered three draws – the most – in the MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup all-India hockey tournament here.

But in a must-win Group-B contest against Punjab and Sind Bank (PSB) here on Thursday, CST played exceedingly well to post a commanding 4-2 win. With the victory, CST (six points) made it to the last four along with Indian Navy.

Later, in a Group-A tie, Punjab National Bank (PNB) drew with defending champion Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) 3-3.

With the outcome, PNB (seven points) qualified for the semifinals, pipping Bengaluru HA by one point.

IOC will now take on CST in the semifinals on Saturday, while Indian Navy will clash with PNB in the other

last-four clash.

Friday is a rest day.

The results: **Group-A:** IOC 3 (Armaan Qureshi 6, Gurjinder Singh 16 & 33) drew with PNB 3 (Abhishek 8, Sumit Toppo 20, Mandeep Mor 50). **Group-B:** CST 4 (Govind Singh Rawat 19, Dharambir Yadav 24, Gaurav Kumar Rawat 30, Umar Mohd. 55) bt PSB 2 (Harmanjit Singh 13, Satbir Singh 35).



New video marks Freddie Mercury's birthday

LONDON
A new video animation featuring two white blood cells in love was released on Thursday to mark what would have been Freddie Mercury's 73rd birthday and help raise awareness of the continued global fight against AIDS. The British singer died in 1991 due to complications from AIDS. The animation features his track *Love Me Like There's No Tomorrow*. REUTERS



LOS ANGELES
Crazy Rich Asians co-writer leaves sequel
Adele Lim has quit the sequel of the film over a pay parity dispute, according to U.S. media reports. Ms. Lim, a veteran TV writer, who was hired to work on the screenplay of the film alongside co-writer Peter Chiarelli of *The Proposal* fame, did not agree with the higher fee that Mr. Chiarelli was getting for the job, said the *Hollywood Reporter*. PTI



NEW YORK
Larson's next book is on Nazi blitz of London
Erik Larson's next book, *The Splendid and the Vile*, is set during the Nazi bombing of London in 1940-41. It is set to hit the stands in March. He is drawing upon everything from the diary of Mary Churchill, daughter of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, to intelligence reports and other materials only recently declassified. AP



LOS ANGELES
Camila Cabello returns with double release
Singer Camila Cabello of *Havana* fame says her songs from her second solo album *Romance* narrate the story of her life. Ms. Cabello came out with singles *Shameless* and *Liar* on Thursday. She also released a video directed by Henry Scholfield. IANS

Fashion influencer Ferragni steals the show

Fans thronged Venice to see her

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
VENICE

The longest queues at the Venice film festival have not been to see Hollywood stars like Brad Pitt or Scarlett Johansson.

Instead the most hysterical fans were those who thronged the Lido dreaming of a selfie with Chiara Ferragni, the fashion influencer who has become rich selling clothes and her starry you-can-have-it-all lifestyle on Instagram.

Hundreds were turned away from screenings of a new Amazon Prime documentary, *Chiara Ferragni – Unposted*, about her remarkable rise.

"You will never understand our love for her," said Angela Fozzi, 24, who had made the long trip from Milan to see her and waited outside the cinema till 1 a.m. in the hope of a chance encounter.

"She is the greatest role model for women in the world," the supermarket cashier said.

"She did it all herself. All she had was her smartphone and determination. She is an inspiration for

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning writer Kiran Nagarkar dies at 77

His novels offered biting humour and complex insights into human nature

GAURI VIJ
MUMBAI

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning writer Kiran Nagarkar has died at the age of 77. He suffered a brain haemorrhage on September 2 and breathed his last on September 5.

Like several writers and artists of his generation, Nagarkar began his career as an educationist, a journalist and then later as a screenplay writer in the advertising industry. His advertisement campaigns with close friend and poet Arun Kolatkar were considered path-breaking.

Nagarkar wrote his first book *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* in 1974 in his mother tongue, Marathi. Its English translation (*Seven Sixes are Forty Three*) was published in 1980 and then re-released in 2017 as a paperback version by Harper Collins.

It was his second novel, *Ravan and Eddie* (1994) about two unlikely protagonists, which cemented Nagarkar's position as a post-colonialist Indian writer. Now a cult classic, it is widely acknowledged as a layered, comic masterpiece about life in a city chawl and one of the best novels written about Mumbai. Later, two more books formed the *Ravan and Eddie* trilogy: *The Extras* (2012) and *Rest in Peace* (2015).

His historical fiction, *Cuckold* (1997), for which he was awarded the 2001 Sahi-



Kiran Nagarkar. ■ FILE PHOTO

tya Akademi Award in English firmly established Nagarkar's reputation as a novelist unafraid to tackle politics, bigotry and extremism. *Cuckold*'s protagonist is the unknown spouse of the 16th century poet-saint Meera, whose love songs to the god Krishna are part of Indian folklore and musical tradition. *Cuckold* initially received a lukewarm reception but was later hailed as a political novel and a landmark in Indo-Anglian literature.

Long literary career

Through the 45 years of his literary career, Nagarkar struggled with acceptance from Marathi audiences. In a column for *Outlook* in 2001, he wrote, "What both the English and the vernacular press share is a lack of discrimination. They dare not trust their own judgement

since they've no critical standards. For those who speak English in India and are westernised, and that includes many of our critics, the sun rises and sets in the west. If the west approves it, it must be good. In the regional languages, safety and security often lie at the other extreme: in parochialism and the bogey of safeguarding our culture."

In 2018, Nagarkar spoke out at public meetings and through newspaper columns about the importance of running a robust public transport system in regard to the beleaguered BEST. In an open letter to the then Municipal Commissioner, Ajoy Mehta, the writer didn't hold back any punches when he wrote, "...almost every major city in the world public transportation has always been subsidised. That's the

only way the poorest of the poor who live in slums as well as those who belong to the lowest rungs of the middle class can afford to travel to work."

In October 2018, Nagarkar found himself part of the Indian #MeToo storm that was engulfing social media posts at the time.

Three women journalists alleged on Twitter (one of these accounts was anonymous) that he had behaved inappropriately with them on separate occasions.

Nagarkar issued a statement denying the allegations. He said, "Forgive me for not responding earlier to the women journalists who have accused me of sexual impropriety on Twitter. The news came as a complete shock to me. It took me time to try and digest the tweets. I unequivocally deny these allegations of sexual impropriety which go against the heart of my character and everything I stand for. I have never engaged in any such behaviour with anyone."

The fallout of the allegations was felt when Penguin Random House cancelled its contract for the writer's latest book about Kabir, titled *The Arsonist*. Later, Jugger-naut Books stepped in as his new publisher and the book was released in June this year.

Nagarkar is survived by his partner of several decades, Tulsi Vatsal.

Copy cat: China clones its first kitten

Pet owners are ready to shell out \$35,000 to \$53,000 to duplicate cats and dogs

SUI-LEE WEE
BEIJING

Garlic was dead, and there was nothing Huang Yu could do. So on a cold winter day, he buried his cat's body in a park close to his home.

Hours later, still heartbroken, the 22-year-old businessman recalled an article he had read on dog cloning in China. What if someday he could bring Garlic back to life?

"In my heart, Garlic is irreplaceable," said Mr. Huang, who dug up the cat and put it in his refrigerator in preparation for cloning him.

Mr. Huang approached Sinogene, a commercial pet-cloning company based in Beijing. Roughly \$35,000 (₹25 lakh) and seven months later, Sinogene produced



Here to stay: China's first cloned kitten. ■ AFP

what China's official news media declared to be the country's first cloned cat – and another sign of the country's emergence as a power in cloning and genetics.

It also suggests that China could turn pet cloning into a viable business. Duplicating dogs and cats has not really

taken off in the United States and elsewhere, experts say. Pet-obsessed China might be different. The size of China's domestic pet market is expected to reach \$28.2 billion this year, up nearly one-fifth from 2018, according to Gouminwang, a pet consultancy in Beijing. The country already has 55 million pet dogs

and 44 million pet cats, and demand for cats is accelerating.

Pet cloning is not confined to China – Barbra Streisand famously declared last year that two of her dogs are clones – and people have been cloning cats for years. But Garlic is the first cat cloned by China, solidifying its position among major cloning nations, which include the United States, Britain and South Korea.

Mi Jidong, Sinogene's chief executive, said the company decided to start cloning pets in 2015 after conducting a survey of roughly 1,000 people that showed there was demand. The company has cloned more than 40 dogs at a cost of about \$53,000 each (₹38 lakh). NY TIMES

Off to school



Royal welcome: Helen Haslem, head of the lower school greeting Britain's Princess Charlotte as she arrives for her first day of school with her parents, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, at Thomas's Battersea in London on Thursday. ■ AARON CHOWN/GETTY IMAGES

Numbers of 400 mn FB users exposed: report

Dataset has now been taken down

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Phone numbers linked to more than 400 million Facebook accounts were listed online in the latest privacy lapse for the social media giant, U.S. media reports have said.

An exposed server stored 419 million records on users across several databases – including 133 million records on U.S.-based Facebook users, 18 million records of users in the U.K., and another with more than 50 million records on users in Vietnam, according to technology news site *TechCrunch*.

The databases listed Facebook user IDs – unique digits attached to each account, the profiles' phone numbers, as well as the gender listed by some accounts and their geographical locations, *TechCrunch* said.

The server was not password-protected, meaning anyone could access the databases, and remained online until late Wednesday.

Facebook confirmed parts of the report but downplayed the extent of the exposure, saying that the number of accounts so far confirmed was around



half of the reported 419 million.

"The dataset has been taken down and we have seen no evidence that Facebook accounts were compromised," a Facebook spokesperson said. Following the 2018 Cambridge Analytica scandal, when a firm used Facebook's lax privacy settings to access millions of users' personal details, the company disabled a feature that allowed users to search the platform by phone numbers.

The privacy lapse was discovered by Sanyam Jain, a security researcher and member at Hague-based non-profit organisation GDI Foundation. "Jain... found the database and contacted TechCrunch after he was unable to find the owner. After a review of the data, neither could we. But after we contacted the web host, the database was pulled offline," said *TechCrunch*.

(With IANS inputs)

Tokyo 2020 organisers to test fake snow

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Tokyo 2020 Olympic chiefs have already rolled out everything from misting stations to flowerbeds to beat the heat at next year's games, and now they want to test it.

Organisers confirmed on Thursday that they plan to test the use of artificial snow at a canoe event later this month as they look for novel ways to keep spectators and athletes cool during Tokyo's notoriously steamy summer months.

"Artificial snow will be sprayed over spectator seating," some of which may be in direct sunlight, during a canoeing event on September 13 that will serve as a test for the Olympics, a spokeswoman for Tokyo 2020 said. "We haven't decided definitively that we will use this system next year for the Olympics, but we want to test it to see how effective it is," she said. "We're open to trying all potentially useful ideas," she added, when asked about possible criticism of the environmental side-effects of the method.

The snow-making machines could produce a tonne of material per day.

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